



Newsletter Issue 2 April 2015

Celebrating 20 Years of EU Membership: Austria, Finland and Sweden

In the fourth round of enlargement, Finland, Austria and Sweden joined the European Union on 1 January 1995, bringing the number of Member States to 15. These three countries were the first new countries to join the EU after the end of the Cold War.



Sweden



Finland



Austria



Sweden, Finland and Austria were the first new countries to join the EU after the end of the Cold War, all becoming members on 1 January 1995. Finland and Sweden are both Scandinavian countries located in northern Europe, while Austria lies in the eastern Alps in central Europe. All three countries remained outside the EU during the Cold War because they did not feel that membership was compatible with their neutrality. Since joining they have been cautious but generally supportive participants in EU projects, although strong anti-EU feeling exists in all three.

Recent History

While Sweden remained neutral during World War II, Finnish forces had been in combat with Russian forces and Austria had been at the centre of the conflict, as part of the German Third Reich. After the war, Finland and Austria joined Sweden as neutral states. In the following decades all three countries prospered and developed into significant trading partners through the European Free Trade Area (EFTA). The three states left this organisation when they joined the EU.

Relations with the EU

EU membership marked a new chapter in the history of all three states. Joining the EU meant that all three countries had to reassess their neutral status because under the Maastricht Treaty (1992) it was possible that the European Union would develop its own foreign and defence policy in the future. Having adapted to this significant change, all three countries have come to play an important role in EU politics, becoming amongst the most competitive economies in the bloc.

However, the enlargement of the EU to include Sweden, Finland and Austria also meant that the EU had to alter the way it saw itself. Before joining the EU, Sweden negotiated an opt-out from any future attempts to create a European defence force, in order to protect its neutral status. Sweden also decided not to adopt the Euro, a decision that was reaffirmed in a referendum in 2003. Such decisions have led to a recognition that the EU is developing at different speeds, with some governments pursuing integration further than others. Yet, in other areas, these countries have provided leadership. For example, in recent years Austria has been at the forefront of attempts to draw the Balkan states under EU influence. During Sweden's Presidency of the EU in the second half of 2009, it oversaw the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty (2007).

Upcoming Events

eTwinning day: a day of celebration at school!

Celebrate the 10th anniversary of eTwinning by joining us for the first ever annual eTwinning day! There will be a human logo, balloon release and more... what will your school do? Show us by sharing your pictures on our brand new Instagram account!



Mark the date: **7 May** will be the eTwinning day in all eTwinning countries!

We invite your school to take part in the activities we propose to celebrate the 10th anniversary. You can choose between the following activities, the decision is up to you:

- Create a human logo: Collaboration and imagination are at the heart of eTwinning. Let your students' imagination shine by asking them to form the shape of the eTwinning logo in the school playground, gym or classroom.
- Organise a balloon release and release them at your school.

While you are having fun carrying out activities, take some pictures and share them via social media using the hashtag #eTwinningDay on the 7th of May. We have also set up our very own instagram account to help you share what your school has been up to.

Please note that you don't have to wait until the 7th of May to do the above activities, but we kindly ask you to wait until then to share the pictures or videos. We want the eTwinning day to be celebrated simultaneously in all eTwinning countries and we will use these pictures and videos on this website and on our 10 anniversary mini website. Don't hesitate to get back to your NSS if you need some support.

So, get ready to celebrate eTwinning day in your school this year - help start a new eTwinning tradition for the future years!



European Youth Week

European Youth Week takes place in the UK from **27 April – 3 May 2015**. It is a dedicated week where countries all over Europe hold events to raise awareness of European opportunities available to young people. The European Youth Portal has information on everything that is happening. If you would like to run an event, or to tell us about something you already have planned, please complete the online form on the Eurodesk website, and receive a free digital marketing pack. To find out more, contact the National Co-ordinator for European Youth Week in the UK.

2015 - The European Year of Development

We introduced The European Year of Development in our previous Newsletter. We talked about how each month has a key theme. The themes for this month and next are detailed below:

April - Health

Health is a basic human right. When the international community set the Millennium Development Goals in 2000, many of them referred directly and indirectly to health. However, progress in this field – with particular regard to women's and children's health – has been slow in many countries. So things haven't exactly turned out as planned. How can we learn from this and break the vicious circle in which poverty undermines health, while poor health compounds poverty?

May - Peace and Security

Seventy years after the end of the Second World War, conflict and violence still keep countries and their people locked in cycles of insecurity and poverty, leaving any attempts at sustainable development hopelessly compromised. The best way of tackling them is to take a collective, comprehensive approach – from early warning and prevention to early recovery, stabilisation and peace-building. Development policies and programmes should address conflict, build resilience and help affected countries return to a sustainable development path, so that their people can live in peaceful, stable societies.



