Europe

Teachers' guide

European Union

The symbols in the boxes stand for the following:

! Information

? Solution

* Recommendations

This teachers' guide and *Europe. A journal for young people* are available online at:

http://europa.eu/teachers-corner/index_en.htm
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1. Europe in everyday life

The objective of this chapter is to familiarise students with the extent to which the European Union features in their everyday lives. The aim is to generate curiosity about the EU.

! How far away is 'Brussels'? p. 5

The European Commission conducts twice-yearly opinion polls to find out what EU citizens think about European matters. They can be found at:
http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

The homepage is in English and French, but most of the reports are available in various EU languages.

How does the European Union work?

Across Europe as a whole, 52 % of EU citizens (which is of course more than half) claim to understand how the EU works.

In any case, the European Commission's regular public opinion poll — the 'Eurobarometer' — contains several questions designed to find out how much respondents really know.

Seventy per cent know that Members of the European Parliament are elected by citizens. Fourteen per cent think that Switzerland is in the EU, while another 13 % admit that they do not know.

Source: Eurobarometer No 81 (spring 2014) (http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb81/eb81_publ_en.pdf).

?/* Europe — a short quiz p. 5

- The European Union has been made up of 28 Member States, since Croatia joined in July 2013.
- Members of the European Parliament are elected directly by citizens in general elections with secret ballots.
- Nineteen EU countries use the euro as their currency as of January 2015.
- The EU's total budget represents 1 % of the EU Member States' gross domestic product (GDP). GDP is the total value of goods and services produced in 1 year.

  See: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/index.cfm
- The Court of Justice of the European Union has its headquarters in Luxembourg; Brussels houses the headquarters of the European Commission; the European Parliament is based in Strasbourg (but also meets in short plenary sessions in Brussels); and the Portuguese capital Lisbon is where the current treaty was signed.

When analysing your students' answers, be aware of the extent to which they are uninformed or where they are not aware of the latest developments.

* How is the EU relevant to us? Ten examples p. 6

After this exercise, students should be given the opportunity to make their own comments and discuss their own experiences.

? Education and study in other EU countries p. 8

Your students will doubtless come up with reasons for and against going abroad to study in another country. Arguments for studying abroad might include: gaining new experiences; meeting new people; finding out how others tackle certain issues; improving foreign language skills; expanding their horizons; etc. Possible reasons for not studying abroad include: being separated from friends and family; difficulties encountered when studying in a foreign language (and therefore maybe getting lower grades); missing home; relationship issues; the expense involved in travelling to visit friends and family; etc.

? European symbols p. 9

1. European Union passport — identifies the holder as a citizen of the European Union.
2. EU driving licence, valid Europewide. Since 2012, the 110 or so different types of driving licence within the EU have been replaced by a uniform European driving licence under European law. Since then, all new driving licences issued have been EU licences. The old licences remain valid until 2033, at which point they will have to be exchanged for new licences.
3. The EU energy label assesses the water and energy use of an appliance and awards a rating from A (the most energy efficient) to G (the most wasteful).
4. The CE label is a product safety label under EU law for certain products. It is not a quality label. The main aim of the CE label is to ensure that products sold to end consumers within the European Economic Area (EEA) are safe. The EEA comprises the EU and the EFTA (European Free Trade Agreement) countries (but not Switzerland). The CE label is often referred to as a 'passport' for the internal market.
5. The new EU organic logo, which has been obligatory since 2010 for organic products, guarantees, according to the European Commission, that:

- at least 95 % of the product's ingredients of agricultural origin have been organically produced;
- the product complies with the rules of the official inspection scheme;
- the product has come directly from the producer or preparer in a sealed package;
- the product bears the name of the producer, the preparer or vendor and the name or code of the inspection body.

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/consumer-confidence/logo-labelling_en

2. The European Union — what does this mean exactly?

The objective of this chapter is to present the Member States of the European Union and to point out that the EU and Europe are not the same thing. The first objective is to familiarise students with the EU. The original reason for establishing the EU — to secure peace among the Member States — should be emphasised. It is recommended that you point out that the first version of the EU, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), was created shortly after the end of the Second World War. The ECSC Treaty was signed in 1951 and came into force in 1952. At that time, mutual suspicion between the parties was still considerable. The treaties establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) were signed in 1957 and came into force in 1958. They are known as the 'Treaties of Rome'.

