

Contents

Page 1
News in the EU

Page 2-3
What has Europe Direct Wrexham been up to?

Page 4
Travelling in Europe

Page 5
Europe Day, The European Parliament

Page 6
Europe for Women. Healthier Together in the European Union

News in the EU

European Union Presidency in June 2011

Every six months a different member state of the European Union holds the Presidency presiding over the work of the Council of the European Union. At the same time the state holding the Presidency becomes the host of most of the Union's events and plays a key role in all the fields of activity of the European Union. It is

responsible for the organization of EU meetings, sets the Union's political direction and ensures its development, integration and security. From 1 July 2011 Poland will hold the Presidency in the Council of the European Union.



What are the main tasks of the Presidency?

The Presidency tasks are focused on the three paramount issues. The first one is conducting the work of the EU Council and its subsidiary bodies, the second one has to do with representing the EU Council in its dealings with other EU institutions, and the third one is about representing the EU in international relations (with third countries and international organisations).

All about European Cultures

Each year, cities chosen as European Capitals of Culture – in 2011 Tallinn (Estonia), and Turku (Finland) – provide living proof of the richness and diversity of European cultures. Started in 1985, the initiative has become one of the most prestigious and high-profile cultural events in Europe.



More than 40 cities have been designated European Capitals of Culture so far, from Stockholm to Genoa, Athens to Glasgow, and Cracow to Porto.

A city is not chosen as a European Capital of Culture solely for what it is, but mainly for what it plans to do for a year that has to be exceptional. Its programme for the year must meet some specific criteria.

The Council of the European Union is the only institution that can award the title of European Capital of Culture.



From 2011, two cities – from two different EU countries – are European Capitals of Culture each year.

The procedure for choosing a city starts around six years in advance, though the order of Member States entitled to host the event is fixed before then and is organised in two stages. It involves a panel of independent experts in the cultural field responsible for assessing the proposals. Once designated, the preparations of the European Capitals of Culture are Monitored by the Council of the European Union.

New cars equipped with daytime running lights

2011 sees the introduction to Daytime Running Lights (DRL) to all new types of passenger cars and small delivery vans. Trucks and buses will follow suit 18 months later, in August 2012.

DRL lights are special lamps which automatically switch on when the engine is started. They are expected to increase road safety as they substantially raise the visibility of motor vehicles for other road users. They also have a low energy consumption rate compared with existing 'dipped-beam' head lights. In countries where DRL is already obligatory it has been hailed as a very positive development in the field of road safety.



What has Europe Direct Wrexham been up to?

NSA Launch Day Sustainable Energy and the Environment

Europe Direct Wrexham came along to Technquest to help with the "Environment and Renewable Energy NSA Launch Day" on Thursday 3rd March, run by Technquest Glyndŵr in partnership with Glyndŵr University and Europe Direct Llangollen.



The event was aimed at Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) students around Wrexham, Flintshire and Denbigshire.

During the morning local companies such as Fiddlers Ferry Power Station, UPM – Shotton Paper and

Environment Agency had presented how they are working to reduce their carbon footprint. Students then took part in three, 40 minute hands-on workshops, such as Electricity Generation, Solar Powered Cars and Exploring the Atom, which allowed them to know more about Sustainable Energy and the Environment.

Primary School workshops

Europe Direct Wrexham and Llangollen hosted workshops at Ysgol Bryn Coch, Mold and Ysgol Frongoch, Denbigh.

Special guests were Georgina, from Barcelona and Veronique from Bordeaux were invited to teach children about their countries. The children had also prepared questions to ask the special guests about their life in Spain and France.

Other activities involved a presentation about Europe and a discussion around a large floor map about 'What is Europe?' Children were also asked to match flags and famous objects to the countries. The sessions were completed with a team quiz with prizes.



Wales, Europe and the World



During March Europe Direct Wrexham and Llangollen attended this event organised by CILT Cymru and Routes into Languages.

The event was aimed at young people aged 14-19 to take part at several workshops during the day. The intention of the event was to inspire young people to have a taste of new languages, learn about new cultures and spread their wings. It also highlighted Wales's European and global links which can help pupils to find out about studying, working and living in Europe and beyond.

