



TEXTS ADOPTED

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The need to reduce work-related fatalities

European Parliament resolution of 21 May 2026 on the need to reduce work-related fatalities (2025/3046(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 151, 153 and 156 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
 - having regard to Council Directive 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work¹,
 - having regard to the EU strategic framework on health and safety at work 2021-2027,
 - having regard to its resolution of 10 March 2022 on a new EU strategic framework on health and safety at work post 2020²,
 - having regard to its resolution of 17 December 2025 with recommendations to the Commission on digitalisation, artificial intelligence and algorithmic management in the workplace – shaping the future of work³,
 - having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, in particular Article 31 thereof, which states that every worker has the right to working conditions which respect his or her health, safety and dignity,
 - having regard to Rule 136(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas health and safety at work is a basic pillar of European social policy and a key element in the protection of human dignity, workers' fundamental rights and fair and safe working conditions;
- B. whereas 3 298 fatal accidents at work and around 2,8 million non-fatal accidents resulting in at least four days' absence from work were recorded in the EU in 2023; whereas these statistics continue to highlight serious problems in high-risk sectors with high incidence of occupational accidents, such as construction, transport, manufacturing

¹ OJ L 183, 29.6.1989, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/1989/391/oj>.

² OJ C 347, 9.9.2022, p. 122.

³ OJ C, C/2026/2154, 6.5.2026, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2026/2154/oj>.

and agriculture;

- C. whereas young workers have an increased vulnerability to serious accidents at work compared with their older colleagues, with rates more than 40 % higher than those of more experienced workers, reflecting their increased vulnerability due to limited work experience, insufficient training and lower awareness of workplace hazards; whereas they may be exposed to poor working conditions that can lead to occupational diseases during their youth or later in life;
- D. whereas it is important to apply a gender perspective to occupational safety and health, as workers may be differently exposed to, and more vulnerable to, various types of substances or risks depending on their gender;
- E. whereas workers in sectors such as health and social care are exposed to violence and psychosocial risks, and also face significant and often underestimated risks to their safety; whereas violence and bullying at work can cause serious psychological harm and have been associated with an increased risk of mental health issues; whereas these phenomena are reported in health and care services in particular;
- F. whereas in recent years, several Member States have reported a significant increase in attacks against public authority officials performing law enforcement duties, as well as emergency rescue workers; whereas certain professional activities, in particular those related to the exercise of public authority and the legitimate use of force, are characterised by structural and permanent exposure to the risk of serious physical injury or death resulting from deliberate acts of violence by third parties; whereas threats and deliberate acts of violence against emergency rescue workers, such as paramedics and firefighters, are a rather new phenomenon; whereas such exposure, involving deliberate acts by third parties, distinguishes these professions from other forms of hazardous work and justifies specific recognition of the nature of the risks involved;
- G. whereas cross-border and migrant workers, including workers from third countries, are particularly vulnerable to labour exploitation and forms of illegality linked to work; whereas research shows that globally, such workers face an approximately 70 % higher risk of work-related fatal accidents compared with local workers⁴, and that for the EU, the risk also remains significantly higher, at around 65 %, particularly for workers from eastern Europe; whereas third-country nationals face a three times greater risk of work-related accidents and it is estimated that only about one in five accidents is reported, highlighting a serious underestimation of the phenomenon and a need to strengthen protection and enforcement mechanisms and comply with legality and the dignity of work;
- H. whereas a significant number of work-related fatalities are caused by occupational diseases, which are too often underestimated, under-recognised and under-reported, in particular because of inequalities in access to care, prevention and follow-up, the inadequate traceability of exposure, and the latency of certain medical conditions; whereas under-reporting and insufficient recognition of occupational diseases undermine the effectiveness of prevention policies, compensation mechanisms and

⁴ See, for example, Lau et al., 'Workplace mortality risk and social determinants among migrant workers', *The Lancet Public Health*, Volume 9, Issue 11, 2024, E935-E949, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667\(24\)00226-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667(24)00226-3).

