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SECOND REPORT

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Transport
on the proposal from the Commission of the
European Communities to the Council (Doc. 1-163/81)
for a second directive on summertime arrangements

Rapporteur: Mr P. BAUDIS

By letter of 16 April 1981 the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament, pursuant to Article 100 of the EEC Treaty, to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a second directive on summertime arrangements (Doc. 1-163/81).

The President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Transport on 4 May 1981.

On 15 May 1981 the Committee on Transport appointed Mr Baudis rapporteur.

It considered the draft report at its meetings of 15 May and 25/26 June 1981 and, at the latter meeting, adopted the amendment, the motion for a resolution and the explanatory statement by eleven votes to none with two abstentions.

Present: Mr Seefeld, chairman; Dame Shelagh Roberts and Mr Carossino, vice-chairmen; Mr Baudis, rapporteur; Mr Albers, Mrs von Alemann, Mr Arndt (deputizing for Mr Klinkenborg), Mr Bonaccini (deputizing for Mr Cardia), Mr Buttafuoco, Mr Cottrell, Mr Gabert, Mr Gendebien and Mr Travaglini.

The report (Doc. 1-356/81) was considered at the plenary sitting of 18 September 1981. On that occasion the Commission's proposal was adopted without amendment and the motion for a resolution together with the amendment tabled by the Committee on Transport was rejected.

At the plenary sitting of 20 November 1981, after consultation with the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions and in accordance with the latter's opinion of 21 October 1981, the draft directive was referred back to the Committee on Transport.

At its meeting of 28 January 1982 the Committee on Transport reconsidered the proposal for a second directive on summertime arrangements and unanimously adopted the motion for a resolution and explanatory statement.

The following voted: Mr Seefeld, chairman; Dame Shelagh Roberts, Mr Carossino and Mr Kaloyannis, vice-chairmen; Mr Baudis, rapporteur; Mr Arndt (deputizing for Mr Ripa di Meana), Mr Cardia, Mr Cottrell, Mr Gatto (deputizing for Mr Key), Lord Harmar-Nicholls, Mr Howell (deputizing for Mr Marshall), Mr Janssen van Raay (deputizing for Mr K.-H. Hoffman), Mr Junot, Mr Klinkenborg, Mr Lagakos, Mr M. Martin, Mr Moorhouse and Mr Tolman (deputizing for Mr Modiano).

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The Committee on Transport hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a second directive on summertime arrangements

the European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council,¹
- having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 100 of the EEC Treaty (Doc. 1-163/81),
- having regard to the second report of the Committee on Transport (Doc. 1-975/81),
- having regard to its report on the first directive on summertime arrangements²,

1. Notes with satisfaction that the Commission has drawn up a proposal for a uniform summertime period for all Member States of the Community for the years 1983 to 2000;
2. Considers that common dates for beginning and ending the summertime period in the Community offer many advantages, in particular for intra-Community cross-frontier passenger and goods traffic, but also in the area of telecommunications and thus for trade and industry;
3. Also considers that the introduction of summertime arrangements leads to significant savings of energy and affords increased opportunities for outdoor recreational activities;
4. Emphasizes the symbolic importance of Community summertime arrangements for the European Community;
5. Recognizes the difficulties of achieving agreement between the Member States, which have different preferences regarding the dates for starting and ending summertime; believes, however, that the Commission's compromise formula in this area is acceptable;

¹ OJ No. C 84, 14.4.1981, p. 3

² Doc. 559/75, OJ No. C 79, 5.4.1976, p. 38

6. Approves therefore the Commission's proposal;
7. Believes it of the utmost importance in view of the time required to draw up schedules and timetables for international public transport services and to prevent problems arising in 1983, that the Council adopt the proposed directive as soon as possible.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENTI. INTRODUCTION

1. As long ago as 3 February 1976 the Commission submitted to the Council a proposal for a directive on summertime arrangements (Doc. 530/75).

This proposal was designed to ensure that the Member States of the Community which already applied summertime or were planning to do so in 1977, 1978 or 1979, should adopt the same date and time on which to begin and end summertime.

2. Although the European Parliament approved the draft directive on 12 March 1976 on the basis of a report by Mr Seefeld (Doc. 559/75)¹, as did the Economic and Social Committee², it was only four years later that the Council was able to agree on limited summertime arrangements.

3. In fact, the relevant directive, which was not adopted by the Council until 22 July 1980³, contained only one provision on a uniform starting date for summertime in 1981 and 1982.

No unanimity could be reached on the end of summertime and so in 1982 summertime will end on 26 September in Belgium, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands and Luxembourg and on 24 October in Ireland and the United Kingdom.

4. The Commission is now proposing a new directive to provide for summertime arrangements in the Community for the period 1983-2000.

