

# CHAPTER 14

# Northern and Western Europe

*The countries of northern and western Europe have had a tremendous influence throughout the world. Great Britain and France were among the greatest colonial powers. They spread their languages, educational, and political systems worldwide.*



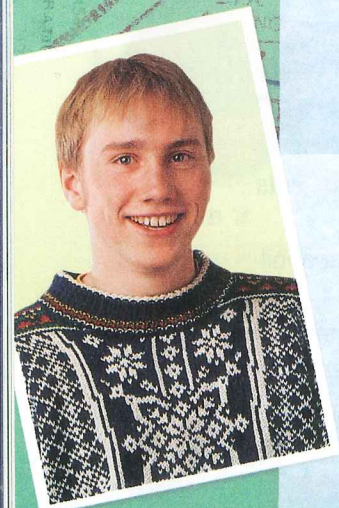
Gathering tulips in the Netherlands

Hi. My name is Lars, and I live in Tromsø, in far northern Norway. I live in a new house in the middle of town. We are so close to the sea that we eat fish almost every day. For breakfast I have a slice of bread with a sweet goat cheese, smoked salmon, shrimp, or cod liver spread.

I take two more of these sandwiches for lunch at school. For dinner we have salmon or cod or another fish about four or five times a week. The other days we like to eat pizza and hamburgers.

In the winter everyone skis to school along trails that look like snowy streets. We live above the Arctic Circle, and it is completely dark in the winter. Because of this, the trails must have streetlights. The Sun does not shine at all in Tromsø from the end of November to January 20 or so. On January 20, when the Sun appears again for just a few minutes, we have a big celebration for Sun Day.

In the summer, the Sun never sets, so there is no nighttime at all. This is my favorite time of year. We have a huge bonfire and a cookout on June 21. But it still can be very cold. Last year the temperature in the summer was usually about 6° or 7°C (about 43° or 44°F).



Walrus-ivory chess pieces from Scotland

## Section 1

## The British Isles

**HOLT**  
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Watch the video to understand the impact of living below sea level.

### READ TO DISCOVER

1. How has history affected the culture of the British Isles?
2. Why are the cultures of Ireland and the United Kingdom similar?
3. How has the British economy changed over the last 200 years?
4. What issue has caused tension in Northern Ireland?

### Reading Strategy

**USING PRIOR KNOWLEDGE** Use the headings to guide you in writing down what you know about the British Isles. Then write down what you want to know. After you read the section, write down what you learned.

### DEFINE

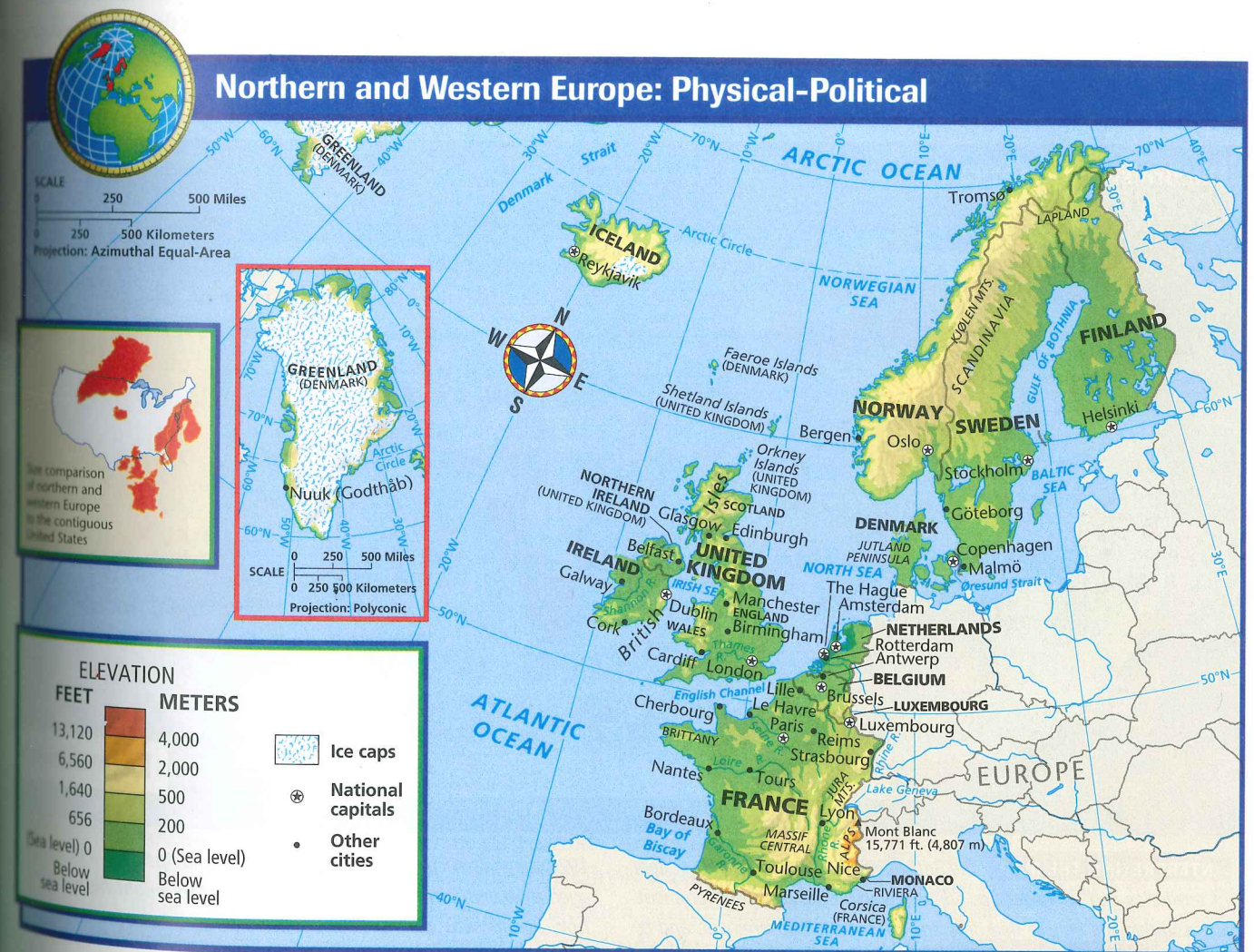
sequent occupance  
famine  
constitutional monarchy  
nationalized