enforcement systems;

- I. whereas cancer is the leading cause of work-related fatalities in the EU; whereas workers may be exposed in the workplace to a combination of substances that further increase health risks; whereas exposure to factors such as radiation, work-related stress, inadequate work organisation and working conditions has been linked to occupational cancers; whereas cases of skin cancer, one of the most widespread occupational diseases, are increasing, while only a limited proportion of these cases are recognised as cases of occupational disease;
- J. whereas, in the context of the updated Commission recommendation on occupational diseases, adopted on 28 November 2022⁵, it was underlined that it is important to support workers who are exposed to occupational risks and families who have lost their relatives because of such exposure, including through the provision of adequate assistance;
- K. whereas the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases is a cornerstone of European social policy and of the right of free movement of workers; whereas this is not only a legal obligation stemming from EU law, in particular Directive 89/391/EEC, and from national legal systems, but also a strategic social and economic investment that can generate positive and lasting effects for workers, companies and communities as a whole by helping to reduce risks, limit the socio-economic costs of accidents at work and ensure the overall improvement of the quality and sustainability of working environments;
- L. whereas the specific training provided to volunteer firefighters, including training in first aid, risk assessment, evacuation procedures and fire prevention, has been shown to enhance workplace safety by enabling prompt and effective response to serious incidents and by fostering a culture of risk prevention, thereby contributing to reducing the severity of workplace accidents; whereas under Directive 89/391/EEC, employers have a legal obligation to implement risk assessments, provide training, and ensure measures for first aid, firefighting and evacuation, and supporting the skills of volunteer firefighters in the workplace can complement these obligations and further strengthen occupational safety;
- M. whereas labour inspections play a crucial role in ensuring the effective implementation of occupational safety and health policies at national, regional and local levels and are essential for preventing labour exploitation and unsafe working conditions;
- N. whereas deep-seated changes in the world of work – including the spread of non-standard forms of work, precarious work, the increasing share of young workers employed in insecure and high-risk jobs, the ageing workforce, digitalisation, the introduction of new technologies, and globalisation – have resulted in greater psychosocial risks, work-related stress and new occupational health challenges, necessitating broader and mainstreamed prevention strategies;
- O. whereas psychosocial risks at work, such as chronic stress, burnout and harassment, are

⁵ Commission Recommendation (EU) 2022/2337 of 28 November 2022 concerning the European schedule of occupational diseases, OJ L 309, 30.11.2022, p. 12, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reco/2022/2337/oj>.

a major and growing driver of ill health and work-related fatalities and are often underestimated, under-reported and insufficiently addressed;

- P. whereas a psychologically supportive working environment is essential for workers' mental health and physical well-being; whereas psychosocial risks may arise from inadequate work design and from poor organisational or managerial practices and may lead to stress, anxiety, burnout and depression; whereas prolonged exposure to adverse psychosocial working conditions is associated with serious consequences for mental health, including chronic diseases and an increased risk of suicide;
- Q. whereas the increasing use of artificial intelligence (AI) and algorithmic management systems in the workplace may intensify the pace of work, lead to a higher workload, increase psychosocial risks, undermine workers' autonomy and create new risks to occupational safety and health;
- R. whereas climate change, including rising temperatures, more frequent and intense heatwaves, and other extreme weather events, poses a growing and multifaceted risk to workers' health, safety and working conditions across the EU; whereas prolonged exposure to heat can have serious health consequences, such as heat exhaustion, heat stroke and other heat-related illnesses, while also increasing the likelihood of fatigue, reduced concentration and impaired decision-making and thus of work-related accidents, requiring targeted preventive and protective measures;
- S. whereas effective prevention strategies, awareness-raising measures, well-being initiatives and the promotion of a strong occupational safety and health culture are essential to preventing serious accidents and occupational diseases and to reducing work-related fatalities; whereas such preventive approaches not only protect workers' health and safety, but also generate economic benefits for companies and for society as a whole;
- T. whereas there is a need to step up the efforts to achieve the objectives set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Target 8.8: 'Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment';
- U. whereas in its resolution of 10 March 2022, it welcomed the introduction of the 'Vision Zero' approach to occupational accidents and diseases, calling for an ambitious roadmap to reduce work-related accidents and eradicate fatalities at work and occupational diseases, as well as for strengthened preventive measures and the enforcement of existing legislation on occupational safety and health; whereas the objective of zero fatalities should be regarded not only as a political objective, but also as an ethical and social duty towards all workers;
- V. whereas the right of every worker to a safe and healthy working environment must be fully guaranteed through effective measures to prevent occupational accidents and diseases, as well as through regular controls and genuinely dissuasive sanctions, backed by adequate resources for the competent authorities; whereas non-compliance with occupational safety and health legislation is a core part of labour exploitation and undermines the achievement of the objective of zero fatalities, making it essential to ensure rigorous and effective enforcement of existing legislation, including by strengthening labour inspectorates and their control and sanctioning tools;

