EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Cancer, Health in all Policies
Head of Unit

Luxembourg
SANTE.B.1/PR/AG/11383805

COLLECTIVE EMP VICTIMS
[redacted]

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Dear Claimants,

I would like to thank you for bringing your concerns to the attention of the European Commission regarding electromagnetic field (EMF) exposure. President von der Leyen, Executive Vice-President Mînzatu and Commissioner Várhelyi asked me to respond on their behalf.

Concerning non-ionizing radiation, at the EU level, Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC[1] sets basic restrictions and reference levels to guide the EU Member States on ensuring protection of the general public from exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMF), in line with the guidelines of the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) adopted in 1998. These EMF limits remain significantly below the levels which international scientific evidence considers having a potential negative effect on human health.

Those limits are not binding for the Member States, which have the primary responsibility for protecting the general public from potential harmful effects of EMF. However, the European Electronic Communications Code[2] calls on Member States to ensure consistent application of those limits.

Following the adoption of the updated ICNIRP guidelines in 2020[3], the Commission, in line with the precautionary principle, mandated its Scientific Committee on Health, Environmental and Emerging Risks (SCHEER) to issue an Opinion on any need for a technical revision of the Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC, notably for the frequency range 100 kHz to 300 GHz.

According to this Opinion[4], there is no moderate or strong level of evidence for adverse human health effects at EMF exposure levels below the limits set in Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC. However, the Committee acknowledged that the latest exposure guidelines

[1] Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC of 12 July 1999 on the limitation of exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields (0 Hz to 300 GHz), OJ L 199, 30.7.1999, p. 59.
[2] Directive (EU) 2018/1972 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 establishing the European Electronic Communications Code (Recast)Text with EEA relevance.
[3] ICNIRPrfgdl2020.pdf
[4] SCHEER Opinion on EMF (europa.eu)

issued by the ICNIRP in 2020 introduced new dosimetric quantities and limits to them, that would protect humans more effectively from emerging technological applications.

The SCHEER Committee advised to revise the annexes in the afore mentioned Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC, to add these new criteria. Preparatory work is currently ongoing for a potential technical revision of the annexes to the Recommendation to ensure the continuous and adequate protection of health and safety of the general public from its exposure to electromagnetic fields.

Regarding low-frequence electromagnetic fields, in adherence to the precautionary principle, the European Commission mandated the Scientific Committee on Health, Environmental and Emerging Risks (SCHEER) to issue a scientific opinion for frequencies ranging from 1 Hz to 100 kHz, with the aim of updating the 2015 opinion in light of the latest scientific developments. The Preliminary Opinion[5] was adopted on 6 October 2023.

The SCHEER concluded that low-frequency EMF exposure for Europe's general population remains within the safe limits recommended in Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC. Currently, there is no strong evidence to suggest a direct link between low-frequency EMF exposure, at these guideline levels, and self-reported health symptoms. However, the committee recognizes the necessity for further research to better understand the interaction between EMF exposure and human health outcomes.

After Public Consultation on the Preliminary Opinion mentioned above, it was adopted on 17 May 2024.

Yours sincerely,

Philippe Roux
Head of Unit

[5] SCHEER - Public consultation on the Preliminary Opinion on potential health effects of exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMF) - Update with regard to frequencies between 1Hz and 100 kHz - European Commission

Electronically signed on 03/11/2025 16:54 (UTC+01) in accordance with Article 11 of Commission Decision (EU) 2021/2121