

Unit 11 Europe – who decides?

About the unit

This unit provides a framework within which to explore and debate issues that affect the UK's relations with Europe and relate to decision-making at different levels of government. The single European currency is used here as a focus, but this could be changed to another issue that is topical at the time of teaching.

The unit contains opportunities for pupils to explore and engage in discussion about issues relating to membership of the European Union and about the single currency. Pupils find out the facts about Europe through their own research, and exchange views with pupils in other European countries through school linking and internet discussion forums. They explore the advantages and disadvantages of the single currency both for individuals and for organisations. A debate is held in which a range of points of view are presented and discussed, and this is followed by a vote/referendum on the issue.

This unit provides opportunities to link with other subjects that contribute to pupils' understanding of European issues, including MFL, history and geography.

Where the unit fits in

This unit addresses the following aspects of the key stage 4 citizenship programme of study:

Knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens

Pupils should be taught about:

- 1b the origins and implications of the diverse national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding
- 1d the importance of playing an active part in democratic and electoral processes
- 1f the opportunities for individuals and voluntary groups to bring about social change locally, nationally, in Europe and internationally
- 1g the importance of a free press, and the media's role in society, including the internet, in providing information and affecting opinion
- 1i the United Kingdom's relations in Europe, including the European Union, and relations with the Commonwealth and the United Nations

Developing skills of enquiry and communication

Pupils should be taught to:

- 2a research a topical political, spiritual, moral, social or cultural issue, problem or event by analysing information from different sources, including ICT-based sources, showing an awareness of the use and abuse of statistics
- 2b express, justify and defend orally and in writing a personal opinion about such issues, problems or events
- 2c contribute to group and exploratory class discussions, and take part in formal debates

Developing skills of participation and responsible action

Pupils should be taught to:

- 3a use their imagination to consider other people's experiences and be able to think about, express, explain and critically evaluate views that are not their own
- 3b negotiate, decide and take part responsibly in school and community-based activities
- 3c reflect on the process of participating

This unit builds on unit 14 'Developing skills of democratic participation' in the key stage 3 scheme of work, and links with unit 10 'Rights and responsibilities in the world of work', unit 1 'Human rights', unit 5 'How the economy functions' and unit 6 'Business and enterprise'.

Expectations

At the end of this unit

most pupils: know about the European Union, the UK's role within it and some of the key issues affecting Europe. They are aware of some of the advantages and disadvantages for individuals, organisations and member states of closer European co-operation on aspects of social, cultural, economic and political policy. They investigate related issues, devising and asking questions and surveying members of their school and the wider community. They carry out research using a range of sources of information, including ICT. They take part in class discussions and a formal debate. They reflect on the issues they have investigated and discussed, and evaluate whether/how their views have changed in the light of what they have learned.

some pupils have not made so much progress and: know that the UK is part of the European Union. They are aware of some of the issues affecting members of the Union. They recognise that different individuals and organisations hold different views on Europe. They investigate a related issue and communicate their views to others, using ICT as well as other means.

some pupils have progressed further and: are aware of the range of arguments for and against the European Union, economic and monetary union, political union, and closer European co-operation on trade and social policy. They recognise the advantages and disadvantages for individuals, organisations and member states of belonging to the European Union. They understand the rights that citizens of Europe have, and can cite examples of where this has brought about change. Using skills of enquiry and a range of sources of information, including ICT, they research the views of the school and wider community, and draw on their findings to contribute effectively to class discussions and a formal debate. They reflect on whether/how their views have changed in the light of what they have discussed.

