

**Question for written answer E-014218/2013  
to the Commission  
Rule 117  
Liam Aylward (ALDE)**

**Subject:** Construction of high-voltage overhead lines in Ireland

The Irish state-owned electricity transmission operator, EirGrid, intends to upgrade the country's electricity network and, as part of its Grid 25 project, construct a high-voltage overhead power line between Munster and Leinster.

Fáilte Ireland (The National Tourism Development Authority) has raised concerns about the construction of overhead pylons, in particular regarding the impact it might have on areas of natural beauty. The Natura 2000 Network project, concerning ecological areas throughout Europe and covering 18% of EU territory, is the centrepiece of the Birds and Habitats Directives. Could the Commission provide more information on how substantial protection measures and the procedure as set out in Articles 3, 4 and 6 of the Habitats Directive have been enforced?

Under the United Nations Aarhus Convention, the public have a right to seek information on health risks that could derive from a project of this nature and they also have a right to participate in projects that impact on the environment. How would the Commission assess the consultation process held with EirGrid? Was that process adequate? What exactly would a proper consultation process in such a case entail?

As regards public safety, could the Commission outline the distance that pylons and high-voltage overhead lines are to be kept from houses and residential areas?