

# GLOBAL HORIZONS

A communications platform for MIA's Protocol and International Affairs Division



MARCH 2026

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### ABOUT US

The core mission of MIA's Protocol and International Affairs Division is *to facilitate the movement of official guests, delegations, dignitaries, and VIPs through MIA and support the airport's international programs and initiatives.*

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## Miami-Dade County: A Rising Nexus for Global Diplomacy

Over the past several decades, Miami-Dade County has steadily evolved into one of the Western Hemisphere's most dynamic hubs for international engagement, sports, and diplomacy. Long recognized as the gateway connecting the United States with Latin America and the Caribbean, the county now serves as an increasingly influential venue for global dialogue, high-level summits, and international cooperation. With world-class infrastructure, a multilingual population, and a globally connected economy, Miami-Dade provides an environment uniquely suited to convene leaders, policymakers, and institutions from around the world.

As a testament to this evolution, Miami-Dade County today hosts the [third-largest diplomatic presence in the United States](#), following only New York and Washington, D.C. The region's consular corps, trade offices, and international organizations form a robust diplomatic ecosystem that supports global engagement, facilitates cross-border collaboration, and strengthens Miami-Dade's role as a strategic center for international affairs.

This growing prominence is rooted in a longstanding history of hosting major international gatherings. In 1994, Miami welcomed leaders from across the hemisphere for the landmark [Free Trade Area of the Americas Summit](#). The meeting brought together heads of state and senior officials to explore economic integration and trade cooperation throughout the Americas. Hosting the summit demonstrated Miami's capacity to facilitate complex diplomatic engagements and positioned the region as a credible platform for hemispheric dialogue.

Miami-Dade County's international stature has also been strengthened by its role as a center for global legal and commercial cooperation. The city is home to the [Arbitration Center of the Americas - Miami International Arbitration Society \(MIAS\)](#), which provides a respected forum for resolving cross-border commercial and investment disputes. By offering a neutral venue for international arbitration, the institution reinforces Miami's reputation as a trusted environment where business, law, and diplomacy intersect to promote stability and economic partnership across the region.

More recently, Miami-Dade reaffirmed its role as a diplomatic convening point by hosting the [Shield of the Americas Summit](#) in Doral on March 7, 2026. The summit brought together regional leaders, policymakers, and international partners to address shared priorities, including security cooperation, economic resilience, and democratic governance. Looking ahead, the county's international profile will continue to rise as it prepares to host soccer matches during the [FIFA World Cup 2026™](#) in June and July. One of the largest global sporting events in history, the World Cup will draw millions of visitors, international media, and official delegations from participating nations. Such global events often serve as informal arenas of diplomacy, fostering cross-cultural exchange while strengthening relationships among governments, institutions, and international organizations.

The broader diplomatic landscape will also be shaped by the United States' hosting of the [G20 Heads of State Summit](#), December 14 & 15, 2026, in Doral, Florida, which convenes leaders of the world's largest economies to address global challenges ranging from economic stability to climate policy. As one of the nation's most internationally connected metropolitan regions, Miami-Dade is well-positioned to support diplomatic activities associated with this gathering and to welcome visiting delegations through its globally recognized aviation and hospitality sectors.

Central to Miami-Dade's emergence as a global convening hub has been the visionary and exemplary leadership of the county's elected officials and public institutions. Through sustained investments in infrastructure, international trade promotion, aviation and maritime connectivity, and cultural engagement, county leaders have deliberately positioned Miami-Dade as a global bridge among nations.

Miami-Dade has become a place where diplomacy, commerce, culture, cruise, sports, tourism, and innovation converge. From historic summits to upcoming global events, Miami-Dade County continues to expand its international footprint, emerging not just as the gateway to the Americas but as one of the hemisphere's most important crossroads for diplomacy and global partnership.



**Cristine Keller**

Senior Protocol Coordinator  
Protocol & International Affairs Division

As we celebrate Women's History Month 2026, my colleagues and I are honored to share this edition of Global Horizons with you. As a woman, I remain humbled by the extraordinary contributions my sisters have made throughout history, and I am deeply grateful for their unwavering dedication to improving our world through grit, ingenuity, and persistence.