- W. whereas the effective implementation of the ‘Vision Zero’ approach requires measurable actions and targets, a comprehensive approach covering all work-related accidents and diseases, the development and promotion of a culture of prevention, and adequate resources;
- X. whereas trade unions and workers’ representatives play an important role in protecting occupational safety and health, including with regard to monitoring compliance and supporting the effective implementation of existing rules; whereas, however, gaps persist in the scope of Directive 89/391/EEC, particularly with regard to certain categories of workers, including domestic workers, who are partially or wholly excluded from protection, thereby undermining the principle of equal protection, in particular for women, third-country nationals and other groups in vulnerable situations, making it necessary to ensure an adequate and uniform level of protection;
- Y. whereas the current EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2021-2027 is nearing expiry; whereas renewed political commitment and an updated, more ambitious framework will be necessary to accelerate progress towards the objective of zero fatalities;
- Z. whereas the remembrance of victims of accidents at work is an act of collective memory and moral responsibility that helps to maintain a close public focus on the value of human life, strengthen a culture of prevention and renew the commitment of European and national institutions to the objective of zero fatalities at work;
- AA. whereas collective memory must translate into accountability, including through reliable reporting; whereas it often remains particularly difficult to record all work-related accidents, including fatal accidents; whereas it is necessary to ensure that all workers benefit from adequate levels of social protection;
- AB. whereas the tragedy at the Bois du Cazier mine in Marcinelle on 8 August 1956, which claimed the lives of 262 miners, many of whom were citizens of what are now EU Member States, stands as a lasting symbol of the struggles for decent work, solidarity and social justice in Europe;
- AC. whereas, owing to the large number of European nationalities among the victims, the Marcinelle tragedy was the first collective disaster in a Europe that, from that point onwards, has taken a fraternal approach to crucial issues such as work, safety, justice and dignity;
- AD. whereas the memory of the Marcinelle tragedy perpetuates awareness of the fundamental value of the free movement of workers, their rights and their safety, which are priorities for an effective and competitive social Europe;
- AE. whereas other past work-related tragedies, including the Marie mine fire of 31 May 1892, the Courrières mining disaster of 10 March 1906, the Luisenthal mining disaster of 7 February 1962, the 1968 Aliveri mine disaster, the 1976 explosion at the Lapua Cartridge Factory in Finland, and the fatal explosion and fire at the Violanta factory in Greece in January 2026, are deeply rooted in the collective memory of various Member States and serve as a constant reminder of the urgent need for effective policies on prevention and protection for workers;

