



## EMPL MEPs ready to protect workers from asbestos! Now it is time for the European Parliament and Commission to do the same

The EFBWW welcomes that, in today's vote on the legislative report on Protecting Workers from Asbestos (the "Villumsen report"), the EMPL Committee called for a concrete asbestos Occupational Exposure Limit (OEL) of 1000 fibres/m<sup>3</sup>. The EFBWW now calls on the European Parliament to swiftly adopt the legislative report in plenary and on the Commission to make legislative proposals in line with the EP demands.

EFBWW general secretary, Tom Deleu: "This is a very important first victory for all the construction workers, firefighters, miners, and workers in cleaning or waste disposal, who are regularly exposed to asbestos. The deadly heritage of asbestos and cancer cannot be disregarded. We are pleased that the MEPs in the EMPL Committee are ready to protect workers from asbestos."

The EMPL MEPs have agreed on an ambitious report: They propose a European Strategy for the Removal of All Asbestos (ESRAA) with national asbestos removal programmes and public asbestos registries, support to homeowners, a revision of the EU Asbestos at Work Directive (AWD), better recognition and compensation for asbestos victims, and provisions for safe disposal of asbestos waste. All of this is in line with the EFBWW demands for better EU rules on asbestos.

Experts of the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH) alert that with the outdated OEL the EU risks to continue with some 90,000 asbestos deaths every year. In EU 28, 3.17 million people have died in the last 40 years as a consequence of inhaling asbestos fibres. Asbestos is still present in an estimated 35 million buildings in the EU – buildings that will be renovated or demolished by workers in the course of the EU's Building Renovation Wave to reach the climate targets.

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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.