WHAT IS THE EUROPEAN UNION?

01
BASIC VERSION

Educational Setting	Classroom (with or without digital tools)
Reference Chapter	Chapter I – WHAT IS THE EUROPEAN UNION (pp. 06-13)
Educational Objective	Provide key facts, reference dates as well as the main guiding principles and aims at which the European Union was founded and built.
Educational Outcomes	After this lesson pupils should be able to: • Explain what the EU is and why it was created • Name and locate the EU countries on a map • Identify the EU countries' flags • Identify the EU capitals • Identify the EU official languages • Describe the European flag and its symbolism • Explain the EU's motto • List the EU common values and rights.
Key concepts and terms	Union, Diversity, Harmony, European Citizenship, European values, Treaties, Brexit
Duration	55 minutes
Needed materials	Classroom without Digital Tools: Maps, Flags (small card size), Audio device (Mp3 and speakers), Video device, Flipchart, Images, Adhesive stripes, Whiteboard, Markers, pencils, A4 white sheets. Classroom with Digital Tools: Digital whiteboard applications, Internet, Laptop
Resources	European Commission "EU & ME" publication and MEGA library platform

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

Note: The icon 🖥 indicates options to be used with digital tools.

Introduction - 5 minutes

The teacher shows the pupils the European Union flag and asks the pupils:

> *Which country is this flag from?*

🖥   Display the image of the flag.

▶   Worksheet: EU Flag (pdf)

After giving time for the pupils to answer, they introduce the topic of the module:

> *What is the Euroepan Union ?*

The meaning of the Flag - 5 minutes

The teacher then asks pupils to describe the flag to lead them to mention specific information: the twelve stars and the blue and golden colours. The teacher uses the pupils' answers to explain the different meanings of each element:

- Flag: European Union/identity of Europe
- Twelve stars: perfection and entirety (no relation with the number of countries)
- Blue colour: sky
- Stars in a circle: unity, harmony, solidarity

The teacher introduces key dates on the flag's history:

- 8 December 1951: First adoption by the Council of Europe
- 1984: Adoption of the flag by the EU (then called the European Economic Community)
- 29 May 1986: First time raised at the building seat of the European Commission
- November 2015: 30th anniversary of the flag

What do you know about the European Union? - 5 minutes

The teacher asks the pupils to tell what comes to their mind when they think about the European Union (brainstorming) and writes all the answers on the board.

🖥   Answers are typed and displayed to the class.

Note: Teachers should bear in mind that negative aspects of the EU may be referred to and accept all the answers.

They use the brainstorming inputs (ex: Europe, Euro, single market, alliance, treaties, economic relationships, free movement, Brussels, European Parliament, Erasmus, Brexit, etc.) to present relevant information by answering the following questions:

What (is the EU)? When (was it born)? Why (was it founded)? How (does it work – overall idea)? The Eurozone, the Schengen area, etc.

Which are the Member states of the European Union? - 20 minutes

The teacher pins a map on the whiteboard/wall and asks the pupils which countries are the EU Member States. Correct answers are written on the whiteboard until the 27 countries list is complete.

Then the teacher asks the pupils to form groups and one representative of each group goes to the board and find for one of the countries listed on the board. The pupils are then encouraged to search the capital city (indicated on the map) and write it near the name of the country on the board.

Once the capitals are connected to the corresponding country, the teacher gives one or two (according to the number of pupils) card-sized flags to each pupil and asks them to complete the EU countries list with the flag.

▶ Worksheet: EU countries flags

In the end, pupils will have a visual presentation of countries (previously located on the map, capitals and flags).

▶ Worksheet: Map with Member states, capitals, flags

The European Union official languages - 10 minutes

The teacher explains to the pupils that they are going to listen to the same phrase (Good morning) spoken in different EU languages. The teacher can select another phrase among the presented possibilities (I love you/I don't understand/I'm sorry).

🖥 Audio and video (when possible) can both be used.

Discover the official EU languages! (europa.eu)

The pupils are expected to identify the language and guess which country(ies) has(have) this language as an official language. Once they have guessed, the teacher completes the list previously built with the official language of each country.

🖥 Come back to the map and indicates the national language of each country.

