

### Starting up

- In your country, does the time change by an hour twice a year? If it does, do you approve?
- If it doesn't, would you like it to? Give reasons in both cases.
- Read through the whole article. Then do the exercise below.

### Reading 1

Read the article again to find, in relation to time changing twice a year:

- a) the year in which legislation will come into force in Europe
- b) the year it was originally supposed to come into force
- c) the number of people who participated in research about the change
- d) the percentage who wanted permanent summertime
- e) the percentage who wanted permanent winter time
- f) the percentage without an opinion
- g) six areas for which reasons are given, some perhaps not valid, for having permanent summer time
- h) the reason supported by the writer

## We need permanent summer time to lift our mood

As I leave the Financial Times building after work this week, I walk into daylight. The clocks have changed. Except the time-shifting should soon stop. The European Parliament voted last week to put an end to the twice-yearly changing of the clocks. All EU countries, the parliament said, should remain either on summer or winter time all year long. The change was meant to start this year, but, in line with the EU's penchant for delay, the parliament said it should now begin in 2021. The vote needs to be approved by EU ministers.

The move seems popular: 4.6m EU citizens responded to a consultation, with 84 per cent saying they wanted clock-changing to stop. The majority — 56 per cent — said they wanted permanent summer time, with 36 per cent opting for endless winter time and 8 per cent having no view, apart from not having to change the clocks.

Many claims have been made for an extra hour of daylight. Its champions say that it reduces accidents, because drivers are more alert on dark mornings on their way to work than they are coming home in the dark. Children walking home from school are less likely to be hit by a car if it is still light. The extra daylight hour is said to stimulate the retail, leisure and tourist economies. People are more likely to go shopping or out with friends. Many believe that crime goes down because criminals are less brazen when it is light.

What is the truth of these claims? There has already been an experiment with “continuous summer time”: Britain tried it between 1968 and 1971. A government White Paper towards the end of the experiment said that the advantages and disadvantages had been difficult to quantify. The difficulty in quantifying the benefits of lighter afternoons continues. A survey of 24 studies into the effect of clock changes on road accidents found some evidence that extending daylight hours reduced road accidents, fatalities and injuries, particularly to pedestrians and cyclists. But, the survey warned, the number of accidents can fall for reasons unrelated to light, such as weather and road conditions.

The research was too inconsistent to reach definite conclusions. Extra daylight “could possibly have a positive or negative impact on collisions, but may also have no effect,” the survey concluded. What of the impact on crime? A US study found that lighter afternoons did reduce robbery rates by 7 per cent. But other interventions reduced crime too. Anti-theft technology reduced car theft by 10 per cent.

We can probably say the same about shopping. Yes, an hour of daylight could get more people into the shops. But the retail trade is more likely to be affected by the drive to online purchasing, which keeps people away from stores, however bright it is. As the White Paper said at the end of the UK's last experiment with continuous summer time, these are qualitative rather than quantitative choices. They are personal preferences. I vote for an extra hour of winter daylight. I think it would lift our spirits.



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### Grammar – reported speech

Transform each of these utterances into two possible forms of reported speech, using the verb and the other word, if any, in brackets.

- 1 Woman: 'I want permanent summer time.' (say)  
*She said she wants permanent summer time.*  
*She said she wanted permanent summer time.*
- 2 Man: 'It gets dark so early in the evenings.' (complain)
- 3 Couple: 'We want to keep to the current system.' (confirm)
- 4 European Union spokeswoman: 'We will postpone the introduction of this change.' (inform/us)
- 5 Man: 'I'm a farmer and I like the lighter mornings.' (tell/interviewers)
- 6 Woman: 'I really didn't want clocks to change twice a year.' (insist)
- 7 Couple: 'We may go out more in the evenings with our friends.' (say)
- 8 Policewoman: 'Criminals must think twice before committing a crime in daylight.' (comment)

### Vocabulary 1 – related forms

Complete the table with words from the article, and related forms.

verb	noun
shift	
approve	
respond	
	option
	champion
	reduction
stimulate	
claim	
	experiment
	survey
	collision
impact	

## Vocabulary 2 – meanings

Match the nouns in the table above to their meanings, as they (or their verb equivalents) are used in the article.

- a) a statement that something is true, even if not proved
- b) when two objects hit each other
- c) study
- d) choice
- e) trial
- f) effect
- g) change
- h) permission
- i) answer
- j) someone who fights for a principle
- k) fall
- l) when activity etc is increased by something

## Reading 2

Which is the correct 'takeaway' from the article?

According to the writer, abolishing the time change is clearly justified for:

- a) practical reasons.
- b) psychological reasons.
- c) educational reasons.

## Further discussion / Group work

- 1 Go back to the answer you gave in Starting up. Now that you have read the article, would it be the same? Give reasons.
- 2 How does your mood vary, on average, through each day, each week and each year? What are the factors involved in these changes?

**ANSWER KEY****Reading 1**

- a) 2021
- b) 2019
- c) 4.6 million
- d) 56 per cent
- e) 36 per cent
- f) 8 per cent
- g) road safety, retail, leisure, tourism, crime, people's mood
- h) improved mood

**Grammar**

- 2 He complained that it gets dark so early in the evenings.  
He complained that it got dark so early in the evenings.
- 3 They confirmed they want to keep to the current system.  
They confirmed they wanted to keep to the current system.
- 4 She informed us that the European Union will postpone the introduction of this change.  
She informed us that the European Union would postpone the introduction of this change.
- 5 He told interviewers that he is a farmer and that he likes the lighter mornings.  
He told interviewers that he was a farmer and that he liked the lighter mornings.
- 6 She insisted that she really didn't want the clocks to change twice a year.  
She insisted that she really hadn't wanted the clocks to change twice a year.
- 7 They said they may go out more in the evenings with their friends.  
They said they might go out more in the evenings with their friends.
- 8 She commented that criminals must think twice before committing a crime in daylight.  
She commented that criminals had to think twice before committing a crime in daylight.

**Vocabulary 1 and 2**

verb	noun
shift	shift – g)
approve	approval – h)
respond	response – i)
opt	option – d)
champion	champion – j)
reduce	reduction – k)
stimulate	stimulation – l)
claim	claim – a)
experiment	experiment – e)
survey	survey – c)
collide	collision – b)
impact	impact – f)

**Reading 2**

b)

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