

## If my link is not working what do I do?

Communication is vital. Agree terms with the school you are linking with. Decide on the number of things to be exchanged and the type of items on an annual basis. Agree to acknowledge all materials that are received and to notify partner if you can not keep to your deadline. Try and meet up face to face at some stage as this will strengthen commitment. Remember to send small items at Christmas or other religious or secular festivals. Share your culture and understand each other better. Explore stereotypes made for each other countries when you are established and comfortable. Remember to have fun! The students will follow your lead!

## Developing your link

This can be done by following the interests of your two or more schools. Do not be too prescriptive at first. Learn from each other. Celebrate your link by doing a European national event like Europe day in or around 9 May and get local media coverage and involve parents and the local community.

Short intensive activities such as a European Day or week can facilitate a class, a whole year group or possibly the entire school by providing a block of time for special events with a European theme, eg language taster classes, foods from other European countries, the flags could be displayed etc

## Implement your link

- » Make sure your plan is realistic and achievable.
- » Your own website. Does it have an international area?
- » Devote a wall as an International display area and have a corner of the staff notice board also.
- » Raise awareness with governors, teachers, pupils, parents.
- » Use overseas traditional songs in the school assembly.
- » Devote part of the library to overseas books and materials.
- » Appoint an international co-ordinator or team with a job description.
- » With the School Council, organise fundraising events for overseas charities and schools.
- » Reflect the international dimension in your job description when making new school appointments.
- » Integrate the international dimension into the school's plans for Personal and Social Education, Citizenship, CSPE, ICT, English and Literacy, Art, Music, Drama.

# 2 – Practical ideas on how to get started

## 1. Developing an International Policy

In deciding to write an International policy you must first consider your reasons for doing so. Are you seeking to prepare your students:

- » To understand complex international interdependencies in the global economy?
- » To respect and value different cultures and beliefs?
- » To enjoy regular contact with students and adults living in different countries?
- » To broaden horizons, to learn about other cultures?
- » To appreciate different languages and cultures and to celebrate their richness and diversity?
- » To share views and opinions and develop their own personal beliefs?
- » To become tolerant and understanding, courteous and assured in the company of people from other cultural or ethnic backgrounds?
- » To develop an awareness and understanding as active members of a European and global society as well as the opportunities, rights and responsibilities?
- » To address global issues concerning sustainability, the environment, development and international interdependence?
- » To increase their self esteem, confidence and sense of achievement?

The following example of a policy may help to guide you in developing your own: 'Sample International Policy'

### **Mission Statement**

"Every child is entitled to a broad and balanced education founded on knowledge and appreciation of the key features of our cultural heritage, as well as that of other countries and their traditions"

### **Rationale**

The school has vital roles in preparing pupils for International citizenship. The promotion of the International dimension in all aspects of the curriculum will assist in removing barriers between cultures encourage openness and positive communication between individuals and groups.

## Aims

- » To celebrate similarities and explore the differences between different cultures and societies
- » To encourage respect for our own and others cultural and religious beliefs and practices
- » To develop the social skills needed to cope and live in a multicultural society
- » To enable children to share views, opinions and develop their own personal beliefs

## Objectives

- » To identify opportunities for developing the Global Dimension Curriculum throughout the school
- » To make contact with global citizens through school and class links, visits and working with visitors in the classroom
- » To provide experiences using a range of media as an opportunity to explore cultural similarities and differences and to investigate global events and issues
- » To provide opportunities to learn about key issues relating to global citizenship e.g. fair trade, human rights and sustainable development
- » To implement a series of whole school initiatives to raise the profile of and celebrate global citizenship and cultural events

## Continuing Professional Development

Staff training will take place as and when the need and opportunities arise, but may include applications by members of staff for Council of Europe courses and liaison with European national agency.

## Review

After each event a review of resourcing, information available and the practicalities of embarking on such events will be shared and considered.

## 2. Undertaking a Curriculum Audit

An effective curriculum audit involves all staff in considering the extent, range and level of access to learning about Europe being made currently available to all pupils through:

- » The ethos of the school;
- » The subjects of the Irish Curriculum;
- » Other subjects and courses;
- » Extra-curricular activities;
- » Contact with Europe and the Europeans; And
- » The school's relationships with parents and the community.

