

**From:** ROMANI, Giulio <gromani@etuc.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 21, 2023 10:17 AM  
**To:** Lučka Böhm <lucka.bohm@sindikar-zsss.si>  
**Subject:** Cancer survey shows need to protect outdoor workers



## Cancer survey shows need to protect outdoor workers



New EU polling showing exposure to solar UV radiation is the most common cancer risk faced by European workers shows the need for stronger rules on the protection of outdoor workers.

One in five workers are exposed to solar UV radiation, according to the [findings](#) of a survey on occupational cancer risk factors published today by the European Agency for Health and Safety at Work.

That is more than any other potential cancer risk. Workers in construction, farming, emergency services and transport are particularly at risk, according to the findings.

That's why the European Trade Union Confederation is calling on policymakers to fix European legislation and protect workers from the risks presented by climate change.

### ***Right to breaks***

It should include the right for workers to take breaks during the most dangerous parts of the day and obligations on employers to provide access to shade, water and protective clothing.

Our call is based on a [study](#) on sun radiation by the European Trade Union Institute which said:

“Shade should be the first choice measure because it protects against both heat stress and excessive UV radiation. Shade, to be effective, must block out sunlight especially during the hours around the middle of the day.

“Clothing and products should not be considered as at-source measures as they are only filters: while they do offer some protection against UV radiation, they do not block it completely, especially in the case of products.”

### **ETUC Confederal Secretary Giulio Romani said:**

*“This research clearly shows that exposure to the sun is the number one cancer risk for workers in Europe. That risk is only going to become more severe with climate change.*

“That's why we need EU legislation to give workers effective protection from all climate change related risks including solar radiation, like the right to take breaks and access to shade, water and protective clothing.

“Most good employers should already be doing this but we know it is the most vulnerable workers, like seasonal agricultural workers or casual construction workers, who are at the highest risk.

“We can't sit back and allow vulnerable workers to contract cancer - the European Commission must act on these findings.”

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