

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1980 - 1981

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1-887/80

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

tabled by Mrs EWING, Mr de la MALENE, Mr LALOR,
Mr NYBORG, Mr ANSQUER, Mr CLEMENT, Mr COUSTE,
Mr CRONIN, Mr DAVERN, Mr DELEAU, Mr DOUBLET,
Mr FANTON, Mr FLANAGAN, Mrs FOURCADE, Mr GERONIMI,
Mr ISRAEL, Mr de LIPKOWSKI, Mr REMILLY, Mr TURCAT,
Miss de VALERA, Mr VIE, Mrs WEISS

on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats
and

Mr MAHER, Mr HUTTON, Mr FERGUSSON, Mr ALMIRANTE,
Mr ROMUALDI, Mr PETRONIO

with request for urgent debate

pursuant to Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure

on a derogation to Community drivers' hours
legislation in remote islands and depopulated
and isolated areas

The European Parliament,

- recognizing the serious social and economic implications of Council Regulation No (EEC) 543/69¹ (on the harmonization of certain social legislation relating to road transport) in remote islands and depopulated and isolated areas,
 - aware of the imminent termination of many essential transport services and the disastrous effect this will have on social and economic conditions in these areas,
 - whereas the regulation permits individuals to drive 'small goods vehicles' up to nine hours per day (as opposed to the standard 8 hour driving period) on two occasions per week,
 - considering this flexibility does not extend to the driving of articulated vehicles or draw-bar combinations exceeding 20 tonnes gross vehicle weight, despite the fact that many operators servicing remote islands and isolated areas are forced to use such vehicles for essential economic survival,
 - recognizing the need for stringent enforcement of drivers' hours legislation but, at the same time, taking into account the specific problems of the above-mentioned areas,
1. Requests the Commission to propose a minor derogation on drivers' hours legislation which would apply to drivers of 'heavy goods vehicles' used to service remote islands and isolated regions and permit individual drivers to include two nine-hour driving periods in their working week, with weekly and fortnightly totals unaltered;
 2. Recommends the Commission to propose that this derogation apply only to drivers of vehicles operating from remote islands headquarters or from mainland bases more than 50 miles (80 km) from a motorway;
 3. Requests the Commission take greater account of depopulation and isolation when drawing up future proposals for transport legislation;
 4. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission.

JUSTIFICATION

The motion for a resolution is self-explanatory, but it should be borne in mind that the remote and isolated areas of the Community are least able to contend with the increased prices necessitated by the reductions in driving hours (e.g. a recent survey in Scotland - completed before the introduction of the new drivers' hours legislation - revealed that food prices etc. were as much as 30% higher in the most remote islands. On the other hand, wages were found to be as much as 25% lower in these areas).

The recent reduction in driving hours is having serious social and economic consequences in such areas; many firms have been forced out of business and many vital services have been withdrawn: consumers simply cannot afford to pay the increased prices. It is essential that this situation be rectified immediately.

¹ as amended by Council Regulations 514/72, 515/72, 2827/77 and 2829/77