



TOGETHER FOR A FAIR DEAL FOR WORKERS

GR/ID/em
Brussels, 25 January 2024



European Federation
of Building
and Woodworkers



Ms Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission
via email

Dear President Ursula von der Leyen,

We are writing to you on behalf of the European trade union movement to urgently draw your attention to the imperative need for advancing the **legislative initiative on the screening of asbestos in buildings**, a matter of utmost importance for the safety and well-being of European workers and citizens as a whole.

We would like to remind you of your commitment to this legislative initiative, which was not only previously announced in the Communication of the European Commission of September 2022, but was also included in the Commission's work programme 2023 "A Union standing firm and united", and in the agenda of the College of Commissioners in 2023.

We urge the Commission to adopt an ambitious legislative approach in this initiative, addressing not only building screening but also encompassing key elements such as training, the accreditation system for authorizations and licenses for asbestos removal companies, safe asbestos waste management, and the decontamination of clothing and equipment.

The widespread presence of asbestos in many buildings and infrastructure across Europe poses a significant risk to workers in various sectors, including construction, firefighting, industry, education, and office work. The absence of mandatory screening and registration exacerbates this issue, leaving workers unknowingly exposed to this hazardous substance. Moreover, with the European Green Deal and its flagship initiative, the Renovation Wave, gaining momentum, it is crucial to ensure the safety of workers and dwellers, as well as citizens in general, who may be exposed during these much-needed initiatives aimed at addressing climate change.

As we approach the final stage of the institutional term for the Commission and the Parliament, we emphasize the urgency of taking decisive action. Failing to deliver on promises in this critical matter would not only compromise the safety of European citizens but also erode trust and credibility in the European Union at a pivotal moment in our history, giving popular credibility to the narrative of the anti-European parties just as they are preparing to compete in the upcoming European elections.

Yours sincerely,



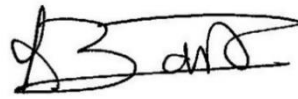
Giulio Romani
ETUC
Confederal Secretary



Tom Deleu
EFBWW
General Secretary



Jan Willem
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General Secretary



Isabelle Barthès
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