1. Calls for the establishment of a European Day in Remembrance of the Victims of Accidents at Work and for the Protection and Dignity of Workers, to be marked each year on 8 August, in memory of the tragedy at the Bois du Cazier mine in Marcinelle, which, owing to its intrinsically European nature – in that it involved workers from several countries that are now Member States of the EU – represents a common symbol of the struggles for decent work and the need for a common approach to the protection of health and safety at work;
2. Views the aims of this European Day as being to remember the victims of accidents at work and of occupational diseases, and to raise awareness among the general public, companies and institutions of the importance of prevention and safety at work and of decent working conditions; recalls, however, that awareness-raising should be linked to current health and safety risks, thereby genuinely contributing to the prevention of fatalities, accidents and diseases in the workplace; emphasises that this European Day can help to strengthen the commitment of the EU and the Member States to the ‘Vision Zero’ approach, in particular by promoting prevention at work, safe and decent work, training, awareness-raising on emerging risks, social dialogue and the effective enforcement of existing legislation, as well as by advancing EU action to address psychosocial risks, musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) and occupational health risks linked to extreme weather events in all sectors and in companies of all sizes; considers that this European Day would also be an annual opportunity to assess the progress made towards the ‘Vision Zero’ objective, identify gaps in prevention and enforcement, reinforce political accountability at national and EU levels and reaffirm the need for effective controls;
3. Stresses that this European Day, which would complement the ILO World Day for Safety and Health at Work on 28 April, should promote concrete initiatives in schools, workplaces and institutions, including awareness-raising campaigns, training programmes and exchanges of best practice on prevention, thereby strengthening a culture of safety across generations and sectors;
4. Emphasises that this European Day should help to strengthen the commitment of the EU and the Member States to the objective of the systematic and sustained eradication of work-related accidents, diseases and fatalities, in line with the ‘Vision Zero’ approach, in particular by promoting prevention at work, safe and decent work, training, awareness-raising on emerging risks, social dialogue and the effective enforcement of existing legislation;
5. Stresses the importance of strengthening workers’ rights to information, consultation and participation through the election of health and safety representatives and the adoption of collective agreements;
6. Underlines that achieving the objective of zero work-related fatalities requires strong cooperation between Member States, employers, social partners, labour inspectorates, research institutions and EU agencies; calls for enhanced exchange of best practice, data and prevention methodologies with the support of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA);
7. Calls on the Commission to assess and address the occupational safety and health risks associated with AI and algorithmic management systems, including work intensification, psychosocial strain, undue surveillance and the blurring of working time

boundaries; calls on the Commission and the Member States to recognise and address the emerging risks of fatalities and serious accidents linked to new forms of employment, including platform work and algorithmically managed work; stresses that workers engaged through digital labour platforms and those whose tasks, pace and performance are directed or evaluated by AI-based tools may face heightened occupational safety and health risks as a result of intensified work rhythms, abusive monitoring, insufficient transparency in algorithmic decision-making, including with regard to identifiable human contact points, and inadequate or insufficient information or training; stresses that the introduction of such technologies is subject to appropriate risk assessment, transparent worker information and consultation, and meaningful human oversight, in accordance with occupational safety and health legislation;

