Tourism sector: collection of statistical information

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The Committee on Transport and Tourism adopted the report by Mr CORNELISSEN contesting the legal basis for the directive (i.e. Article 213 alone). The rapporteur pointed out that, although previous decisions on the same subject (two-year programme on tourist statistics and framework programme for priority actions in the field of statistics) had also been based on Article 213, the effects of these decisions, although binding, were not general in scope. The effect of the present directive, on the other hand, was general in scope in that it linked all the Member States in the pursuit of a single objective. The arguments in support of Article 213 were not therefore applicable in the present case, which was why the rapporteur was in favour of a new legal basis combining Article 100A and Article 213. He justified his choice of new legal basis on the grounds that other Commission proposals on statistics (e.g. proposal on exchanges of goods between Member States) had been based on Article 100A on the approximation of legislation to establish the internal market. The working of the internal market is expressly mentioned in the framework programme for priority action in the field of statistics, thereby substantiating the addition of Article 100A for the present proposal for a directive. In addition to changing the legal basis, the rapporteur also recommended a number of other amendments: - the report recommended adding a heading on employment in the tourist sector (including seasonal employment) to the areas in which data is collected, using a NUT II regional breakdown; - as regards the dissemination of results, the report recommended that all users should have access to results. The Commission would be required to monitor the accuracy of the data provided by ensuring that Member States complied with their obligations and then submitting a report to the European Parliament. Finally, the rapporteur proposed that the transitional period planned by the Commission be reduced to 2 years for monthly and annual data (rather than 3) and to 3 years (rather than 5) for quarterly data. The paragraph stating that 1997 would be the first observation period for quarterly information was deleted. The Community would underwrite part of the cost incurred by national statistics offices in adapting their individual systems during the transitional period.