

EN

P-002496/2026

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu
on behalf of the European Commission
(7.8.2026)

The EU occupational safety and health (OSH) regulatory framework providing protection for workers exposed to hazardous chemicals in factory environments consists mainly of the Framework Directive 89/391/EEC¹ and its related directives in the area of chemicals, i.e. Directive 98/24/EC² and Directive 2004/37/EC³. The latter provide protection specifically against risks of exposure to hazardous chemicals and are updated regularly. The EU OSH regulatory framework lays down a duty of the employer to ensure workers' safety and health in all work-related aspects and to take the measures necessary therefor. It sets minimum requirements covering risk assessment, preventive and protective measures, the informing, training and consultation of workers and health surveillance.

Member States must transpose the EU OSH directives into national legislation, and it is the competent national authorities that are primarily responsible for enforcing national provisions transposing EU directives and for dealing with issues related to compliance with EU law in concrete individual cases. The Senior Labour Inspectors' Committee (SLIC)⁴ assists the Commission regarding the enforcement aspects of the EU OSH legislation at the national level. The Commission monitors the correct implementation of these directives by Member States and takes action in case of non-conformity of national law with EU law or of incorrect application of EU law. In addition, the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)⁵ provides analyses, guidelines and tools to support the prevention and management of OSH risks on the ground, including those related to exposure to hazardous chemicals⁶.

¹ Council Directive 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 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), ELI: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/1989/391/2008-12-11>.

² Council Directive 98/24/EC of 7 April 1998 on the protection of the health and safety of workers from the risks related to chemical agents at work (OJ L 131, 5.5.1998, p. 11), ELI: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/1998/24/2024-04-08>.

³ Directive 2004/37/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens or mutagens at work (OJ L 158, 30.4.2004, p. 50), ELI: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2004/37/2024-04-08>.

⁴ More information at https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies-and-activities/rights-work/health-and-safety-work/senior-labour-inspectors-committee-0_en.

⁵ <https://osha.europa.eu/en>.

⁶ See, for example, <https://osha.europa.eu/en/themes/dangerous-substances>.