Minimum level of training for seafarers: recognition of certificates issued by third countries

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The committee adopted the report by Bernard POIGNANT (PES, F) broadly approving the proposal (under the 1st reading of the codecision procedure), subject to a number of mainly technical amendments aimed at clarifying and improving the text. The purpose of the amendments was as follows: - to simplify and clarify the procedure for issuing and extending recognitions; - to indicate clearly that certificates of competency issued before the directive enters into force remain valid; - to indicate clearly that certificates of competency issued before the withdrawal of any recognition will likewise remain valid; - to propose, with a view to increasing transparency, that a fraud-proof multilingual European certificate of conformity be established which would be issued by the European Maritime Safety Agency; - to propose a clear period (12 months after the directive's entry into force) for the Member States to implement the legislative proposals; - to ensure that, in order to avoid inequality of treatment and at the same time to satisfy the highest safety standards, non-EU nationals employed on ships flying the flag of a Member State have the same access to continuing training as EU crew members. Lastly, the committee called for the directive to be reviewed after five years in the light of new insights gained concerning the correlation between safety and the level of training of ships' crews.