? Who is a member? p. 11

Members of the EU

Country	Year of accession	Population (2014)	Capital
Belgium	**Founding member 1952/1958**	**11.2 million**	**Brussels**
France	**Founding member 1952/1958**	**65.9 million**	**Paris**
Germany	**Founding member 1952/1958**	**80.8 million**	**Berlin**
Italy	**Founding member 1952/1958**	**60.8 million**	**Rome**
Luxembourg	**Founding member 1952/1958**	**0.5 million**	**Luxembourg**
Netherlands	**Founding member 1952/1958**	**16.8 million**	**Amsterdam (*)**
Denmark	**1973**	**5.6 million**	**Copenhagen**
Ireland	**1973**	**4.6 million**	**Dublin**
United Kingdom	**1973**	**64.3 million**	**London**
Greece	**1981**	**11.0 million**	**Athens**
Portugal	**1986**	**10.4 million**	**Lisbon**
Spain	**1986**	**46.5 million**	**Madrid**
Austria	**1995**	**8.5 million**	**Vienna**
Finland	**1995**	**5.4 million**	**Helsinki**
Sweden	**1995**	**9.6 million**	**Stockholm**
Cyprus	**2004**	**0.8 million**	**Nicosia**
Czech Republic	**2004**	**10.5 million**	**Prague**
Estonia	**2004**	**1.3 million**	**Tallinn**
Hungary	**2004**	**9.9 million**	**Budapest**
Latvia	**2004**	**2.0 million**	**Riga**
Lithuania	**2004**	**2.9 million**	**Vilnius**
Malta	**2004**	**0.4 million**	**Valletta**
Poland	**2004**	**38.5 million**	**Warsaw**
Slovakia	**2004**	**5.4 million**	**Bratislava**
Slovenia	**2004**	**2.0 million**	**Ljubljana**
Bulgaria	**2007**	**7.2 million**	**Sofia**
Romania	**2007**	**19.9 million**	**Bucharest**
Croatia	**2013**	**4.2 million**	**Zagreb**

(*) The capital of the Netherlands is Amsterdam, even though the seat of government and of the royal family is The Hague.

NB: Further facts and figures can be found in all the official languages at:
http://europa.eu/abc/euslides/index_en.htm

Source: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu

Students can colour or mark the map as follows: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands in red; Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom in brown; Greece in pink; Portugal and Spain in yellow; Austria, Finland and Sweden in dark blue; Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia in green; Bulgaria and Romania in light blue; Croatia in purple.

* What else do you know about these countries — or what can you find out? p. 11

Most students will have had their own experiences of other Member States. We recommend that you invite them to share these ('What else do you know about the countries of Europe?') and structure them. In this way, it will be possible to draw up proper 'fact sheets', at least for some Member States. These could also be created in pairs or in groups. In this way, the students will feel that they can contribute their own experiences to the discussion.

? Europe — a short quiz p. 12

1. Valletta, Malta. According to the Maltese Government, it has 6 675 inhabitants.
2. The coldest average temperature is found in Vilnius, Lithuania, with – 8 °C in January. The hottest summer temperature is in Nicosia, Cyprus, with an average maximum temperature of 36 °C.
3. The highest mountain in the EU is Mont Blanc (4 810 m) in the Alps, on the border between France and Italy.
4. The EU is bordered by the North Sea, the Baltic, the Mediterranean, the Atlantic and the Black Sea.
5. The EU has seven monarchies (Belgium, Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom). Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden have a king as the Head of State. Denmark and the United Kingdom have a queen. The Head of State in Luxembourg is a grand-duke.
6. Three: Dutch, French and German.
7. Germany, with around 80 million inhabitants.
8. France, at almost 544 000 km².
9. The most easterly capital is Nicosia, Cyprus, at 35° 10' N, 33° 21' E.

Special question for experts

10. The number of stars has nothing to do with the number of Member States. There are 12 stars because 12 is traditionally the symbol for completeness, perfection and unity. The flag therefore remains the same, even when new countries join.

    Source: http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/symbols/flag/index_en.htm

? Do you speak European? p. 12

The 24 official languages of the EU are: Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish and Swedish.

? History of the EU in pictures p. 15

Left-hand column, from top to bottom: 6 — 1 — 3.
Right-hand column, from top to bottom: 2 — 5 — 4 — 7.