Some of the workshops that the young people took part in were Bollywood dancing, a taste of Mandarin, Tai Chi, problem solving in French, European quiz, volunteering in Europe and also meeting an Erasmus student to learn about their experience.

During breaks the pupils were encouraged to attend exhibition stands to answer questions and sign their passports. This gave an opportunity to gather more information about studying and living abroad and learning languages. The exhibition stands included Europe Direct, Bangor University and British Council.

CILT is an organisation which works to encourage and inspire people of all ages to learn new languages. They help to implement policies to improve the teaching and learning of languages and provide independent advice on all aspects of

language teaching, learning and use. Routes into Languages is a funded programme to encourage to learn languages and have been established where groups of universities will work together, with schools and colleges, to enthuse and encourage people to study languages. National networks have been set up to promote translation and interpreting as careers.



Primary School Teacher Conference

Recently Europe Direct Wrexham and David Phoenix, International Links officer WCBC with support of the European Commission Representation Office in Wales organised a teacher conference for primary school teachers across Wrexham, Flintshire and Denbighshire, held in Catrin Finch Centre, Glyndŵr University.

The aim of the event was to inform teachers on topics such as how to set up school partnerships, apply for grants to develop links with schools in Europe, what ESTYN expects from schools, organise an MEP visit to school, run European days, and access free resources to aid teaching about Europe.

The day was opened by Andy Klom, Head of Office, European Commission Representation in Wales, followed by presentations from organisations such as British Council Wales, National Grid for Learning (NGFL) and Europe Direct Wrexham and Llangollen.

In the afternoon teachers were able to speak to all the presentation hosts in more detail about what services they can offer. This also provided an opportunity for the teachers to see other schools' best practice in forming European links and participating in projects.



Future Events

Wrexham Employment Fair 10th May 2011

With support from Europe Direct Wrexham, Businessline based in Wrexham Library is organising an Employment Fair. With the jobs market at present looking bleak for many individuals out of part-time / full-time employment or education, the aim of this event is ultimately to raise awareness of the availability of training, support and employment opportunities in the local area.

The event will include trade stands from which jobseekers can gain information and the opportunity to attend a series of relevant workshops which will be held throughout the day.

Europe Direct Wrexham will also be available on the day to hand out relevant information and publications for people who may be looking for opportunities across Europe.

If you require any more information or you would like to attend this event please contact Businessline on 01978 292092 or email on businessline@wrexham.gov.uk.



Adult Learners' Week 13th May 2011

NIACE Dysgu Cymru runs a number of high profile campaigns, to raise the demand for learning and skills in Wales and to celebrate outstanding learning achievements. They also run a range of events and training courses to support the interests of adult learners in different contexts.

Throughout the week there will be a number of different workshops, events and seminar happening around Wrexham where people can find out more about studying further and also learn new skills. Europe Direct have been invited to give out free European Information at the Adult Learning Festival.

Wrexham learning festival

part of Adult learners' week

National Eisteddfod July-August 2011

This year, National Eisteddfod is in Wrexham and Europe Direct Wrexham and Llangollen will be at the event all week to hand out European publications and answer any queries from the public.

International Eisteddfod, Llangollen July 2011

Europe Direct Wrexham and Llangollen will be attending this great annual event all week to answer queries from the public and handing out publications on European related issues.

European Day of Languages 27th September 2011

Once again this event will be organised to encourage young children from around Wrexham to learn languages to open more opportunities for them in the future. On the day there will be storytellers and a theatre company holding brilliant workshops throughout the day.

Europe Day 2011 – Sustainability for all! 20th June 2011

As part of Green Light Festival, Europe Direct has organised this year's Europe Day which will be held at Techniquet, Glyndŵr University and will focus on sustainability.

Eco-Committees from primary schools in Wrexham are invited to come along and participate in workshops held in either morning or afternoon sessions. The day will begin with a fun, interactive 'Sustainability Show' hosted by 'Scintillate'. Pupils will then split into rotation of workshops held by Environmental Education Officer, Caroline Pollitt, and Techniquet.

