



NEPSI IN ACTION Project Launch

In continuation of the NEPSI Actions from 2006, a new European Project has been launched to reinforce the development and implementation at local level of tools to prevent workers exposure to respirable crystalline silica.

On 22 November 2022, a Conference organised by the European social partners signatories of the NEPSI Social Dialogue Agreement took place in Brussels. Sixteen years ago, social partners signed an agreement for the protection of workers from silica dust exposure and to promote health and safety at work. Today the launch of NEPSI IN ACTION presents the evolution of a series of new tools made available to companies and employees.

The trade unions and employers organisations, signatories of the Nepsi Agreement highlight the importance of the continued protection of workers and the value of social dialogue for implementing health and safety measures. Together, they work to reduce the exposure of workers to silica and improve working conditions.

The Conference has taken stock of the many achievements of the Social Dialogue Agreement since 2006. Among them, it has been demonstrated that the NEPSI Agreement is a unique tool to improve workers' protection on the floor thanks to the respirable crystalline silica dust reduction measures described in the evolving Good Practice Guide.

Since the 10th Anniversary of the Agreement in 2016, the 16 signatories have now become 19 – with the addition of AstA Worldwide, ERMCO and EUROGYPSUM.

Together, the below mentioned 19 signatory industry sectors and industriAll Europe from the European Network on Silica (NEPSI) and have facilitated the implementation of good practices in dust reduction measures and monitored the application of the Agreement through eight bi-annual reports of key performance indicators. Since 2019, thanks to the continuous financial support of the European Commission the network has developed educative tools for the particular attention of micro-small and medium size companies, as well as innovative training tools for new workers, offering a more attractive vision of the industrial sectors for the young generation.

IndustriAll Europe highlights the importance of NEPSI in the context of the transition and transformation of European industries. Now more than ever, good working conditions are key to addressing the challenges industries are facing. NEPSI, for example, is a blueprint for many extractive industries who will need to deliver high social and environmental standards, while the EU is launching its critical raw materials (CRM) strategy.

EU industry is following very closely the ongoing work in the preparation of the CRM act that will support the EU sovereignty. EU industry commits to deploy high level of standards in its operations to protect its employees, as demonstrated with the NEPSI agreement.

Through NEPSI IN ACTION which is the new project funded by the European Commission Social Dialogue budget, the recently developed new tools will be disseminated at local level through eight national seminars across Europe in 2022-2024: France, Hungary, Sweden, Italy, Germany, Spain, Romania and Poland.

At the NEPSI IN ACTION Conference, Stefan Olsson (European Commission, Deputy Director-General of DG Employment for Jobs, Skills and Social Policies), Claude Rolin (former EU MEP, notably responsible for the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive first revisions) and Brenda O'Brien (Brussels Liaison Manager of the EU OSHA Agency) expressed their continuous support to NEPSI positive actions for the health of workers exposed to respirable crystalline silica dust.

It is important to highlight the Recital 19 of (EU) 2017/2398 amending the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive which officially recognises that ***NEPSI good practices are valuable and necessary instruments to complement the regulatory requirements and to support their effective implementation.***

NEPSI is also recognised in helping to protect the employees, as part of the EU principles for sustainable raw materials (see on p.14)

[EU principles for sustainable raw materials - Publications Office of the EU \(europa.eu\)](https://european-council.europa.eu/media/e300042f-323d-4761-995d-6f9e6c9a457c/attachment_data/data/eu-principles-for-sustainable-raw-materials.pdf)

<p>NEPSI signatories confirm hereby their desire to continue working together for enhanced workers' health protection and to make sure that the NEPSI Agreement has a useful role to play in facilitating compliance with the regulatory measures. The NEPSI Agreement is always open for new signatories.</p>

22 November 2022

List of NEPSI Signatories:

IndustriAll – European Trade Union

AStA Worldwide – Association of engineered stones manufacturers

BIBM – The International Bureau for Precast Concrete

CAEF – European Foundry Association

CEEMET - European employers' organisation of metal, engineering and technology based industries

CEMBUREAU – The European Cement Association

Cerame-Unie - The European Ceramic Industry Association

EMO – European Mortar Organization

ERMCO – European Ready-Mixed Concrete Organisation

EURIMA --The European Insulation Manufacturers Association

EUROGYPSUM – The European Association of Plaster and Plaster Product Manufacturers

EUROMINES – The European Association of Mining Industries

EUROROC - European Federation of Natural Stone Industries

EXCA – The European Expanded Clay Association

ECSPA – European Calcium Silicate Producers Association (voluntary)

FEVE – The European Container Glass Federation

GlassFibreEurope – The European Glass Fibre Producers Association

Glass for Europe – Trade association for Europe's flat glass sector

IMA-Europe – The European Industrial Minerals Association

Aggregates Europe – UEPG – European Aggregates Association