



Newsletter Issue 1 February 2017

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Happy New Year!

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2017

2017 looks set to be another busy year. It is expected that Article 50 will be triggered which will then, start the negotiations as to what type of relationship the UK will have with the remaining 27 countries in the EU.

Despite this Europe Direct will still be operating and will be available for school workshops, information, publications and other events. If you have any queries please get in touch.

Upcoming events:

- Careers events at local schools planned.
- On Tuesday 14th February we will be attending a jobs fair at Glyndwr University.
- On Tuesday 28th February we will be attending another careers event at Glyndwr University.
- April – workshops at Coleg Cambria.
- April–June – Series of workshops at St. Joseph’s High School.
- July – Llangollen Eisteddfod.
- August – Denbigh & Flint Agricultural Show.

Coming up in the newsletter in 2017:

- ✓ Information on the EU Solidarity Corps – an initiative bringing together opportunities for volunteering and training in other countries.
- ✓ A new resource for secondary schools to raise awareness of the importance of food and farming in our daily lives. The resource looks at food, environment and farming and includes lesson plans, maps, worksheets and projects.
- ✓ An opportunity to feedback what you want from the EU and what you think the EU should be doing, particularly in light of the UK withdrawing from the EU.
- ✓ And much more.



The European Commission's Ten Priorities for Europe

We have been looking at the European Commission's Ten Priorities for Europe. Those priorities are:

- A new boost for jobs, growth and investment,
- ✓ A connected digital single market,
- ✓ A resilient energy union with a forward-looking climate change policy,
- A deeper and fairer internal market with a strengthened industrial base,
- A deeper and fairer Economic and Monetary Union,
- ✓ A reasonable and balanced free trade agreement with the United States,
- An area of justice and fundamental rights based on mutual trust,
- ✓ Towards a new policy on migration,
- ✓ A stronger global actor,
- ✓ A union of democratic change.

The priorities with ticks have been covered in previous issues. In this issue we will focus on 'A new boost for jobs, growth and investment'.

A New Boost for Jobs, Growth and Investment



Due to the global economic and financial crisis, the EU suffered a drop in investment levels, so the commission has decided to create the investment plan and conduct structural reforms in order to bring back sustainable growth. There are three main policy areas that the commission has targeted:

- **The Investment Plan.**
This plan is designed to remove obstacles to investments, provide visibility and technical assistance to projects and provide smarter use of new and existing financial resources. There are three main ways they want to achieve this. The first is getting the European Fund for Strategic Investments to address the market gaps, mobilise private investments, support infrastructure, education, research, innovation and risk finance for small businesses.

The second is creating new opportunities for institutional investors, project promoters and small-medium sized enterprises through InvestEU, the European Investment Project Portal and the European Investment Advisory Hub. The third way is to better the environment and financing conditions by mapping out the main challenges at national level, which will include progress toward the Digital Single Market, the Energy Union and the Capital Markets Union.

- **The European Semester.**

This will improve the framework for coordination of economic policies between the member states. It will allow the countries to discuss their economic and budget plans and monitor progress at specific times of the year.

- **Towards a Circular Economy.**

This will help make the transition between European businesses and consumers stronger and make resources more sustainable. They want to promote greater recycling and re-using of raw materials, which will save energy and reduce Green House Gas emissions. They want a full lifecycle of products from its production to waste management or possible market of secondary raw materials. This will be supported by €5.5 billion for waste management, €650 million to Horizon 2020 and investments in the circular economy at national level.

So far, with €315 billion put into the Investment Plan for Europe, it has raised €116 billion in investments in the first year. It has created more than 100,000 new jobs and the European Fund for Strategic Investments have said they will provide €500 billion by 2020 and aim to provide €630 billion by 2022.

EURODESK UK



We have become a Eurodesk ambassador. The main aim of ambassadors is to help spread the word about Eurodesk UK and opportunities to volunteer, study and train in other countries to young people and organisations.