Note: Once the list is concluded, the teacher delivers a copy for the pupils to fill in with the information previously provided (countries, capitals, flags, official language).

▶ Worksheet: EU Countries Information

🖥 The copy can be sent or made available to pupils via online platform.

The teacher then explains the importance of being a citizen in a democratic organisation where communication can be done in each country's official language, without needing to learn a foreign language. The teachers also mentions that a European citizen can write to the EU institutions in any of the 24 official languages and they will receive an answer in this same language.

Then the teacher presents the 24 EU official languages with the dates of their entry.

EU Official Languages and dates (pdf)

The European Union motto and what it entails - 10 minutes

The teacher writes the phrase "United in diversity" on the board and asks the pupils to identify what it is and what it means.

🖥 The sentence can be displayed and (to do the transition with the previous section, written in the EU languages). It will be easier for pupils to understand it.

The teacher explains the EU's motto and presents the relevant content/definitions/explanations related to it (sense of European identity, six common values: human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law, respect for human rights based on pluralism, tolerance, justice, solidarity and non-discrimination).

▮ Websites: EU motto (europa.eu) or the symbols of the European Union (cvce.eu)

The teacher explains the values of the European Union.

▮ Websites: Aims and values (europa.eu)

🖥 Information presented on a slideshow support and/or video.

▮ YouTube Video: What are EU values?

Conclusion

Optional - Pupils are given an assignment as homework:
Each pupil is assigned a country - randomly chosen by the teacher - and is expected to present specific information about this country (official language, inhabitants, typical dishes, the time difference with their country, currency if not the Euro, famous celebrations, etc.) on visual supports (PowerPoint, infographics, etc.)

WORKSHEET : EU FLAG

WORKSHEET : EU COUNTRIES FLAGS

WORKSHEET : EU MAP

WORKSHEET: EU MEMBER STATES INFORMATION

	COUNTRY	CAPITAL	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

WORKSHEET: EU MEMBER STATES INFORMATION

	COUNTRY	CAPITAL	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

WORKSHEET: EU MEMBER STATES INFORMATION

	COUNTRY	CAPITAL	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

01
ADVANCED VERSION

Educational Setting	Classroom (with or without digital tools)
Reference Chapter	Chapter I – WHAT IS THE EUROPEAN UNION (pp. 06-13)
Educational Objective	Reflect and discuss key the role of the European Union in the world, list the principles of the Pillar of Social Rights, List and explain the Fundamental Rights of the EU, by taking the Charter as reference.
Educational Outcomes	After this lesson pupils should be able to: • Analyse the place of the EU in the world • Describe the social aspects of the EU • Explain what the Charter consists of • Present the Common Values and Fundamental Rights of the EU.
Key concepts and terms	Role of the EU in the world, Social Rights, Fundamental Rights, Charter
Duration	90 minutes
Needed materials	Classroom without Digital Tools: Flipchart, Images, Whiteboard, Markers, pencils, A4 white sheets. Classroom with Digital Tools: Digital whiteboard applications, Internet, Laptop
Resources	European Commission "EU & ME" publication and MEGA library platform

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

Note: The icon 🖥 indicates options to be used with digital tools.

Introduction - 10 minutes

The teacher shows the pupils the European Union flag and asks the pupils:

> *Which country is this flag from?*

🖥 Display the image of the flag.

▶ Worksheet: EU Flag (pdf)

Pupils will mention that it is not the flag of a country but the European Union's flag.
The teacher will then ask the pupils to mention what they know about the European Union by guiding them with questions such as:

> *What is it? What is it aimed at? What are the main guiding principles and values of the EU?*

🖥 Answers are typed and displayed to the class.

The role of the European Union in the World - 20 minutes

After listening to all the answers given by pupils and correcting the incorrect ones, the teacher says that all the information provided by them lead to think that the European Union plays an important role in the world and completes the idea by asking:

> *In each way?*

She then writes on one side of the board:

> *Role of the European Union in the world – pupils' answers.*

Pupils form groups and each group's representatives are invited to come to the board and write what they think is the role of the EU in the world.

The teacher accepts all the answers, whether they are correct or not.

