Energy: petroleum products, security of supply

2002/0219(COD) - 11/09/2002 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to encourage greater harmonisation and coordination of national measures regarding security of oil supplies, thereby helping to ensure that the internal market functions properly. CONTENT : over 70% of our oil consumption and 40% of our natural gas consumption is at present imported. Projections indicate that these figures could rise to 90% and 70% respectively in 2020. In order to manage the EU's energy dependence as effectively as possible, this proposal aims to ensure the proper functioning of the internal market in petroleum products. For this purpose, it provides for the alignment of the provisions of the Member States with regard to oil stocks and crisis measures and coordinated action between the Member States in the event of a supply crisis. It aims to provide the European Union with the means to act in a unified, credible manner when oil supply difficulties are disrupting, or threaten to disrupt, the functioning of the economy and society. All the Member States will set up a public oil stockholding body, which will eventually own stocks representing at least 40 days' consumption. This will help to improve the functioning of the internal market by establishing rules which will ensure healthy competition between economic operators. It will also guarantee effective and efficient mobilisation of oil stocks in a crisis. In an energy crisis, the EU will in future be able to adopt a common strategy. The Commission will be authorised to take the requisite measures as a matter of urgency, assisted by a committee of Member State representatives. Lastly, security stocks representing at present 90 days' consumption could in future be used in the context of solidarity in the event of a general perception of a risk of disruption of supply giving rise to dangerous market volatility. A gradual liberalisation of stocks of petroleum products will help to re-establish smoother operation of the oil market. The volume of these stocks will gradually increase from 90 to 120 days' consumption.