

Beat: Politics

Europe change hour

Summer time

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USPA NEWS - EU countries switch to summer time every year, as they will do this Sunday., but what are the benefits and are there any drawbacks? These and other questions were discussed by MEPs and experts on 24 March.

"We need to move forward with this legislation and giving an oral question to the European Commission could be one of the ways to accelerate the whole thing," said Czech EPP member Pavel Svoboda, chair of the legal affairs committee, summing up the discussion. Summer time is the practice of moving clocks one hour forward to make better use of the longer daylight hours in the summer months. This creates opportunities for leisure activities or work during as it stays light for longer during the evening. However, energy savings are relatively small and some experts say summer time creates health problems.

How it works in Europe

Although the idea for summer time has often been credited to Benjamin Franklin, It is believed that Germany and Austria-Hungary were the first to embrace the concept a century ago to save fuel for the First World War. Others soon followed suit. Most EU member states adopted summer time in the 1970s. However, having different beginning and end dates in every country created problems, especially for the transport sector. This is why governments decided at the EU level that summer time should begin on the last Sunday in March and end on the last Sunday in October.

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