Summer-time arrangements: 8th Directive

1996/0082(COD) - 29/10/1996

The committee unanimously endorsed the eight directive on summer time arrangements, with the priority on harmonisation during the period from the last Sunday in March to the last Sunday in October (as has been the case in the Member States since this year). The rapporteur, Mr Spalato BELLERE, stated that the majority of European Union citizens were in favour of keeping summer time, especially as account needed to be taken of regions in which summer time arrangements had different effects. Mr Thomas MEGAHY pointed out that the French proposals could affect the plenary sessions of the European Parliament in Strasbourg. MEPs' working conditions would deteriorate yet further if Strasbourg time was an hour different from Brussels time or 2 hours different from London time. In addition, frontier workers in France, Germany, Belgium and Spain would face huge problems as far as their working hours were concerned. Parliament considered that this type of decision should not rest with the Member States alone. Where possible, summer time in 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001 should start in each Member State at one o'clock universal time on the last Sunday in March, i.e. 29 March 1998, 28 March 1999, 26 March 2000 and 25 March 2001 and end on the last Sunday in October, i.e. 25 October 1998, 31 October 1999, 29 October 2000 and 28 October 2001. Mr Florus WIJSENBEEK's amendment calling for the Commission to ensure that there was no more than one hour's time difference between adjoining Member States was adopted.