



2018/0332(COD)

19.11.2018

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Petitions

for the Committee on Transport and Tourism

on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council
on discontinuing seasonal changes of time and repealing Directive 2000/84/EC
(COM(2018)0639 – C8-0408/2018 – 2018/0332(COD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Cecilia Wikström

PA_Legam

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

The proposal aims at ending seasonal changes of time amongst EU Member States. EU legislation on summertime arrangements was first introduced in 1980 with the objective of unifying existing national summertime practices and schedules. Since 2001, EU summertime arrangements have been governed by Directive 2000/84/EC setting out the obligation on all Member States to switch to summertime on the last Sunday of March and to switch back to their standard time ("winter-time") on the last Sunday of October.

The system of bi-annual clock changes has been increasingly questioned, by citizens, by the European Parliament, and by a growing number of Member States.

In its resolution of 8 February 2018¹, the European Parliament asked the Commission to carry out an assessment of summertime arrangements as provided for in Directive 2000/84/EC and, where appropriate, to submit a proposal for revision. The European Commission has also carried out a public consultation, which generated around 4.6 million replies, the largest amount of responses ever received in any Commission consultation, of which 84% were in favour of discontinuing the bi-annual clock changes, while 16% wanted to keep them.

Furthermore, summertime arrangements are a recurring topic in the work of the Committee on Petitions (PETI), which has received more than 100 subject-related petitions over the years. Almost all petitioners advocate the abolition of bi-annual clock changes, arguing primarily on the basis of health concerns and its margin effects on energy savings. Some petitioners maintain that the clock change has a particularly negative impact on vulnerable groups, such as children and the elderly. PETI has discussed daylight saving time (DST) related petitions in its committee meetings, in July 2015 and November 2017.

As stated in the European Parliamentary Research Service study of October 2017 on EU summertime arrangements under Directive 2000/84/EC, the existence of negative effects on human health caused by these changes should be taken into consideration to put an end to EU bi-annual clock changes. As a clear example of the importance of the discussion of the effect of DST on the body clock, the 2017 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine was awarded to Jeffrey C. Hall, Michael Rosbash and Michael W. Young for their discoveries of molecular mechanisms controlling the circadian rhythm, explaining the human internal, biological clock and how our wellbeing is affected by a mismatch between our external environment and internal biological clock. That is to say, chronobiological research findings suggest that the effect on human biorhythm may be more severe than previously thought. Moreover, on the basis of paragraph 8 of article 114 TFEU, on the approximation of laws, "When a Member State raises a specific problem on public health in a field which has been the subject of prior harmonisation measures, it shall bring it to the attention of the Commission which shall immediately examine whether to propose appropriate measures to the Council".

Against this background, the draft opinion seeks to support the idea that the arrangements for bi-annual clock changes should be terminated in a coordinated manner in order to avoid any

¹ European Parliament resolution of 8 February 2018 on time change arrangements (2017/2968(RSP)) P8_TA(2018)0043

potentially adverse health effects and taking into account that the alleged energy savings are not achieved.

The draft opinion suggests that a removal of the bi-annual clock change should be done in a way to avoid any major disruption to the internal market caused by the divergences between Member States in this area. The rapporteur argues that the original Commission proposal, which gives the Member States the opportunity to decide unilaterally on their preferences of standard time, could create a situation where a patchwork of time zones appears between the Member States, making the internal market more divergent. It would make cross-border trade, transport, communication and travel more complicated within the internal market. To ensure harmonisation, the rapporteur therefore proposes to introduce summertime as the new standard time within the whole Union. According to the European Commission public consultation on EU Summertime arrangements, summertime was the clear preference of the citizens and the businesses who responded to the survey.

Furthermore, research¹ also shows that longer daylight hours in the evening induce people to spend more time outdoors, which increases physical activity, contributes to a more active social life, and benefits the health and wellbeing of both adults and children. Which implies that having summertime as standard time in the European Union could have positive health effects on the population.

