

Workers Memorial Day 2023

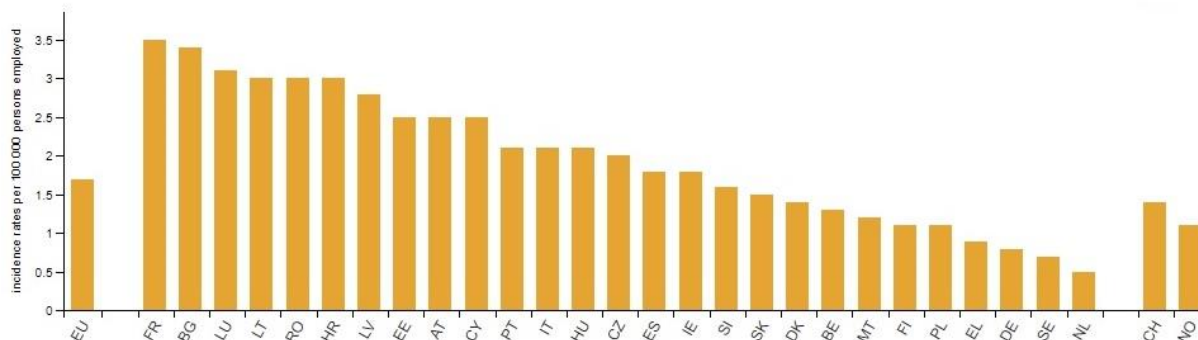
So here we are again, 28th of April - a day when we remember and honour those who have lost their lives due to work. Unfortunately, in Sweden 16 people have lost their lives at work so far this year.

16 people who left their homes in the morning and never came back. It is important to remember that this is only one part of the whole picture - there are also those who die due to work-related diseases.

According to the Swedish Work Environment Authority, it is estimated that around 3000 people die every year, due to work. We can therefore never give up the fight to ensure that no one risks their life or health because of work. Every work-related death and illness show the importance of health and safety at work. Through active and preventive measures for a good working environment all these deaths can be avoided. If an effective work environment management was in place globally, accident like the fire in Rana Plaza in 2013, where more than 1, 100 people died, would never have happened.

EU statistics show that 78% of all work-related cancers are due to exposure to asbestos, which has been totally banned in the EU since 2005 (Sweden 1982), to give one example. In total, 3 355 people died at work in the EU in 2020 (the latest statistics available), of which more than 1/5 took place in the construction industry, according to Eurostat.

Fatal accidents at work, 2019



Source: Eurostat (online data code: hsw_n2_02)

eurostat

With a closer look at Eurostat's 2019 statistics, we see that in comparison with the rest of the EU, we have few fatal accidents. But can we really "settle" for having few fatal accidents in comparison? Absolutely not, if you ask me or anyone in the trade union movement. The idea that your work could put your life at risk is unacceptable, work should always be carried out with careful and thorough risk assess management, so that your work can be carried out without risking your life or health. No matter where or with what you work!

Systematic work environment management at each workplace, access to personal protective equipment and safety devices, well-trained safety representatives and managers in work environment issues, and access to expertise from e.g. occupational health services if necessary, are essential to create a safe and healthy work environment for all workers. Hopefully it has not been unnoticed that since the ILO Labour Conference in 2022, a safe and healthy working environment is a

fundamental principle and right of working life. This means that you should not get sick or die due to work.

Therefore, my friends, today we light a candle for all our comrades who have left us because of work, to remember and honour them. At the same time, we promise ourselves that together we will demand a working environment where no one risks their health or their life!