Green Light is a British Council-funded twinning project which links Wrexham local authority with Raciborz local authority in Poland.

Let's Volunteer! - Volunteering Fair

Europe Direct Wrexham and Llangollen are organising a Volunteering Fair in Edward Llwyd Centre Glyndŵr University, 19th May 2011, 10-3pm.



This year has been established as the European Year of Volunteering, to celebrate third of the European population who already volunteer and also to encourage others to do so.

Let's Volunteer! is a free event, open to all the public, and offers the chance to meet over 25 volunteering organisations across Wrexham, Flintshire, Denbighshire and Europe and find out how you can get involved in volunteering. This is a great way to give something back to the community as well as add to your CV.

Travelling in Europe

The European Union stretches over the continent of Europe from Lapland in the north to the Mediterranean Sea, and from the west coast of Ireland to the shores of Cyprus: a rich tapestry of landscapes from rocky coastlines to sandy beaches, from fertile pastureland to arid plains, from lakes and forests to arctic tundra.



Europeans love to travel and the removal of most passport and baggage formalities has made travelling much easier. Seventeen EU countries share the same currency, the euro (€), which makes price comparisons easy and removes the cost and inconvenience of changing money. In fact, most Europeans find it as easy to travel within the EU as to travel within their home country.

Passport or identity card for European Union citizens

Carry them when travelling in the EU because they may be required for identification or security purposes. Be aware that the only valid ID is the one obtained from national authorities.

Visa You will not need a visa to travel within the European Union.

For non-EU citizens

Passport You will need a valid passport.

Visa There are 39 countries whose nationals do not need a visa to visit the EU for three months or less. These include Australia, Canada, Croatia, Japan, New Zealand and the United States.

The list of countries whose nationals require visas to travel to the United Kingdom or Ireland differs slightly from other EU countries.

European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

If you are going to another European Economic Area (EEA) country on a leisure or business trip, you'll need a

European Health Insurance Card to access state-provided healthcare that may become necessary during your visit. The treatment you receive will be at a reduced cost, or sometimes even free. The quickest way to get an EHIC, which is free, is to apply online at www.dh.gov.uk/travellers.



Cash and cards

Thanks to EU rules, withdrawing euros from a cash machine costs you the same anywhere in the EU as it does in your own country from a cash machine that does not belong to your bank. The transaction fee for making a debit or credit card payment in the EU in euros is the same as in your own country. Charges may, of course, differ between banks.

The European Health Insurance card is not a substitute for travel insurance as it may not cover all health costs and it never covers repatriation costs or mountain rescue. So you may want to take out separate travel insurance to cover those risks.

Passengers rights

Denied boarding? Cancellation? Long delay? Lost luggage? Reduced mobility?

Passengers need a common set of principles so that they can be more easily aware of their rights if something goes wrong with their trip, regardless of the mode of transport they use or whether a journey takes place wholly within a single Member State or goes through an Intra-Community or external frontier.

Find out more about Passenger rights at www.ec.europa.eu/transport/passenger-rights

Discover the European Emergency Number (112)

Imagine you are visiting an EU country or at home and you need to contact an ambulance, the fire brigade or the police. Would you know which emergency number to call?

As Europeans are increasingly travelling for business or leisure, millions of people could be faced with this problem. Fortunately, there is no need to look up and remember the emergency numbers for each EU country you are visiting. Just remember 112!

112 is the European emergency number, reachable from fixed and mobile phones, free of charge, everywhere in the EU.



Mobile Roaming

The EU Roaming regulation was adopted in 2007 and introduced caps on roaming prices ("Eurotariff") and imposed certain information obligations on operators, ensuring that mobile phone subscribers pay affordable and transparent roaming prices when they are travelling across the EU.

The Eurotariff set maximum prices for phone calls made and received while abroad.

These maximum prices apply to all consumers unless they opted for special packages offered by operators. In July 2009, revised rules were adopted that cut voice calls roaming prices further and introduced new caps on SMS tariffs ("Euro SMS tariff").

In addition, as of 1 July 2010, consumers are protected by an automatic safeguard against data roaming bill shocks.

Europe Day - 9th May

Probably very few people in Europe know that on 9 May 1950 the first move was made towards the creation of what is now known as the European Union.

