

Road transport, organisation of working time: mobile workers and self-employed drivers

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The Committee has endorsed the report on sectors excluded from Directive 93/104/EC on working time. The committee backed a package which consists of four proposals for directives but made several amendments to the horizontal directive and the proposal on the organisation of working time in road transport. Hugh McMAHON (PES, UK), rapporteur on the organisation of working time for road transport workers and seafarers, welcomed the Commission's decision to include self-employed drivers within the scope of the directive on working time in road transport. He pointed out that there seemed to be a trend among big transport companies to turn their employed drivers into sub-contractors in order to avoid complying with health and safety regulations. The committee clarified the definitions of working time, night workers and self-employed drivers. "Standby duty", it said, should be counted as working time even for self-employed drivers, as should monitoring of loading/unloading and time devoted to administrative formalities. MEPs were willing to allow the social partners to reach agreement on derogations concerning maximum weekly working time and rest periods, provided the workers were granted equivalent compensatory rest periods. The committee stressed that all working hours should be properly monitored, not just the working time of those doing more than 48 hours a week. Member States should carry out checks on working and driving times equivalent to at least 2% of all the working days in the industry.