WRITTEN QUESTION E-2752/07
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to the Commission

Subject: Calculation methods of energy statistics

The Eurostat, just like the International Energy Agency (IAE), usesthe same type of calculation methods for calculating the primary energy value of the electricity produced by different energy sources, assuming a conversion efficiency factor for each source. This factor is 33% for nuclear power, while only 10% for thermal.

This calculation leads to the result, that while the electricity produced by hydropower and nuclear power in terms of TWh is nearly the same, once translated into the share of primary energy supply, a completely different picture emerges, in which nuclear is counted three times more than hydro. This clearly favours conventional and nuclear sources, while sources such as wind, hydro and PV are underestimated.

Based on the other method of calculation, the so-called substitution principle, the primary energy attributed to the electricity produced by the non-combustion-based electricity sources (nuclear, geothermal, hydro, wind, solar and ocean) is adjusted to reflect the fossil fuel energy required to produce an equivalent amount of electricity.

As long as the role of renewables is underestimated in the ongoing discussions about a future energy mix because of the wrong calculation model, changes in peoples' attitudes will remain difficult.

Is the currently used calculation method scientifically well-grounded? Does the Commission agree with the statement that the current system discriminates against renewable energy sources?

What is the Commission planning to do to change this practice, and introduce the substitution principle as the main calculation method, as is done at the biggest fuel companies like BP or Shell?