Restrictions on the marketing of certain measuring devices containing mercury

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The committee adopted the report by María SORNOSA MARTÍNEZ (PES, ES) broadly approving the proposed directive on restrictions on the marketing of certain measuring devices containing mercury. Although they wanted an agreement to be reached under the 1st reading of the codecision procedure so that the directive could enter into force as swiftly as possible, MEPs nevertheless adopted a few amendments:

- antique barometers and scientific instruments intended for sale or trade in the international antiques market should be exempted from the directive, as should the production of traditional barometers using small quantities of mercury in carefully controlled and licensed environments;

- exemptions should be authorised for measuring devices not intended for the general public in cases where safer mercury-free alternatives are not yet available, and for measuring equipment for consumer and professional use (especially households, healthcare facilities and schools) where safer and economically feasible alternatives, producing an equivalent level of precision and reliability, are not yet available;

- the Commission should take measures in the short term to ensure that all products (not just electrical and electronic equipment) containing mercury and currently circulating in society are collected separately and safely treated.