AMENDMENTS

The Committee on Petitions calls on the Committee on Transport and Tourism, as the committee responsible, to take into account the following amendments:

Amendment 1

Proposal for a directive

Recital 2

Text proposed by the Commission

(2) In its resolution of 8 February 2018, the European Parliament called on the Commission to conduct an assessment of the summer-time arrangements provided by Directive 2000/84/EC and, if necessary, to come up with a proposal for its revision. That resolution also confirmed that it is essential to maintain a harmonised

Amendment

(2) In its resolution of 8 February 2018, ***building on petitions and demands received from the citizens***, the European Parliament called on the Commission to conduct an assessment of the summer-time arrangements provided by Directive 2000/84/EC and, if necessary, to come up with a proposal for its revision. That

¹ Hendrik Wolff and Momoe Makino, Extending Becker's time allocation theory to model continuous time blocks: evidence from daylight saving time, IZA discussion paper No 6787, 2012, ICF International, p.25, Anna Goodmann (et al.) Daylight saving time as a potential public health intervention: an observational study of evening daylight and objectively-measured physical activity among 23,000 children from 9 countries, in *International journal of behavioural nutrition and physical activity*, 2014, 11:84,

approach to time arrangements throughout the Union.

resolution also confirmed that it is essential to maintain a harmonised approach to time arrangements throughout the Union.

Or. en

Amendment 2

Proposal for a directive

Recital 3

Text proposed by the Commission

(3) The Commission has examined available evidence, which points to the importance of having harmonised Union rules in this area to ensure the proper functioning of the internal market and avoid, inter alia, disruptions to the scheduling of transport operations and the functioning of information and communication systems, higher costs to cross-border trade, or lower productivity for goods and services. ***Evidence is not conclusive as to whether the benefits of summer-time arrangements outweigh the inconveniences linked to a biannual change of time.***

Amendment

(3) The Commission has examined available evidence, which points to the importance of having harmonised Union rules in this area to ensure the proper functioning of the internal market and avoid, inter alia, disruptions to the scheduling of transport operations and the functioning of information and communication systems, higher costs to cross-border trade, or lower productivity for goods and services.

Or. en

Amendment 3

Proposal for a directive

Recital 4

Text proposed by the Commission

(4) A lively public debate is taking place on summer-time arrangements and some Member States have already expressed their preference to discontinue the application of such arrangements. ***In the light of these developments, it is necessary to continue safeguarding the***

Amendment

(4) A lively public debate is taking place on summer-time arrangements, ***as seen by the large amount of petitions received by the European Parliament and the public consultation on EU summertime arrangements, which generated the largest amount of responses***

proper functioning of the internal market and to avoid any significant disruptions thereto caused by divergences between Member States in this area. Therefore, it is appropriate to put an end in a coordinated way to summer-time arrangements.

ever received in any Commission consultation, and some Member States have already expressed their preference to discontinue the application of such arrangements. Many citizens have advocated putting an end to seasonal clock changes, primarily based on health concerns. In the petitions received by the European Parliament, citizens maintain that the clock change has a particularly negative impact on vulnerable groups, such as children and the elderly. Furthermore, numerous scientific studies, including the European Parliamentary Research Service study of October 2017 on EU summer-time arrangements under Directive 2000/84/EC, have indicated the existence of negative effects on human health. Chronobiological research findings suggest that the effect on human biorhythm may be more severe than previously thought.

Or. en

Amendment 4

Proposal for a directive Recital 4 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(4 a) In the light of these developments, it is necessary to continue safeguarding the proper functioning of the internal market and to avoid any significant disruptions thereto caused by divergences between Member States in this area. Therefore, it is appropriate to put an end in a coordinated way to the biannual change of time and establishing the summer-time period as the new standard time in all Member States.