8. Calls on the Commission to comprehensively assess and anticipate the occupational safety and health risks stemming from climate-related factors, including heat stress, extreme weather events, air pollution, increased exposure to hazardous substances during renovation and infrastructure modernisation projects, and the emergence of new biological hazards; calls for preventive action to be stepped up on the basis of this assessment in the aim of strengthening resilience and preparedness within national occupational safety and health systems, including through early-warning mechanisms and sector-specific guidance for high-risk sectors such as construction, agriculture and transport, as well as for other affected sectors, including the emergency services; underlines the need to equip labour inspectorates and employers with practical EU-level guidance on managing heat at work and on other climate-related occupational risks;
9. Emphasises the need to recognise the effects of extreme heat and climate change as major occupational risk factors and calls on the Commission and the Member States to strengthen preventive, protective and adaptive workplace measures in order to reduce work-related accidents, occupational diseases and fatalities;
10. Calls on the Commission, the Council, civil society and the social partners to support the establishment and marking of the European Day as a civic commitment uniting institutions, businesses and citizens, including through initiatives to promote information, awareness-raising and practical prevention tools tailored to small and medium-sized enterprises and vulnerable workers and through the exchange of best practice for health and safety at work; stresses that such initiatives should specifically address psychosocial risks, risks related to heat and extreme working temperatures, risks linked to subcontracting chains and non-standard forms of work, and challenges affecting posted, seasonal workers and other cross-border workers, ensuring compliance with the principle of equal treatment and the effective application of host-country rules on occupational safety and health and social protection; recalls that excessively long working hours often result in fatigue and increase the risk of fatal work-related accidents;
11. Encourages the Member States to raise awareness among employers and workers of their responsibility to ensure their own safety and that of others, to promote first aid training to all employees, particularly in sectors with higher occupational risks, and to ensure that such training is regularly updated, widely accessible and integrated into workplace safety policies; stresses that employers bear primary responsibility for ensuring workers' health and safety, including through risk assessment, preventive measures, the provision of personal protective equipment, occupational health services, the effective implementation of occupational safety legislation, and the provision of

adequate information, instruction and training to employees; underlines the responsibility of employers to ensure the genuine involvement of employees and their representatives in developing workplace occupational safety and health processes, assessing risks and hazards, planning and monitoring measures, and carrying out preventive work;

12. Recalls that violence is a growing challenge in many workplaces, particularly in the service and healthcare sectors and for emergency rescue workers; insists on the need for measures designed to implement a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, harassment and other forms of workplace violence through the improvement and promotion of organisational and legislative support structures and through better incident reporting systems;
13. Calls on the Commission and EU-OSHA to use the European Day as an opportunity to disseminate up-to-date statistics, comparative analyses and evidence-based guidance on occupational safety and health, with a particular focus on psychosocial risks, non-standard forms of work, micro- and small enterprises and the most vulnerable groups of workers; calls, furthermore, on the Commission and EU-OSHA to publish a EU-wide snapshot and country files on occupational diseases and work-related fatalities, including indicators on prevention and controls (including labour inspections), in order to better guide public policies and strengthen accountability; further underlines the importance of systematically monitoring and analysing trends in working conditions, psychosocial risks, labour inspection capacity and compliance with occupational safety and health standards across Member States, with a view to strengthening prevention, transparency and upward convergence in working conditions throughout the EU;
14. Calls on the Commission, in cooperation with Eurostat and the Member States, to improve the collection, harmonisation and transparency of data on occupational accidents and diseases, including psychosocial risks and long-latency diseases, and to address under-reporting;
15. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure that responsibility for compliance with occupational safety and health legislation is clearly anchored at management level and broadly embedded within the organisation, including through effective prevention plans and worker participation; stresses that carrying out risk assessments contributes, in itself, to reducing the number of accidents;
16. Underlines the importance of regulatory occupational safety and health inspections in helping to achieve safe and healthy workplaces, while recognising that the inspections can be limited in their reach; calls on the Member States to strengthen labour inspectorates with permanent staff, adequate resources and institutional independence in order to ensure the effective implementation of occupational safety and health legislation and respond to the transformation of the world of work;
17. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to strengthen the enforcement of occupational safety and health legislation, including by ensuring adequate resources for labour inspectorates, improving cross-border cooperation and ensuring effective compliance, in particular in cases where gross negligence has led to serious injury or death; considers that in order for occupational safety and health rules to be credible and effective, they must be sufficiently dissuasive and proportionate;

