

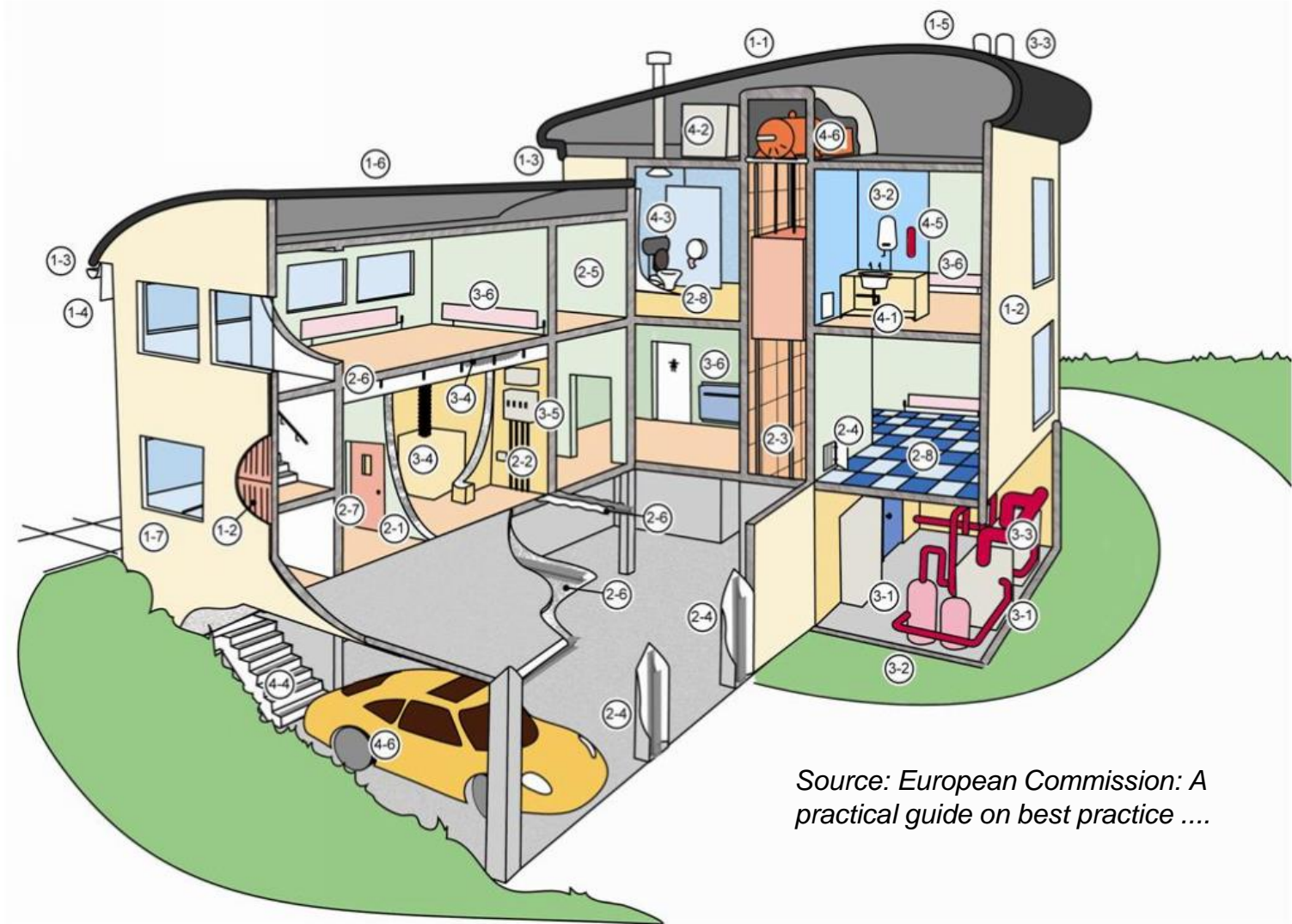
Asbestos: background information

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18th seminar on workers' protection & chemicals

Zadar, 28-29 June 2022

Asbestos is still present in our buildings



Source: European Commission: A practical guide on best practice

Asbestos: exposed workforce in the EU-27

Exposure groups	Estimated exposed workers
1. Building and construction - exposure situations subject to notification	300,000 - 500,000
2. Building and construction - exposure situations subject to Article 3(3) waiver	3,500,000 - 5,500,000 (potentially exposed)
3. Building and construction - passive exposure in buildings	Potentially millions (500,000 used) at low levels close to 0.001 fibre/cm ³
4. Exposure to asbestos in articles: Trains, vehicles, vessels, aircraft and other	1,000 - 10,000
5. Waste management and land remediation activities	50,000 - 200,000
6. Mining and quarrying - naturally occurring asbestos	1,000-10,000
7. Tunnel excavation - naturally occurring asbestos	500-5,000
8. Road construction and maintenance – partly naturally occurring asbestos	2,000 – 20,000 Potentially more at low levels close to 0.001 fibre/cm ³
9. Sampling and analysis	5,000 - 15,000
Summary (rounded)	4,000,000 - 6,000,000 (excl. passive exposure)

Asbestos kills over 47 000 people each year in the EU



- **Lung cancer**
- **Mesothelioma**
- **Larynx and ovary (sufficient evidence)**
- **Pharynx, stomach, and colorectum (some evidence)**
- **Asbestosis (fibrotic lung changes due to long-term asbestos exposure)**

Source: RPA study, 2021

Asbestos at Work Directive (Dir 2019/148/EC)

Aim: protect workers health from risk of asbestos exposure

Obligation for employers:

- ban on extraction, manufacture, processing of asbestos
- carry out a risk assessment to determine nature and degree of exposure
- If exposure: notification to Member States authorities, registration of workers, health surveillance
- If sporadic exposure (low intensity): no notification, no health surveillance, no registrations
- asbestos removal works with **OEL = 100 000 fibres/m³**
- training of workers (use of PPE, decontamination procedures, waste disposal, etc.)
- keep a register with nature & duration of exposure (40 years)

Obligation for Member States:

- Keep a register of cases of asbestosis & mesothelioma

Annex I: practical recommendations for the clinical assessment of workers

Binding Occupational Exposure Limit Values (BOELs)

Current BOEL (Dir 2009/148/EC)	100 000 f/m ³	0,1 f/cm ³	
BOEL in France & Germany	10 000 f/m ³	0,01 f/cm ³	Employers IG and Governments IG in the ACSH
Lowest BOEL in the EU (NL)	2 000 f/m ³	0,002 f/cm ³	
BOEL recommended by European/ICOH	1 000 f/m ³	0,001 f/cm ³	Workers IG in the ACSH

Thank you for your attention !

More info on asbestos:

Directive 2010/148/EC:

<https://osha.europa.eu/en/legislation/directives/2009-148-ec-exposure-to-asbestos-at-work>

ETUI: <https://www.etui.org/topics/health-safety-working-conditions/hesamag/construction-workers-at-the-mercy-of-social-dumping/asbestos-not-a-problem-of-the-past#:~:text=The%20European%20Commission%20can%20play,the%20removal%20of%20existing%20asbestos.>

ACSH opinion: https://circabc.europa.eu/ui/group/cb9293be-4563-4f19-89cf-4c4588bd6541/library/b24cae6a-31f5-4213-a47c-4fa10ddab0a0?p=1&n=10&sort=modified_DESC