Or. en

Amendment 5

Proposal for a directive

Recital 5

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(5) *This Directive should not prejudice the right of each Member State to decide on the standard time or times for the territories under its jurisdiction and falling under the territorial scope of the Treaties, and on further changes thereto. However, in order to ensure that the application of summer-time arrangements by some Member States only does not disrupt the functioning of the internal market, Member States should refrain from changing the standard time in any given territory under their jurisdiction for reasons related to seasonal changes, be such change presented as a change of time zone. Moreover, in order to minimise disruptions, inter alia, to transport, communications and other concerned sectors, they should notify the Commission in due time of their intention to change their standard time and subsequently apply the notified changes. The Commission should, on the basis of that notification, inform all other Member States so that they can take all necessary measures. It should also inform the general public and stakeholders by publishing this information.*

deleted

Or. en

Amendment 6

Proposal for a directive

Recital 5 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(5 a) *The online public consultation regarding the EU summertime*

arrangements, organised by the European Commission from 4 July 2018 to the 16 August 2018, and a large amount of petitions received by the Committee on Petitions in the European Parliament demonstrate the citizens' preference for a permanent summertime arrangement. In addition, responses from businesses and stakeholder groups also show a clear preference for a permanent summertime according to the European Commission survey.

Or. en

Amendment 7

Proposal for a directive

Recital 6

Text proposed by the Commission

(6) Therefore, it is necessary to put an end to the harmonisation of the period covered by summer-time arrangements as laid down in Directive 2000/84/EC and to introduce common rules preventing Member States from applying different seasonal time arrangements ***by changing their standard time more than once during the year and establishing the obligation to notify envisaged changes of the standard time.*** This Directive aims at contributing in a determined manner to the smooth functioning of the internal market and should, consequently, be based on Article 114 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, as interpreted in accordance with the consistent case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union.

Amendment

(6) Therefore, it is necessary to put an end to the harmonisation of the period covered by summer-time arrangements as laid down in Directive 2000/84/EC and to introduce common rules preventing Member States from applying different seasonal time arrangements. ***For the smooth functioning of the internal market, it is essential that all Member States use the same time arrangement, permanent summer-time arrangement, to avoid a patchwork of time arrangements within the internal market.*** This Directive aims at contributing in a determined manner to the smooth functioning of the internal market and should, consequently, be based on Article 114 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, as interpreted in accordance with the consistent case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union.

Or. en

Amendment 8

Proposal for a directive

Recital 7

Text proposed by the Commission

(7) This Directive should apply from 1 April 2019, so that the last summer-time period subject to the rules of Directive 2000/84/EC should start, in every Member State, at 1.00 a.m., Coordinated Universal Time, on 31 March 2019. ***Member States that, after that summer-time period, intend to adopt a standard time corresponding to the time applied during the winter season in accordance with Directive 2000/84/EC should change their standard time at 1.00 a.m., Coordinated Universal Time, on 27 October 2019, so that similar and lasting changes occurring in different Member States take place simultaneously. It is desirable that Member States take the decisions on the standard time that each of them will apply as from 2019 in a concerted manner.***

Amendment

(7) This Directive should apply from 1 April 2019, so that the last summer-time period subject to the rules of Directive 2000/84/EC should start, in every Member State, at 1.00 a.m., Coordinated Universal Time, on 31 March 2019, ***shall be the new*** standard time ***in all*** Member States.

Or. en

Amendment 9

Proposal for a directive

Article 1 – paragraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission

2. ***Notwithstanding paragraph 1, Member States may still apply a seasonal change of their standard time or times in 2019, provided that they do so at 1.00 a.m., Coordinated Universal Time, on 27 October 2019. The Member States shall notify this decision in accordance with Article 2.***

Amendment

deleted

Or. en

Amendment 10

Proposal for a directive

Article 1 – paragraph 2 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

2a. For the purpose of this Directive ‘summer-time period’, the period of the year during which clocks are put forward by 60 minutes compared with the rest of the year, shall be the new standard time in the Member States.

Or. en

Amendment 11

Proposal for a directive

Article 2

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Article 2

deleted

1. Without prejudice to Article 1, if a Member State decides to change its standard time or times in any territory under its jurisdiction, it shall notify the Commission at least 6 months before the change takes effect. Where a Member State has made such a notification and has not withdrawn it at least 6 months before the date of the envisaged change, the Member State shall apply this change.

2. Within 1 month of the notification, the Commission shall inform the other Member States thereof and publish that information in the Official Journal of the European Union.

Or. en

Amendment 12

Proposal for a directive

Article 2 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Article 2a

As defined in Article 1, the new standard time period shall apply, in every Member State, at 1.00 a.m., Greenwich Mean Time, as from the 31 of March 2019.

Or. en