

Travelling in Europe

The old saying, "Travel broadens the mind", says it all; travel does inform, does educate, and can certainly inspire.

Increasingly we find products and produce from across the world in our High Street - with hopefully UK products and produce also being consumed and being appreciated across the world.

One consequence of this is that we see, indirectly, more of the world on our doorstep since global brands are just that and appear across almost the entire world, often providing giving a hint of their country of origin. However to experience fully ... you need to travel!

We live in a global society, and businesses are finding that their operations increasingly have an international flavour. Having experience beyond the shores of the UK will do nothing but help those who are setting out on their careers!

Fortunately on our doorstep (well almost!)

we have mainland Europe and an extremely wide range of languages, cultures, scenery and - and it's there for the taking - experiences.



The Louvre Paris

Europe Direct has a number of publications that can help you on your travels, help you make the most of your journey, and ensure you understand your fundamental rights – many courtesy of the EU!

Air Passenger Rights

An essential booklet for anyone who is planning on flying to (say) a holiday destination. It is clear, factual and small enough to pack in your hand luggage. It contains information on what to do if your flight is cancelled, if you are denied boarding or if you are unfortunate to encounter long delays. Don't go without it!

Be informed when you fly

A handy leaflet that explains the advantages of flying within the EU, covering issues from safety to passenger rights. It also contains a free telephone number to call for on the spot information.

The EU – what's in it for me?

This useful booklet highlights the key advantages of the EU, many of which relate to travelling around Europe.

The single market, has not only contributed to economic growth, but also ensures that travel from state to state is easy and free from hassle. Shopping is easier, and allows for EU nationals and residents to shop in other member states – where goods may be cheaper – without paying additional taxes. Furthermore the single market means that you have full consumer rights when shopping outside your own country – thanks to safeguards and access to redress introduced by the EU.

The cost of using your mobile phone abroad has also been significantly lowered thanks to new rules on roaming charges that are now no more than 29-33p per minute when calling home and 13p a minute receiving calls.

Languages take you further

A simple guide that is designed for children but can help all ages to learn to say 'hello', 'goodbye' and 'thank you' (and a few other key phrases) in all of the 23 official languages of the EU. Just a few words but it only takes a little effort to break the ice!

Let's Explore Europe

If you are travelling with children this booklet is an ideal introduction to Europe for them. Colourful photographs and illustrations help children learn about ways to travel around Europe, important issues such as climate change and the environment, and of course languages.

'Passport' to the European Union

This really delightful publication is aimed at children but is useful for any age! A mini-booklet that looks like a passport, and provides facts and figures on each country of the EU – the capital city, the population, the language, the date of the national day, famous landmarks, famous people and traditional foods (that you can try?). There are also stickers of landmarks, coins and flags that children can identify and then stick into the 'passport'.

Other points / Did you know that ...

- If you are an EU National you can get free or reduced-cost healthcare in the case of illness or accident during a visit to any EU country, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland. Get the 'Health Advice for Travellers' booklet from a main Post Office. See box below for NHS guidance in this area.
- A valid driving licence from any EU country is valid across all of the other EU countries.
- There are no longer frontier controls between more than half of the EU countries.
- Within the EU the common FREE emergency services telephone number, for fixed or mobiles, is 112. This number does not replace existing numbers but is common across the EU (including the UK. Trust me on this, don't be tempted to test it!).

Healthcare is free at the point of delivery in the UK but don't assume it's the same abroad. You will often have to pay part, if not all, of your medical bills. And if it's serious, the costs could easily spiral.

By taking out travel insurance and getting a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) you can avoid massive doctors' bills, delays in treatment and undue stress in the event of a medical emergency.

The EHIC replaces the now obsolete E111 form. It entitles UK residents to free or reduced-cost medical treatment in European Economic Area countries and Switzerland. The card is free (*).

If you're pregnant you should also fill out an E112 form, which can be obtained through the Department of Health. More info at www.ehic.org.uk

(* *You already have one - good (but just check the expiry date!)*)

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