

# Sanitation in the EU – Name and Shame

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# Name and Shame

- Margot Wallström some 10 years ago tried to expose this issue within the EU when she was Environment Commissioner at a “name-and-shame” seminar in Brussels
- Lack of proper sewage treatment in southern European cities and aging cities in the north has never become a major issue
- Cities have been reprimanded in EU courts to make amends but little action has occurred
- The media, the public and our politicians have not made this an issue
- Useful data on the sanitation sector is impossible to find in the EC

# Situation in Europe

- Of the major cities in Western Europe only about 80 have advanced treatment facilities (mainly in the north)
- Many countries in Europe lag behind in wastewater treatment with coverage in Belgium and Portugal at 40%, and Greece, Italy and Poland running at 60%
- Brussels only began treating all its sewage in 2006
- Athens got its first modern STP when they held the Olympics in 2004 after having built an offshore island (not general knowledge in Greece)
- Milan, after 40 years of discussion, got their plants on line in 2006

# Our aging cities

- London's sewage collector system, built in the mid-1800s for 3 to 4 million people, is grossly under-dimensioned, so raw sewage is bypassed into the Thames River every time there are heavy rains
- This only became an issue when the UK olympic rowing team all became sick paddling on the Thames
- A 2.5 billion (Euros) pipe system is being planned for London
- This should be one of many loud alarm clocks for our aging cities

# Weak legislation

- EU's Municipal Wastewater Directive has in effect been put in storage in favor of the Water Framework Directive which allows cities to ponder 25 years before building a proper treatment facility
- Reuse of human urine in agriculture is not legally acceptable practice in the EU