Europe Direct Wrexham attends many events in colleges and universities with information stands and to give workshops on opportunities, so to become a Eurodesk ambassador compliments our existing work. In December we met with other ambassadors and Eurodesk partners to share best practice and make links with other organisations.

Eurodesk helps young people aged 13-30 find out about the funded opportunities available in Europe and to give an insight in what it is like to take part. For those working in the youth field, Eurodesk also provides support and advice.

eurodesk

Update on Brexit

Since the referendum in June 2016 the media has been filled with articles about the UK leaving the EU, what it might mean and what might happen. In January the Prime Minister delivered a speech outlining plans for leaving the EU.

It should be noted that a negotiation will take place between the UK and the remaining EU members and the negotiating terms are set by the European Council.

The UK Government 12 point plan is:

1. Provide certainty about the process of leaving the EU
2. Control of our own laws
3. Strengthen the Union between the four nations of the UK
4. Maintain the Common Travel Area with Ireland
5. Control of immigration coming from the EU
6. Rights for EU nationals in Britain, and British nationals in the EU
7. Protect workers' rights
8. Free trade with European markets (exiting the single market and entering a new Free Trade agreement with the EU)
9. New trade agreements with other countries
10. The best place for science and innovation
11. Co-operation in the fight against crime and terrorism
12. A smooth, orderly Brexit

The European Council has not formally set its terms for negotiations yet but in a speech by Michel Barnier – Chief Negotiator for the European Commissioner he stated that their preparations so far have four main strands:

1. Unity – Preserve the unity and interest of the remaining 27 countries.
2. Countries outside of the EU can never have the same rights and benefits as members as they are not subject to the same obligations.
3. Negotiations will not start before notification of the intention to withdraw from the EU
4. The single market and its four freedoms cannot be cherry picked. These are the right to free movement of goods, services, money and people.

The Process

Article 50 still has to be triggered by formally notifying the European Council that the UK is to leave the EU. It is anticipated that this will happen at the end of March 2017. It will have to be triggered by an Act of Parliament which requires MPs to vote. It is anticipated that MPs will vote to trigger it taking into account the results of the referendum by the people that they represent.

When will the UK leave the EU?

No date has been set, however negotiations take a maximum of 2 years (from triggering Article 50), though this period can be extended by agreement. Theresa May stated in her speech that she does not want an unlimited transition status and wants to reach an agreement within the 2 years.

Michel Barnier has further stated that the two years of negotiating will include at the start time to set and agree the guidelines for the negotiations. It will also include at the end the approval of the agreement reached which has to be approved by the European Council and the European Parliament. Finally, the UK will have to approve the agreement. This will probably leave just 18 months to negotiate. Should the UK notify the Council by the end of March 2017 negotiations could start a few weeks later, and an Article 50 agreement be reached by October 2018.

Existing EU laws – continuation of those laws.

According to a BBC report the UK Government will enact a Great Repeal Bill which will end the primacy of EU law in the UK. It is also expected that all EU legislation will be included into UK law in one go so many rights that have been gained from EU law such as workers rights and consumer rights will still apply. This may change over time as the government will decide later which parts to keep, change or remove.

EU funding and programmes

It is still expected that programmes such as Erasmus+ will continue to run in the UK until the end of the programme. So for Erasmus+ which runs until 2020 it is expected that the UK can still take part in the programme until that time even if the UK has left the EU. Other programmes which have similar end dates it is expected that the same would apply for those. The continuation of programmes in the UK once the UK has left is unclear at this time and may be decided upon in the negotiations.

Key Players in the negotiations

European Commission:

The Chief Negotiator for the European Commission is Michel Barnier. He is experienced in many of the policy areas which will probably be included in negotiations. He is a former French Minister for Foreign Affairs and for Agriculture. During his time in the European Commission he was in charge of many areas including regional policy, the internal market and institutional reforms.

UK:

David Davis – MP – Secretary of State for Exiting the EU

Former Minister for Science, Foreign Office and former Shadow Home Secretary. In his role he is responsible for the work of the Department on Exiting the EU which will include working with devolved administrations such as the Welsh Assembly, Scottish Parliament and Northern Ireland Assembly and conducting the negotiations including discussions with other European countries.