Resources

Resources include:

- *Europe in the round*, an annually updated CD-ROM that provides facts and figures on countries across Europe. See the DfES citizenship website for details
- local twinning associations, which can provide information and support to pupils investigating cultural and social issues
- the British Council's Education and Training Group provides guidelines on setting up school-linking projects and has information on grants available to UK schools
- European Resource Centres, which provide a range of resources to support teaching about Europe (details available from the British Council)

Many groups and organisations produce online resources that are relevant to citizenship. QCA has not printed these website addresses as it recognises that they can and do change, often at short notice. So that we can monitor and maintain a reliable and useful resource, the website addresses of the following organisations can be accessed through the key stage 4 citizenship scheme of work site at www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes

- Speak Out! on European citizenship (an Institute for Citizenship discussion site for young people. A teacher's guide is available)
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office (for information about Britain and the European Union)
- European Parliament (includes information about the euro)
- the Treasury's euro information website
- European Central Bank
- BBC news website (for information on the costs and benefits of the euro)

Links with other subjects

In this section, references are made to the programme of study if there is one at key stage 4, or to the subject specific criteria on which GCSE courses are based. Some of these links have been included in the 'Points to note' section to illustrate these opportunities.

English: 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 10a, 10b in the programme of study

History: GCSE modern world history could provide the historical context for this unit

Geography: GCSE criteria: the European Union as a context for thematic studies (3.1ii); the way in which places are interdependent (3.1iii); development of locational knowledge (3.1viii)

MFL: this unit builds on the programme of study requirements for developing pupils' cultural awareness (4a, 4b, 4d) and also provides a context for several other aspects of pupils' learning (for example 1c, 2c, 2f, 2h, 5c, 5e, 5h)

Economics: GCSE criteria: interdependent behaviour of individuals, groups, organisations and governments within local, national and international contexts (3.3ii); the implications of trade with Europe (3.4i)

Pupils should learn:

Pupils:

How am I part of Europe?

- about the European Union and its member countries
- about the advantages and disadvantages of being a member of the European Union
- about some of the different issues that affect the UK in its role as a member of the European Union
- Give pupils an outline map of Europe and ask them to mark on it the countries that belong to the European Union.
- Start a discussion by presenting pupils with a range of statements on key issues and asking them to discuss them in pairs. For example, on the issue of law, statements could include: 'laws should be the same for all countries in the European Union'; 'individual countries should make their own laws'; and 'countries should make their own laws, but these should be compatible with laws in other EU countries'. On the issue of the single currency, possible statements include: 'the UK should keep the pound'; 'the UK should adopt the Euro'; and 'the UK should keep the pound but have economic policies that are compatible with those of other European Union countries'. Other issues on which statements could be discussed include defence, crime, immigration, cultural identity, trade and social policy.
- The pairs join up into small groups and share their views on each issue. They also discuss who should have the power to make major decisions on the issue, *eg the UK Government, the European Parliament, the European Commission or the people of a country in a referendum*. Pupils then share their different views as a class. They discuss the advantages and disadvantages of membership of the European Union for individuals, *eg as consumers, tourists, employees, students, citizens*, and organisations, *eg different types of business, football clubs, organisations providing healthcare*. What are the advantages and disadvantages of EU membership for the UK?
- identify the member countries of the European Union
- recognise that a range of issues can be affected by decisions taken at both national and European levels of government
- know some of the arguments for and against membership of the European Union, for both individuals and organisations
- contribute to class discussions
- The European Union currently has 15 member states (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK) and more than 375 million citizens. European citizens have the right to travel, live, work and study in any European Union member state.
- This section could be linked with unit 5 'How the economy functions'.
- Link with history: European issues and the European Union in modern European history.
- Link with geography: GCSE criteria: development of locational knowledge (3.1viii); study of places and interdependence (3.1iii).
- Link with MFL: pupils are likely to have learned about the languages spoken in the member countries of the European Union. They may know reasons why linguistic and political boundaries are not always the same.
- Pupils could record their personal views on each issue in their citizenship portfolio. They return to these at the end of the unit to reflect on whether/how their views have changed.