In Paris that day, against the background of the threat of a Third World War engulfing the whole of Europe, the French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman read to the international press a declaration calling France, Germany and other European countries to pool together their coal and steel production as "the first concrete foundation of a European federation". This proposal, known as the "Schuman declaration", is considered to be the beginning of the creation of what is now the European Union.

What he proposed was the creation of a supranational European Institution, charged with the management of the coal and steel industry, the very sector which was, at that time, the basis of all military power. The countries which he called upon had almost destroyed each other in a dreadful conflict which had left after it a sense of material and moral desolation.

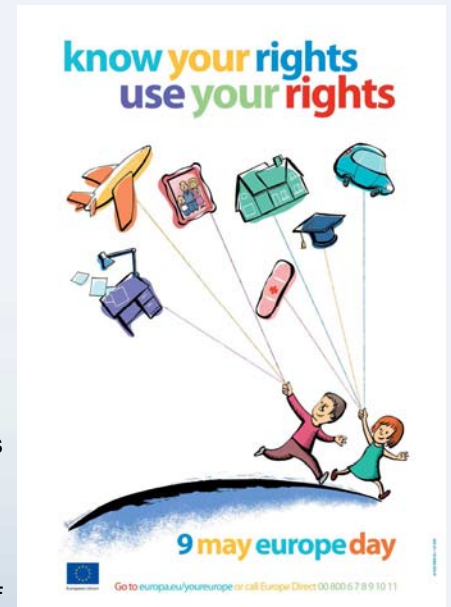
Everything, therefore, began that day. That is why during the Milan Summit of EU leaders in 1985 it was decided to celebrate 9 May as "Europe Day".

Every country which democratically chooses to accede to the European Union endorses its fundamental values of peace and solidarity.

These values find expression through economic and social development embracing environmental and regional dimensions which are the guarantees of a decent standard of living for all citizens.

While Europe as such has existed for centuries, the elements which united it, in the absence of rules and institutions, have in the past been insufficient to prevent the most appalling tragedies.

The integration of Europe will not come about in one day or even in a few decades. Deficiencies are still numerous and there are evident imperfections. The project which was begun just after the Second World War is still very new. In the past, efforts at European Union were based on domination of one group over another. These attempts could not last because those who had been conquered had only one aspiration: to regain their freedom.



The European Parliament

The European Parliament represents Europe's citizens. It is a place where lively political debates are held. Since the first elections in 1979, it has gained more and more parliamentary powers, particularly as a co-legislator and budgetary authority. Parliament exercises these powers in the interests and for the benefit of Europe's citizens and to shape our common future.



The European Parliament is the only multinational parliamentary assembly in the world elected by universal suffrage and, since June 1979, the European Union's only directly elected institution. Elections are held every five years and the number of Members has increased in line with the successive enlargements of the EU. In 2007, Parliament had 785 Members from 27 countries, sitting in groups formed on the basis of political affiliation rather than nationality. The election held in June 2009 marked the 30th anniversary of European elections by universal suffrage.

The European Parliament's official seat is in Strasbourg, on the border between France and Germany, a location that symbolises reconciliation in Europe after two world wars. As decided by the member States of the EU, Parliament holds 12 plenary sessions every year in Strasbourg. Its committees meet in Brussels, where additional plenary sessions are also held. Debates in Parliament's chamber are conducted in all the EU's official languages, reflecting its commitment to a varied and multicultural Union which is "united in diversity".

An increasingly important role

Since 1979 successive European treaties have increased the powers of the European Parliament. It now has equal weight with the Council (representing the EU governments) when it comes to drafting the EU budget and laws designed to facilitate the movement of persons, goods, services and capital within the EU or to protect the environment, and consumers. It also has the power to approve and dismiss the European Commission.

Citizens can petition Parliament with requests or complaints concerning the application of European law. Members of the European Parliament elect a European Ombudsman who investigates citizens' complaints against the EU for maladministration. They can set up a committee of inquiry if they believe EU law has been broken.

