

EN

E-000403/2026

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu
on behalf of the European Commission
(9.3.2026)

The minimum requirements set by the Transparent and Predictable Working Conditions¹, Work-life Balance², and the Working Time³ Directives give specific form to fundamental rights enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights⁴. The Framework Directive 89/391/EEC⁵ and the related EU Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Directives set minimum requirements for the health and safety protection of workers. They require, in particular, that the employer evaluates all occupational risks and puts in place preventive and protective measures. The primary responsibility for properly enforcing national legislation transposing EU Directives lies with national authorities⁶. Pursuant to Article 4 of the Framework Directive, Member States must ensure, in particular, adequate controls and supervision of the application of the national transposing provisions. In this regard, Member States are competent to decide on the organisation of enforcement authorities/labour inspectorates and on the nature, frequency, procedure and other characteristics of such controls.

Directive 2012/18⁷, covers establishments where dangerous substances may be present in quantities exceeding certain thresholds. Pursuant to its Article 5, Member States have to ensure that operators of such establishments take all necessary measures to prevent major accidents and to limit their consequences for human health and the environment. Operators must prove, at any time, that they have taken these measures, in particular for the purpose of inspections, which Member States are required to perform pursuant to its Article 20. However, pursuant to information available to the Commission, such requirements do not apply to the concerned factory.

¹ Directive (EU) 2019/1152 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on transparent and predictable working conditions in the European Union, OJ L 186, p. 105 (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/1152/oj/eng>).

² Directive (EU) 2019/1158 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on work-life balance for parents and carers and repealing Council Directive 2010/18/EU, OJ L 188, 12.7.2019, p. 79 (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/1158/oj/eng>).

³ 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 (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2003/88/oj/eng>).

⁴ They aim, respectively, to improve working conditions by promoting more transparent and predictable work for workers in all sectors of activity, address women's underrepresentation in the labour market by designing work-life balance arrangements, such as leaves and flexible working arrangements, and to regulate working time and rest time in all sectors of activity.

⁵ Directive 89/391/EEC on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work, OJ L 183, 29.6.1989, p. 1 (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=celex%3A31989L0391>).

⁶ Relevant labour inspectorates or equivalent bodies.

⁷ 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 (Seveso-III-Directive, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2012/18/oj/eng>).