

WRITTEN QUESTION P-1564/09  
by Alessandro Foglietta (UEN)  
to the Commission

Subject: Siting of a nursery school near a power line in Nave San Rocco

The municipal council of Nave San Rocco, in Trento Province, approved in November 2007 the final plan for the construction of a new nursery school which is to be built only 15 metres away from a 132 kVolt power line belonging to the RFI (Italian railway network).

The prime ministerial decree (DPCM) of 8 July 2003 implementing law no 36 of 22 February 2001 (framework law on protection from exposure to low-frequency electrical, magnetic and electro-magnetic fields), article 4 of which sets quality objectives, sets three microtesla ( $\mu\text{T}$ ) as the magnetic induction threshold below which there is supposed to be no risk to health. This reference value applies to planned new buildings in which people will spend more than four hours a day and to playgrounds and school premises. The relevant value is the medium value throughout a 24-hour period. However, despite this legal provision, which requires the magnetic field to be monitored over an extended period, the relevant measurements were taken on 18 January 2005 over a period of less than an hour and cannot, therefore, be regarded as reliable evidence of the absence of any health risk in the vicinity of the power line.

Secondly, attention should be drawn to the particular vulnerability of the children exposed to these fields, as children are undoubtedly more sensitive to exposure to electromagnetic fields and consequently the quality objective set in the legislation should be extended to cover areas in which they spend less than four hours a day, in other words the outside area and gardens surrounding the area where the school will be built.

Finally, risks associated with the use of the power line in question should be assessed in the light of the possible future development of the power line, including a possible increase in the power carried by the line, which currently is not being used to its full potential. There is also a possibility, due to the liberalisation of the energy market, that the power line will be transferred to another operator, which might make much greater use of the power line than the present operator.

In view of the foregoing,

- Are the planned school and the methods used to calculate the strength of the electro-magnetic field in question compatible with current Community legislation?
- Does the Commission have at its disposal any new scientific studies on electro-magnetic fields which it would be reasonable for the local authorities to take into account on the precautionary principle?