

E-4623/09EN  
Answer by Ms Vassiliou  
on behalf of the Commission  
(9.11.2009)

The Commission would like to remind the Honourable Member that all Member States have adopted measures that provide at least the level of protection proposed by Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC<sup>1</sup>. So far, four independent assessments of the scientific evidence by the EU scientific committees, the latest one published in January 2009, have failed to identify a scientific rationale for modifying the current exposure limits proposed by this Recommendation. As a result, the Commission considers that the exposure limits proposed by the Council Recommendation are compatible with a high level of health protection. However, the Commission is also conscious of the need to constantly review the scientific evidence supporting this assessment. The Commission has asked the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) to develop a research strategy to best address any gaps in the scientific assessments. The opinion presenting this research strategy was adopted in July 2009. It will be one of the sources of ideas that will be taken into account when the funding of additional research is considered at Commission level. Furthermore, the Commission will continue to regularly assess the new scientific evidence that becomes available.

The EU Treaty provides for limited competence of the Commission on public health, whose role is mainly to encourage cooperation between Member States. As regards the protection against electromagnetic fields, the Commission considers that decisions on the siting and building of base stations should be left to national or local authorities.

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<sup>1</sup> 1999/519/EC: Council Recommendation of 12 July 1999 on the limitation of the exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields (0 Hz – 300 GHz), OJ L 199, 30.7.1999.