

Introduction

This Transition Year Euro-Quest programme is designed to motivate and encourage Irish students to consider education and training opportunities across the EU. It gives students an opportunity to explore studying in Europe for a semester, an academic year, or for an entire degree or apprenticeship training.

A guidebook has been prepared for use by Guidance Counsellors and a team of teachers in other subjects to collaborate to deliver this course together.

Some Interesting Facts

- The European Commission set a target of 20% of graduates from Higher Education institutions in Europe to have experience of studying or training abroad by 2020. (Bologna Process, 2009)
- Currently, only approximately 6% of Irish students enrol in Higher Education abroad (HEA Eurostudent VI Survey, 2017). This needs to change.

This Euro-Quest programme introduces the idea of studying or training abroad to Transition Year Students when they are preparing for senior cycle study and making their subject choices for Leaving Certificate. Euro-Quest aims to assist in increasing the number of Irish students who choose to study or do apprenticeship training in Europe to reach and exceed the desired European target of 20%.

The Irish Department of Education and Skills set the following targets in 2017:

- to increase the number of participants in Erasmus+ by at least 50%
- to establish greater links between post primary schools and Higher Education language schools to support language learning, cultural awareness and to raise cultural awareness of career opportunities for studying abroad
- to increase the proportion of the Higher Education cohort studying a foreign language, in any capacity as part of their course to 20%

(**Language Connect 2017-2026**, Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education)

Students who spend time abroad are more adaptable and flexible, able to adjust quickly to different work environments and are often more employable at higher rates of pay.

By exploring this programme, Transition Year students may research their options and discover the benefits of educational mobility.

In summary, the desired outcome is to increase the number of Irish students who will consider doing:

- part of their degree or apprenticeship abroad
- all of their degree or apprenticeship abroad
- post-graduate study abroad
- a study trip abroad while in school or college
- a traineeship abroad
- an internship or working abroad

Many Irish students do not realise that

- there are many scholarships available in European universities and colleges to facilitate educational mobility
- student grants in Ireland are transferrable to other European universities for short or long periods and that there are additional financial supports available for those who meet the criteria
- University credits are also transferrable between European institutions, so students can return to Ireland to receive their final qualification

Euro-Quest invites students to journey through the four modules, follow links to research courses and training in Europe and gain more knowledge to assist them to make more informed career decisions and course choices in the future.

Guidance Counsellors who are interested in using this Euro-Quest programme may also be interested in participating in the online Continued Professional Development (CPD) module facilitated by the NCGE, **Mobility Guidance Counselling (MGC)**. This Euro-Quest Transition Year course was developed in response to feedback from Guidance Counsellors who have completed the MGC course to date. To find out more go to - www.euroguidance.ie/cpd-mobility-guidance-counselling

If you need any support as you navigate the delivery of this programme please contact NCGE/ Euroguidance Ireland at euroguidance@ncge.ie and we will answer your queries.

The Whole School Guidance Framework and how Euro-quest relates to it

The [NCGE: A Whole School Guidance Framework \(2017\)](#) is intended to support schools in meeting the requirement of the Education Act (1998), for schools to provide ‘*access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices*’ (section 9c).

The framework presents a continuum of support model for whole school guidance and sets out three areas of learning to facilitate students’ development of eight competences. Euro-Quest fulfils the following competences.

Developing and maintaining self esteem & a positive self-concept

Interacting effectively with others

Developing and growing throughout life

Employing effective personal learning and exam strategies

Making educational choices in line with career aspirations

Using career related information and sources appropriately

Understanding the world of work and life roles

Managing career development and decision making

Euro-Quest	Whole School Guidance Framework
<p>An Overview of Europe</p>	<p>Developing and growing throughout life Identify the influence of change and growth on wellbeing, life and work choices</p>
<p>Why Study in Europe? Understand the benefits of studying abroad and consider other students’ experiences of studying in Europe Reflect on aspirations for studying abroad</p>	<p>Making educational choices in line with career aspirations Investigate educational/apprenticeship, training/ work opportunities Explore subject choice requirements for further/ higher education, training and employment</p>
<p>Living in Europe Cultural challenges, including culture shock and preparing for cultural exchanges</p>	<p>Interacting effectively with others Recognise the importance of tolerance, respect and openness when meeting others with different abilities and from diverse backgrounds</p>

Euro-Quest	Whole School Guidance Framework
<p>Where would you like to go?</p> <p>Reflect on attributes and personal strengths</p> <p>Discover their interests through Careers Interest Assessment research options for studying abroad</p> <p>Compare content, duration of study, tuition fees and qualifications</p>	<p>Developing and maintaining self esteem and a positive self-concept</p> <p>Identify and describe personal qualities, strengths, interest, attitudes and values</p> <p>Developing and growing throughout life</p> <p>Describe personal strengths and resources which can be used during times of change and transition</p> <p>Using career related information and sources appropriately</p> <p>Describe the importance and ways of accessing career related information</p> <p>Recognise the importance of knowing if career related information is from a reliable source, up-to-date and accurate</p> <p>Identify how to access information sources</p> <p>Managing career development and decision making</p> <p>Explore different career/occupational search tools and resources</p>

Delivering Euro-Quest

Euro-Quest delivery is centred on **four online modules**

These online modules are accessed by both students and school staff by going to www.euro-quest.ie and completing the required registration / enrolment (separate communications have / will be issued on this process). A school staff member is first to register initial school participation by going to www.euroguidance.ie/euro-quest

Each online module has a corresponding 'Student Workbook' element. These modularised workbooks can be completed by students by hand (using print outs) or students can type directly into the PDFs provided. If students are planning to complete these by typing into each workbook directly, please ensure that they save EACH Module PDF to their computer or a shared drive before they start and that students make sure to SAVE their work as they then progress through each module.

