Organisation of working time to cover sectors and activities excluded from Directive 93/104/EC

1998/0318(COD) - 14/10/1999

The committee adopted a recommendation for second reading (co-decision procedure) by Mrs Miet SMET (EPP/ED, B) amending the Council's common position. The committee insisted that junior doctors be brought within the scope of the working time directive after a four-year transition period (as compared with the seven-year period originally proposed by the Commission which the Council wanted to extend to 13 years). During this time they would work no more than 54 hours a week on average over a four-month reference period. Thereafter the maximum weekly average would be 48 hours. Regarding offshore workers, the committee suggested that Member States should be able to permit the extension of the reference period to twelve months providing there was employer - employee agreement. The period could also be extended by Member States, if there were objective or technical reasons or reasons concerning the organisation of work, even if the social partners had not reached an agreement on it. That provision, however, would have to be reviewed from a health and safety perspective five years after the entry into force of the directive. The committee also adopted an amendment in which it urged the Commission to review the operation of the provisions concerning workers in scheduled urban transport services five years after the entry into force of the directive. Lastly, the committee felt that the new provisions should be implemented within two years of the adoption of the directive, rather than four years as proposed by the Council.