For more details go to:

<https://europa.eu/eyd2015/en/content/eu-development-aid>

EU development aid

15 things you may not know about EU development cooperation in 2015

1. EU aid focuses on the countries which need it most.
2. The EU is helping to improve the lives of millions.
3. EU aid is transparent and it is easy to find out where the money goes.
4. To prevent fraud and corruption, EU aid is regularly audited and controlled.
5. The EU and its Member States together are the most generous donors of official development aid in the world.
6. Developing countries have a strong say in how EU aid is spent, what will be done and where.
7. The EU relies on organisations with the right experience to carry out its development projects on the ground.
8. The EU involves civil society organisations when it plans its cooperation with partner countries.
9. About 25% of EU aid is given directly to governments so they can do their work, following priorities that they define themselves, in close dialogue with the EU.
10. The EU has 139 delegations and offices across the world, more than any EU member state. At the same time its external aid equals less than a tenth of its budget.
11. In many countries the EU and its Member States combine their development efforts to ensure that we work more hand in hand and don't do the same thing twice.
12. The EU works hard to ensure that its work in areas such as trade and finance, agriculture, security, climate change, or migration helps overcome poverty in developing countries.
13. EU humanitarian aid and development cooperation are different but work hand in hand.
14. The world has managed to reduce the share of extremely poor people by more than half since 1990.
15. Europeans believe that we have a responsibility to help people in poor countries, and many are ready to play their part in this.



Europe Day

Europe Day is held on 9th May every year and celebrates peace and unity in Europe. The date marks the anniversary of the historical 'Schuman declaration'. At a speech in Paris in 1950, Robert Schuman, the then French foreign minister, set out his idea for a new form of political cooperation in Europe, which would make war between Europe's nations unthinkable.

The Schuman Declaration – 9 May 1950

The Schuman Declaration was presented by French foreign minister Robert Schuman on 9 May 1950. It proposed the creation of a European Coal and Steel Community, whose members would pool coal and steel production.

The ECSC (founding members: France, West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg) was the first of a series of supranational European institutions that would ultimately become today's "European Union".

Historical context

In 1950, the nations of Europe were still struggling to overcome the devastation wrought by World War II, which had ended 5 years earlier.

Determined to prevent another such terrible war, European governments concluded that pooling coal and steel production would – in the words of the Declaration – make war between historic rivals France and Germany "not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible".

It was thought – correctly – that merging of economic interests would help raise standards of living and be the first step towards a more united Europe. Membership of the ECSC was open to other countries.

Key quotes

"World peace cannot be safeguarded without the making of creative efforts proportionate to the dangers which threaten it."

"Europe will not be made all at once, or according to a single plan. It will be built through concrete achievements which first create a de facto solidarity."

"The pooling of coal and steel production... will change the destinies of those regions which have long been devoted to the manufacture of munitions of war, of which they have been the most constant victims."

For full details of the 'Schuman declaration' go to :

http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/symbols/europe-day/schuman-declaration/index_en.htm

What is Europe Direct?

Europe Direct Wrexham is an information service about Europe and the European Union. We provide a vast amount of FREE literature for all ages on all kind of subjects from the environment, European Parliament, opportunities for young people in Europe, travelling in Europe and languages.

We also provide packs for teachers to aid them in delivering topics on Europe and the European Union as part of the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification and Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC).

We offer free material to create colourful wall displays about Europe such as maps, flag bunting and posters.

Aside from the publications we also deliver FREE workshops in schools on subjects such as history of the EU, what it does, how laws are made, the importance of learning modern foreign languages, business and trade and the environment.

Workshops consist of various activities which you can mix and match from such as presentations, quizzes, map games, design your MEP and European bag design to form a lesson.

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

The aim of this newsletter is to keep you informed of the services that Europe Direct can offer YOU to help teach certain subjects.

Workshop Examples:

European Fairies (Ages 3 - 11, 1 hour session)

How well do you know Europe? (Ages 11+, 1 hour session)

'Europe and the European Union - what's that?' (Ages 11-18, 1 hour session)

Design a European Cotton Bag (Ages 7-14, 1 Hour session)

European Postcards (Ages 8-11, 1 hour session)

Design Your Own Politician (Ages 11-16, 30 minute session)

Design your own European Citizen (Ages 11-16, 30 minute session)

Design an EU flag (Ages 8-11, 30 minute session)

Erasmus + Strategic Partnerships for Schools (for teachers)

E-Twinning (for teachers)

European Parliament London FREE Visits

Parlamentarium - European Parliament's Visitor centre - Brussels

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

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