18. Welcomes the Commission's evaluation report on the European Labour Authority (ELA), recognising its role in the effective enforcement of EU labour law and occupational safety and health rules, in particular in cross-border contexts and high-risk sectors, and reiterates the call on the Commission to strengthen the ELA's mandate in order to improve the enforcement of EU labour law and occupational safety and health; highlights the importance of ensuring concrete added value in support of national enforcement authorities, including through strengthened concerted and joint labour inspections and the possibility to contribute more effectively to identifying and tackling violations; stresses the need to promote greater alignment and simplification of rules on labour mobility and related control procedures, including through more uniform rules and more effective information exchange, in line with ELA guidance;
19. Calls on the Commission, on the basis of the priorities of the current EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2021-2027 and the experience gathered with it, to define a new strategic framework, under the Quality Jobs Roadmap, for 2028-2034; stresses that this new strategic framework should be clear, measurable and time-bound, should set out clear and new requirements, and should be aimed at reducing work-related accidents and fatalities, completing the transition towards zero fatalities at work, strengthening worker protection, particularly in high-risk sectors and for vulnerable groups, addressing emerging occupational risks, including those arising from new forms of work, digitalisation and psychosocial risks, and ensuring the adaptation of working conditions to extreme temperatures;
20. Welcomes the directives aimed at reducing the risks of carcinogen exposure and of other potentially fatal occupational diseases; notes that the prevention of fatal occupational diseases requires the development of exposure-related expertise both in workplaces and in occupational health services; recalls the importance of adequate resources, in workplaces, for identifying exposure risks and preventing them in collaboration with occupational health services, which can provide guidance on appropriate occupational safety and health measures; considers that workers at risk of exposure to substances that cause serious occupational diseases should have access to occupational health services and periodic health checks to monitor potential exposure; stresses that any comprehensive strategy to reduce in-work fatalities must explicitly address occupational cancer as a silent but leading cause of work-related fatalities, including through long-latency diseases resulting from prolonged exposure to carcinogens in the workplace; emphasises the need for improved EU-level data collection on occupational cancers in order to fully reflect the real scale of work-related fatalities;
21. Is concerned that posted workers, migrant workers and workers in subcontracting chains are exposed to disproportionate occupational safety and health risks, including the risk of fatal accidents, as a result of fragmented chains of responsibility, insufficient coordination and diluted accountability, particularly in high-risk sectors such as construction; calls on the Commission to assess whether the current occupational safety and health *acquis* sufficiently guarantees the effective implementation of minimum safety and health requirements throughout subcontracting chains and to propose legislative action where gaps are identified;
22. Invites the Member States to foster a culture of safety in occupational safety and health, particularly for young workers, by combining education and practical experience; considers that educational institutions should provide general information and training

on health and safety, while employers should ensure job-specific training, particularly during apprenticeships and traineeships;

23. Encourages the Member States to establish supportive frameworks facilitating the employment of volunteer firefighters, recognising the value of the skills acquired, notably in first aid, risk prevention, firefighting, the use of firefighting equipment and the organisation of evacuations, and in improving workplace safety, preventing occupational accidents and reducing the severity of such accidents while awaiting the arrival of the emergency services;
24. Underlines that micro-enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises often have limited administrative capacity, financial resources and specialised expertise; calls for comprehensive and targeted support measures to assist them in effectively identifying, preventing and managing occupational risks, work-related diseases and fatalities, including through simplified and user-friendly risk assessment tools, sector-specific guidance, practical prevention programmes, accessible training and support in complying with occupational safety and health obligations;
25. Calls on the Commission, in cooperation with the Member States and the social partners, to strengthen EU guidance on support for victims of occupational accidents and diseases and their families; further calls on the Commission to assess the possibility of developing recommendations aimed at promoting adequate support and compensation mechanisms for victims and their families, encouraging upward convergence of protection across the EU;
26. Calls on the Member States to ensure that all workers effectively benefit from occupational safety and health protection in line with national systems and practices, including platform workers, third-country nationals, and domestic workers employed in private households; invites the Member States and the social partners to promote the use of innovative solutions and best practice to prevent occupational accidents and work-related illnesses, including through initiatives such as the EU-OSHA Healthy Workplaces Good Practice Awards, which showcase effective strategies and technologies that can be implemented across sectors to improve occupational safety and health;
27. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.