



European Parliament

LEGISLATIVE TRAIN 02.2026

1 A NEW PLAN FOR EUROPE'S SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY AND COMPETITIVENESS

DIRECTIVE DISCONTINUING SEASONAL CHANGES OF TIME

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CONTENT

On 12 September 2018, the European Commission published a proposal for a directive on discontinuing seasonal changes of time.

The proposal would discontinue the current system of bi-annual clock changes.

The EU first unified the summer-time arrangements in 1980, in order to ensure a harmonised approach to time switching within the single market, as until then, national summer-time practices and schedules were diverging. The current summer-time arrangements directive requires Member States to switch to summer-time on the last Sunday of March and back to standard time (informally known as winter-time) on the last Sunday of October.

In its resolution of 8 February 2018, the European Parliament called on the Commission to conduct a thorough assessment of the current summer-time arrangements directive and, if necessary, come up with a proposal for its revision. Parliament quoted scientific studies indicating negative effects on human health and a number of concerns expressed by citizens' initiatives. Commission's public consultation from 4 July 2018 to 16 August 2018 received 4.6 million responses, including 4.5 million from individual citizens, of which 84% were in favour of discontinuing the bi-annual clock changes, while 16% wanted to keep them. Cyprus and Greece were the only countries where a small majority was in favour of keeping the current system while Malta is nearly evenly divided.

On 17 October 2018 the European Economic and Social Committee adopted its opinion.

The legislative proposal was assigned to the European Parliament's Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN), which designated Marita Ulvskog (S&D, Sweden) as rapporteur. The rapporteur presented her draft report at the 21-22 January 2019 TRAN Committee meeting, during which a workshop with experts on the potential consequences and impacts of discontinuing seasonal changes of time was also held.

The TRAN Committee adopted the report on 4 March 2019 by 23 votes in favour, 11 against, 0 abstentions. The report argues for a final switch to summer time at the end of March 2021, before a possible final time change at the end of October 2021 (for States that wish to apply winter time). MEPs want to set up a coordination mechanism, composed of a representative for each State and one of the Commission, to ensure that Member States approach the choice of time zone in a harmonised way. They also want to give to the Commission the power to adopt a delegated act to postpone the date of application of Member States' decisions by twelve months, if

the time arrangements notified by the Member State have the potential to hamper the functioning of the internal market.

In addition, six other Parliament committees provided their opinion.

The Parliament adopted its position at first reading on 26 March 2019 by 410 votes to 192 with 51 abstentions. It supports the Commission's proposal to discontinue the time change. The time change scheduled for the last Sunday in March 2021 should be the last for EU Member States wishing to keep summer time. Member States that prefer to keep the standard time (winter time), may change their time one last time on the last Sunday in October 2021. Member States should cooperate with one another via a coordinated mechanism, with one representative for each Member State and the Commission. Further, a mechanism for protecting the internal market is to be set up. By the end of 2025, the Commission should assess the implementation.

On 24 September 2019, TRAN Committee decided to enter into interinstitutional negotiations on this file after 1st reading in Parliament. This file was part of the unfinished business and was carried over under the new term.

In the Council, the matter has been discussed within the Council Working Party on Land Transport. At the informal meeting of EU transport ministers, held in Graz, Austria at the end of October 2018, a majority of Member States expressed their support for ending seasonal clock changes. However, they underlined that a way forward could only be secured when the next steps are known and the impact assessment available. On 19 November 2018, Council published a progress report, which was endorsed by the Transport Council meeting of 3 December. Ministers assessed the progress in discussions and decided to conduct an impact assessment and coordinate action at European level before reaching a political agreement. While in January 2020, the Commission included the proposal in Annex III of the 2020 Commission Work Programme relating to "Priority pending proposals", there have been no further progress in the Council on the file.

On 26 March 2021 TRAN Committee MEPs issued a statement urging the Council to speed up their work on the file.

On 23 October 2025 Parliament held a debate in plenary on the discontinuation of seasonal changes of time. Following discussions initiated by the Polish Presidency of the Council, the Commission has decided to undertake further analysis through a detailed study to support future decision-making on this issue.

References:

- EP Legislative Observatory, [Procedure file on a Directive on discontinuing seasonal changes of time](#), 2018/0332(COD)
- European Commission, [Proposal for a directive on discontinuing seasonal changes of time](#), COM(2018) 639
- [Directive 2000/84/EC of 19 January 2001 on summer-time arrangements](#)
- Council, [Progress report on Proposal for a discontinuing seasonal changes of time and repealing Directive 2000/84/EC](#)

- Council, [Outcome of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council meeting of 3 and 4 December 2018](#)
- European Economic and Social Committee, [Opinion: Discontinuing seasonal changes of time, 17 October 2018](#)
- European Parliament, [Transport MEPs urge to end clock change](#), press release, March 2021
- European Parliament, [Committee on Transport and Tourism report on the proposal for a directive discontinuing seasonal changes of time and repealing Directive 2000/84/EC](#)
 - European Parliament, [Legislative resolution of 26 March 2019 on the proposal for a directive discontinuing seasonal changes of time and repealing Directive 2000/84/EC](#)
- Council, [Outcome of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council meeting of 2 December 2019](#)
- European Parliament, [Debate on discontinuing seasonal time change, Verbatim report](#), 23 October 2025

Further reading:

- European Parliament, EPRS, [EU summer-time arrangements under Directive 2000/84/EC](#), Study, Ex-post impact assessment, October 2017
- European Parliament, EPRS, [Discontinuing seasonal changes of time](#), Briefing, EU Legislation in Progress, March 2019

Author: Mathias Gullentops, Members' Research Service, legislative-train@europarl.europa.eu

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RAPPOTEUR
Petar VITANOV
 ENVI - TRAN - LIBE