



On asbestos there is no right or left! Vote for zero cancer! Vote for 1000 fibres/m³!

On 27 September, the EMPL Committee will vote the legislative report on Protecting Workers from Asbestos. There is a vital question open for decision:

- Most groups have tabled a compromise for a new Occupational Exposure Limit (OEL) to be set at 1000 fibres/m³ (0,001 fibres/cm³).
- An alternative proposal tabled by EPP and ECR seeks to delete a concrete recommendation.

The EFBWW urges the European Parliament to adopt a firm position to protect the health of workers and calls for the occupational exposure limit to be set at 1000 fibres/m³ (0,001 fibres/cm³).

The OEL determines the number of asbestos fibres per m³ air allowed in workplaces without dedicated protection measures. The current EU minimum standard is set at 100,000 fibres/m³ (0.1 fibres/cm³). Scientific and medical experts agree: This OEL is by far outdated, and instead, an OEL of 1000 fibres/m³ (0,001 fibres/cm³) is urgently needed to effectively protect workers from cancer.

EFBWW general secretary, Tom Deleu: “We cannot turn our backs on construction workers, firefighters, miners, and workers in cleaning or waste disposal, who are regularly exposed to asbestos. On asbestos there is no right versus left! There is only a vote for zero cancer! The vote for 1000 fibres/m³!”

A Commission proposal to update the Asbestos at Work Directive 2009/148/EC is expected for 2022. This proposal will be the starting point for the negotiations between the two European legislators Council and the European Parliament.

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The European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW) is the European Workers' Industry Federation for the following sectors: building, woodworking, forestry and allied industries and trades. The EFBWW has 76 affiliated unions in 35 countries and represents a total of 1,500,000 members.