A FULL and complete workbook (comprising of all 4 x modular elements put together) is also available on the course page for students and in a **resources folder** on the course page for Euro-Quest Leaders / Teachers.

Many additional web links for student research are provided in the workbooks, some within questions and others in lists at the end of each module. All of them are listed at the end of this guidebook and the student workbook (and also at the end of the Module 4 separated workbook)

Online Practicalities:

The course could be delivered by the Guidance Counsellor, or the Guidance Counsellor with the Transition Year Coordinator or with a team of teachers by:

- accessing these modules in school either on individual computers in a computer room or the Guidance Counsellor/teacher presents it on a whiteboard or another device
- accessing these modules in school on the student's own device if permitted by the school (this is not a common approach at this time in Ireland)
- as part of a 'flipped classroom' approach (students view modules at home and complete the workbook and have discussion activities in class)
- accessing these modules using a combination of the above (i.e. in school and/or at home).

Guidance:

This course can be integrated as part of the school's Transition Year Guidance Programme, or Guidance Counsellors may wish to use the materials in it as a preparatory step towards Leaving Certificate Guidance, where students will have done some research on studying abroad before they start fifth year. It would be a good idea for students to keep their workbooks to read back over the countries and courses which interested them in Transition Year, because they may change their minds regularly during their Leaving Certificate cycle.

Inter-subject links:

There is good potential for this programme to be co-delivered by a team of Transition Year teachers led or co-led by the Guidance Counsellor, depending on the Transition Year curriculum and subject allocations for Transition Year in each individual school.

A collaborative approach to delivering Euro-Quest could link Guidance with subjects such as: European Languages, History, Geography, Business, Economics, Politics, Computers, Art and Music to produce co-operative projects culminating in presentations, discussions, debates, posters, power point presentations or websites. There are suggested activities given in this guide at intervals throughout and at the end of each module.

While many subjects could integrate very well with Guidance to deliver Modules One, Two and Three, it is important that the Guidance counsellor is available to deliver or co-deliver Module Four in particular, because of the Careers Interest Assessment and other Guidance content.

Please see a downloadable template and sample ideas for working with other subjects in the **resources folder** on the course page for Euro-Quest Leaders / Teachers.

Estimated time frame:

Due to the flexible nature of Transition Year curricula, here are some suggested time plans:

- a short intensive 8 or 10 week course delivered by the Guidance Counsellor and one or more teachers with two classes per week
- it could be a year long programme for one class period a week (or two class periods for a term) if most of the suggested further optional exercises are chosen and a major inter-subject final project is organised
- the course could be delivered in the first and second terms and the final project could be done with subjects collaborating together for the end of year exhibition
- the course could be co-delivered between two or more Transition Year subjects for part or all of the year e.g. a History or Geography teacher does Module 1, Languages teachers do Modules 2 or 3 and the Guidance Counsellor does Module 4.
- access to a computer room might direct the organisation of the course. If the course is delivered by whiteboard and the workbook is a hard copy the course might be primarily classroom based

Some schools allow students to use their own IT devices in the classroom and schools which may not have online access for the full course might assign the online research for homework or for a computer room class.

Please see a Euro-Quest Sample Plan for delivery in 8 classes in the **resources folder** on the course page for Euro-Quest Leaders / Teachers.

Extensions:

If a Transition Year study trip is being organised to a European country, that country could be the lead country for research where students look at the education system in that country and the course options there. If there is a strong link between the school and a school in another European country already established, that country might be the lead country for a Transition Year research project. If there happens to be a large number of Transition Year students from one European country in the school, perhaps that country may be the main focus of a study.

Multiculturalism:

It would be good practice to check or be aware of students with other citizenships in the class such as students from other continents or some with dual nationality. If there is a broad range of nationalities present, this could be explored as a positive opportunity to explore and share differences in Modules One and Three. It could provide an opportunity for further extensions of activities if there are many different European languages present.

Inclusion of students with special needs:

In the delivery of this course, Guidance Counsellors, Transition Year Co-ordinators and teachers should remain mindful of students with special education needs and emphasise that all students are included in the programme. In Module Two, there is a slide with information about extra funding for disability support and special grants, and there is a link to this topic on the Erasmus website called: Don't let special needs stop you studying abroad! There is also information on support websites for students with disabilities. The suggested further activities presented at intervals throughout the workbook are offered as opportunities for students with varying needs to be facilitated in the programme at the discretion of the teachers involved in delivering the course.