II. ADVANTAGES OF UNIFORM SUMMERTIME ARRANGEMENTS IN THE COMMUNITY

5. It should be emphasized that the term 'uniform summertime arrangements' in fact means common dates for starting and ending the period of summertime within the Community. In view of the wide geographical area covered by the Community, there cannot of course be any intention of introducing a single time zone.

6. In his abovementioned report on behalf of the former Committee on Regional Policy and Transport (Doc. 559/75), Mr Seefeld underlined a number of advantages of uniform summertime arrangements. These advantages are enumerated and briefly commented on in the following paragraphs.

¹ OJ No. C 79, 5.4.1976, p. 38

² OJ No. C 131, 12.6.1976, p. 12

³ OJ No. L 205, 7.8.1980, p. 17

(i) Transfrontier traffic

7. It is clear that non-uniform summertime arrangements cause major problems for transfrontier passenger and goods traffic.

This applies both to road transport, for example since the opening hours of customs houses on opposite sides of a frontier do not coincide, and to rail and air transport, in view of the confusion and difficulties involved in adjusting international timetables relative to public transport.

8. Uniform summertime arrangements can therefore obviate the need for complex adjustments of international timetables or at least simplify them considerably and will conduce to the smooth flow of transfrontier road traffic. For the individual passenger, such arrangements naturally offer greater certainty and hence greater comfort.

These aspects were also emphasized in the own-initiative report by Mr Schyns on the difficulties encountered at the Community's internal frontiers in the transport of passengers and goods by road (Doc. 678/78)¹.

(ii) International telecommunications

9. It is equally clear that starting and ending summertime on the same dates in all the Member States of the Community greatly facilitates telecommunications (telephone, telex, telegrams) between these countries, thus benefiting intra-Community trade and industry.

In his report, Mr Seefeld referred to the confusion which arose in the summer of 1976 when the time relationship between London and Paris changed four times.

(iii) Energy saving

10. By putting the clock forward one hour in the summer, the use of artificial light is delayed by one hour in the evening, which undoubtedly means a saving of energy resources, which are becoming increasingly scarce and expensive.

11. Precise figures are not, of course, available on the quantity of energy that can be saved in this way. In reply to a written question put by Mr Linde, Mr Brunner replied on behalf of the Commission as follows: 'It is difficult to assess how much energy is saved as a result of these arrangements

¹ OJ No. C 140, 5.6.1979, p. 166

because, although the savings may be appreciable in absolute terms they are low in terms of percentages, and lie within the margin of uncertainty attaching to any estimate. In addition, the amounts saved may vary from one Member State to the next; however, the average for the Community is probably around 0.25%.¹

12. Consequently, even if the economies of energy resulting from summertime are not as great as is frequently supposed, in the light of the current precarious energy situation, the Community's high degree of dependence on external energy supplies and the uncertain outlook for the future, this aspect should by no means be overlooked.

(iv) Outdoor recreational activities

13. Artificially lengthening daylight, as it were, by one hour creates more opportunities to practise sport and other outdoor activities.

(v) Symbolic importance

14. In the explanatory statement accompanying its proposal the Commission rightly points out the importance of uniform Community summertime arrangements 'as a practical demonstration of Community solidarity' (Par. 2).

III. COMMENTS ON THE PRESENT DRAFT DIRECTIVE

15. As the Commission itself admits, the Member States have different preferences with regard to the dates for starting and ending summertime.

16. After consulting representatives of the Member States, the Commission has worked out a compromise formula in this area, which can be summarized as follows:

(i) Start of the period

Summertime will start on the last Sunday in March, unless this is celebrated as Easter in one or more Member States, in which case summertime will start on the previous Sunday².

(ii) End of the period

Summertime will end on the second Sunday in October.

¹ Written Question No. 1138/78, OJ No. C 156, 25.6.1980, p. 18

² For the exact starting dates, see page 2 of the Commission's document.

17. In the light of the arguments set out by the Commission, your rapporteur is of the opinion that the proposed compromise formula is logical and acceptable.

18. For the sake of completeness, it should be pointed out that summertime begins and ends at 1 a.m. GMT (Greenwich Mean Time).

19. Under Article 3 of the draft directive, Greenland and the overseas territories of the Member States are, for obvious geographical reasons, excluded from the scope of the proposed summertime arrangements.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

20. In view of the advantages set out in Section II, the Committee on Transport is in favour of a Community scheme whereby summertime covers the same period in all the countries of the Community.

21. With regard to the starting and ending dates, the Committee on Transport fully appreciates the difficulties involved in reaching an agreement between the various Member States which have conflicting preferences; it feels, however, that the proposed compromise formula is a realistic solution.

22. For these reasons, the Committee on Transport is able to approve the draft directive without amendment.

23. In view of the time required to draw up schedules, international timetables, etc., and to avoid problems arising in 1983, the Committee on Transport calls on the Council to approve the abovementioned proposal from the Commission as soon as possible.