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Health Concerns Prompt Thousands of Swiss to Protest Expansion of 5G Networks

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Thousands of people gathered in front of the Swiss parliament building in Bern on September 21 to protest the expansion of 5G wireless technology across the country. The protestors fear that 5G technology could be harmful to people's health. The technology's critics in Switzerland argue that the electromagnetic radiation the new system emits poses health and environmental risks compared to previous generations of mobile technology.

"The fact that so many people turned out today is a strong sign against the uncontrolled introduction of 5G," Tamlin Schibler Ulmann, co-president of Frequenica, the group that organized the rally, was quoted by Techspot.

Telecom operators in Switzerland began the installation of new 5G-compatible antennas earlier this year and by July, 334 such antenna stations for 5G were operational across the country.

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5G, so-called because it is the "fifth generation" of cellular network technology, came into general use by late 2018. Because 5G technology employs millimeter waves, which have a shorter range than microwaves, previously used, the cells — the range from each cell tower — are limited to smaller size. Millimeter wave antennas are also smaller than the large antennas used in previous cellular networks, so the signals are poorly transmitted through solid materials. This will require additional antennas to be placed closer together, nearly every 10 to 12 houses in urban areas, and increase exposure to radio frequency electromagnetic fields (RF-EMF).

While the science concerning the potential harmful effects of such exposure has not been settled, since the technology is too new to have been thoroughly studied, many people nevertheless are concerned over 5G's health risks.

Health concerns related to radiation from cell phone towers and cell phones are not new, even related to the older technology. Although electromagnetic hypersensitivity has not been scientifically recognized, effects such as headaches have been claimed to result from 4G and Wi-Fi.

On August 8, FCC Chairman Ajit Pai shared with his colleagues a proposal that would "continue to ensure the health and safety of workers and consumers of wireless technology."

"The FCC sets radiofrequency limits in close consultation with the FDA and other health agencies. After





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a thorough review of the record and consultation with these agencies, we find it appropriate to maintain the existing radiofrequency limits, which are among the most stringent in the world for cell phones,” Fai’s statement quoted Julius Knapp, chief of the FCC’s Office of Engineering and Technology.

Of course, those who are skeptical of statements from federal agencies about their wellbeing may not be reassured by such statements. Since the technology is too new to have been thoroughly studied, it is too early to have determined if it has any negative health effects.

As was noted in an August 29 article about this subject in *The New American*: “While 5G has certainly not been ‘proven’ to be harmful to the general population, since it is just now being implemented, it appears that concerns over 5G’s health risks are not unfounded.”

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Related article:

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Warren Mass has served The New American since its launch in 1985 in several capacities, including marketing, editing, and writing. Since retiring from the staff several years ago, he has been a regular contributor to the magazine. Warren writes from Texas and can be reached at wmass@thenewamerican.com



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