The Guardian

onestopenglish

Parisians vote to ban rental e-scooters from French capital by huge margin

Level 2: Intermediate

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1 Warmer

a. Discuss these questions.

1. Have you ever rented an e-bike or e-scooter? Did you enjoy it?

2. What are some advantages and disadvantages of travelling by bike or scooter instead of by car?

3. Would you like more e-scooters available to rent in your town or city? Why? Why not?

2 Key words

a. Write the correct words from the wordpool next to the definitions below. Then find and highlight them in the article to read them in context.

ban	encourage	injured	nuisance	opponent	pedestrian
public	self-service	source	support	tension	vote

1. formally express an opinion by choosing between two or more issues, people, etc.

   _____

2. approve an idea, person, or organisation and help them to be successful

   _____

3. hurt in an accident or attack _____

4. when customers serve themselves _____

5. say officially that people must not do, sell, or use something _____

6. suggest that someone does something you believe is good _____

7. the cause of a problem or the place where it began _____

8. the feeling of being so nervous or worried that you cannot relax _____

9. something that is annoying and is a continuing problem _____

10. available for people in general to use _____

11. someone who disagrees with something such as an idea or plan and tries to change or stop it

   _____

12. someone who is walking, especially in a town or city, instead of driving or riding

   _____

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b. **Use some of the key words from task A to complete these sentences. You may have to change the form of the word.**

1. Are you planning to _____ in the election tomorrow?

2. As a driver, you must always watch for _____ crossing the street.

3. They were both _____ in the accident.

4. Do you think schools should _____ mobile phones in classrooms?

5. Her parents always _____ her to do her best.

6. There is a lot of _____ in your neck. You need to relax!

7. _____ of the new law protested in the city centre yesterday.

8. If you really want to solve a problem, you must first find out the _____.

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Angela Giuffrida and agencies

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1. Parisians have voted to ban electric scooters available for rent from the streets of their city, with 90% of votes supporting a ban.

2. Paris was among the first to introduce e-scooters in 2018 as the city tried to promote non-polluting forms of urban transport.

3. But as the vehicles grew in popularity, especially among young people, so did the number of e-scooter accidents: in 2022, three people died, and 459 were injured in Paris.

4. Voters were asked: "For or against self-service scooters?" Twenty-one voting stations were set up and open until 7 pm local time. 1.6 million people can vote.

5. The ban won between 85.77% and 91.77% of the votes in the 20 Paris districts that provided results. It is rare that citizens are asked their opinion in this way. The vote resulted in long queues. Although the result is not a legal requirement to ban the scooters, the city has promised to follow it.

6. Paris's Mayor, Anne Hidalgo, has encouraged cycling and bike-sharing but supported a ban on e-scooters. In a recent interview, Hidalgo said "self-service scooters are the source of tension and worry" for Parisians, and a ban would "reduce nuisance" in public spaces.

7. Paris has almost 15,000 e-scooters operated by companies including Lime, Dott, and Tier. Opponents argue that e-scooter users don't follow the rules of the road and ignore a ban on riding on pavements. The vehicles are often parked in a disorganised way or even thrown into the River Seine.

8. In June 2021, a 31-year-old Italian woman was killed after being hit by an e-scooter while walking along the Seine.

9. "Scooters have become my biggest enemy. I'm scared of them," said Suzon Lambert, a 50-year-old teacher from Paris. "There's no space any more for pedestrians."

10. Another Parisian said, "It's dangerous, and people use them badly."

11. Julian Sezgin, aged 15, said he often saw groups of two or three teenagers on e-scooters. "I avoid going on e-scooters and prefer e-bikes as, in my opinion, they are safer and more efficient," he told the *Guardian*.

12. Bianca Sclavi, an Italian who has lived in Paris for years, said the scooters go "too fast" and should have their engines changed so they go slower. She is not planning to vote.

13. However, Linda Joëlle, 35, is against a ban. "Now that I have found an excellent way to get to work, and one that is better for the environment, they are trying to ban it," she said. "They keep changing the rules."

14. One student said, "I don't live that close to the Métro, so it's better to go to school on the e-scooter." Another said: "Where I live, it's better than going on foot."

15. The French Transport Minister, Clement Beaune, told Europe 1 radio recently that he expected the ban to happen, adding that the vote "will be watched by a lot of other towns in France and abroad."

16. He argued that e-scooters are a valuable transport solution that has replaced up to one in five journeys in Paris that would have been made using gas-powered vehicles.

17. Meanwhile, e-scooter companies worry a ban would encourage other cities to do the same.

18. Hadi Karam, General Manager for France at California-based Lime, said that Paris is making the wrong decision because e-scooters are becoming more and more popular everywhere. There have been decisions to increase the number of e-scooters or extend contracts in Washington, Madrid and London.

3 Comprehension check

a. Answer the questions using information from the article.

1. What percentage of Parisian voters support the e-scooter ban?

2. When did Paris introduce e-scooters?

3. Why are they a problem?

4. How many people were injured in e-scooter accidents in 2022?

5. How many places to vote are there?

6. How many people can vote on the ban?

7. How many scooters are there in Paris?

8. Why do people dislike e-scooters?

9. What does Clement Beaune, the Transport Minister, think will happen due to the vote?

4 Key language

a. Change the verbs to the gerund forms ending in *-ing*.

1. support   _____

2. cycle   _____

3. bike-share   _____

4. go   _____

5. ride   _____

6. walk   _____

7. change   _____

b. **Complete each sentence with the gerunds from task A.**

1. _____ by foot will take too long. Let's take the underground instead.

2. I have my own bike, so I haven't tried _____ before.

3. _____ the plan after we spent hours making it doesn't seem like a good idea.

4. The bike path is for _____ only.

5. _____ that plan has helped the mayor's popularity.

6. Do you enjoy _____ your e-scooter around town?

7. _____ outside for just ten minutes can change how you feel.

c. **Choose three of the gerunds above and write personalised sentences using them.**

5   Discussion

a. **Discuss these statements.**

- "Something that is good for the environment is good for everyone."

- "E-scooters are an important part of city transportation."

- "It is always important to vote in elections and government polls."

6   In your own words

a. **Use an internet search engine to learn more about self-service e-scooters worldwide.**

- Which cities have them?

- Where are they banned?

- How much does a ride cost?

- How popular are they?

b. **Report your findings to the class.**