If so, how does it view the conflict of objectives between promoting renewable energies, increasing the share of renewable energies and fulfilling the Kyoto obligations, on the one hand, and increasing the cost of hydro-electric power on the other?


**Answer given by Mrs Wallström on behalf of the Commission**

*(12 July 2002)*

The Water Framework Directive (1) provides for a definition ‘water services: means all services which provide, for households, public institutions or any economic activity a) abstraction, impoundment, storage, treatment and distribution of surface waters or groundwater, b) waste water collection and treatment facilities’ (Article 2(38)).

Article 9 of the Water Framework Directive provides for taking into account the principle of polluter pays and of cost recovery by 2010: the different uses have to provide adequate contributions to the recovery of costs of water services; at the same time Member States may, in applying these provisions, take into account social, ecological and economic effects of costs recovery.

The Water Framework Directive addresses all impacts on waters. The Commission does in this context not see a contradiction between support for renewable energies (2) and the Water Framework Directive: all involved will – in line with the Directive – have to contribute to water protection, including sectors subject for support at Community level.

An ecological and economic analysis of different water uses is to be carried out by Member States by December 2004, and will provide a sound basis. Based on this, Member States will, in a transparent manner and involving all interested parties, have to assess and decide the issue of costs recovery. Collated facts as well as assessment can and will differ from case to case; consequently, it is impossible to provide a general response on the role of hydroelectric power plants in the context of cost recovery for services.

Member States and the Commission have for the Water Framework Directive agreed on a comprehensive implementation strategy: it will provide exchange of knowledge and information, and develop guidance documents in cooperation of all involved parties, including European umbrella organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as well as the scientific community. Work within this strategy will support implementation efforts and provide from the beginning a comparable basis. Joint work in the frame of this implementation strategy is delivering and can be regarded as an example of Good European Governance.


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(2002/C 301 E/195) **WRITTEN QUESTION E-1576/02**

by Brice Hortefeux (PPE-DE) to the Commission

*(4 June 2002)*

**Subject:** Domestic violence

According to a study carried out by the University of Madrid, one European women in five suffers violence at the hands of her husband or partner at some time in her life, and women in Europe aged between 15 and 44 are more likely to be injured or die as a result of domestic violence than as a result of cancer, malaria, traffic accidents or war put together.
The statistics are more telling still in the United Kingdom, where a woman dies from this kind of violence every three days, and Austria, where the grounds for half of all divorces are wives’ complaints of ill-treatment by their husbands.

These incidents also have a high economic cost in terms of hospitalisation and absence from work. In Finland these are estimated at EUR 5 million per annum, in the Netherlands at EUR 150 million.

Faced with the complexity of this problem, which is still not being tackled with enough determination, despite the effectiveness of campaigns such as the ‘zero tolerance for violence’ campaign which was successfully launched in Europe in 1999, what approach does the Commission propose to take to combating this social scourge which also has economic repercussions?

**Answer given by Mrs Diamantopoulou on behalf of the Commission**

*(22 July 2002)*

Preventing and combating violence against women, including domestic violence, is a priority across the Union. The growing concern and consensus of all relevant actors to tackle the causes as well as the effects of violence has lead to an increase of activities at Union level.

The most important current Commission action programme against domestic violence is the Daphne Programme for the period 2000-2003 which aims at fighting violence against children, young people and women. The goals of the Daphne Programme are a) to support and encourage both non-governmental organisations and other organisations including public authorities active in the fight against violence to set up multi-disciplinary networks and to ensure exchange of information, best practice and cooperation at Community level and b) to raise awareness amongst the general public but also amongst specific professions such as medical doctors, teachers, lawyers, social workers, etc., and c) to support the prevention of violence against children, young people and women, including victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, commercial sexual exploitation and other sexual abuse.

After the ‘Zero Tolerance Campaign’ launched by the Commission in 1999/2000 as a response to a resolution adopted by the Parliament in 1997, it is now more appropriate for each Member State, at national and/or local level, to continue their awareness — raising efforts, in the light of their own needs and requirements, though they can of course, co-ordinate their campaigns, for example by identifying common priority issues.

The Spanish Presidency has, in close cooperation with the Commission, taken a major step forward to bring this issue to the highest political level, starting off by the Informal Ministers’ Conference on violence against women on 18 and 19 February 2002 in Santiago de Compostela. The conference was organised by the Spanish Presidency with the support of the Commission.

The conclusions of the conference were submitted to the Employment and Social Policy Council on 7 March 2002 during which Member States underlined the importance of a multi-disciplinary and multi-level approach to the eradication of violence against women; of the exchange of best practice within the Union; and of continuing to develop awareness campaigns in the Member States. A reference to the subject was also included in the Barcelona European Council Conclusions (of 15 and 16 March 2002). This was the first time the European Council took up this issue.

Member States and the Commission agree that a streamlined approach to data and statistics as well as a common understanding and terminology of violence across the Union are needed in order to get comparable information. The Commission appreciates Denmark’s initiative to build on the work of the Spanish Presidency; to develop and present indicators during its Presidency in the 2nd half of 2002 for assessment and follow-up of progress in combating violence against women. Such indicators could be integrated into appropriate policy areas, particularly Justice and Home Affairs, health and education.

These indicators will be based on a study and a good practice guide developed by the Spanish Presidency, focusing on data and measures in the Member States in the field of violence against women, in particular domestic violence, including legal, judicial and law-enforcement measures.