



New EU-Assessment of Mobile Communication and Human Health: Extensive Research Substantiated ICNIRP Exposure Limits

The European Commission's Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) has recently issued an updated scientific opinion on the safety of Radio Frequency (RF) fields associated with mobile communications.

The SCENIHR stated *"in conclusion, no health effect has been consistently demonstrated at exposure levels below the limits of ICNIRP (International Committee on Non Ionising Radiation Protection) established in 1998."*¹

The SCENIHR was requested by the European Commission to review the science that has been undertaken since the last scientific review ('opinion') was published in 2001. In particular, SCENIHR evaluated whether or not exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMF) cause a disease or other health effects, and in particular whether there were any long-term effects.

SCENIHR emphasized: *"Since the adoption of the 2001 opinion extensive research has been conducted regarding possible health effects of exposure to low intensity RF fields, including epidemiologic, in vivo, and in vitro research."*

Although it is mentioned that the data base for evaluation remains limited especially for long-term low-level exposure, SCENIHR pointed out: *"The balance of epidemiologic evidence indicates that mobile phone use of less than 10 years does not pose any increased risk of brain tumour or acoustic neuroma. For long-term use, data are sparse, and the following conclusions are therefore uncertain and tentative. However, from the available data it does appear that there is no increased risk for brain tumours in long-term users, with the exception of acoustic neuroma for which there is some evidence of an association."* They also state that: *"Animal studies have not provided evidence that RF fields could induce cancer, enhance the effects of known carcinogens, or accelerate the development of transplanted tumours."*

On the issue of mobile phone use and children SCENIHR stated that *"no specific evidence exists"* which indicated any harm for children using mobiles however also noting that *"children or adolescents may be more sensitive to RF field exposure than adults"*.

The SCENIHR recommended further research within all frequency ranges in view of the fast pace of technical development within the mobile communications field. In general, the committee mentioned high quality dosimetry as crucial for further studies.

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¹ http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihr/docs/scenihr_o_007.pdf