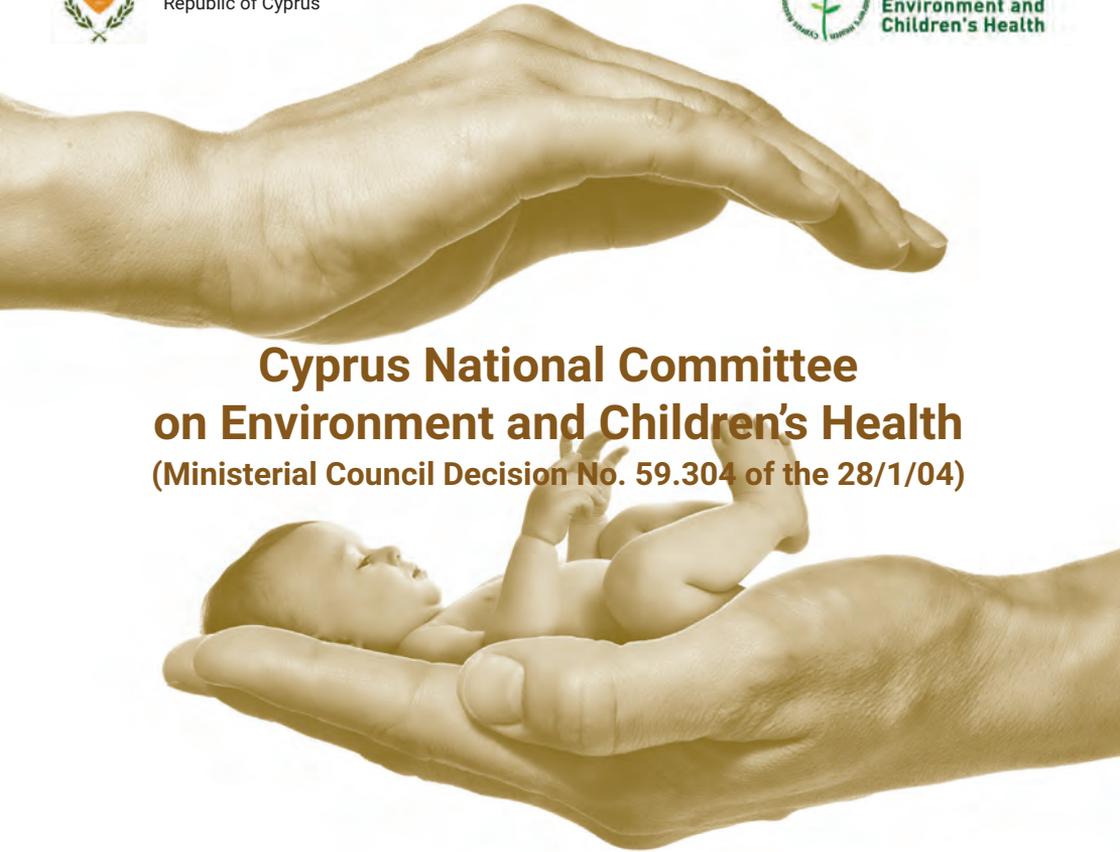




Ministry of Health
Republic of Cyprus



Cyprus National
Committee on
Environment and
Children's Health



Cyprus National Committee on Environment and Children's Health

(Ministerial Council Decision No. 59.304 of the 28/1/04)

**Our children are so valuable but also so vulnerable
to toxic chemicals, radiations and other toxic factors.**

***We must and can protect them and
prevent health impacts.***

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Cyprus National Committee on Environment and Children's Health

The Committee is an independent one, composed of scientists, specialists in environmental and children's health issues, proposed by Ministries, Academic Institutions, Medical Associations, etc. Since 2004 it is appointed every 3 years by the Council of Ministers after relevant proposal by Minister of Health. The president is a well-recognized expert proposed by the Minister of Health. Members are offering their services as volunteers and all actions are funded by the Ministry of Health. The Committee has mainly an advisory and coordinating role. The basic terms of reference are as follows:

- To provide scientific advisory support to the Minister of Health, other Ministers, the House of Representatives, Authorities etc., on relevant legislation and other regulations, as well as for the preparation of scientifically substantiated Cyprus position papers submitted to international bodies;
- To act as a National Focal Point for the "Environment and Children's Health" in EU, WHO and other international organizations, as well as to participate in EU research programmes;
- To raise awareness, inform and educate the public and health professionals;
- To develop and coordinate the National Action Plan for the Environment and Children's health.

