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European Commission - Press release

Summertime Consultation: 84% want Europe to stop changing the clock

Brussels, 31 August 2018

The European Commission has today published the preliminary results of the public consultation on clock change in Europe.

This online consultation, which ran from 4 July to 16 August 2018, received 4.6 million responses from all 28 Member States, the highest number of responses ever received in any Commission public consultation. According to the preliminary results (see annex), 84% of respondents are in favour of putting an end to the bi-annual clock change.

European Commissioner for Transport Violeta **Bulc** presented these preliminary results to the College of Commissioners that held a first discussion on the possible next steps. Commissioner **Bulc** said: "Millions of Europeans used our public consultation to make their voices heard. The message is very clear: 84% of them do not want the clocks to change anymore. We will now act accordingly and prepare a legislative proposal to the European Parliament and the Council, who will then decide together."

The preliminary results also indicate that more than three quarters (76%) of the respondents consider that changing the clock twice a year is a 'very negative' or 'negative' experience. Considerations related to the negative health impacts, increase of road accidents or the lack of energy savings, were put forward by respondents as motivations to put an end to the change.

European Commission President **Juncker** put the summertime question on the political agenda as part of his pledge to be big on the big things while leaving it to Member States to take decisions where they are best placed to do so. The public consultation on clock change arrangements was organised by the European Commission as part of its ongoing assessment of the current arrangements on clock change in Europe. It also follows the European Parliament's resolution in February 2018, as well as requests from Member States, stakeholders and citizens.

Next steps

The final results of the public consultation will be published in the coming weeks. The Commission will now make a proposal to the European Parliament and the Council with a view of changing the current clock change arrangements.

Background

Between 4 July and 16 August 2018, the European Commission organised a public consultation as part of its ongoing assessment of the current arrangements on clock change in Europe. It took the form of an online survey seeking the views of Europeans, notably on their overall experience with the change of clock or their preference over the main alternatives (i.e. maintaining the current system unchanged or abolishing it for the whole EU). Public consultations are one of the tools the Commission uses to make its assessment on policy, alongside other elements such as scientific studies. Other past prominent consultations include the Birds and Habitat legislation (more than 550,000 replies) or the modernisation of the Common Agriculture Policy (more than 322,000 replies).

Most Member States have an old tradition of clock change arrangements, many of which date back as far as the First and Second World Wars or to the oil crisis in the 1970s. Since the 1980's, the European Union gradually adopted legislation whereby all Member States would agree to coordinate the clock change and put an end to diverging national schedules. Since 1996, all Europeans have been changing their clock forward by one hour on the last Sunday of March and by one hour backward on the last Sunday of October. The purpose of EU rules was not to harmonise the time regime in the EU but to address the problems, notably for the transport and logistics sectors, which arise from an uncoordinated application of clock-changes in the course of the year.

In parallel to the daylight saving time arrangement in the European Union, the Member States apply three different time zones or standard times. The decision on the standard time is a national competence.

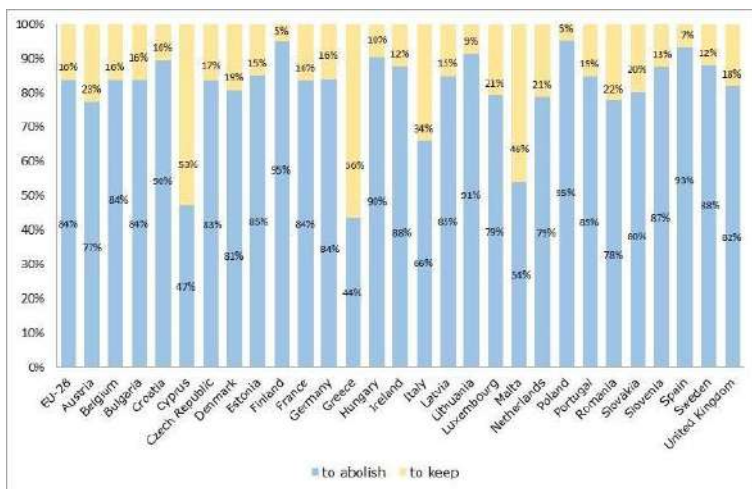
ANNEX

All results are preliminary and subject to changes

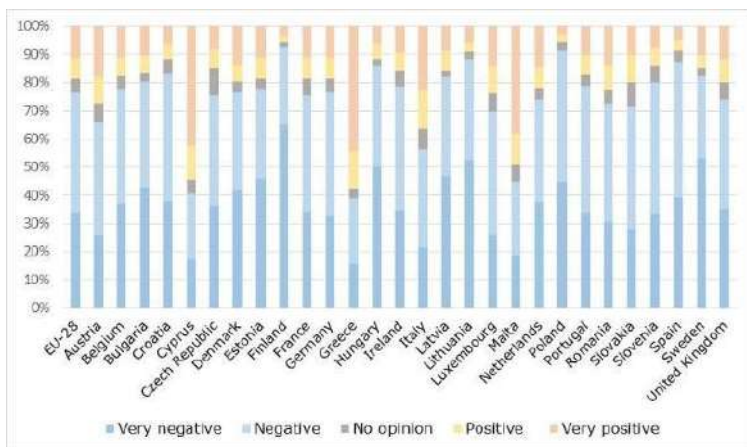
Participation rate in each Member State (in percentage of the national population):

Germany	3,79%
Austria	2,94%
Luxembourg	1,78%
Finland	0,96%
Estonia	0,94%
Cyprus	0,88%
Slovenia	0,73%
Slovakia	0,60%
Czech Republic	0,59%
France	0,59%
Belgium	0,55%
Croatia	0,52%
Sweden	0,48%
Latvia	0,39%
Poland	0,34%
Greece	0,34%
Lithuania	0,34%
Portugal	0,33%
Malta	0,25%
Ireland	0,24%
Hungary	0,21%
Spain	0,19%
Bulgaria	0,18%
Netherlands	0,16%
Denmark	0,11%
Italy	0,04%
Romania	0,04%
United Kingdom	0,02%

Which of the following alternatives would you favour?



What is your overall experience with the clock change?



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