Priority question for written answer P-000221/2020

to the Commission

Rule 138

Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Subject: 5G, International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) and the independence of the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR)

In 2009, the Commission pointed out that some of the experts on the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) who were the most competent in the area of electromagnetic fields (EMFs) had been involved in the activities of the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) [[1]](#footnote-0) . The opinion produced by the SCENIHR between 2014 and 2019 endorsed the view of the ICNIRP that the only adverse effects of electromagnetic fields are their thermal effects [[2]](#footnote-1) : a position which is in fact wrong [[3]](#footnote-2) . In terms of risk factors of brain tumours (glioblastoma), Santé publique France (‘Public Health France’) recently announced that ‘the latest epidemiological studies and tests on animals indicate that exposure to electromagnetic fields has a carcinogenic effect’ [[4]](#footnote-3) .

Which members of the SCENIHR and its EMF working group have been or are also members of the ICNIRP? How does the Commission ensure that its committee provides an independent, impartial and balanced interpretation of scientific results when its members might have conflicts of interest with other organisations?

According to what basis, objective criteria and thresholds are possible conflicts of interest of its members and experts now assessed, and by whom?

How has the Commission, in particular, implemented the recommendations of the European Ombudsman set out in her 2015 opinion on conflicts of interest in the SCENIHR [[5]](#footnote-4) ?

1. Commission’s reply to Written Question P-1843/09 of 18 March 2009: ‘Independence of experts on SCENIHR’. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. CSRSEN, ‘Opinion on potential health effects of exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMF)’, 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. https://www.icems.eu/papers.htm ‘Non-Thermal Effects and Mechanisms of Interaction Between Electromagnetic Fields and Living Matter’, European Journal of Oncology, Libr. Vol. 5, 2010; Carlberg M, Hardell L.: ‘Evaluation of mobile phone and cordless phone use and glioma risk’, Biomed Res Int., 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. National estimates of cancer incidence and mortality in metropolitan France between 1990 and 2018, Volume 1, p. 321, Public Health France et al. 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. Decision of the European Ombudsman closing the inquiry into complaint 208/2015/PD concerning conflicts of interests in a Commission expert group on electromagnetic field, 18 April 2017. https://europa.eu/!Ry86Nu [↑](#footnote-ref-4)