

## **EPSU compares Commission working time proposal to a Salvador Dali clock - utterly surreal!**

At a Hearing by the Social Affairs Committee of the European Parliament EPSU General Secretary Carola Fischbach-Pyttel launched a searing attack on the European Commission proposals to revise the Working Time directive. Calling the proposal a 'historical mistake', the General Secretary called on the Parliament to provide leadership in framing the debate.

Ms. Fischbach-Pyttel concluded her speech by saying that "The last point that I would therefore like to make is that the Commission's response to working time is flexible in the way a Salvador Dali clock is flexible - utterly surreal"!

The distinction between 'active and inactive' periods of on-call duty risks to permanently accept excessively long working hours for hospital doctors and other health care staff who often have to work to the point of physical and mental exhaustion.

The Commission has therefore made a great tactical error in formulating this draft. The introduction of the category of 'inactive time' as a response to successive European Court of Justice rulings on on-call duty is a political scandal. The Commission's rationale for the directive apparently no longer is the core principle of health and safety, but it puts financial expediency before health and safety.

The organisation of working time is first and foremost a responsibility of the social partners at all levels (full text of speech is attached).

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