The sample framework below could be used with members of your staff in considering the range of opportunities they already provide and areas which might benefit for a more pro-active approach.

### Sample Audit

To what extent do you consider the subjects and educational themes contribute to the objectives of the European dimension in education?  
 Very little or not at all – X    To some extent – O    In-depth – D

Objectives	English	Maths	Science	ICT	ETC.
To develop economic, political cultural and social knowledge and understanding of European countries and people					
To develop the ability to use their own and other European languages in order to communicate and co-operation in Europe					
To develop tolerant attitudes towards other people, their ways of life, beliefs, opinions and ideas					
To develop a sense of responsibility as citizens of Europe particularly with regard to upholding human rights, safeguarding democracy, working for peace and preserving the environment					

### 3. Promoting a Set of Curriculum Strategies

Using opportunities to promote ideas among staff groups is also an important way of encouraging the international dimension of learning. Subject meetings can be an ideal vehicle and maybe you can begin with your own subject and then maybe support other subject groups to take on some ideas. The list below can be used as stimulus to get people thinking about connections between Ireland, Europe and the wider world.

#### English

- » Review your use of and pupils' access to multi-cultural texts through Literacy.
- » English take a look at e.g. African poetry
- » Folk stories/customs from around the world
- » Use your local community to develop pupils' skills in the creative arts and Story-Telling across the world
- » Co-author books with partner schools on line

#### Mathematics

- » Introduce teaching modules in the History of Mathematics-Arabic, Chinese, Islamic and Indian
- » Carry out learning activities with pie charts/graphs on holiday destinations, miles-kilometres conversions, and foreign currency conversions

#### Science

- » Investigate the lives of famous scientists
- » Organise competitions for students to select and champion their scientist
- » Set up a comparative energy-saving exercise
- » Investigate food and culture in relation to "healthy foods"

#### ICT

- » Develop e-mail and video links with a partner school
- » Set up a shared international electronic newsletter and website

#### Modern Foreign Languages

- » Register greetings in foreign languages
- » Displays, directional signs and labels to include minority languages and non Roman alphabets. Introduce a (new) foreign language or language awareness projects
- » Contact your local European national language agency e.g. leargas for further information
- » Set up a video conference link for language events

#### Creative Arts/Sports and games

- » Visit art galleries and museums and liaise with education officer for international links
- » Extend skills in dancing through the focus of multi cultural dance
- » Study of artists from around the world
- » Organise a joint international drama/musical production
- » Produce 2D and 3D masks
- » Teach about art from Japanese, Aboriginal, Mayan, Egyptian cultures
- » Teach about playground games from around the world
- » Artists-in-Residence projects-dancers, drummers, potters, artists, sculptors, etc
- » Make your sports day an Olympic type day
- » International sporting activities. Analysis of results from major sporting events

#### Humanities/Social Sciences

- » Take a group of Business studies students to visit a local factory with an International link
- » Develop a comparative unit on tourism in Geography on a region of Africa and Europe
- » Involve Young Enterprise in Fair Trade initiatives
- » Business studies students set up an international import-export company and investigate impact of international currency exchanges
- » Develop your links through the local church, mosque, and synagogue
- » Diversity and festivals: Customs from around the world (e.g Ramadan ,Chinese New Year)

#### Citizenship/Personal and Social Education

- » Consider joining Model United Nations General Assembly through e.g. Council for Education in World citizenship
- » Focus on the developing world-agencies like Oxfam, Save the Children Fund, W.W.F., Red Cross have good global citizenship curriculum.
- » Examine the web sites and publications from Christian Aid, Trocaire etc
- » Follow the route of a banana from growth to sale
- » Alert students to the UN commission on the Rights of the Child
- » Plan your assembly programme to reflect an international ethos. Incorporate the global dimension themes of sustainability, interdependence, social justice etc, into assemblies and tutorials.
- » Global citizenship water project. Study of water purification in other countries- [www.wateraid.org](http://www.wateraid.org)
- » Design technology
- » Introduce a Food Around the World project
- » Design and make toys from recycled products
- » Investigate meals and related nutritional values from around the world
- » Produce an international cookbook, exchange recipes with partners
- » Make enquiries about partner schools' meals and related nutritional values

