
Parliament wants better protection of workers' mental and physical health

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- More than 840,000 people die each year from health conditions linked to psychosocial risks, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO)
 - Violence, harassment, bullying and discriminatory behaviour at work must be addressed
 - Call for individual return-to-work plans to support workers returning to work
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Parliament is calling the European Commission to better protect workers from work-related psychosocial risks and stress.

On Tuesday, MEPs agreed on a series of recommendations for a new EU proposal to prevent, eliminate or reduce work-related psychosocial risks that can lead to work-related stress, burnout, and mental and physical disorders. The proposal should be preceded by an impact assessment including an assessment of existing legislation. MEPs are demanding obligations on employers to protect workers' mental and physical health and to ensure safe and dignified working conditions.

They also want the Commission and EU-countries to recognise explicitly that work-related psychosocial risks give rise to occupational diseases.

The [legislative initiative](#) report was adopted by 413 votes in favour and 210 votes against, with 29 abstentions.

Policies addressing violence and harassment

MEPs want employers to prevent work-related psychosocial risks, and to adopt and implement policies that define and prohibit violence, harassment, bullying and discriminatory behaviour that undermines workers' dignity, physical or mental health, as well as early detection mechanisms and risk-based prevention protocols for third-party violence. They also say timely support is needed for workers exposed to psychosocial risks.

Psychosocial risk assessment and action plan

MEPs recommend employers carry out regular psychosocial risk assessments to evaluate factors such as excessive workload and high work intensity and adopt action plans with concrete measures.

Significant restructuring or reorganisation, such as teleworking arrangements or the introduction of automated decision-making and automated monitoring systems, should be subject to a prior psychosocial risk assessment in cooperation with workers and their representatives, they say.

Employers should ensure that the introduction of algorithmic management systems does not impose excessive burden or monitoring of workers, and there must always be human oversight. MEPs also reiterate that workers have the right to disconnect from work.

Support for returning to work

Workers who have been absent from work because of work-related psychosocial risks should have the right to a supported and sustainable return to work, MEPs say. To that end, they recommend employers establish individual return-to-work plans, specifying factors such as adjustments to working time or work organisation and adaptations of a worker's tasks or workload.

Quote

Rapporteur [Estelle Ceulemans](#) (S&D, BE) said: "We are calling on the Commission to take action on mental health and psychosocial risks in the workplace. Europe must move away from a 'burnout society' and help create healthy workplaces where everyone can thrive, especially as the use of digital technologies and AI in the workplace continues to grow. This is a matter of workers' well-being but also of public finances, as the cost to society is skyrocketing."

Next steps

The Commission will have three months to reply to Parliament's request, either by informing Parliament on the steps it plans to take or by giving reasons for any refusal to propose a legislative initiative along the lines of Parliament's request.

Further information

[Committee on Employment and Social Affairs](#)

[Text adopted \(6.10.2026\)](#)

[Recording of the debate in plenary \(5.10.2026\)](#)

[Procedural file](#)

[European Parliament Research Service - Psychosocial risks, stress and mental health at work](#)

[International Labour Organization - The psychosocial working environment: Global developments and pathways for action \(April 2026\)](#)

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