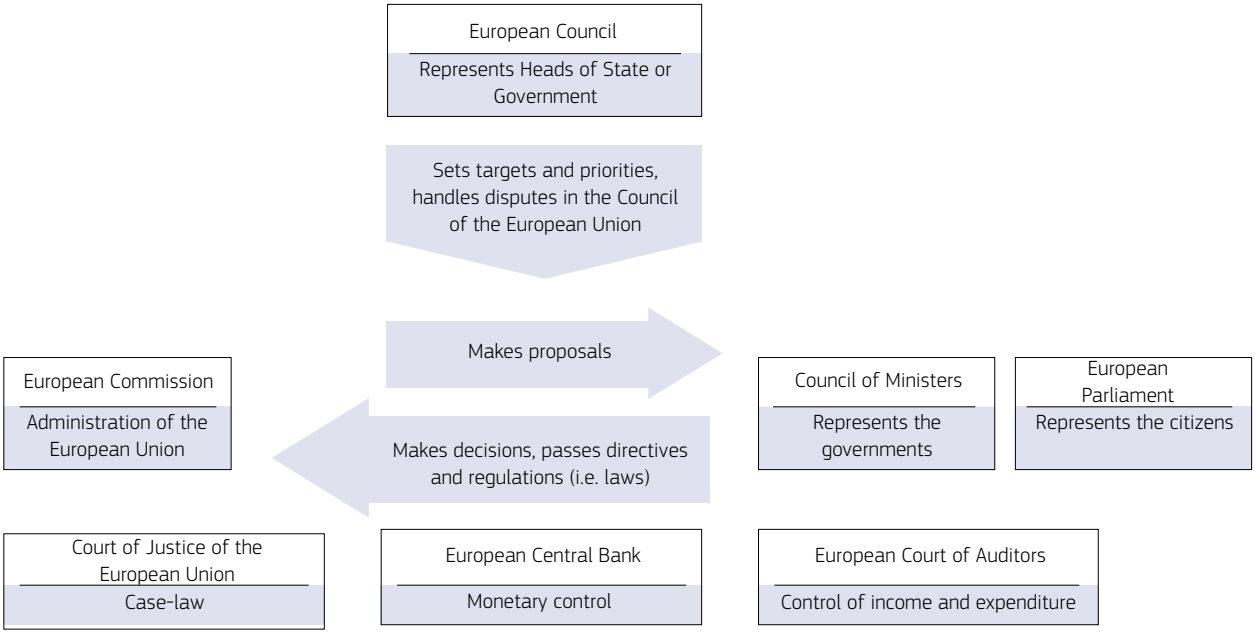
3. How does the European Union work?

The objective of this chapter is to present the institutions of the European Union and give an idea of how the EU functions.

? Who does what in the EU? p. 19

Description	European Council	Council of the European Union	European Parliament	European Commission	Court of Justice of the European Union	European Central Bank	European Court of Auditors
Makes proposals for EU regulations	☐	☐	☐	X	☐	☐	☐
Consists of one representative/ member per Member State	X	X	☐	X	X	Only Member States with the euro	X
Sets key interest rates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	X	☐
Monitors EU spending	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	X
Is elected by the population	☐	☐	X	☐	☐	☐	☐
Passes EU laws (regulations/ directives)	☐	X	X	☐	☐	☐	☐
Decides jointly on the President of the European Commission	X	☐	X	☐	☐	☐	☐
Administers the EU	☐	☐	☐	X	☐	☐	☐
Represents the interests of citizens	☐	☐	X	☐	☐	☐	☐
Represents the interests of Member States and their governments	X	X	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rules on the interpretation of European laws	☐	☐	☐	☐	X	☐	☐
Defines the general political directions and priorities	X	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

? The bodies of the European Union p. 20



?/* Find out more about the European citizens' initiative p. 21

Since the Lisbon Treaty came into force, citizens have had the right to come together and force the Commission to tackle a particular issue. A citizens' initiative has to be backed by at least 1 million EU citizens, which is 0.2 % of the population, and they should be citizens of at least seven out of the 28 Member States. A minimum number of signatories is required in each of those seven Member States. It is therefore not possible to have 999 994 signatories from one Member State and one signatory from six other Member States.

It should be borne in mind that a European citizens' initiative must relate to matters which are within the European Union's powers and do not contradict the EU's fundamental values. For example, a citizens' initiative to introduce the death penalty would not be eligible, as it would be at odds with the Charter of Fundamental Rights. A citizens' initiative on some aspect of school organisation would also be ineligible, as education is a matter for each individual Member State. A citizens' initiative cannot make laws directly. It is not a referendum. However, it can promote and/or influence certain decisions. It is thus a form of decision-shaping, rather than decision-making.

The initiators have 1 year to collect 1 million signatures (which can be electronic). There are currently several citizens' initiatives under way. An up-to-date list in all the official languages can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/welcome

Your students could make their own suggestions as to what they would like to see regulated and what is important to them. This is also a good way of finding out exactly what powers the EU does have (and to discover that the EU is certainly not an institution responsible for everything).

?/* What is a petition? p. 22

A petition (from the Latin *petitio:* 'application', 'plea') is a request or a complaint to a competent authority or representative body. It is normally a request from citizens to their parliament to amend or adopt certain laws, etc. The possibility of drawing up a petition is a generally acknowledged component of democratic rights. Petitions to parliaments are sent to the relevant petitions committee, which examines and replies to them.

The European Parliament has set up a Committee on Petitions to deal with petitions from citizens. If you live in a Member State of the EU and believe that your rights as an EU citizen have been infringed, and if you want to submit an individual complaint or you wish to urge the European Parliament to take a position on an issue of public interest, you can turn (on your own or with others) to this Committee on Petitions, in writing or via the website of the European Parliament.

