

# **EXECUTIVE REPORT EMF EXPOSURE LIMITS & RISK COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES**

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27<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Executive Briefing Meeting

# Discussion flow...

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- Structure of the study
- Response variations
- Introduction to the report
- Recommendations

# Structure of the Questionnaire

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Brief reminder of the structure of the study

- **EMF regulations**
  - Occupational
  - General public
  - Applicable Guidelines, Directive and EC recommendation
- **Approval procedures**
  - Multiple or single
  - General challenges
- **EMF assessment**
  - Availability of the stds
  - Involvement in the development procedure
- **Public acceptability**
- **Risk communication**
  - Risk communication plan
  - Faced challenges
  - Expected role of WHO

# Response's variations

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- Responses were mainly detailed and clear, many thanks for this!
- Some countries left some questions unanswered
- Some countries provided more useful details than expected
- One question which afterwards we thought could be useful should industry players play a more active role in communicating about emerging technologies with public whether with regards to 5G this responsibility were carried out in an acceptable way

# Introduction to the report

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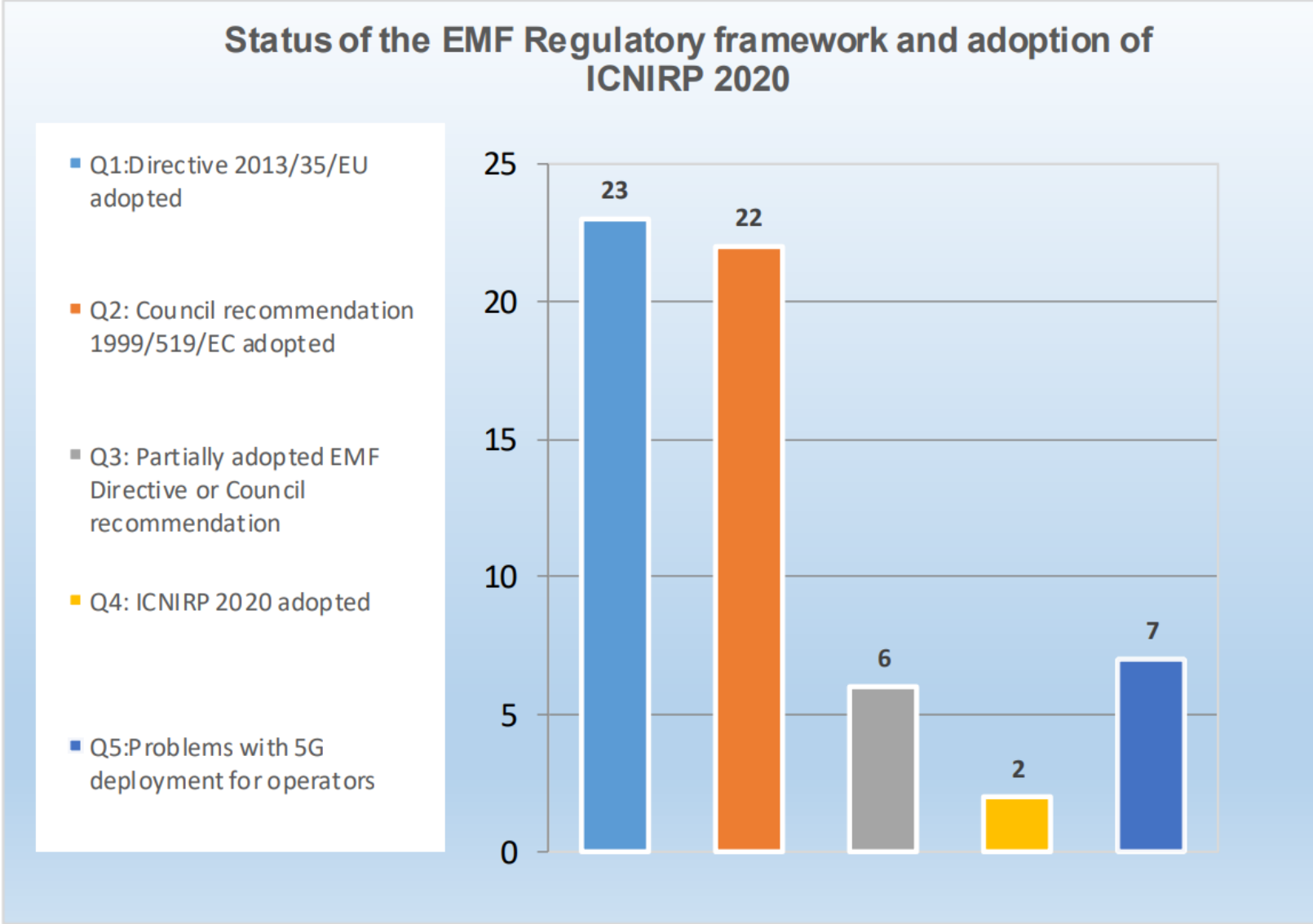
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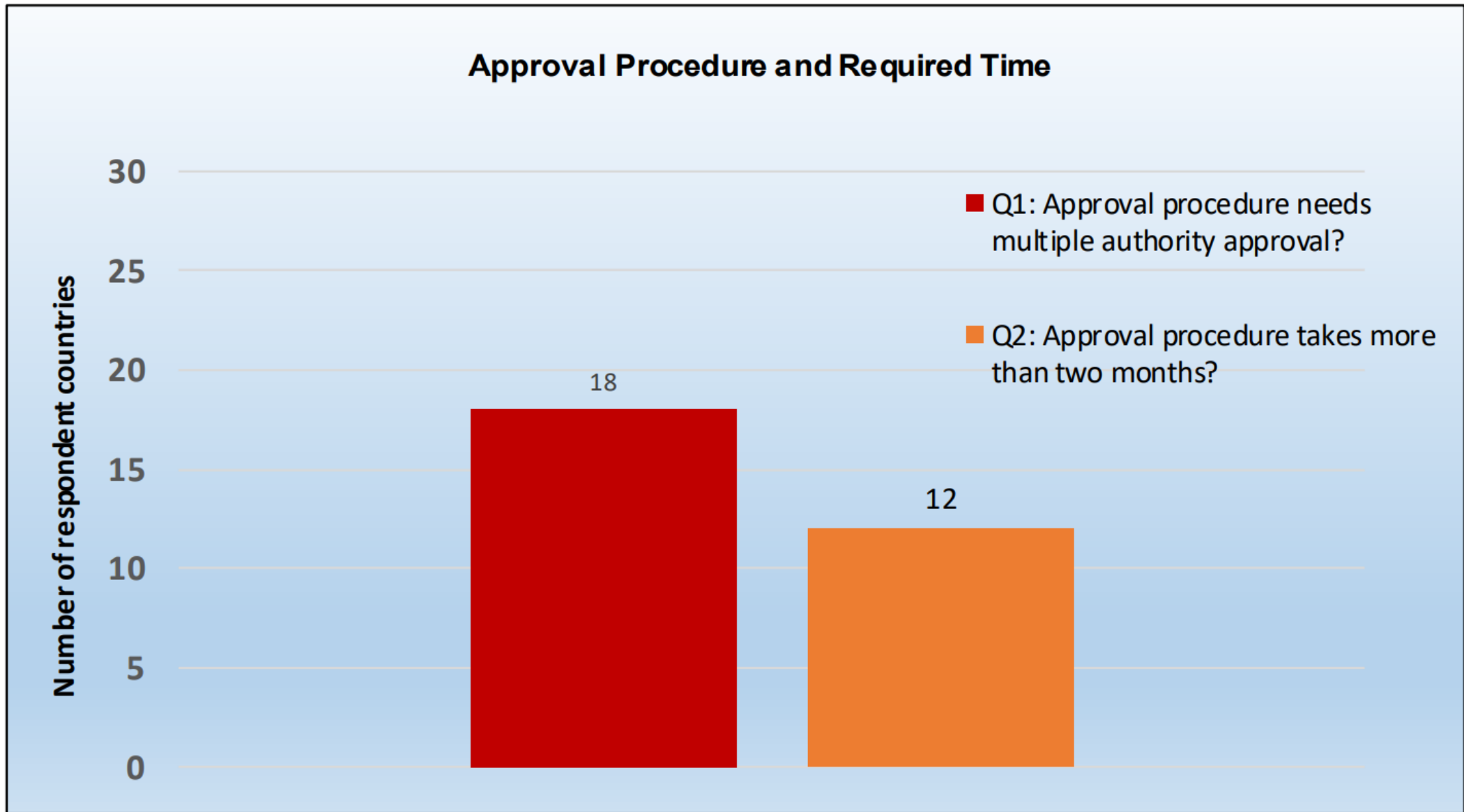
# What is out of scope of this report

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- Any recommendation regarding EMF exposure levels or other risk management tools, including application of the precautionary principle, is beyond the scope of the Regional Assessment.
- Nor will this report fill any gap in knowledge, notably on long-term exposure or make any statement on biological effects or health effects of exposure to EMF. This report merely aims at taking stock of some selected and basic aspects of national regulations on the protection from EMF and of the risk communication strategies adopted by institutions.