## Cross Curricular and Miscellaneous

- » Introduce African and South American influences to the junior curriculum
- » Create international induction activities for prospective first year classes
- » Bring the community into the schools:
  - » Local business and industry leaders and employees
  - » Frequent, widely-travelled speakers invited to assemblies
  - » Making the school available for visits by foreign delegations and groups
- » Set up work experience placements abroad
- » Organise school visits abroad. In Denmark some schools take whole staff for induction to e.g. Ireland and arrange visits to schools with Q and A sessions
- » Apply for a FREE Comenius (language) assistant. Contact your local European national agency e.g. Leargas for further information
- » School-to School partnerships
- » In Europe through Comenius 1- funded projects
- » Change the menus your school kitchen is offering once per term

## Other Suggestions

- » How are your charity links decided?
- » Involve the Schools Council in decisions to support e.g. Operation Xmas Child, Romanian orphanage support etc
- » European awareness events (e.g. tourism, architecture, trade and industry), communications, European identities
- » Organise international curriculum days(s)/week
- » Mark Europe Day on 9th of May
- » World Book day
- » World languages day
- » One World week
- » International Children's day
- » Human Rights Day
- » Use international sporting events as ICT and Geography exercise
- » Hold a Global citizenship evening or open day for parents and the local community .Encourage students to display work and show web sites illustrating issues of Global Citizenship, perform drama presentations, role play, songs or dance. A band or story teller could be asked to perform and fair trade refreshments provided
- » Euroscola – The European Parliament runs a programme for students to spend a day in Strasbourg debating in the parliament and meeting young people from all the member states. Further information is available from your European Parliament Information Office [www.europack.ie](http://www.europack.ie).
- » Contact your MEP for a talk or to possibly host a community or school visit to Strasbourg.

## 4. Conducting a staff audit

If you ask the right questions you will find out more about your current school profile. Raise awareness with boards of management, teachers, students, parents. Try an audit of staff by devising a questionnaire such as the attached

### Sample Audit

	Objectives	Yes	No
1	Does your school do an annual ski trip or other sporting events? If so, do you ever visit schools in those areas or have host contacts you could develop?		
2	Do you have a religious link with other schools in Europe, can this be worked on?		
3	Do you have a town twinning or city twinning arrangement? (It may be useful to contact your local county council as there may be funding for some activities)		
4	Do you have a modern languages assistant or Comenius language assistant in school who can establish links with your school?		
5	Do you have a Rotary Club or similar that may have international contacts?		
6	Do you have any links with youth or sporting associations that may have partners in different countries?		
7	What about the teachers in school are any of them from different countries or have connections to one?		
8	Do you raise money for charity each year? Is it for schools in a particular country, could you do a curriculum link with them too?		
9	Do you have parents or students newly arrived or with strong contacts in different countries, could these be used?		
10	What about your music department or other departments. Do they have special links with any schools in different countries?		
11	Where are your students from? Would any of them welcome inclusion by a partner school in that country?		
12	What modern foreign languages are students undertaking? Do you do trips to these places? Could you get links there?		

## 5. Promoting a European Day of Languages

### Every year on 26 September

A European Day of Languages is only one day on the school calendar but it could provide a springboard for other such days, such as a human rights day. The following list of ideas may help you get started.