Most of the petitions dealt with by the committee relate to social security, environmental protection, tax harmonisation, free movement and the recognition of qualifications.

The national parliaments usually also have petition committees or ombudsmen to whom citizens can turn with complaints. You can find more information on the website of the European Ombudsman, which also documents the European Network of Ombudsmen: http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/home.faces

? Our representatives in Strasbourg and Brussels p. 22

Political groups in the European Parliament		How many members does this group have?
	EPP — Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats)	219
	S & D — Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament	191
	ECR — European Conservatives and Reformists Group	71
	ALDE — Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	68
	GUE/NGL — Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left	52
	Greens/EFA — Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance	50
	EFDD — Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy Group	48
NI	Non-affiliated	52

NB: These numbers sometimes fluctuate as members come and go.

You can find a list of all the Members of the European Parliament and their respective parties here: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/map.html

? Europe — a short quiz p. 23

Who is the current President of the European Parliament? And who are the other people in the photos?

1. German Social Democrat Martin Schulz is President of the European Parliament.
2. Federica Mogherini, from Italy, is High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission. The role of 'High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy' was created by the Treaty of Amsterdam, which entered into force in 1999. A decade later, the Treaty of Lisbon expanded the role, adding significant new responsibilities. Called from that point onwards the 'High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy', the post was also extended to include the role of Vice-President of the Commission.
3. Jean-Claude Juncker, former Prime Minister of Luxembourg, is President of the European Commission.
4. Donald Tusk, former Prime Minister of Poland, is President of the European Council.

* Invite your MEP to visit you p. 23

Members of the European Parliament are very keen to talk to young people. Why not invite your local MEP to visit your students?

All MEPs have an office in Brussels and one in their constituency, so it's easy to get hold of them. For more details go to: http://www.europarl.eu

4. What exactly does the EU do?

The objective of this chapter is to present the most important policy areas of the European Union.

? Europe — a short quiz p. 26

The correct answer is 9 May 1950. That was the day on which the French Foreign Minister, Robert Schuman, called for a European Community in order to secure permanent peace in Europe. This initiative led to the formation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), which started operating in 1952. This was the first of the three European Communities which were formed in 1958 on the basis of the 1957 Treaties of Rome, followed by the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). The Treaty of Maastricht merged these Communities to form the European Union (EU). Politically speaking, 9 May 1950 marks the birth of the European Union, exactly 5 years after the end of the Second World War.

You can find more information here: http://europa.eu/about-eu/eu-history/founding-fathers/index_en.htm

! Who should decide about the common currency? p. 28

This exercise looks at a real 'hot potato'. The 19 Member States using the euro make many decisions in the Eurogroup which directly relate to the single currency but which also have an impact on other EU countries. It is therefore important to weigh up carefully which decisions should be taken at which level. The Eurogroup, which has its own president — the Dutch Finance Minister Jeroen Dijsselbloem — and its own working group, consists of the finance ministers of the 19 euro area states and coordinates the economic policy of these states, so as to create maximum stability and consistency within the euro area.

The Eurogroup tries to achieve consensus with the other Member States, in particular the so-called 'pre-ins' that will be switching to the single currency over the coming years. One example of this is the Euro Plus Pact, in which participating states undertake to introduce measures to improve competitiveness. The name of the pact illustrates that it includes the euro area states plus other EU countries (Bulgaria, Denmark, Lithuania, Poland and Romania).

More information on the Eurogroup can be found here: http://eurozone.europa.eu and the following website about the euro might also be of interest:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/explained/index_en.htm

? Europe — a short quiz p. 29

Which countries are in the euro area?
There are 19 EU countries which use the euro as their currency.
The euro coins in the picture are from these countries (from left to right): Austria, Slovenia, Estonia, Greece, France, Italy, Germany, Latvia, the Netherlands, Lithuania, Ireland, Malta, Finland, Slovakia, Luxembourg, Portugal, Cyprus, Spain and Belgium.

* Climate protection measures — Do you think this policy is right? p. 31

Climate protection is certainly an important contemporary issue so the table containing different opinions on the subject provides ideal material for conducting discussions with students.

Suggested exercise: In groups, discuss the three fundamental climate protection goals adopted by the European Council in March 2007. Find out about specific ways of achieving these goals. Think about how everyone can contribute personally to them. Also think about any obstacles preventing these goals from being achieved. Discuss the results with the class.

