

**Question for written answer E-002032/2026
to the Commission**

Rule 144

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Subject: Need to recognise cancers as occupational diseases of firefighters in the European Union

According to the WHO International Agency for Research on Cancer, occupational exposure as a firefighter is categorised as a Group 1 human carcinogen¹, as the performance of duties entails long-term and cumulative exposure to carcinogenic combustion substances, smoke particles and toxic gases, PFAS, as well as other chemicals from protective equipment and firefighting foams².

Research shows that cancer is the primary cause of death related to the profession of firefighter³, with firefighters subject to a 9 % higher cancer risk and 14 % higher death rate compared to the general population. Despite repeated calls by European and national trade unions for the institutional recognition of specific types of cancer as occupational diseases of firefighters and the need to establish a uniform framework for prevention, registration and protection, in many Member States, including Greece, the current institutional framework remains inadequate.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following:

1. Does it intend to update Recommendation (EU) 2022/2337⁴ on the European schedule of occupational diseases in order to strengthen prevention measures and the possibility of compensation for diseases linked to the occupational exposure of firefighters, as proposed by the European Parliament⁵?
2. What initiatives does it intend to take to create a common European framework for the protection, registration, prevention and support of firefighters and emergency workers in light of the health risks they face in the performance of their duties?

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¹ See <https://publications.iarc.who.int/615>. Based on international research, the IARC concludes that there is an increased incidence of prostate, testicular, kidney, bladder, lung and laryngeal cancer, as well as melanoma, mesothelioma, leukaemia and lymphoma, among firefighters compared with the general population.

² As a result, specific risk assessments, adequate protective measures, and targeted medical surveillance are necessary for these high-risk workers.

³ According to IAFF data, from 2002 to 2019, cancer was responsible for 66 % of the deaths of firefighters during their professional careers.

⁴ Commission Recommendation (EU) 2022/2337 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>).

⁵ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-10-2026-0100_EN.html