Women in aviation paved the way through remarkable firsts that represented not only personal milestones but also courageous breakthroughs against powerful cultural and social barriers. In the early 1900s, when women first took to the sky, many believed they were too nervous or emotional to fly, and society largely viewed the idea of a woman pilot as unacceptable. Yet these early trailblazers pressed forward. They challenged norms, rattled expectations, and persevered despite seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Through their boldness and sacrifice, they dismantled long-standing biases and expanded opportunities for future generations.

We honor these fearless pioneers—Harriet Quimby, Ruth Law, Katherine Stinson, Bessie Coleman, Lillian Boyer, Louise Thaden, and Blanche Noyes, among many others. Bessie Medlar Raiche, M.D., though less widely known, made history on September 16, 1910, with the nation's first intentional solo flight by a woman in an aircraft she built with her husband. Reflecting the spirit of her peers, she later wrote, "Adventure was calling me, and I readily obeyed."

Dear readers, thank you for your continued support. All of us at the Protocol & International Affairs Division hope you enjoy this issue.

# DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR RELATIONS

## MIA Operational Workshop 2026

On Friday, March 6, 2026, the Concourse D Auditorium at MIA served as the staging ground for a high-level Operational Workshop tailored for the Consular Corps and international partners. MIA Director and CEO Ralph Cutié stated in his welcome remarks, highlighting MIA’s role as a regional ambassador:

*"As the first and last impression of Miami-Dade for millions, we aren't just preparing for the World Cup and the G20. We are defining the world-class experience this county will deliver for decades."*

He was followed by Assistant Aviation Director, Mark O. Hatfield, Jr., who spoke on "Aviation Security Readiness for Global Events."

### Panel 1: The G20 Heads of State Summit – Doral, Florida

The morning session focused on the frictionless movement of global delegations. Moderated by Shannon H. Eisenhut, Regional Director, U.S. Department of State, Office of Foreign Missions. This panel addressed the rigorous requirements of hosting the G20 in Doral this December, with the following panelists:

- **Consular Integrity:** Aura Arauz-Figueroa (Fraud Prevention Manager, U.S. Dept. of State – Miami Passport Agency) briefed the assembly on Consular Notification and Access (CNA) policies and procedures, ensuring legal frameworks remain robust.
- **Diplomatic Precision:** Denis Galipeau (Senior Protocol Officer, U.S. Dept. of State) detailed the intricacies of managing "Heads of State" arrivals, emphasizing safety, security, and hospitality.
- **Checkpoint & Terminal Fluidity:** Stephen Taber (Federal Security Director, TSA Miami Field Office) detailed the operational strategy for TSA checkpoints and terminal management, highlighting the essential collaboration required between diverse stakeholders to maintain secure, efficient passenger flows.

### Panel 2: FIFA World Cup 2026™ – Miami-Dade as a Host Community

This session was moderated by Matt Ratner (Director, Sports & Entertainment Tourism, GMCVB) and focused on three core pillars of readiness:

- **Passenger Flow & Logistics:** Valeria Sorrentino (FIFA’s Head of Arrivals & Departures) laid out the scale of the tournament, emphasizing the need to expedite national teams and officials without disrupting the general traveler experience.
- **Infrastructure & Modernization:** Jeff Plant (Assistant Director of Operations, MIA) discussed leveraging MIA’s \$12 Billion Modernization Plan to ensure peak tournament days do not throttle standard airport commerce.

- **Resilience & Safety:** Jesse P. Spearo, Ph.D. (Assistant Director, Emergency Management, Miami-Dade County) addressed the broader county-wide coordination required to manage the massive influx of international fans safely.



Top R-L: Mr. Ralph Cutié, Mr. Mark O. Hatfield, Jr., Ms. Shannon Eisenhut and Mr. Mat Ratner.



Below top: L-R: Panelists – Ms. Aura Arauz-Figueroa, Mr. Denis Galipeau, and Mr. Stephen Taber, and bottom: L-R: Panelists – Ms. Valeria Sorrentino, Jesse Spearo, Ph.D., and Mr. Jeff Plant.



### The 2045 Utopia: A Reality Check on the AI Travel Architect

The year is 2045. A generation has passed since artificial intelligence first disrupted the global travel sector. What began as rudimentary chatbots and personalized search has supposedly evolved into a world where AI is the invisible, omnipresent architect of the journey itself. While the 20-year vision of a seamless, highly sustainable travel experience is compelling, getting there requires a ruthless look at the operational realities we are fighting today.