Learning objectives

Pupils should learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Pupils:

Points to note

Euro versus pound – an example issue for the European Union

- about the arguments for and against the European single currency (the euro)
- about the issues involved in implementing a single currency, and some of the effects of these on individuals and organisations
- to devise a set of questions to use as they investigate the issue
- to use a range of information from primary and secondary sources, including ICT, in their investigation
- Using the map on which they identified the EU member countries, pupils mark the members of the EU that have adopted the euro and those that have not. They investigate the advantages and disadvantages for EU members of the single currency, using a range of sources of information, *eg textbooks, websites, information from the government, information from the European Commission.*
- Working as individuals or in pairs or small groups, pupils find out how the introduction of the euro might affect individuals and organisations. For example, individuals wouldn't need to change money to spend while on holiday, and could easily compare the prices of goods in different countries; businesses trading in Europe would be able to see the cost differences of the same goods and services immediately (transparent pricing), and would also benefit from a reduction in transaction costs/exchange rate risk.
- Pupils devise questions for a survey of their school and wider community on the issues they have investigated, and any others they think of. This might include, for those who can remember it, a question about what happened when decimal currency was introduced. Pupils could also find out where their MP and/or MEP stands on the issue of the euro.
- Through school linking and use of the internet, pupils explore and exchange views with pupils from schools in other European countries (ideally, one country that has adopted the euro and one that has not). They find out what happened in the country that adopted the euro in the run-up to its introduction. What information was available? How were people consulted? If there was a referendum, what was the result and what was voter turnout like? What impact has the introduction of the euro had?
- Pupils could research the way the single European currency is portrayed in the media. How much coverage is there? What do different sources, including newspapers, say about the euro? Are facts being conveyed objectively, or does the media tend just to present different political points of view?
- know some of the arguments for and against the single currency
- identify the effects of introducing the single currency, both for individuals and for organisations (including businesses)
- use their investigation to exchange different points of view, including with pupils from other countries
- recognise that media coverage of the euro may not present all the facts
- can distinguish between fact and opinion
- The issue pupils investigate in this section should be topical, to enable use of media reports, UK and European parliamentary debates and other sources of information. It could be one of the issues discussed in the first section of the unit.
- Link with MFL: pupils learning a European language should be used to talking about prices in euros.
- Information about school-linking projects is provided in unit 17 'School linking' in the key stage 3 scheme of work. If the school has a link with a school in another European country, pupils may already have exchanged views with pupils in that school on the introduction of the euro.
- If internet access is available, pupils could use a discussion forum such as Speak Out! on European citizenship to exchange views with pupils overseas (see www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes).
- Useful information on the euro is available from the Treasury's euro information website (see www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes).
- The countries that have adopted the euro are Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. These countries also share a single interest rate, set by the European Central Bank.

Learning objectives

Pupils should learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Pupils:

Points to note**Debate on the Euro – what do I think?**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to analyse the findings of their investigation • to prepare contributions to a formal debate, aiming to reflect different points of view | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing on their work in the previous section, pupils prepare for a class debate on the introduction of the euro. They could do this in character, taking on the particular viewpoints of individuals, groups or organisations, <i>eg consumers, managers of different types of business</i>. They could also prepare materials to display in the classroom, along with information sheets detailing all the different views being put forward. Pupils agree on how they want to end the debate, <i>eg by voting with a show of hands, holding a secret ballot/referendum</i>, and discuss whether they should vote in character or on the basis of their personal views. • Following the debate, pupils reflect in pairs on what they have learned. What do they know now that they didn't know before? Has their view of European issues changed? • Extension activity: the class debate and vote/referendum could be adapted or extended into a whole-year or whole-school activity. It could take place on Europe Day (9 May every year), which provides an opportunity to celebrate European diversity and culture. Local twinning associations may be able to support this kind of whole-school activity. The booklet <i>Staying involved: extending opportunities for pupil participation</i> provides guidelines for pupils organising events. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate their views in a formal debate, drawing on their earlier research • make informed contributions to the debate, putting forward different points of view • use their imagination to consider other people's experiences. They think about, express, explain and critically evaluate views that are not their own • know that there are different ways of voting on issues and understand how these operate • reflect on what they know and understand about the issue now, and identify whether/how their own views have changed |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issue for debate should be topical, so that up-to-date information and media coverage are available. For guidelines on running a debate, see the DfES citizenship website, www.dfes.gov.uk/citizenship. |