**Figure 1.** Response from 29 countries showing how many have adopted the European EMF directive 2013/35/EU and 1999 Council Recommendation concerning EMF exposure limits for workers and general public.

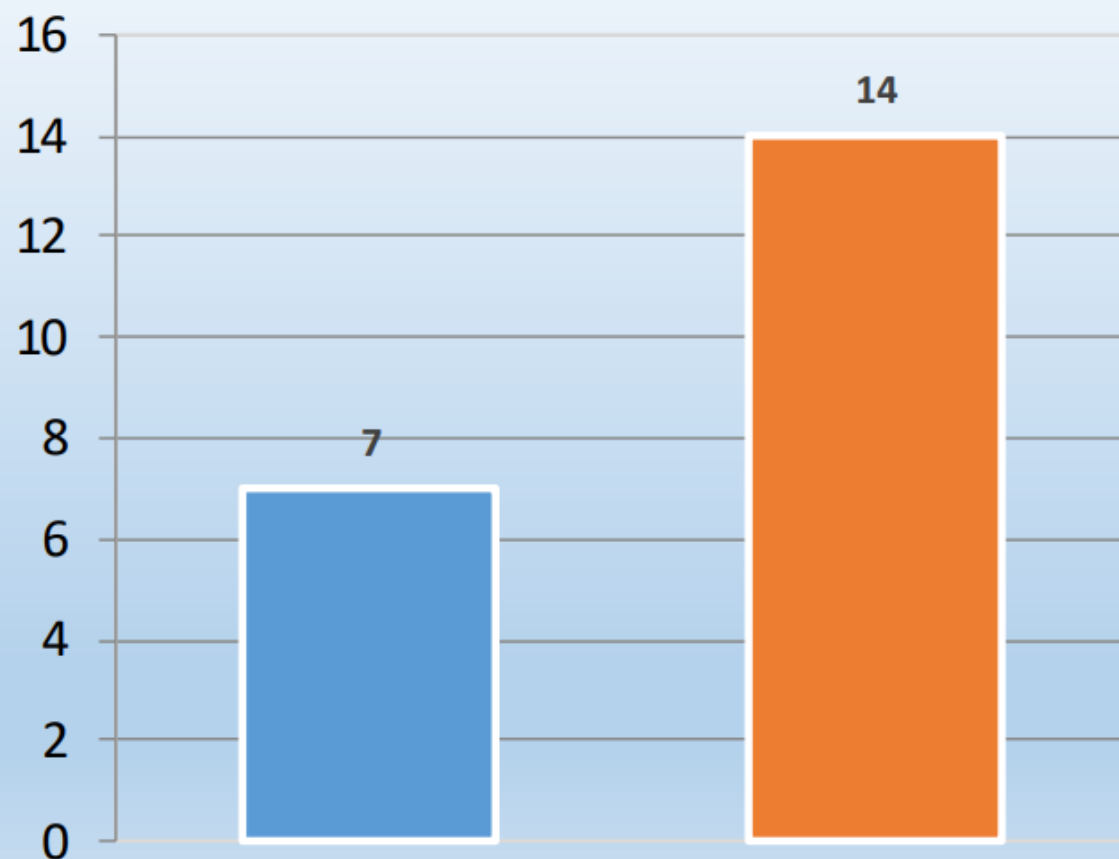


**Figure 2.** Response from 27 countries showing if multiple permits required and also how long the approval procedure for the cellular antennas requires.

