



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND INCLUSION

The Director-General

Brussels
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Dear Ms Duriš Nicholsonová, dear Mr Villumsen,

Protecting people from the exposure to asbestos is very important, as asbestos is a known major carcinogen. Although its use is banned in the EU¹, there is a substantial legacy problem since it is still present in many older buildings that are likely to be renovated, adapted or demolished over the coming years. Many workers will therefore be at risk, and the Commission is addressing this both in Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and the EU strategic framework on health and safety at work 2021-2027.

We also follow with great interest the work by the European Parliament in this domain, in particular on your draft legislative own initiative report on 'Protecting workers from asbestos' (VILLUMSEN report – 2019/2482 (INL)). My services and several other Directorates-General have already engaged with relevant committees of the European Parliament to provide all the necessary information and we stay at your disposal for further exchanges on this topic.

An important step in improving the protection against asbestos at the work place is updating Directive 2009/148/EC. The Commission has already initiated the preparatory works for revising the occupational limit value for asbestos under this directive, with a proposal expected in 2022. We are currently consulting social partners on this initiative.

Given the level of scientific and technical knowledge required to identify measures ensuring adequate protection of workers while being practically feasible for companies, the Commission bases its proposals in this area on opinions developed by the Advisory Committee for Safety and Health at Work (ACSH). It would therefore be counterproductive if the final version of the Parliament's report on asbestos calls for a concrete limit value, and it would also undermine social partners' autonomy. It is essential that we follow the well-established procedures, involving Member States authorities and social partners when defining these occupational limit values.

¹ The manufacture, placing on the market and use of asbestos is banned in the EU through REACH Regulation. Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006

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Finally, I would also urge you to have further discussions and contacts with other Commission services to ensure a sound report in terms of scientific feasibility and impact.

I look forward to our continuous collaboration on this important file.

Yours sincerely,

p.o. 
Andriane Sukow
2025

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