



Brussels, 24 June 2026  
(OR. en)

11082/26

SOC 428  
EMPL 232

**NOTE**

---

From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Council

---

Subject: Initiative for the establishment of a European Day in Remembrance of the Victims of Accidents at Work and for the Protection and Dignity of Workers  
- Information from Belgium and Italy, supported by Romania and Malta

---

Delegations will find attached information from Belgium and Italy, supported by Romania and Malta, on the above subject, with a view to the meeting of the EPSCO Council of 29 June 2026 (Any Other Business item).

---

**Initiative for the establishment of a European Day in Remembrance of the Victims of Accidents at Work and for the Protection and Dignity of Workers.**

*Information from Belgium and Italy, supported by Romania and Malta*

On 21 May 2026, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the need to reduce work-related fatalities (2025/3046 (RSP), with a broad cross-party majority of 395 votes in favour, 12 against and 41 abstentions. The resolution also proposes the establishment of a **European Day in Remembrance of the Victims of Accidents at Work and for the Protection and Dignity of Workers**, to be marked each year on **8 August**.

This date holds particular historical and symbolic value for Europe, as it commemorates the tragedy of the **Bois du Cazier mine** in **Marcinelle**, Belgium, on 8 August 1956, in which 262 miners of various European nationalities lost their lives, including Belgians, French, Greeks, Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Polish.

This multinational presence gives the date a genuine European dimension, making it one of the earliest shared moments of collective remembrance in the construction of Social Europe, in the struggle for decent work, solidarity, social justice and the protection of workers' safety across Europe, as highlighted by the European Parliament.

Other tragedies have occurred in Europe. However, the Marcinelle disaster is particularly emblematic because the sacrifice of so many workers from numerous countries across our continent took place in a setting where they worked together to help rebuild a region devastated by the Second World War, at a time when the foundations had already been laid for the great peace project that is our Union.

The establishment of a European Day aims at honoring the memory of victims of workplace accidents and occupational diseases; raising awareness among citizens, businesses and institutions of the importance of prevention, occupational health and safety, and decent working conditions through training, information, social dialogue and the exchange of best practices; and strengthening the commitment of the European Union and its Member States to the “**Vision Zero**” objective, which seeks to eliminate work-related deaths, accidents and occupational diseases.

The European Day is fully consistent with the values enshrined in the Treaties of the European Union, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, and the European Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work.

The proposal, as also underlined by the European Parliament, is intended to complement the **World Day for Safety and Health at Work**, promoted by the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** and celebrated on 28 April from a specific European perspective.

While international observance draws global attention to safety and health in the workplace, the European Day on 8 August would make it possible to highlight the shared historical memory of Social Europe, strengthen awareness of workers' rights within the context of European integration, and promote initiatives addressing the specific challenges facing the European labour market.

To consolidate the commitment of the European Union and its Member States to promoting and preserving increasingly safe, healthy and dignified working environments,

**Belgium and Italy, also in view of the commemoration of the eightieth anniversary of the event of Marcinelle, join the European Parliament in calling for the establishment of a European Day in Remembrance of the Victims of Accidents at Work and for the Protection and Dignity of Workers to be observed every year on 8 August.**