Internationally, Parliament participates in EU foreign policy. Its assent is required for any international treaty the EU signs up to as well as for any enlargement of the EU. It regularly debates human rights issues and sends observers around the world to check that elections are conducted freely and fairly.

The most recent revision of the treaties, agreed at the European Council meeting held in Lisbon in December 2007, further increases Parliament's powers in many areas.

To find out more about the European Parliament:
Europartv, www.europartv.europa.eu



EU laws on equality

Equal treatment for women and men was a founding principle of the EU in 1957, when the Treaty of Rome laid down the principle of equal pay. Since the 1970s, European and national laws have expanded women's choices and improved their lives. The proportion of women in work has risen steadily and, since 2000, female workers have taken three quarters of the millions of new jobs generated in Europe. Girls now do better than boys at school, and make up 59% of university graduates in the EU.

Nonetheless, women still earn 17% less than men, and remain a minority in political decision-making and senior management positions.

So the EU is stepping up action to eliminate discrimination and achieve gender equality. Key objectives include breaking down stereotypes and achieving economic independence for women so that they can work, earn their own incomes and have equal rights to benefits. The EU has also set up a network of women in decision-making to accelerate women's access to power, and is establishing a European Institute for Gender Equality.

Protecting women against violence

Yet in Europe, many women and girls continue to live under the shadow of aggression or exploitation. They may be victims of

domestic violence or sexual abuse, of trafficking and forced prostitution, or of intimidation and oppression—breaching their fundamental right to freedom, dignity and safety.

The European Commission runs a programme called Daphne that protects women, children and young people from all forms of violence. It funds projects such as women's refuges and health facilities, as well as efforts to change attitudes and to protect women within migrant and ethnic minority groups.

When the woman is boss

Across Europe, far more men than women run their own businesses and manage companies. Entrepreneurs make up around 8% of the female workforce, compared with 16% of men. Women often face bigger problems in accessing finance and launching and expanding their own small businesses: recent figures show that men are three times more likely to be self employed with staff of their own.

The EU believes women's entrepreneurial talents can boost European prosperity, and since the 1980s it has been giving practical support to women wanting to set up their own business.



Eat better, exercise more - fight obesity

There are over 1 billion overweight adults around the globe, out of which 300 million are obese. In the EU alone, it is estimated that over 200 million adults may be overweight or obese - that is over half the adult population. And, as far as European children are concerned, one quarter are now overweight or obese and this figure is growing by 400,000 each year.

Fat is unhealthy

The obesity phenomenon is responsible for a series of very serious physical and mental health problems, ranging from heart disease, diabetes, cancer, to infertility and psychological disorders. It is estimated that obesity accounts for up to 7% of the EU's healthcare costs. On top of this, the wider costs to the economy, due to lower productivity and premature death, should be taken into consideration.

Positive changes for healthier living

Nutritional habits have changed significantly over the last Decades - people now consume around 500 calories more each day than they did 40 years ago. Combine this with a lack of exercise, and rising obesity levels hardly seems surprising - EU citizens spend on average over 5 hours a day sitting down and more than one in three does no exercise in their leisure time!

Tackling the obesity epidemic requires action to be taken by authorities and industry, along with personal effort by individuals to adopt a healthier lifestyle.

Improving Food Labels

In May 2006, the European Parliament approved new EU-wide rules on health and nutrition claims and a new Fortified Foods Regulation. Together, these ensure that consumers can rely on food labels for accurate information on health and nutritional value. Health claims such as "good for your heart" have to be scientifically demonstrated and it is not possible to attach a positive health claim to a product which contains too much salt, fat or sugar.

Encouraging voluntary actions by key EU players

In March 2005, the EU set up the Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, bringing together consumer organisations, health Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and EU-level industry representatives to tackle the EU's obesity problem. In its first year, 100 new voluntary actions by 34 key European actors from industry and civil society were triggered to provide information to customers on the nutritional content of their meals, including a voluntary ban by the Union of European Beverages Associations on adverts targeting children and a pledge by members of the European Modern Restaurant Association.

This newsletter is published by:

**Europe Direct
Wrexham Library
Rhosddu Road
Wrexham, LL11 1AU
Tel: 01978 292090
Fax: 01978 292611**