- 1 Language taster sessions in a variety of languages
- 2 Learn words and phrases in different languages
- 3 Greetings in different languages – provide sheet for all staff to use in their classes.
- 4 Ask teachers to take the register, and pupils to answer, in a different language
- 5 Widespread use of other languages throughout the school – pupils vote for the member of staff who makes the best attempt to speak in another language.
- 6 Challenges involving languages eg introducing yourself, teacher opening remarks to their class, making a speech, telling a joke.
- 7 Send an e-mail in another language.
- 8 Organise a special assembly. Include contributions from teachers and pupils eg. opening remarks, poems, readings, songs, hymns, prayers, drama.
- 9 Label your school/college – doors, classrooms, hall, and library in whatever languages are taught (and also in ones that are not).
- 10 Put a special language page on your school/college website.
- 11 Sing/write a song. Say/write a poem.
- 12 Puppet shows, plays, drama.
- 13 Provide a food tasting session or serve a special lunch in the canteen
- 14 Competition to identify flags around the school/college – pupils say which language is spoken in those countries
- 15 Get pupils to design posters, write leaflets, make a video to promote the learning of languages
- 16 ‘Design a language badge’ competition
- 17 Competition to identify ‘hello’, ‘goodbye’ and ‘welcome’ in different languages or to identify international car plates
- 18 Quizzes on general knowledge about other countries – pub quiz format
- 19 Eurovision song contest with each class performing a different song
- 20 Design and write a holiday postcard in a different language
- 21 Bring in wrappers or packaging in different languages
- 22 Learn a traditional sport or dance from another country
- 23 Survey staff in your school/parents on languages spoken
- 24 Organise a sponsored ‘speak-in’ in another language for charity – e.g. pupils only speak in the chosen language for the day, for a lesson, for an hour!
- 25 Highlight the importance of languages in work

#### ALSO

- » Check out <http://europa.eu/languages/en/home> for information on languages from the European Union
- » Log on to [www.languageswork.org.uk](http://www.languageswork.org.uk) or access activities and resources
- » Visit the CILT website [www.cilt.org.uk/edl](http://www.cilt.org.uk/edl) for additional ideas, quizzes etc, and links to other sites
- » Register your activities on the Council of Europe website [www.ecml.at/edl](http://www.ecml.at/edl)

## 6. Developing a short European studies programme using europack and other resources

Enabling teachers to develop short modules of learning for their students is an ideal way of embedding the international dimension of learning into the curriculum. Often teachers do not know where to begin. The following template might help in getting other started.

#### Sample Template

### The European Studies Programme



#### Aims

European Studies aims to enable the students to:

- » Develop an awareness of the background, evolution, and status of Europe today
- » Increase their awareness of and engage with their identity as European citizens
- » Grow in mutual understanding, awareness and tolerance of each other
- » Understand relationships between different cultures and traditions in regional, national and European contexts
- » Have an opportunity to see the perspectives of others through collaborative work/projects
- » Develop a range of communication skills including the use of information technology.



#### Time

The European Studies Senior Programme is a one year course which is cross-curricular in scope and allows students and their teachers to choose from a range of topics encompassing a variety of subject areas.



#### Learning Outcomes

Learners should be able to:

##### KNOWLEDGE:

- » Demonstrate an understanding of the richness and diversity of the cultures of Europe developed through our shared heritage
- » Distinguish between the different European Institutions and understand how young people can have a role in them.
- » Understand European legislation as it affects them in their daily lives
- » Explore areas of shared interest today and areas of conflict in the past.
- » Examine the challenges facing an expanding European Union in the local/National and International context

**SKILLS:**

- » Demonstrate communication skills and competencies using ICT's
- » Undertake a research project including information gathering and management skills
- » Demonstrate their ability to understand and to communicate in at least one non-native language
- » Develop inter and intra personal skills by working collaboratively with partner schools

**ATTITUDE:**

- » Show an appreciation of the wide range of perspectives among the peoples of Europe
- » Appreciate their own role as citizens of Europe and have an awareness of what they share, contribute and gain from being Europeans
- » Appreciate their own regional contribution to European culture and identity and that of their neighbours
- » View with understanding and tolerance issues that arise in a European context

**Teaching and Learning Strategy:**

- » negotiated learning
- » formal input
- » debates
- » practical work
- » group work
- » interviews
- » project work
- » visiting speakers
- » computer-based learning (video conferencing, online conferencing etc)
- » oral presentations by students
- » drama
- » discussion
- » research
- » pair work
- » demonstration
- » role-play
- » simulation game
- » visualisation
- » field trips

Further information from [www.european-studies.org](http://www.european-studies.org)