### **Hyper-Personalization: Anticipatory Service or Intrusive Tech?**

The long-term narrative promises the absolute elimination of friction. By 2045, sophisticated AI companions autonomously manage entire itineraries, learning unspoken needs based on biorhythms, real-time context, and past behavior. Before you explicitly consider booking, an AI advisor predicts your burnout and automatically arranges a low-stress getaway, optimizing flights for minimal disruption. Accommodation environments self-adjust to your precise temperature and lighting preferences upon arrival. However, current market data reveals a different reality: consumers fiercely protect their data privacy. Moving from reactive service to proactive, autonomous problem-solving requires deep data integration that legacy travel brands are still struggling to architect.

### **Revolutionizing Infrastructure: The Heavy Capital Lift**

Behind the scenes, the physical infrastructure of travel faces a massive overhaul. The 2045 projection assumes AI algorithms perfectly manage air traffic control, permanently eliminating holding patterns and delays. [Autonomous electric air taxis \(eVTOLs\)](#) and hyperloops seamlessly integrate into a flawlessly optimized multi-modal transport network. Security relies entirely on instantaneous, passive biometric sensors. Furthermore, sustainability is intrinsically managed by intelligent systems, routing electric fleets for maximum fuel efficiency and managing macro-scale waste to achieve net-zero goals. Yet, replacing aging, capital-intensive infrastructure is notoriously slow. Software can scale almost instantly; concrete and aerospace engineering simply do not.

### A New Era: The Augmented Destination

Perhaps the most viable evolution is the nature of the travel experience itself. AI-enhanced immersive technologies are not just tools; they are part of the destination. Augmented and mixed reality, driven by massive generative AI streams, breathe life into ancient ruins and visualize historical events in real time. Context-aware translation effortlessly dismantles deep cultural and language barriers.

The core human desire to explore the world remains completely unwavering. But ensuring the journey is as effortless as the destination requires bridging the massive gap between fragmented supply chains and autonomous networks.

### 14 Marvelous Facts About March

March is commonly associated with two well-known celebrations, one filled with candy and the other with lively, festive gatherings, but the month carries a depth of historical and cultural significance that extends far beyond its popular holidays. Below are fourteen (14) marvelous facts about March that you may not know:

1. In the old Roman calendar, the year consisted of ten months, beginning in March and ending in December, making March the original start of the year.
2. The “Ides of March,” equivalent to March 15, was traditionally a deadline for settling debts and is best remembered as the date Julius Caesar was assassinated in 44 B.C.
3. March birthdays are represented by two flowers, daffodils and jonquils, and two birthstones, aquamarine and bloodstone, both linked to courage. The month spans two zodiac signs: Pisces until March 20 and Aries beginning March 21.
4. March ushers in the first month of spring in the Northern Hemisphere, typically between the 19th and 21st, while serving as the equivalent of September in the Southern Hemisphere. It also includes the Vernal Equinox, when daylight and nighttime hours are nearly equal.
5. Every year, the months of March and June conclude on the same day of the week, a consistent feature of the calendar.
6. March is the time when many animals emerge from hibernation, symbolizing renewal and the return of warmer weather.
7. The name “March” originates from Mars, the Roman god of war, a name carried through both the Julian and Gregorian calendars.
8. The social media platform Twitter, now known as X, was launched on March 21, 2006, with founder Jack Dorsey posting its first message: “just setting up my Twitter.”
9. Saint Patrick’s Day is celebrated every March 17 in many Western countries to honor the patron saint of Ireland.
10. Easter Sunday often falls in March. Though rooted in Christian traditions, it now includes popular customs like egg hunts, candies, and the Easter bunny.
11. March is considered the least productive month in the U.S., largely due to “March Madness,” the NCAA basketball season, which costs businesses billions in lost productivity.
12. On March 10, 1876, Alexander Graham Bell made the first-ever telephone call, famously saying, “Mr. Watson, come here. I want to see you.”
13. The Eiffel Tower was first ascended in March by Gustave Eiffel and a group of officials, who climbed the structure before elevators were operational.
14. President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps on March 1, 1961, creating a volunteer program that has since sent hundreds of thousands of Americans abroad to support global development.