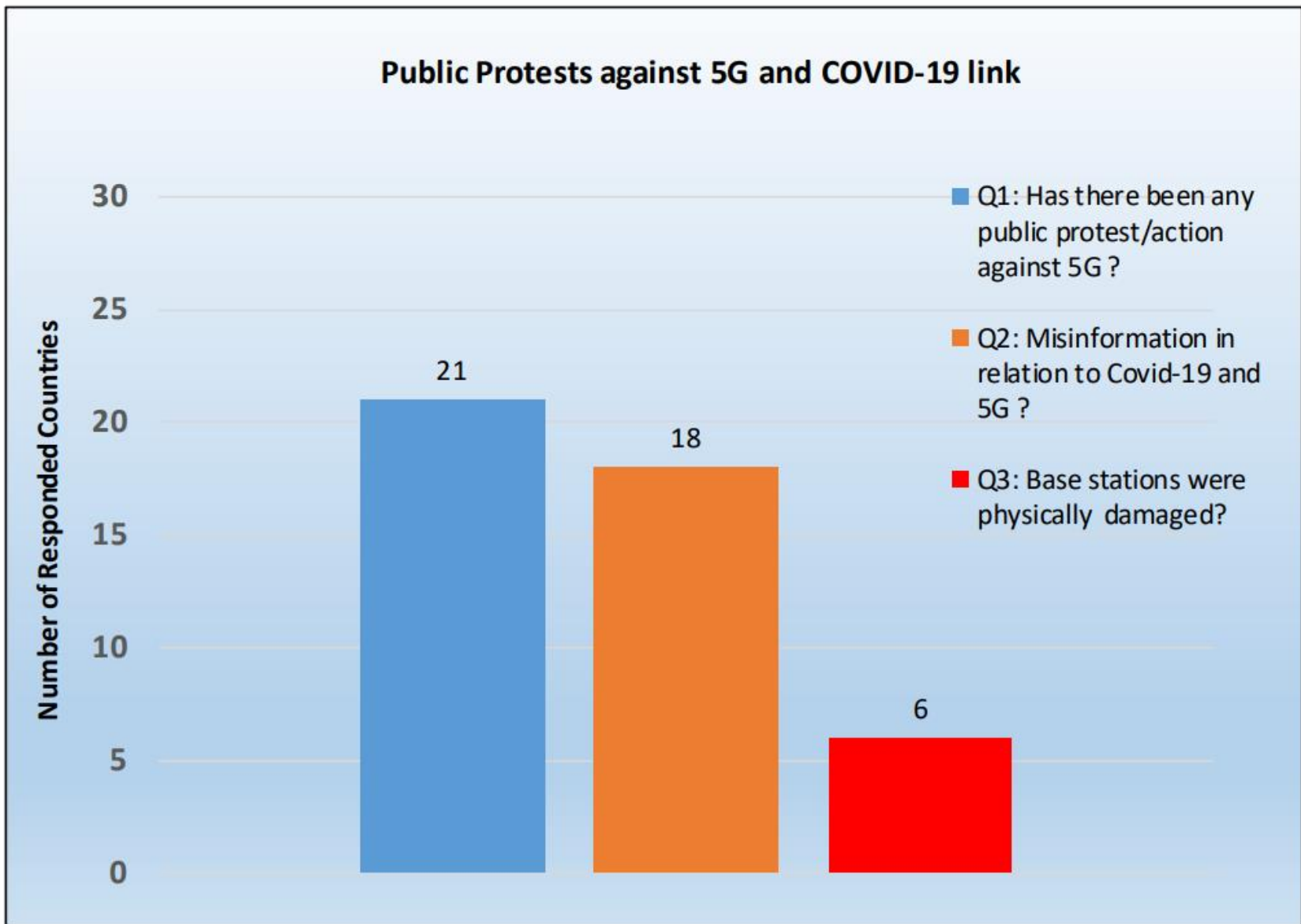


## Challenges of Availability of Compliance Assessment Standards

- Q1: Challenges on availability of EMF Compliance Assessment Standards
- Q2: Awareness of ongoing relevant standards activities



**Figure 3.** Response from 29 countries showing the number of countries having challenges with the availability of compliance assessment standards. Only half of the countries are aware of the relevant standards activities.



**Figure 4.** Response from 29 countries showing number of countries that have had protests against 5G technologies, physical damage to the base stations and also number of countries that has reported incidents relating COVID-19 to 5G technologies.<sup>8</sup>

# EMF Regulations

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**Recommendation 1:** Taking into account the fact that the revised ICNIRP 2020 Guidelines include changes for the mmWave spectrum, and the fact that 5G networks using mmWave spectrum will be soon ready to deploy, it is recommended that European Commission starts the process of revision of the EMF Directive 2013/35/EU of the European Parliament and Council recommendation 1999/519/EC to reflect the main changes of the ICNIRP 2020 Guidelines.

# Approval procedures prior to building / planning permission

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**Recommendation 2:** In support for efficient deployment of 5G, simplified procedures and shorter approval time is needed. Since other obstacle for installation of antennas/radio base stations seems to be related to the concerns with EMF exposure limits and public acceptability putting pressure on regulators, active communication between regulators and public is crucial.

# Assessment of EMF limits

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**Recommendation 3:** Regulators are recommended to assign a regulatory officer in their office to the major international Standards Development Organizations, to engage in the standardization process and specifically follow up equipment compliance assessment standards progress, get first-hand information and reflect their concerns and needs to the relevant committees.

# Acceptability by the public

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**Recommendation 4: a)** Regulatory bodies should follow evidence-based EMF protection policies.

**b)** Authorities should be more proactive in conveying information to the general public, including across the Internet and social media where misinformation spreads.