! Discussion on the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union p. 32

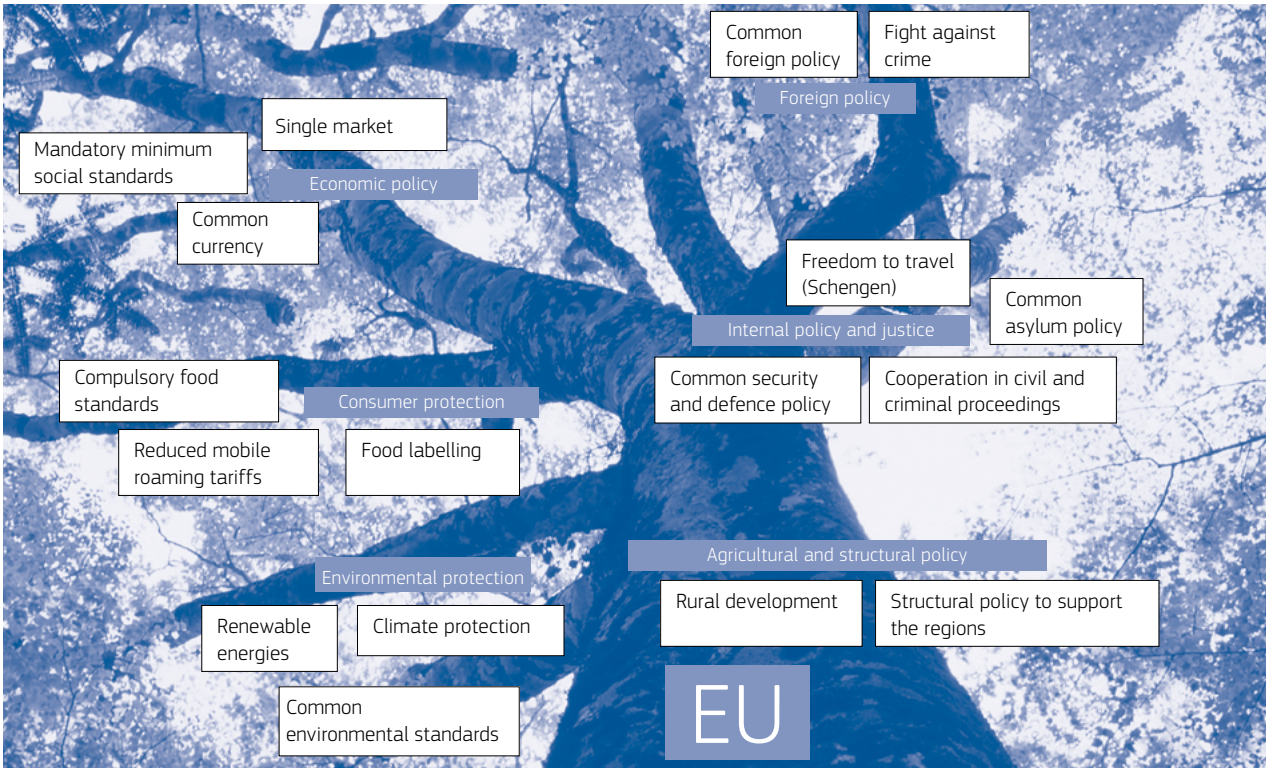
The European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights was drawn up by a convention comprising representatives of the European Parliament, the national parliaments, the national governments and the European Commission. It was proclaimed in December 2000 on the occasion of the Nice Summit and, since the Lisbon Treaty entered into force in 2009, has been incorporated into EU law. The aim of the convention was not to 'invent' a new constitution, but rather to map the protection of fundamental rights already existing in the Member States, thus strengthening European identity. The Charter of Fundamental Rights is therefore a summary of pre-existing human and fundamental rights in the EU. It is also important as a legal document as it applies to all the European institutions. National courts must also take the Charter of Fundamental Rights into account when they interpret EU law. Poland and the United Kingdom have negotiated opt-outs, but these only apply to the question of the extent to which the Charter of Fundamental Rights can be referred to in the context of national court proceedings and how far the Court of Justice of the European Union's powers extend into national legal affairs. The Czech Republic has also been granted an opt-out of this kind.

Because the Charter of Fundamental Rights was drawn up in the 1990s — in other words later than most of the constitutions of the Member States — it is very up to date. For example, it contains a ban on the reproductive cloning of human beings (Article 3(2)(d)), the right to the protection of personal data (Article 8(1)), detailed provisions on the prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of various factors including sexual orientation (Article 21) or ensuring a high standard of consumer protection (Article 38). The rights to good administration (Article 41) and access to documents (Article 42) are also covered by the charter. The 50 fundamental rights set out in the chapters entitled 'Dignity', 'Freedoms', 'Equality', 'Solidarity', 'Citizens' rights' and 'Justice' are followed by four further articles regulating the implementation and scope of the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Some aspects are not mentioned specifically, such as the right to work (although the right to be allowed to engage in work is). There are no specific provisions on the protection of ethnic minorities, although these are specifically mentioned in connection with the prohibition of discrimination (Article 21 of the charter).

