

WRITTEN QUESTION P-0935/04
by Hans Kronberger (NI)
to the Commission

Subject: European environment and health strategy - SCALE

Early last summer, the Commission launched the European environment and health strategy (SCALE).

In its press release (IP/03/823) of 11 June 2003, the Commission describes the five key elements of the strategy. The second of these is 'children', as they are particularly susceptible to environmental agents. In this connection the Commission claims that 157 million children in Europe are suffering from special environment-related problems.

According to 'A Community of fifteen: key figures', 2000 edition, in 1998 less than 20% of the population of the EU consisted of children aged from 0 to 14. Assuming the population of the EU to be around 370 million, the population would include 74 million children under 15 at the absolute maximum. Even if one allows for the increase in the EU's population due to enlargement, it would hardly be possible to arrive at a figure of 157 million children in Europe.

1. What criteria did the Commission use to arrive at the figure of 157 million children in Europe?
2. Could the figure quoted by the Commission be due to a misprint?
3. If so, how many children are really suffering from environment-related problems in Europe?