ASBESTOS – BANNED, HOW TO REDUCE FUTURE RISKS

Lars Vedsmand, EFBWW/Danish Constr. Workers
About me

- 30 years experience with asbestos
  - Compensation cases insulation workers
  - Regional cooperation physicians and Occ Health Clinic
    - Building cooperation victims, trade unions, psychiatrists and OCC Health clinics
- Guidelines and regulatory work nationally, EU and global (ILO)
- EFBWW asbestos action plan
Several MS had restrictions and bans since 1970’s and 80’s, ongoing until 2005

30 years of political and technical negotiations before the ban as well as a Berlaymont building...

EU has a ban with still few exemptions and a directive, providing regulation for safe work procedures
Asbestos remains a deadly material

- Present in many ships, trains and not the least buildings throughout EU
- Indeed, asbestos may be found particularly in many public and private buildings, where its presence is often unknown.
Even with a ban, time is working against a safe removal of all existing asbestos. People who installed it and know how to identify asbestos-containing materials in buildings are retiring from the construction sector. Newer generations do not have any experience with the old materials they can find when doing maintenance or demolition.
Coordinated strategy

Mapping and registration
Action plan for asbestos-free
EP amendment strategy
Export waste
Derogation chlorine
Extended obligations
Training and awareness
Recognition diseases
Compensation diseases
Statement from EP:
- "36. Considers that the health problems related to exposure to asbestos are well known and that the European regulation on asbestos is adequate; underlines the fact that asbestos-initiated diseases in Europe are forecasted to be very high for many years ahead;
  - therefore calls on the Commission to organise a hearing on how to tackle the huge OHS problems related to existing asbestos in buildings and other constructions such as ships, trains and machinery;
  - also calls on Member States to draw up national action plans on phasing out asbestos, including obligations to map asbestos in buildings and provide for the safe removal of asbestos;"

New strategy, like:
- start action plans for asbestos removal at European, national and regional levels. These shall include legislation; education and information, training for public employees; national and international training, seminars, conferences, congresses and participation in activities related to the removal of asbestos and products containing asbestos from the buildings, public amenities and sites of former asbestos factories; cleaning premises, building landfills and installations for the destruction of asbestos and asbestos-containing debris; monitoring of the implementation of regulations, exposure assessments of at-risk personnel, and health protection
Screening and registration:
- Monitoring
- Action plans
- Energy – integration in other policies
- Public asbestos registers
- Obligations for house-owners
EP INI report asbestos

- Qualification and training
  - Asbestos removal
  - Construction companies and workers
  - Building technicians
  - Labor inspectors

- Removal programmes
  - Deadline for asbestos free Europe
  - Legislation
EP INI report asbestos

- Asbestos-related diseases
- Support for asbestos victims’ groups
- Stop for exporting of waste
- Support for global ban of asbestos
- Regulation
- Information
- Training
- Deadline for an asbestos-free Europe
Thank you for your attention