

CalConnect calls on EU to reconsider timeline for proposed seasonal time changes

Workshop and mailing list announced for discussion of technical impact

Summary

The European Commission has proposed, after public consultation, that its member states discontinue seasonal changes of time, effective October 2019. The member states must decide how to implement the proposed change before April 1st 2019. Several governments and organizations have since expressed concerns on such a tight timeline for the far-reaching change.

[The Calending and Scheduling Consortium](#) (CalConnect) a global non-profit organization shares these concerns, and recommends the European Commission extend the timelines specified in the proposal.

Specifically, we recommend providing a transition period of at least one year (12 months) after the final decision of the change has been set. CalConnect will host a public workshop on the proposed EU changes at its next conference in early February 2019, and has recently launched a public mailing list for the discussion of best practices for planning new time zone changes.

The European Commission's Proposal

The European Commission has proposed requiring European Union (EU) member states to decide whether to permanently keep summer or winter time by 1 April 2019. ([Proposal for discontinuing seasonal changes of time and repealing Directive 2000/84/EC](#)). For countries opting for permanent winter time, the last daylight-saving time change will occur in October 2019.

This proposal was made in response to the corresponding public consultation that ended in August 2018, where the majority of participating EU citizens voted to abandon daylight saving time in the EU.



Specifically, the timeline specified in this proposal only gives EU member states 6 months of lead time from the decision date of March 2019 (since the adoption date is set to 1 April 2019) to the effective date of October 2019.

Our concerns

CalConnect is concerned insufficient notice has been provided to EU member states to make their decisions and implement changes. CalConnect is deeply aware of potential repercussions of such a change with short notice. Our membership is comprised of technology vendors and end-user organizations focused on the areas of date and time, calendaring, scheduling, and for more than a decade, time zone issues.

CalConnect's experience from similar DST changes in the past indicates that such changes pose serious risks to the accuracy of stored time-related data and schedules (such as meetings, appointments, flights and transit schedules).

Users of services and products that depend on correct time zone information -- universities, companies of all sizes, and many other types of organizations, as well as their suppliers -- will face a major challenge to assess which software and hardware is vulnerable, and to implement mitigation measures.

While customers need adequate time for budgeting, procurement, and installation of upgrades or replacements for this change, vendors also need time to implement and test product changes, all the while under pressure to meet market needs and fulfill regulatory compliance. An extended timeline will benefit all parties.

Change management

Serious technical and operational problems can occur when insufficient time is allowed for time zone changes.

Over the last decade, a number of time zone related changes performed were enforced in diverse areas without consideration of best practices and adequate planning, leaving user



organizations, especially small and medium businesses, scrambling and suffering from the effects of using incorrect time zone information.

We strongly suggest extending the effective implementation date of October 2019 to March 2020, allowing a transition period of at one year from the decision deadline of March 2019. This would provide consumer and technology vendors alike ample time to implement the necessary changes.

What CalConnect is doing to help the transition

CalConnect is pursuing a number of initiatives in order to assist policy makers and IT specialists in implementing the proposed time zone changes.

Public workshop

CalConnect is organizing a public workshop on the EU proposal to abandon seasonal time change at our next conference in Zurich, Switzerland (Feb 4-8, 2019).

We call on all stakeholders (e.g., vendors, consumers, policymakers) interested in, or affected by this Directive, to [register](#) and participate in the workshop.

Time zone distribution standard

Our members have created the standard for [Time zone Data Distribution Services](#) (IETF RFC 7808). Today, most services and devices still rely on patching and manually updating time zone information instead of automated or dynamic updates.

We recommend the European Commission strongly support adoption of relevant open standards, and encourage its member states to collaborate with each other as well as the international standards bodies.

Coordinated global effort with ISO/TC 154

We are working closely with other standards-setting organizations (including ISO/TC 154 and UNECE) to harmonize time zone data and time zone distribution internationally.

We recommend regional standards bodies in the European Union, such as [CEN](#) and [CENELECT](#), and standards bodies in its member states participate in this global partnership.



Public time zone change mailing list

We have set up a public mailing list to discuss the challenges and best practices relating to time zone and DST changes worldwide at:

<http://www.calconnect.org/resources/discussion-lists/time-zone-discussion> .

Contact

For further information or to discuss these issues, please contact Rutger Geelen, President rutger.geelen@calconnect.org or Dave Thewlis, Executive Director dave.thewlis@calconnect.org

About CalConnect

CalConnect, The Calendaring & Scheduling Consortium, pursues the wide availability of truly interoperable collaboration tools through the use of open standards. We are the authoritative voice of calendaring and scheduling; much of our work touches on, or is applicable to, other collaboration technologies. See more at www.calconnect.org.

References

Articles relating this to proposal

- Abschaffung der Zeitemstellung braucht mehr Zeit - <https://www.stuttgarter-nachrichten.de/inhalt.eu-abschaffung-der-zeitumstellung-braucht-mehr-zeit.7a2c1f71-0dc7-4a3f-a2be-e7653f36948c.html>
- EU members complain about a lack of detail and a tight timeline. - <https://www.politico.eu/article/countries-resist-jean-claude-juncker-daylight-saving-clock-change-plan/>
- IANA statement - <https://mm.icann.org/pipermail/tz/2018-July/026705.html>
- Mit dem Ende der Zeitemstellung droht ein neues Jahr-2000-Problem - <https://newsroom.gmx.net/2018/10/26/ende-der-zeitumstellung-moegliche-folgen-es-droht-ein-neues-jahr-2000-problem/>

Articles relating to past time changes and their challenges

- What is the daylight saving time (DST) problem? - <https://www.itprotoday.com/management-mobility/what-daylight-saving-time-dst-problem>
- Daylight Saving Time – The Year 2007 Problem - <http://www.edgeblog.net/2007/daylight-saving-time-the-year-2007-problem/>

CalConnect TZ and DST knowledge base

- <https://www.calconnect.org/resources/daylight-saving-time>