## BRIEFS AND NOTES



### Beyond the Horizon: International Women's Day 2026

The global community observes International Women's Day (IWD) on March 8, 2026. This year, the international focus moves decisively from symbolic celebration to systemic and actionable reform. The United Nations has announced a powerful official theme for 2026: "**Rights. Justice. Action. For ALL Women and Girls.**" Running parallel to this is the global grassroots campaign theme, "**Give To Gain**," which emphasizes the transformative power of investing resources in women. Together, these frameworks offer a fresh, urgent perspective on global gender equality in a world where progress feels simultaneously closer than ever and increasingly fragile.

### The Global Reality Check: A Focus on Justice

Despite decades of relentless advocacy, the legal landscape for women globally remains uneven. A startling insight driving the 2026 UN agenda is that women currently hold only **64 percent** of the legal rights enjoyed by men worldwide. Furthermore, if the current pace of legislative progress continues, it will take an estimated **286 years** to close these legal protection gaps. For 2026, the international perspective is fiercely centered on legal and justice systems. It is no longer enough to merely have rights written into national constitutions; those rights must be enforceable. Millions of women are priced out of legal support, ignored, or revictimized by the very systems meant to protect them. The 2026 mandate demands an end to discriminatory laws, affordable legal aid, and justice systems entirely free of bias, especially critical for the **676 million** women and girls who live near active conflict zones.

Current Female Heads of State or Government (as of January 2026)

Country	Name (Her Excellency)	Title
Barbados	Mia Mottley	Prime Minister
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Borjana Krišto	Chairperson of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bulgaria	Iliana Iotova	President
Democratic Republic of Congo	Judith Suminwa	Prime Minister
Denmark	Mette Frederiksen	Prime Minister
Dominica	Sylvanie Burton	President
Iceland	Halla Tómasdóttir	President
Iceland	Kristrún Frostadóttir	Prime Minister
India	Droupadi Murmu	President
Ireland	Catherine Connolly	President
Italy	Giorgia Meloni	Prime Minister
Japan	Takaichi Sanae	Prime Minister
Latvia	Evika Siliņa	Prime Minister
Liechtenstein	Brigitte Haas	Prime Minister
Lithuania	Inga Ruginienė	Prime Minister
Malta	Myriam Spiteri Debono	President
Marshall Islands	Hilda Heine	President
Mexico	Claudia Sheinbaum	President
Moldova	Maia Sandu	President
Namibia	Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah	President
North Macedonia	Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova	President
Slovenia	Nataša Pirc Musar	President
Suriname	Jennifer Geerlings-Simons	President
Tanzania	Samia Suluhu Hassan	President
Trinidad and Tobago	Christine Kangaloo	President
Trinidad and Tobago	Kamla Persad-Bissessar	Prime Minister
Tunisia	Sara Zaafarani	Prime Minister
Ukraine	Yulia Svyrydenko	Prime Minister

Source: Council on Foreign Relations

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2026: RIGHTS. JUSTICE. ACTION. A GLOBAL SNAPSHOT