Then, the teacher uses the other part of the board to write:

> *Role of the European Union in the world – teacher's answers.*

🖥 Answers are typed and displayed to the class on a table format with two columns: pupils' answers and teacher's answers.

■ YouTube Video: EU in the World – A stronger Europe in the World

Examples: It helps the world economy keep going. It helps millions of people who live in poorer countries outside the European Union. It tries to make the world a safer place where people are treated fairly and laws are respected.

The pupils are asked to compare their answers and analyse which of their answers match the teacher's answers.

Afterwards, the teacher asks the pupils to explain the teacher's answers by answering a simple question to all her statements:

How? (How does it help the world economy grow, etc...)?

Once the pupils have given their explanations, the teacher explains in detail every statement.

🖥 The explanation is presented and then sent or made available to the pupils (online platform).

Social issues in the European Union - 30 minutes

The teacher asks the pupils to think about the EU's social issues they have heard about on TV, social networks, newspapers, using guidelines (delivered by the teacher) to connect social issues with their country. Pupils are expected to identify issues listed in the guidelines that happen in their country and indicate what the EU does to solve these issues.

Guidelines with keywords such as Unemployment, Labour market, Poverty, Social protection, Social inclusion, Migration, Demographic challenges, Health.

She uses the brainstorming inputs to introduce the next question:

How can the European Union become socially strong, fair, inclusive and full of opportunity?

After listening to the pupils' answers, the teacher draws a table on the whiteboard with three columns:

Equal opportunities and access to the labour market	Fair working conditions	Social protection and inclusion

Pupils are divided into four groups and each group receives a strip with five different topics. Then, she asks groups' representatives to go to the board (one at a time) and to place the topic in the correct column of the table.

▶ Worksheet: Stripes with Topics

Once the task is completed and corrected, the teacher explains to the pupils that they are looking at the 20 principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights. She then explains each one in detail.

■ Website The European Pillar of Social Rights in 20 principles, European Commission (europa.eu)

Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union - 30 minutes

The teacher asks the pupils if they know the name of the document where all their rights as European citizens are gathered and clearly defined.

If the pupils do not know the name of the document, she introduces it: the **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union** (also known as the Charter).

Each pupil receives a copy of the Charter on which they can only read six main titles:

- Dignity,
- Freedom,
- Equality,
- Solidarity,
- Citizens' Rights,
- Justice.

No information is provided under each title.

▶ Worksheet: Charter of Fundamental Rights

Pupils are asked to form six groups composed of two or three elements according to the number of pupils. Each group represents one of the topics previously presented.

Some time is given to the groups to fill in the blank sections with the rights they consider are listed in this section of the Charter.

Once the task is concluded, the teacher asks each group to present its results to the class.

🖥 Interactive drag and drop exercise.

■ Bing Video: The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union - Easy to read

Conclusion

Optional: Pupils are given an assignment as homework.

Pupils are expected to present in an infographic format all the information they got from this course.

WORKSHEET : SOCIAL ISSUES

Equal opportunities and access to the labour market	Fair working conditions	Social protection and inclusion

Education. Training and Life-Long Learning. Gender Equality. Equal Opportunities. Active Support to Employment. Secure and Adaptable Employment. Wages. Information about Employment Conditions and Protection In Case Of Dismissals. Social Dialogue and Involvement of Workers. Work-Life Balance. Healthy. Safe and Well-Adapted Work Environment and Data Protection. Childcare and Support to Children. Social Protection. Unemployment Benefits. Minimum Income. Old Age Income and Pensions. Health Care. Inclusion of People with Disabilities. Long-Term Care. Housing and Assistance for the Homeless. Access to Essential Services.

WORKSHEET : CHARTER OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

In your opinion, which rights are listed in each section of the Charter?

CHARTER OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION ˙(2012/C 326/02)

TITLE I. DIGNITY

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TITLE II. FREEDOMS

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TITLE III. EQUALITY

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TITLE IV. SOLIDARITY

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TITLE V. CITIZENS' RIGHTS

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TITLE VI. JUSTICE

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MAKE EUR★PE
GREAT AGAIN

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PICK&TEACH: LESSON PLANS ON THE EUROPEAN UNION

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