

### Unit 1 New millennium

#### Video script

When the clocks struck midnight on the 31st of December 1999, it seemed like a new era was about to begin. One of the first big changes of the new millennium happened in Europe. In 2002, many countries in Europe started to use the same currency, the euro. Germany, France, Italy, Spain and others decided that it would be better to have the same currency to help their economies. As a result, you can now travel from the south of Portugal to Lapland, north of the Arctic Circle, without having to change money at the airport.

The first decade of the new millennium also saw a number of natural disasters. On the 26th of December 2004, a powerful earthquake beneath the Indian Ocean resulted in a massive tsunami that seriously damaged the coastlines of many countries, including Indonesia, Thailand, India and Sri Lanka. Thousands of people were killed and many more lost their homes, but people all over the world combined to help the victims and over \$14 billion was donated to the region in humanitarian aid.

South Asia wasn't the only area to be hit by a natural disaster in the new millennium. When Hurricane Katrina struck the city of New Orleans in August 2005, it was very damaging and deadly – one of the worst hurricanes in the United States' history. There were also major earthquakes in Haiti and Japan, and each time a natural disaster happened, people from all over the world worked hard to raise money to help those who needed it.

One reason why so many people were able to help those affected by natural disasters so quickly is that in the 21st century we are now more connected than ever before. The internet is now a central part of people's lives all over the world, changing the way we learn about international events and connect with each other. Social networking websites like Facebook and Twitter are now used by millions of people to chat with their friends, make new connections and to share information. Technology is playing an important role too. Smartphones first became widely available in 2007, with the introduction of Apple's iPhone. This combined a mobile phone with an MP3 player, a digital camera and an internet platform that allowed the user to download a wide selection of applications, or apps. Smartphones are now even smarter, and people use them to browse the internet, download music, post social media messages, and take and upload digital photos.

The result is a world in which the media, and the way we share information, is now in the hands of the people. In the 21st century, when a major event happens, we can all play a part. In October 2012, when Felix Baumgartner jumped from the edge of space and broke the speed of sound as he fell, over eight million people across the world were watching him do it live. They were using their smartphones, laptops and PCs to watch him online via YouTube.

Events like Baumgartner's achievement and our ability to help people affected by natural disasters show that the new millennium has brought us closer together than ever before. If you want to know what will happen next, all you have to do is stay connected.