### 1 THE STARTLING REALITY: A CHALLENGE TO JUSTICE



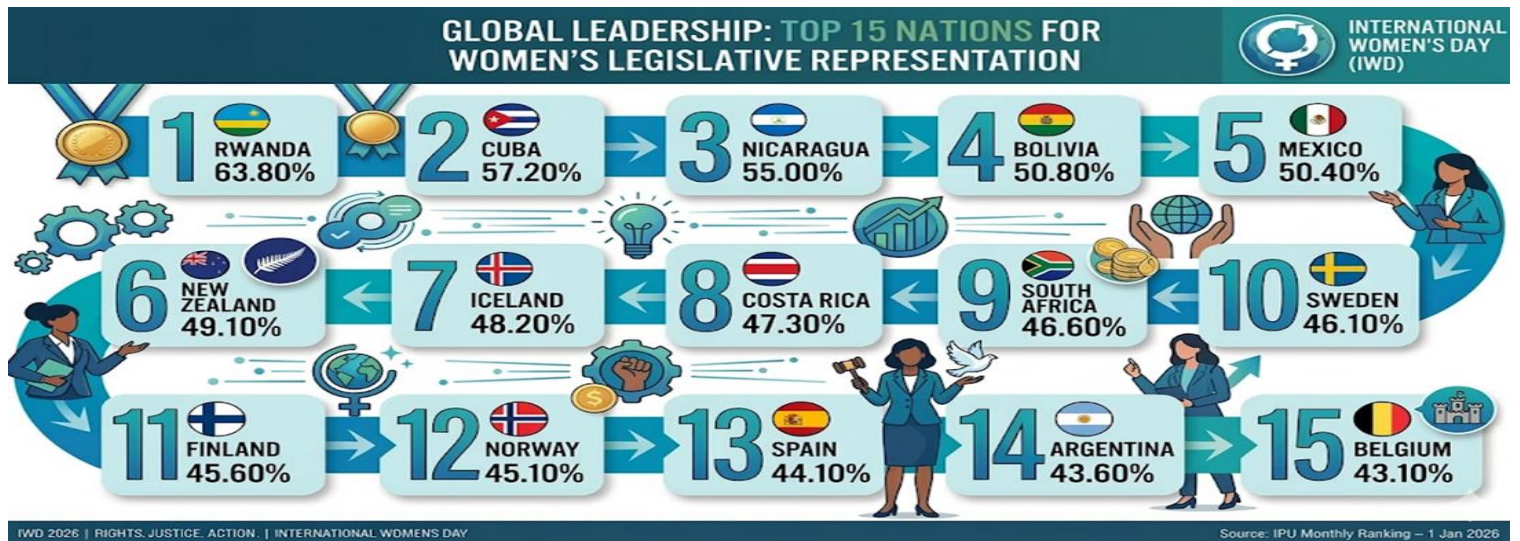
### 2 #GIVETOGAIN: THE MULTIPLIER EFFECT & ACTION MANDATE



## New Insights and Intersections for 2026

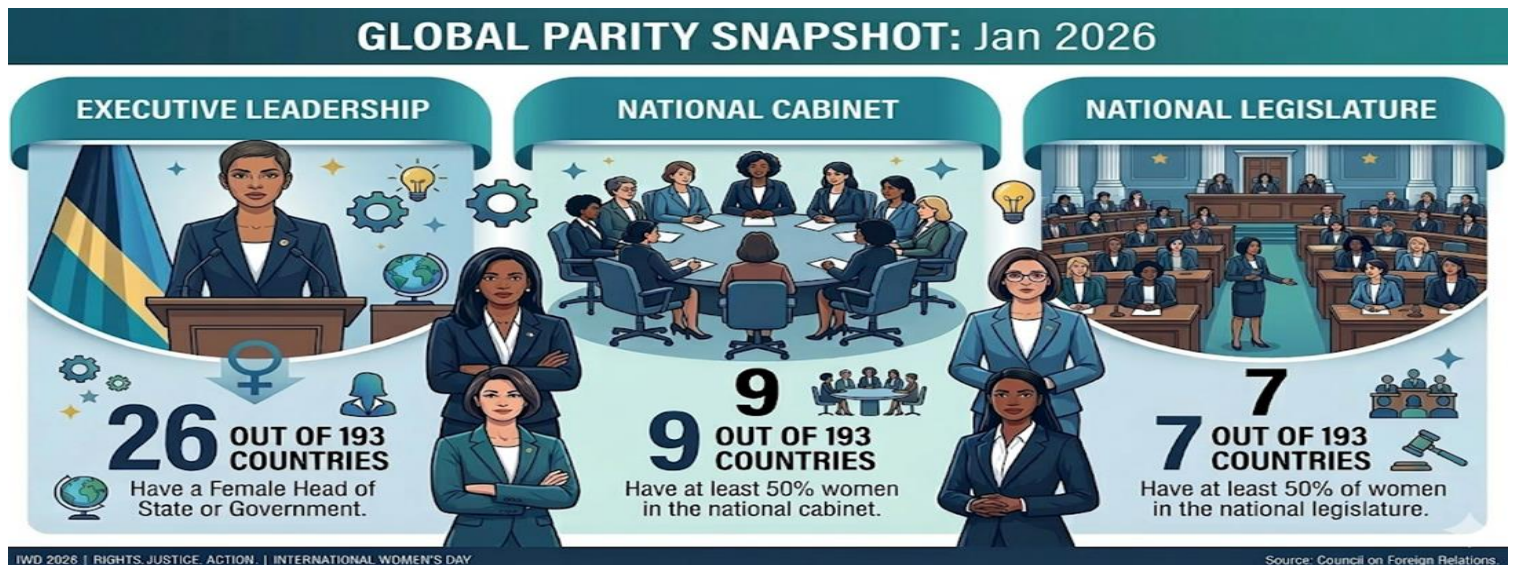
The 2026 narrative brings several new insights and strategic intersections to the forefront of the global movement:

- **The "Give to Gain" Economic Imperative:** The grassroots #GiveToGain campaign highlights that supporting women is an act of intentional multiplication, not subtraction. It calls for active investment, funding, mentorship, visibility, and resources. It proves that when women are economically empowered, entire societies experience broader economic growth and stability.
- **CSW70 Alignment:** This year's UN observance purposefully aligns with the 70th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70). This creates a unified, focused global political moment aimed at strengthening access to justice, bridging the gap between rights on paper and rights in everyday practice.
- **Climate and Technological Justice:** As climate change and digital transformation accelerate, 2026 emphasizes women's critical leadership in these pivotal sectors. The ongoing push ensures women are not just protected from the adverse effects of climate displacement and algorithmic bias but are actively leading sustainable green innovations and ethical digital governance.



## Moving Forward: From Words to Action

True equality requires sustained, fully funded action. International Women's Day 2026 challenges governments to overhaul discriminatory legal frameworks and urges individuals to support women-focused nonprofits, participate actively in IWD giving, and challenge everyday biases. As we reflect on "Rights. Justice. Action," it is clear that justice is not something that simply happens; it must be intentionally built. The year 2026 serves as a critical rallying cry to dismantle the structural barriers that hold women back and to forge a legally and economically equitable world for all. By fully embracing the "Give to Gain" ethos, we recognize that true progress demands our shared, unwavering commitment. Every investment made to secure a woman's fundamental rights and independence acts as a catalyst for global prosperity, ensuring a resilient, thriving society for generations to come.



## Daylight Saving Time 2026: The Earliest Start in U.S. History



Daylight Saving Time (DST) in the United States began unusually early this year, on March 8, 2026, marking the earliest start date ever recorded. At 2 a.m., clocks “sprang forward” one hour, instantly shifting sunrise and sunset times later in the day. While many welcome the extended evening light, the tradeoff is darker mornings and the familiar disruption to sleep schedules. DST will end on November 1, when clocks “fall back” to standard time.

The idea of adjusting human activity to daylight is far older than modern clocks. Ancient civilizations, including the Romans, divided the day into 12 variable-length hours, adjusting their lengths depending on the season. Long before standardized timekeeping, daily life simply followed the sun: farmers rose at dawn, tradesmen worked until dusk, and communities organized themselves around sunlight.

[The modern concept of DST](#) emerged gradually. Benjamin Franklin, jokingly, suggested in 1784 that Parisians could save on candles by waking earlier to use the morning sunlight. Though satirical, his essay planted the seed for aligning schedules with daylight. The first serious proposal came in 1895 from New Zealand entomologist George Hudson, who wanted more evening daylight for collecting insects. In 1907, British builder William Willett championed a similar idea, campaigning vigorously for seasonal clock changes. Parliament rejected his proposal at the time, but the idea was gaining momentum.

The first nation to adopt DST was Germany in 1916, during World War I, to conserve fuel. The United States followed in 1918, though the policy was unpopular and quickly repealed after the war. It returned during World War II, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt instituted year-round “War Time” from 1942 to 1945.

The modern U.S. system took shape with the [Uniform Time Act of 1966](#), which established nationwide rules for states choosing to observe DST. Today, DST begins on the second Sunday in March and ends on the first Sunday in November. A few places opted out: most of Arizona and all of Hawaii stay on standard time year-round, as do several U.S. territories, including Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Navajo Nation, however, does observe DST, even within Arizona. Alaska also participates, though many residents question the need, given the state’s extreme swings in daylight.

Globally, more than 70 countries observe some form of DST, affecting over a billion people. Nations near the equator generally do not participate because their daylight hours change very little throughout the year. Even in countries that use it, DST remains controversial. Debates continue over whether it truly saves energy, how it affects health, and if the economic benefits outweigh the inconvenience.

