Question for oral answer O-000035/2026
to the Commission
Rule 142
Anthony Smith (The Left), Damien Carême (The Left), Mimmo Lucano (The Left), Rudi Kennes (The Left), Jonas Sjöstedt (The Left), Marie Toussaint (Verts/ALE), Mélissa Camara (Verts/ALE), Marina Mesure (The Left), Marianne Vind (S&D), Arash Saeidi (The Left), Danilo Della Valle (The Left), Pernando Barrena Arza (The Left), Elisabeth Grossmann (S&D), Martin Günther (The Left), Leila Chaibi (The Left), Lynn Boylan (The Left), Estelle Ceulemans (S&D), Rima Hassan (The Left), Majdouline Sbai (Verts/ALE), Hanna Gedin (The Left), Maria Ohisalo (Verts/ALE), Özlem Demirel (The Left), Emma Fourreau (The Left), Younous Omarjee (The Left), Konstantinos Arvanitis (The Left), Benedetta Scuderi (Verts/ALE), Cristina Guarda (Verts/ALE), Manon Aubry (The Left), Carolina Morace (The Left), Mario Furore (The Left), Nikos Pappas (The Left), Dario Tamburrano (The Left), Martin Schirdewan (The Left), Irene Montero (The Left), Anja Hazekamp (The Left), Kathleen Funchion (The Left)

Subject: Climate change, public health and the world of work: for a directive on maximum working temperatures

In June 2026, Europe experienced its second heatwave in a month: in France, 24 June was the hottest day on record. The impact that these heatwaves are having on health and society is a direct consequence of climate change.

Heatwaves have become the leading cause of climate mortality in Europe: the WHO reports that more than 175 000 people die from heat-related causes in Europe every year, and nearly 95% of the deaths from extreme climate events are due to heatwaves. Workers are paying a heavy price: according to the ILO, heat at work injured more than 80 000 people in the EU in 2020, and heat-related occupational mortality has jumped by 42% since 2000.

However, the EU does not set any binding maximum working temperature: Framework Directive 89/391/EEC does not address heat-related risk and the EU-OSHA guidelines are still optional. Only a European response will protect all workers.

In light of the above:

1. Will the Commission bring forward a directive setting binding maximum working temperatures, based on the WBGT index, as an integral part of climate adaptation?

2. How will it tie this in with the European Climate Law, the adaptation strategy and a just transition, so that no one is sacrificed in the name of – or because of a lack of – climate action?

3. Will it guarantee the right to stop work without penalty in the event of a serious risk, and ensure that preventative measures (breaks, hydration, shade, adjusted working hours) are put in place, particularly for workers in precarious jobs?

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