Useful Links

Department for Exiting the EU - bit.ly/exiteu

Task force for the preparation and conduct of the negotiations with the United Kingdom under Article 50 of the TEU - <http://bit.ly/eucommexit>

Erasmus + Celebrates 30 Years

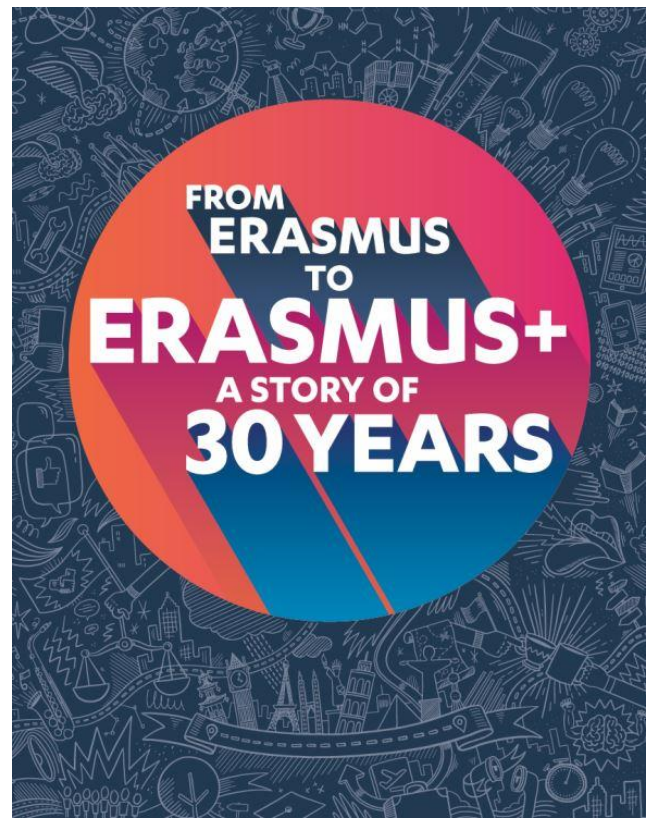
2017 is the 30 anniversary of Erasmus+, the programme which supports education, training, youth and sport in Europe. Erasmus+ enables people to volunteer, train, study and participate in youth exchanges in other countries. Teaching staff in schools, higher education, vocational studies and adult education along with youth workers can also participate and increase their professional development. The programme is funded so taking part means that many of the costs are covered for you.

It started as Erasmus which was for students to spend part of their studies in a different country. In 2014 other programmes such as Comenius, Leonardo and Grundtvig were either brought under the Erasmus name or ceased to continue. All the programmes became known as Erasmus+.

To find out more about taking part in an Erasmus+ project go to: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/individuals_en

Benefits of Erasmus+

In taking time to study, train or volunteer in a different country means many benefits including boosting confidence, improving employability, improving communication and intercultural skills to name a few.



What is Europe Direct?

Europe Direct is an information service about Europe and the European Union. We provide **FREE** publications for all ages on all kinds of subjects from opportunities in Europe to packs for teachers. These can include maps, flag bunting and posters.

We also deliver **FREE** workshops on subjects such as history of the EU, what it does, how laws are made and the importance of learning modern foreign languages. Workshops can be tailored and consist of various activities such as quizzes, map games, and design your MEP and European bag.

As well as publications and workshops we can assist in organising European weeks, European assemblies, fun days and MEP visits.

Workshop Examples:

- European Fairies.
- 'Europe and the European Union - what's that?'
- Design your own European Citizen, and EU Flag.
- Erasmus + Strategic Partnerships for Schools (for teachers).
- E-Twinning (for teachers).
- European Parliament, London, **FREE** visits.
- Parliamentarium - European Parliament's Visitor centre – Brussels.

If you are interested in having Europe Direct Wrexham come and do presentations, attend events, or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us on the details below:

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