The United States operates across [eleven official time zones](#), reflecting the broad geographic span of its states and territories. Within the continental U.S., the primary time zones are Eastern (EST), Central (CST), Mountain (MST), and Pacific (PST), while Alaska observes Alaska Standard Time (AKST) and Hawaii follows Hawaii–Aleutian Time (HST). Several U.S. territories extend this range even farther: Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands use Atlantic Standard Time (AST), American Samoa follows Samoa Standard Time (SST), and Guam, along with the Northern Mariana Islands, observes Chamorro Standard Time (ChST). The last two are Wake Island Time (WAKT) and Baker Island/Howland Island Time (BIT). Together, these zones span UTC–11 to UTC+10, underscoring the remarkable timekeeping diversity within the United States.

Public opinion in the United States has shifted sharply. Early 2025 [Gallup](#) polling shows that most Americans, between 54% and 71%, depending on the survey, want to end the twice-yearly clock changes. Support for the current system has fallen dramatically from the 1990s, when more than 70% favored keeping it. Today, only about 40% want to maintain the status quo.

What Americans want instead is less clear. Among those who oppose the current system, preferences are split roughly 48% favor permanent standard time, which offers earlier sunrises, while between 24% and 56% prefer permanent DST, which provides later sunsets. What is clear is that the transition is disruptive. About 84% of Americans say it takes at least a day to adjust to the time change, and nearly a third say it takes a week.

As the nation experiences its earliest DST start on record, the debate over its future is more active than ever. Whether the U.S. ultimately chooses permanent standard time, permanent DST, or keeps the current system, one thing is certain: the conversation about how we use our daylight isn’t going away anytime soon.

## INDEPENDENCE AND NATIONAL DAYS (MARCH 2026)

**March 1, 1992 - Bosnia and Herzegovina:** On March 1, the referendum for independence was completed, and on March 3, Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence from Yugoslavia.

**March 2, 1956 - Morocco:** After signing the French Moroccan Agreement on March 2, 1956, Morocco gained independence from France. The abolition of the Spanish protectorate and Spain's recognition of Moroccan independence were negotiated separately and finalized in the Joint Declaration of April 1956.

**March 3, 1878 - Bulgaria:** On Liberation Day, March 3, 1878, Bulgaria became an autonomous principality within the Ottoman Empire and remained as such until it gained full independence in 1908.

**March 6, 1957 - Ghana:** Formed by the merger of the Gold Coast (British colony) and the Togoland trust territory, Ghana became the first Sub-Saharan country in colonial Africa to gain its independence on March 6, 1957.

**March 11, 1990 - Lithuania:** This day, known as the Restoration of Independence Day, marks the declaration of independence from the Soviet Union.

**March 12, 1968 - Mauritius:** On March 12, 1968, Mauritius gained independence from the United Kingdom. 24 years later, on March 12, 1992, it became a republic.

**March 13, 2013 - Holy See (Vatican City):** This day commemorates the election of Pope Francis.

**March 15, 1848 - Hungary:** On March 15, Revolution Day, Hungarians commemorate the Revolution and the War of Independence against the Austrian-Habsburg rule in 1848 – 1849.

**March 17, 1903 - Ireland:** Saint Patrick's Day marks the traditional death date of Saint Patrick, patron saint of Ireland. Although this day was celebrated as early as the ninth century, it did not become an official public holiday and Ireland's National Day until 1903. The Irish American Heritage Month is also celebrated in March to honor the many contributions Irish Americans have made to the United States.

**March 17, 1861 - Italy:** After the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies joined Piedmont-Sardinia, the new Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed.

**March 20, 1956 - Tunisia:** The country gained independence from France on 20 March 1956.

**March 21, 1990 – Namibia:** On this day, Namibia gained independence from the South African mandate.

**March 25, 1821 - Greece:** After being part of the Ottoman Empire since 1453, the War of Greek Independence began on March 25, 1821. Independence was achieved on 3 February 1830, but March 25 is still celebrated as Greek Independence Day. Greek American Heritage Month is also celebrated in March to honor the many contributions Greek Americans have made to the United States.

**March 26, 1971 - Bangladesh:** Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, leader of the Awami League and "Father of the Nation," declared an independent Bangladesh on March 26, 1971. The fight for independence lasted until 16 December 1971, when Pakistan was defeated, and the nation of Bangladesh was born.

