

EN

E-002873/2024

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu
on behalf of the European Commission
(7.2.2025)

1. and 3. EU law sets out minimum requirements in the social field. The Working Time Directive¹ protects workers' safety and health by laying down minimum requirements on working time. The Directive notably guarantees workers 11 consecutive hours of daily rest and a weekly rest period of 24 hours plus the 11 hours of daily rest; any derogations must comply with strict conditions. It also limits weekly working time, including overtime, to an average of 48 hours for each 7-day period.

Member States may adopt and maintain provisions or permit the application of collective agreements more favourable to the protection of the safety and health of workers than Directive 2003/88/EC or other EU directives setting minimum requirements in the social field.

The Commission does not have any evidence that the Greek legislation referred to by the Honourable Member breaches the provisions of Directive 2003/88/EC.

2. The Seveso III Directive² sets obligations both to competent authorities and operators to prevent and control major-accident hazards³. Member States must ensure that operators are obliged to take all necessary measures to prevent major accidents and to limit their consequences for human health and the environment, and to demonstrate to the competent authorities, at any time, that this has been done, notably in case of inspections. The Directive makes competent authorities responsible for ensuring compliance with it, and for the operator to act to prevent and control major accidents.

In particular, the operator must draw up an internal emergency plan and provide necessary information for the competent authority to be able to draw up an external emergency plan⁴. It must also draw up a major-accident prevention policy⁵ and produce a safety report⁶.

¹ Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003 concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time, OJ L 299, 18.11.2003, p. 9-19 - <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2003/88/oj>

² Directive 2012/18/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2012 on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances, amending and subsequently repealing Council Directive 96/82/EC, OJ L 197, 24.7.2012, p. 1-37 - <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2012/18/oj>

³ Article 5 of Directive 2012/18/EU.

⁴ Article 12 of Directive 2012/18/EU.

⁵ Article 8 of Directive 2012/18/EU.

⁶ Article 10 of Directive 2012/18/EU.