Driving licence, new Community model (amend. Directive 91/439/EEC)

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The rapporteur, Mr FARASSINO, believed that the introduction of a new credit card model driving licence would simplify the bureaucratic management procedures and make it more difficult to forge licences. Furthermore, the option to include a microchip in the driving licence would turn it into a multifunctional card that could be used, for example, to pay tolls or store information on the owner's health (willingness to donate organs, blood group). On behalf of the Liberal Group, Mr FARASSINO supported three amendments, put forward by the group in spite of the fact that they were rejected by the Committee on Transport. These included the two amendments that provided for an advisory committee to assist the Commission in future technical reviews of the model driving licence. Furthermore, according to the Liberal Group, Member States should be able to decide whether or not to leave or to reduce the time frame for the renewal of licences for drivers aged over 50. The Commissioner, Mr Neil KINNOCK, stated that the Commission could take over several of the amendments tabled by the European Parliament, especially those aimed at: - including medical information on the licence (Amendment No 3), - allowing the licence to include details of the holder's willingness to donate organs (Amendment No 4). In his view, these two amendments did not infringe civil liberties; rather, they benefited citizens in light of the risks involved in driving. However, the Commission rejected the amendments concerning: - the introduction of a penalty points driving licence (Amendment No 1), - the requirement to include the name of the country issuing the licence (Amendment No 2), - the requirement to include a microchip (Amendment No 6), - the duration of the validity of the licence (Amendments Nos 9 and 12). As far as this last point was concerned, the Commission rejected the idea of the licence being valid for an unlimited period of time and proposed that it should be updated every 10 years. It also rejected the amendments of the Liberal Group, particularly those on the advisory committee (Amendments Nos 11 and 13) as they would amend the Council's decision on comitology.