

Subject: open letter concerning the Strategic Orientation Report for an Environmental Health Law

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Barzan, 07/06/2023

Through this open letter, Robin des Toits wishes to make its position officially known regarding the Report cited in subject.

First of all, Robin des Toits welcomes this initiative and approves the participatory approach around this text. In particular, we approve:

- the four objectives set out in Article 1.1,
- the strategy which consists in “considering electromagnetic pollution and its consequences as an integral part of a larger whole which includes the interactions between environment and health”.

On the other hand, the position of Robin des Toits is radically different from the one adopted in this report, when it comes to designating electrohypersensitivity as a pathology, and electrohypersensitive people as sick people.

The position of Robin des Toits has been exposed on many occasions and can be summarized as follows:

- electrohypersensitivity is a disability linked to exposure to electromagnetic waves of people who are sensitive, or even hypersensitive, to this exposure,
- this disability is generated by artificial electromagnetic waves,
- in extreme cases of electrohypersensitivity, this disability is such that the people who suffer from it need care, to support the provoked symptoms.

Of a person who fell down the stairs and broke his leg, we will not say that he is sick. However, this can be an obvious disability and of course requires care.

This position of Robin des Toits is based on six arguments developed below.

A factual argument: it is the environment, the electromagnetic pollution, which creates the disability. Leaving this polluted environment, the electrohypersensitive person no longer feels any symptoms, proof if it were needed that he/she is not sick.

An argument of causality: considering electrohypersensitivity as a disease amounts to considering that the problem resides in electrohypersensitive people, while it resides in those who implement the technologies that generate electromagnetic pollution. It is to give a blank check to the development of these technologies, by sending electrohypersensitive people back to their pseudo-disease.

A stigma argument: designating electrohypersensitive people as “sick” amounts to confining them to a category, to marginalizing them, when it is more than plausible that everyone is more or less sensitive to electromagnetic fields. This is all the more true as there is a tendency, maintained by manufacturers and the risk of which is underlined in the Report, to favor classification as mental illnesses (“irrational fears”). It has already happened in Germany and Italy.

An argument of social integration or non-exclusion: electrohypersensitive people do not want to be excluded from social life, they wish to be fully integrated into it, provided that society, laws and regulations give them the possibility, as with other people with other disabilities. Just as a building open to the public must be accessible to people with reduced mobility, it must be accessible to electrohypersensitive people.

A financial argument: recognition as a disability opens the way to financial aid, which is very useful for electrohypersensitive people who often lose their jobs and are forced to change their living environment.

An argument linked to the very purpose of our associations and their objectives: this question of the recognition of EHS brings us back to the even more fundamental question of what we are fighting for. For us, our *raison d'être* is to defend the entire population, declared electrohypersensitive or not, against invasive electromagnetic pollution. Consequently, our goal is to have the toxicity of this pollution officially recognized. The eventual recognition of electrohypersensitivity as a disease would be very counterproductive in this respect. It would easily allow the promoters of the technologies in question to maintain that they are only toxic for a well-identified and limited category of the population that will be treated. An obstacle that could hinder their activity and their future development projects would thus be removed.

All in all, presenting electrohypersensitivity as a pathology and electrohypersensitive people as sick appears to us to be inaccurate on a factual level and to only present disadvantages for the people concerned.

However, the Report resolutely takes the opposite position:

- either directly, explicitly, as in the whole development of the three-point medical approach a, b, c page 36, ultimately leading to appropriate structures, not to say centers.
- either indirectly, implicitly, voluntarily or not, as on page 44 of the report, where one option is to consider that "EHS is not a disease but only a disability", everything being in the "only", while of course the symptoms are taken care of. Or again, still on page 44, when one criticizes the recognition of functional disability, before becoming ill, while the disability recognition that currently exists in France is a valuable tool for people who are not yet ill.

For all the reasons set out above, Robin des Toits cannot fully associate itself with the text as it is in the version of April 16, 2023. We call for a gathering of associations around a project tackling to the causes of all the disorders induced by pollution, including electromagnetic pollution, at the health, environmental and societal levels. Electrohypersensitivity is not a cause, but a consequence of these pollutions, and it is not the only one.

The Board of Robin des Toits