
Investigating Europe

Teacher's guide

What is this section about?

This section of the resource includes 7 themes for further investigation by students, either on their own or in pairs. Each theme offers a key research area, outlining for the student(s) their task and what they need, particularly in relation to Internet sites.

What will my students learn?

The areas of research are chosen to enhance students understanding of the geography and cultural heritage of Europe, as well as the function of the European Union and some of its significant institutions.

Throughout this section therefore there is an emphasis on the development of key skills. Those, which are perhaps most effectively developed through using this research work are:

- » Working with others
- » Communication
- » Personal effectiveness
- » Critical thinking
- » Information processing
- » Learning to learn

How should my students work?

Each research activity is designed to promote the students' capacity for independent learning and critical thinking. The research activities are ideally undertaken in pairs as this means that there is a degree of collaboration, sharing of task and learning to work together and accept joint responsibility.

- » Should teachers wish these research tasks could also be given as small group exercises.

Many of the research activities can be undertaken within school where there is access to a computer room and/or at home or in a library.

How can I use this section effectively?

As with every section in this resource, teachers can use it as a menu of activities to choose from or as part of a complete programme of work.

Model A

USING THIS SECTION AS PART OF AN OVERALL PROGRAMME OF STUDY

If teachers are using this as a complete programme of work it is suggested that students would undertake **a minimum of three research activities** (However, the number, and method of selection is up to the teacher and students to decide) and that the results of all three would be presented for assessment in a portfolio. It is strongly recommended that Research Activity no. 1 be compulsory for all students. This will help students see how their lives are affected on a day to day basis by European policies and will help bring the reality of the European Union closer to them.

Each research activity should comprise of approximately **5 hours** of student independent learning and completion of their portfolio sheets. Students who work together in pairs can share the tasks and present a common portfolio or if a teacher so wishes each can be asked to present their own. Guidelines are given for portfolio sheet presentation.

Model B

USING THIS SECTION AS GROUP ACTIVITIES WITHIN SHORT UNITS OF STUDY

In the case of model B, teachers can use this section as a menu of ideas for individual, pair or group work. In this case there is no maximum or minimum number of research activities in which students can engage. Ideally any investigation activity undertaken should have some means of feedback, even if it is not in a portfolio or for assessment.

Model C

USING THIS SECTION DURING EUROPEAN AWARENESS WEEK

Students could be supported in undertaking a number of research activities as part of a European Awareness week. The results of their research could be displayed throughout the school.

How will my students choose an investigation activity?

This is really up to you, but you can either present them with a range of investigation options, or if they are working in small groups a number can be written on cards and the teacher can give students the opportunity to choose one randomly.

However, these kinds of activities work best when students are working on something of interest to themselves, therefore ideally they should be allowed to choose their own.

How are the investigation topics structured?

Each investigation has a different emphasis and theme. The list below gives teacher an indication of the range of themes available in this resource, but it should by no means limit teachers in developing their own and using the ones given as a guide.

Investigation	Key Theme
Investigating Europe I The European Union in Ireland	Discovering what the European Union does and how it affects life in Ireland.
Investigating Europe II Holidaying in Europe	Producing a variety of packages for a variety of holidaymakers
Investigating Europe III Third Level Study and Europe	Finding out about college courses in Ireland which offer a European Experience
Investigating Europe IV An Olympic Variety	Investigation into the variety of Olympic Games
Investigating Europe V Olympics	Historical Investigation into the Olympic Games
Investigating Europe VI The Power of Music	Researching the origins of a variety of national anthems
Investigating Europe VII Europe's Architectural Heritage	Researching some of Europe's key buildings

The following table of icons and symbols will help direct the students, each research activity outlines for the student the aim of the investigation, how long it should take, what they can presume to learn from carrying it out, what materials they need and ideas on how to present their findings.

Icon Legend



AIMS



TIME REQUIRED



LEARNING OUTCOME



MATERIALS OR SOURCES REQUIRED



PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS



POTENTIAL PARTNER ACTIVITY

Investigating Europe I

The European Union in Ireland



Your aim

Your aim is to learn more about what the European Union does and how its actions affect the lives of people in Ireland.



Time

This research activity should take you approximately five hours



By the end of this activity

By the end of this activity you will have identified a number of different policy areas of the EU and will be able to give examples of how some of these policies impact on your surroundings. You will have identified available resources, integrated information from the different sources and presented your findings in a clear and coherent manner



What you need

- » Access to internet
- » Possibly access to a telephone



How you will present your findings

The findings of this research activity will become a part of your portfolio and a sample presentation sheet is provided.



Potential Partner Activity

After you have completed your investigation, let a student from your partner school know of your findings and ask her/him to make the same investigations and report back the results.