OUR VISION

Children from the stage of their conception until adolescence, to enjoy a healthy and safe environment with the least possible exposure to environmental and other toxic factors. This can ensure normal physical, mental and emotional development and will create conditions for a healthy future life.

OUR AIM

To minimize preventable environment related diseases by reducing foetus and child exposure to toxic substances, radiation and other harmful environmental factors.

OUR MISSION

To raise awareness, to provide science-based information and educate the society and professionals. To provide scientific advice and suggestions, to Authorities and professionals, with the ultimate goal to support science-based policies and best practices of prevention in line with the basic principles of Public Health.

HOW WE ACCOMPLISH OUR MISSION

Our approach is primarily based on scientific documentation complemented with the application of the Precautionary Principle, especially when there is serious documentation of risks but not yet definitive proof of harm, because of ignorance, uncertainties and grey zones.

On the issue of Electromagnetic Radiation Radiofrequency, the Committee reviews and exploits assessments and evaluations of existing and ongoing peer review research conducted by international scientific bodies, on potential health effects. Based on the findings of peer review studies, the Precautionary Principle (COM 2000) and other Public Health Principles, the Committee aims to contribute in:

a) Raising awareness, providing information and educating the public, health professionals and educators, as well as children themselves. The Committee proposes the implementation of

precautionary and protective measures as well as safe and age-related technology usage.

b) Developing policies and best practices that enable technology to be exploited safely and limit its potential health effects especially on children. Policies should be based on **Science, the Precautionary Principle and Public Health Principles**.

The Committee does not have any competency, nor the technological expertise to intervene with telecommunication companies for antennae related and/or other technological issues.

Why are the foetus and child more vulnerable than adult to the effects of toxic factors?

The child (foetus - 19 years old) is not a small adult. He/she is unique and different. He/she has greater exposure and greater vulnerability to toxic agents than adults because among other things:

- The central nervous, respiratory, reproductive, digestive systems, kidney and lung organs of a child are continuously developing and their defense, detoxification and excretion mechanisms are mostly weak or incomplete.
- Child development is characterized by the so called "windows of vulnerability" which are critical periods of vulnerability in the course of their development. At these "windows", exposure to toxic factors can disrupt the child's endocrine system, brain development, nervous and reproductive systems, disrupting their normal development. Such agents are, for example, dioxins, PCBs, lead, mercury, pesticides, radiation and others.
- Child is more sensitive to epigenetic changes in DNA and carcinogens.



- Division/multiplication of both healthy and cancerous cells is faster.
- Child will be exposed to toxic factors for more years and the time horizon for the development of long-term diseases, such as cancer and neurodevelopmental disabilities is greater, increasing the chance of their occurrence.
- The child is more exposed to toxic factors than the adult because as a developing organism it has multiple needs for food, air and water, per kilogram of body weight. Inevitable this leads to two up to ten times higher exposure to toxic substances, radiation and others factors.
- Placenta cannot prevent the passage of toxic substances or the effect of radiation.
- Children are unaware of the risks, dependent on adults and have no say in risk management decisions - The responsibility for protecting them is OURS.





- Children represent the future of our planet and are intrinsic component of sustainable development.
- Let's minimize their exposure to toxic chemicals, radiations and other toxic factors and take all necessary measures at all levels to protect them.
- Uncertainties or conflicting views in relation to risks, should not let to INACTION or POSTPONEMENT allowing EXPOSURE to potential hazards to continue. They must be addressed by PREVENTION and the application of the PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE (COM (2000)1).

Further information

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