More information here:
http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:12012P/TXT:EN:NOT

*/? The tree of European politics p. 33



If you have time, you might like to have a closer look at 'The tree of European politics'. Why not ask students to collect current newspaper articles and see whether they contain themes mentioned in the illustration? In this way, the tree could be made more topical.

5. Europe moves on — the enlargement of the European Union

The objective of this chapter is to make students familiar with the process of enlargement and to show that the EU is a values-based community which makes corresponding demands on potential new members.

? Who can become a member? p. 35

A country ...	can join the EU	cannot join the EU
... that does not have freedom of the press	☐	☒
... that applies the death penalty	☐	☒
... that allows its citizens to protest against the government	☒	☐
... in which the parliament is elected on a regular basis	☒	☐
... in which a president governs until death, and is succeeded by a son or daughter	☐	☒
... in which the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community has the same rights as heterosexuals	☒	☐
... in which the army determines policy and may even intervene in internal affairs with military force	☐	☒
... in which people are considered innocent until their guilt has been established by a court	☒	☐
... in which there is only one party which is therefore always in government	☐	☒
... which protects minorities, even where the majority would like to put more pressure on minorities	☒	☐

! Where are the boundaries of Europe? p. 36

Different associations and organisations have very different sets of members. For example, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) includes the central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan (and, because of their security policy importance as North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) members, even Canada and the United States). The playoffs for the European football championship have included Israel and Kazakhstan.

* Where does Europe end? p. 36

It becomes clear as soon as you start discussing this issue that there is no one objective criterion for deciding where Europe ends. Various factors, such as geography, history, culture and a feeling of belonging should be taken into account. The Council of Europe defines Europe as being 'those countries that want to be European'. This definition could be extended by specifying that Europe means those countries that want to be European and are accepted by the others as being European.

? The western Balkan states — What's where? p. 37

See the map on the right.

? Steps towards EU membership p. 38

0. The accession process has not yet started.
1. Conclusion of a stabilisation and association agreement.
2. Ratification of the stabilisation and association agreement by the Member States and the partner country.
3. Implementation of the agreement.
4. Application for membership.
5. Positive response of the European Commission to the application for membership.
6. Recognition as a candidate.
7. Start of negotiations on accession.
8. Successful completion of negotiations on accession.
9. Ratification of the accession treaty in all Member States and in the partner country (by the parliaments or by referendums).
10. Ratification by the European Parliament.
11. Membership.

? At what stage are the countries of the western Balkans? p. 38

Croatia: stage 11. Croatia became a full member on 1 July 2013.
Montenegro: stage 7. Accession negotiations have been ongoing since 2012.
Serbia: stage 7. Accession negotiations began in January 2014.
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: stage 6.
Albania: stage 6.
Bosnia and Herzegovina: stage 1.
Kosovo is not recognised by five EU Member States (Cyprus, Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Spain) and is not included in the process. It is therefore at stage 0, i.e. it has not yet started the accession process.
If there is time, students could be split into groups and asked to find out more about one of the Balkan countries (its geography, history, economy and politics, for example). They could then report back and answer the question 'What, in your view, are the main arguments for or against this country's accession to the European Union?'

! Turkey p. 39

One issue which has been widely discussed in the media, and which will certainly also interest students, is the possibility of Turkey joining the EU. Turkey, with which there has been an association agreement since 1963, was officially named as a candidate in 1999. Accession negotiations, which have proved controversial in the EU, have been ongoing since 2005.

Each argument in favour is offset by an argument against and vice versa. Is Turkey's young and dynamic population, which would enjoy mobility within the EU, an opportunity to make us more competitive or is it a threat to our jobs? Would Turkey joining provide stability for the Middle East, because of its geographical location, or would its borders with Iran, Iraq and Syria destabilise the EU? Would Turkey's Muslim population represent a bridge with the Islamic world or a threat to European identity?

These questions have all been raised in the public arena and can be discussed further in the classroom. Ask your students to look for current news stories about this subject online.

Current information about Turkey and the steps towards membership can be found in the European Commission's progress report of October 2013, here:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/tr_rapport_2013_en.pdf

Also Iceland has applied for EU membership (July 2009) and is a candidate country. Accession negotiations started in July 2010 and were put on hold by the Icelandic government in May 2013.

6. Europe and the wider world

The objective of this chapter is to consider Europe in the global context and to understand the role of the European Union as an international player.

? The continents of the world p. 41

Comparison of the sizes, populations and areas of the continents.

