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To: [DigitalConnectivity](#)
Subject: Consultation on the Digital Connectivity Strategy - [REDACTED]
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SUBMISSION ON THE DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY STRATEGY

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission regarding the Digital Connectivity Strategy. I am very worried about the Strategy for various reasons both personally and for the wider society. My main worry is for my personal health as the Strategy focuses on the enablement of the physical telecommunications infrastructure and services and delivery of targets as set out in 'Harnessing Digital – The Digital Ireland Framework'. This framework aims to facilitate the development of SMART cities and other communities and to cover all populated areas by 5G by 2030. This is a frightening prospect for me as I suffer from electromagnetic hypersensitivity (EHS). It means I already can not tolerate the non-ionising radiation from mobile phones and other wireless devices as it gives me severe headaches. If 5G small cell antennae are installed in my neighbourhood and surrounding area it will make my life a living hell. 5G is much more powerful than the already existing generations of wireless technology. There is a huge volume of evidence on the harmful effects of electromagnetic radiation and for example, the Bioinitiative Report reviewed thousands of peer reviewed scientific papers and found that even at low levels, they can cause adverse effects.

https://bioinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/pdfs/sec01_2012_summary_for_public.pdf

Even our own Oireachtas Committee in 2005 made a series of recommendations that would make the use of technology safer in Ireland:

http://archive.oireachtas.ie/2005/REPORT_20050600_2.html

And the World Health Organisation and International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) in 2011 classified all Electromagnetic Fields/Radio Frequency (EMF/RF/Wi-Fi) used to power modern technology and emitted by masts/antennae and technological devices, as a Class 2B Carcinogen.

http://www.iarc.fr/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/pr208_E.pdf

I am very worried also about the copper switch-off mentioned in the Strategy as this appears to suggest a possible phasing out of landlines. As mentioned above, I can not use a mobile phone and rely on my landline to make phone calls. The loss of a landline would make me even more isolated than I already am. Landlines are vital not just for EHS sufferers but also elderly and other vulnerable people who need them for various reasons including difficulty using mobile phones and for use with an emergency response system in case of accident or emergency. A VOIP internet-based system would be totally unreliable in case of a power cut.

The people behind the Digital Connectivity Strategy need to examine the planning legislation which facilitates the proliferation of telecommunications masts in highly inappropriate areas such as next to homes and schools. The EU's European Electronic Communications Code would provide even more sweeping exemptions to the industry and facilitate the widespread installation of small cell 5G, Wi-Fi or any wireless antennae without public consent. Circular Letter PL 01/2018 from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage provides for certain exemptions to works undertaken by telecommunications companies, including that small cell antennae may be attached "to smaller structures including electricity poles, telegraph poles, lamp posts, lighting structures, flag poles, CCTV poles, phone kiosks and bus shelters".

<https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/35bd3-circular-pl-012018-amendments-to-the-exempted-development-provisions-in-the-planning-and-development-regulations/>

This and other exemptions for the telecommunications industry such as the Section 254 licence and Class 31 under the Planning and Development Act of 2000 as amended are far too wide-ranging and in practicality remove the need for planning permissions for masts in built-up areas, including schools and churches and on virtually any pole on any street.

I am not against the use of technology but it must be safe for everyone especially EHS sufferers and their needs must be taken into account in future planning in this area. We need safe/white zones free of electromagnetic fields to be set aside so that we have a safe place to live and work and we must have the continued right of access to landlines and wired technology instead of wireless. The current implementation of technology is not safe. Software and hardware changes can be incorporated into the

design of new electronics which would reduce and eliminate our exposure to electromagnetic radiation.
Wired internet is much safer, faster and more reliable.