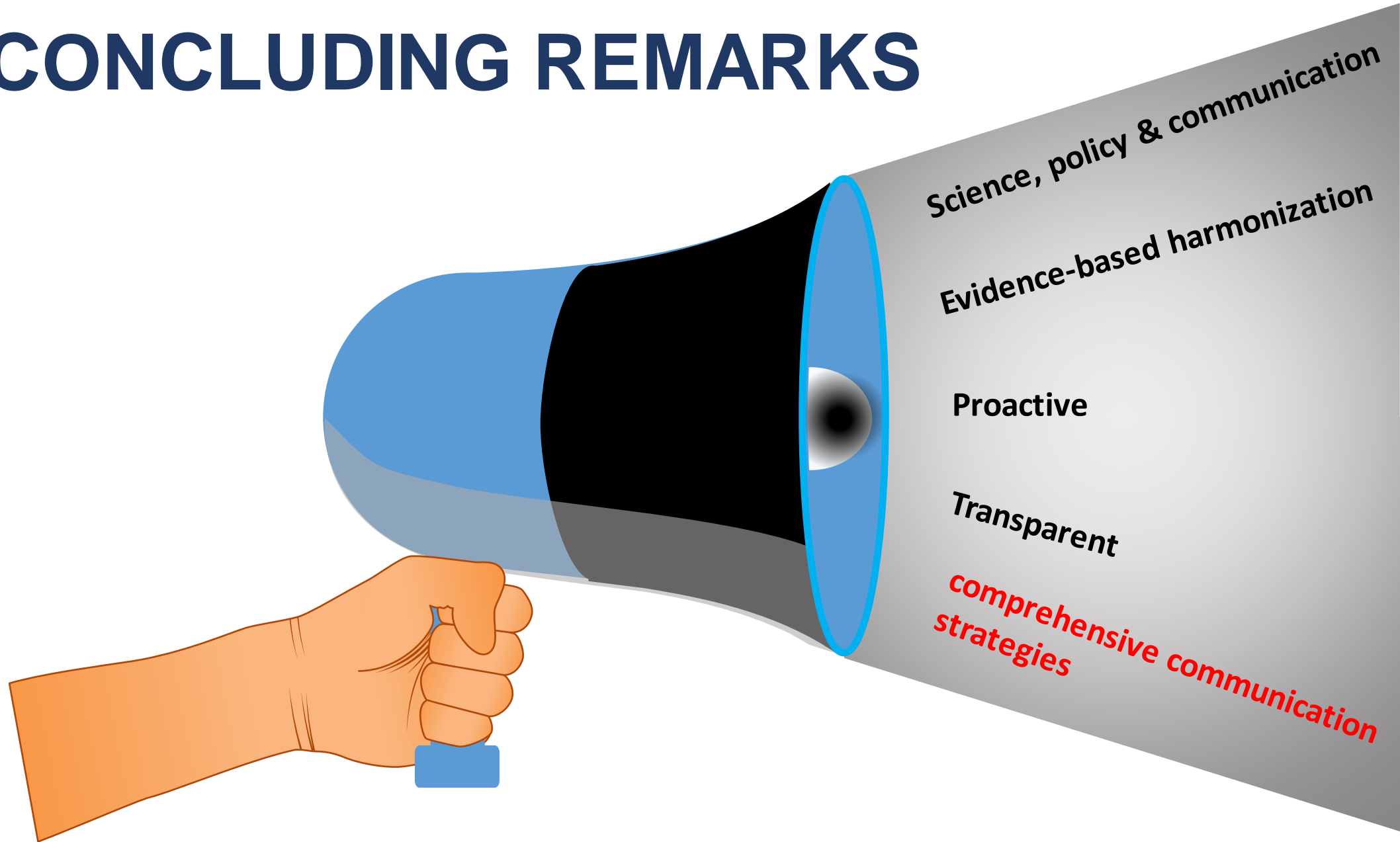
**c)** Particular attention should be given by authorities to the interplay between misinformation on EMF and other domains, including Covid-19.

# Risk Communication

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**Recommendation 5:** For the regulators it is crucial to establish a dialogue between all stakeholders concerning the deployment of 5G networks. The ingredients for effective dialogue include consultation with stakeholders, leveraging live or periodic monitoring of EMF levels, implementing capacity building activities, acknowledgement of scientific uncertainty, and a fair and transparent decision-making process. Failure to do these things can result in loss of trust and flawed decision-making.

# CONCLUDING REMARKS



Science, policy & communication

Evidence-based harmonization

Proactive

Transparent

**comprehensive communication strategies**



**Thank you for your  
attention!**