Continent	Area (in km²)	Percentage of the Earth's land area	Population	Ranking by population	GDP (1) per capita in USD	Ranking by GDP (1)
Asia	**44.5 million**	**30.0 %**	**4 298 million**	**1**	**2 941**	**5**
Africa	**30 million**	**20.3 %**	**1 111 million**	**2**	**1 576**	**6**
North America	**24.2 million**	**16.3 %**	**565 million**	**4**	**32 077**	**2**
South America	**17.8 million**	**12.00 %**	**407 million**	**5**	**9 024**	**4**
Europe	**9.9 million**	**6.7 %**	**742 million**	**3**	**25 434**	**3**
Australia/Oceania	**7.6 million**	**5.2 %**	**38 million**	**6**	**39 052**	**1**

(1) Nominal GDP per capita (2010). In this column, South America includes Central America and the Caribbean.

Sources: 1) The United Nations' World Population Prospects (2012) and 2) Nominal GDP per capita (2010) estimates by the International Monetary Fund.

The figures are not as exact as they seem. In addition to statistical inaccuracies there are also differences in definition. The aim of this exercise is more about trends and where Europe fits in.

? Global challenges p. 42

Global challenges	Proposed solution
Wars and civil conflicts	Peacekeeping through military intervention. Supporting democracy in other countries.
Poverty	Debt remission for underdeveloped countries. Opening up European markets to products from developing countries.
Disease	Improving health systems in less-developed countries.
Underdevelopment	Development aid for Africa.
Scarcity of resources	Protecting the world's water reserves.
Europe's energy dependence	Energy cooperation beyond Europe's borders.
An ageing population in Europe	Managed immigration.
Terrorism	Dialogue with the Islamic world. Combating international terrorism. Security on the Internet.
Spread of weapons of mass destruction	International arms control and disarmament agreements.
Organised crime	International police cooperation.
Threat to the natural environment	Climate protection. Combating the pollution of the seas.

? EU development cooperation p. 44

Left-hand column, from top to bottom:
10 — 7 — 3 — 8 — 5 — 4 — 1 — 2 — 9 — 6.
Right-hand column, from top to bottom:
2 — 6 — 1 — 5 — 8 — 10 — 7 — 4 — 9 — 3.

A concise overview of the EU's development policy can be found here: http://europa.eu/pol/dev/index_en.htm

? Discussion about migration p. 45

Another controversial issue is what to do with people who arrive in our countries illegally and stay for several years (often earning their keep with occasional, black-market work). Should they be arrested and sent back, even if they have been here for some time, or should their situation be regularised, so that they can stay permanently?

Suggested exercise: Form two groups, one in favour of repatriation and the other in favour of regularising the situation of illegal immigrants.

Provide them with the following statements (for and against) and ask them to discuss and debate them, whilst trying to come up with their own arguments as well.

The following statements favour repatriating illegal immigrants	The following statements favour the integration of illegal immigrants
If you came here illegally, you can't stay legally. It's a matter of law and order.	People come for reasons of poverty and desperation. Even if we can't take everyone, the people who are already here should be integrated.
Illegal immigrants work in the shadow economy and don't pay any taxes, so they're a drain on the social security system and the state.	If we give illegal immigrants regular papers, they will be able to work legally. Then they'll pay their taxes, which is good for everyone.
Illegal immigrants are particularly likely to turn to crime as a way to survive.	By not regularising the situation of immigrants, we are pushing them into criminality. Regularising their status would reduce crime rates among illegal immigrants.
We already have enough foreigners in our country. We can't take any more or we'll never get unemployment under control.	We can already feel the effects of a lack of skilled labour in our country, which will only get worse over the coming years as the population ages. We need all the workers we can get. But only immigrants living here legally can be properly trained and give their children a good education.

7. The future of Europe

The objective of this chapter is to discuss the future of the European Union so that your students can come up with their own proposals on future European integration.

* The year 2030 and me p. 47

Ask your students to compare their results with those of their classmates and, for example, list their policy demands.

! The European Union of the future p. 48

The crisis which started in 2008 has led to a series of reforms in Europe, particularly in the financial and banking sectors. It has also triggered an important discussion about the future of the European Union, both in the Member States and at European level. The discussion has been prompted by, among other things, reports and speeches by the presidents of the various European institutions. Use the material in the brochure to discuss the kind of Europe students would like to see in the future. Should the European Union become a kind of European federal state? Or do they believe that their country should loosen its ties with the EU? Or should the status quo be maintained?

For further information, see the following:

'Why we need a United States of Europe now' — speech by European Commission Vice-President Viviane Reding at Passau University — November 2012: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-12-796_en.htm

'A blueprint for a deep and genuine economic and monetary union' — European Commission — November 2012:

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0777:FIN:EN:PDF

'Towards a genuine economic and monetary union' — Report by Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council — December 2012:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/134069.pdf

There are no right or wrong answers in this exercise.

The aim is not for the students to come up with definitive proposals but rather for them to become aware of the issues and to understand that the EU is not a finished product but a work in progress which can and must be structured and developed by the political decisions of its citizens.

The current situation is the following.

Size: There are various opinions about this. The EU has 28 Member States, following Croatia's accession. Accession negotiations with Montenegro and Serbia have already been launched. The EU is also negotiating with Turkey and has named Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as candidate countries. Bosnia and Herzegovina has been given a general assurance that it will be able to join when it meets the criteria. Logically, the same applies to Kosovo, which declared independence in February 2008 but has not been recognised by all the Member States.

Competences: A distinction must be made between the EU's exclusive competences (e.g. the customs rules governing its external borders), joint areas of competence (e.g. transport policy), which the EU shares with the Member States, and competences remaining with the Member States (e.g. the organisation of education systems). It should be noted that the EU cannot just decide to award itself more competences. Rather, it must be granted them by the Member States. In other words, the power to grant competences lies with the Member States.

Military: With the common security and defence policy, the EU is developing a military component and has already developed its own battle groups. It works closely with NATO and uses the latter's infrastructure.

This has been laid down in an agreement between the EU and NATO (the Berlin Plus Agreement).

Decision-making: Most legal acts (directives and regulations) are enacted jointly by the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers. Most of the exceptions to this rule were scrapped by the Lisbon Treaty. Foreign policy, however, is still the domain of the Member States. The EU plays a diplomatic role in the context of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and the common security and defence policy (CSDP).

Voting procedure: The treaty sets out which matters are to be decided on a majority vote and which have to be decided unanimously. The Lisbon Treaty increased the number of areas where a majority vote is sufficient.

The Lisbon Treaty introduced the concept of 'double majority'. This means that a decision in the Council must obtain a double majority of both Member States and population. The votes in favour must be at least:

- 55 % of the Member States, i.e. 16 of the 28 countries;
- Member States that represent 65 % of the EU's population.

This means roughly 329 million out of the population of some 506 million. In addition, to block a decision from being taken there must be at least four countries voting against, representing more than 35 % of the population. These rules mean that all decisions taken by the Council have broad support across Europe, but also that small minorities cannot block decisions from being taken.

Before November 2014, a different system was used, whereby each country had a certain number of votes.

The euro: The euro has not only an economic but also (and perhaps above all) a political function: to keep the larger European Union together. It has become clear over recent years that a currency union can work only if it is accompanied by a political union. What this means is controversial and is the subject of intense debate between the Member States and abroad.

The single currency makes it impossible for participating Member States to compensate for their weaknesses by means of devaluation. If certain euro area countries do not comply with jointly made agreements, it is, ultimately, up to the others to put up guarantees for them or write off some of their debts. The EU has therefore made considerable efforts over recent years to give a more binding character to the euro area: the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), the use of which is subject to certain economic reform conditions, and the Fiscal Compact, which forces Member States to reduce their debts, are manifestations of this policy. The loss of national sovereignty has to be weighed against the fact that participating Member States use a world currency, which provides stability. Within the euro area, exchange costs and risks no longer apply, which makes exporting easier. Comparable prices make it easier for customers to order goods from other countries, thus obtaining better value for money. This is an important point, particularly in the age of the Internet. However, the measures to rescue the euro have led to tensions between and within certain Member States, because of the rigorous austerity policies which have been implemented there.

Jobs: Although budget cuts are necessary in order to reduce deficits, it is clear that the current crisis cannot be solved unless the Member States remain competitive, and preferably become even more competitive. It is very important to reduce unemployment in the EU, for economic but also social and domestic policy reasons. The regular Eurobarometer survey demonstrates clearly that, for many Europeans, unemployment is the most important issue. Around half of respondents were worried that they might lose their job or would not be able to find a (new) job soon enough. Many citizens are feeling the full force of the financial and economic crisis. A majority of respondents take the view that the European Union is the best hope for combating the crisis (Eurobarometer No 78) and hope that the necessary measures will be taken. EU funds will be used even more in this context in the new financing period 2014 to 2020.

The Europe 2020 strategy looks at various ways of creating jobs. For example, the single market is to be further developed and barriers to trade removed, so that small and medium-sized firms in particular have better access to it, thus promoting entrepreneurship. Moreover, targeted investment, mainly from the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund, should help to create jobs. The EU also hopes that the extension of international trade will have a positive impact on the European labour market.

In the short term, migration within the EU, which has been growing over recent years, can mitigate some of the effects of these problems, but it cannot replace an active labour market policy.

* Additional exercise — Speakers' Corner p. 52

One possible additional task for students could be to present their views in the form of a Speakers' Corner.

Suggested exercise: Tell or remind students about the famous Speakers' Corner in London's Hyde Park where anyone can stand up freely and say what they want to the crowd. Why not suggest that your students set up a Speakers' Corner on the European elections? Ask them to set out their views in the form of a speech, trying to be as concise and entertaining as possible. Perhaps they could even do it in one of the foreign languages they are studying at school. What does the audience think? Do people agree with them? And, if not, do they need to think again?