### Locate, continued

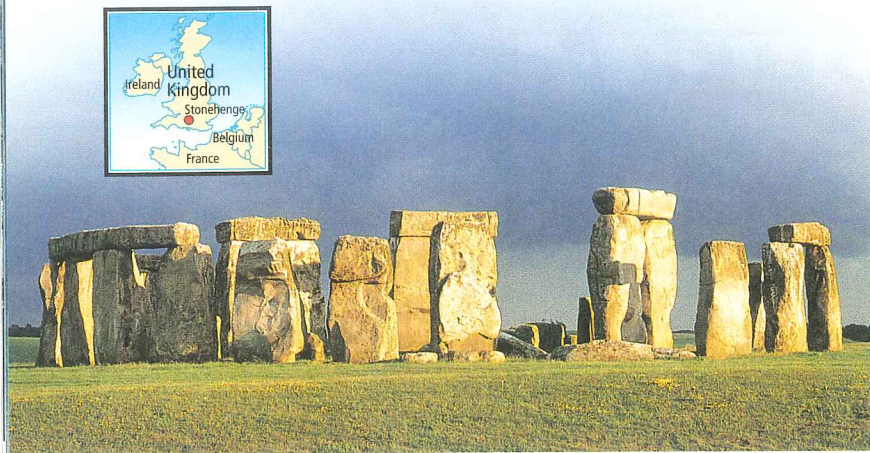
Dublin  
London  
Thames River  
Glasgow  
Edinburgh  
Birmingham  
Belfast

### LOCATE

British Isles  
England  
Wales  
Scotland  
Northern Ireland







#### INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

Stonehenge, an ancient complex of massive stone circles in England, was built beginning about 3100 B.C. Modern archaeologists are unsure exactly why Stonehenge was built. How is Stonehenge an example of sequent occupance?

England, except the far north, is part of lowland Britain. Northern England, Wales, and Scotland make up highland Britain.

Lowland Britain has developed a complex cultural geography. About 5,000 years ago, the earliest settlers left their mark with monuments like Stonehenge. Later the Celts—the ancestors of the Scots, Welsh, and Irish—occupied the island. Then the Romans came and built fortified towns. Later, Angles and Saxons, two Germanic tribes, came and drove the Celtic peoples to highland Britain. Vikings from Scandinavia raided the coastal areas and also built settlements. In 1066 William of Normandy conquered England. Normandy is now part of France. Each of these peoples left an imprint on lowland Britain. This process of settlement by successive groups of people, each group creating a distinctive cultural landscape, is called **sequent occupance**.

## History

The British Isles are made up of two independent countries—the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The Republic of Ireland occupies all but the northern part of the island of Ireland. The United Kingdom is often referred to as just Great Britain or even Britain. It includes four political regions—England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. Great Britain can be divided into two physical regions, lowland Britain and highland Britain. Most of

**The British Empire** In the 1600s and 1700s, British explorers and settlers founded colonies around the world. By 1801 England had brought Ireland, Scotland, and Wales into the United Kingdom. The surrounding ocean helped protect this kingdom. The British also built a powerful navy to take further advantage of the sea. During the 1800s more than one fourth of the world's land was ruled by the British Empire. The empire's colonies provided raw materials for British industries. The colonies also served as markets for finished goods. The empire spread the English language, Christianity, British law, sports, and other British customs around the globe.

The colonies that became the United States were part of the British Empire when they declared independence in 1776. Over time, most parts of the empire gained independence. Most former colonies became members of the Commonwealth of Nations. They still meet to discuss economic, business, and scientific matters of common concern.

Ireland did not win independence from the British until 1921. Before independence, life had long been hard for many Irish. Then in the mid-1800s Ireland suffered from a potato **famine**. A famine is a widespread shortage of food that may lead to severe hunger and starvation. About 1 million Irish died when the potato crop failed for several years in a row. The famine, poverty, and a lack of economic opportunities led many Irish to immigrate to other countries. Many migrated to the United States. (See the map.)

**READING CHECK:** *Environment and Society* Why did many people emigrate from Ireland during the mid-1800s?

## Culture

Because of their shared history, Ireland and Great Britain share many cultural features. Social life is often centered around local eateries. Sports such as soccer, rugby, and cricket are popular. In addition, English is the main language of both countries. However, a small number of Irish also speak Irish Gaelic, and some Scots speak Scottish Gaelic.

The countries also differ in important ways. Both Ireland and Britain are democracies. However, their governments are organized differently. Ireland is a republic, and the president is the head of state. Britain is a **constitutional monarchy**. That is, a king or queen is the head of state, but a parliament led by a prime minister serves as the lawmaking branch of government.

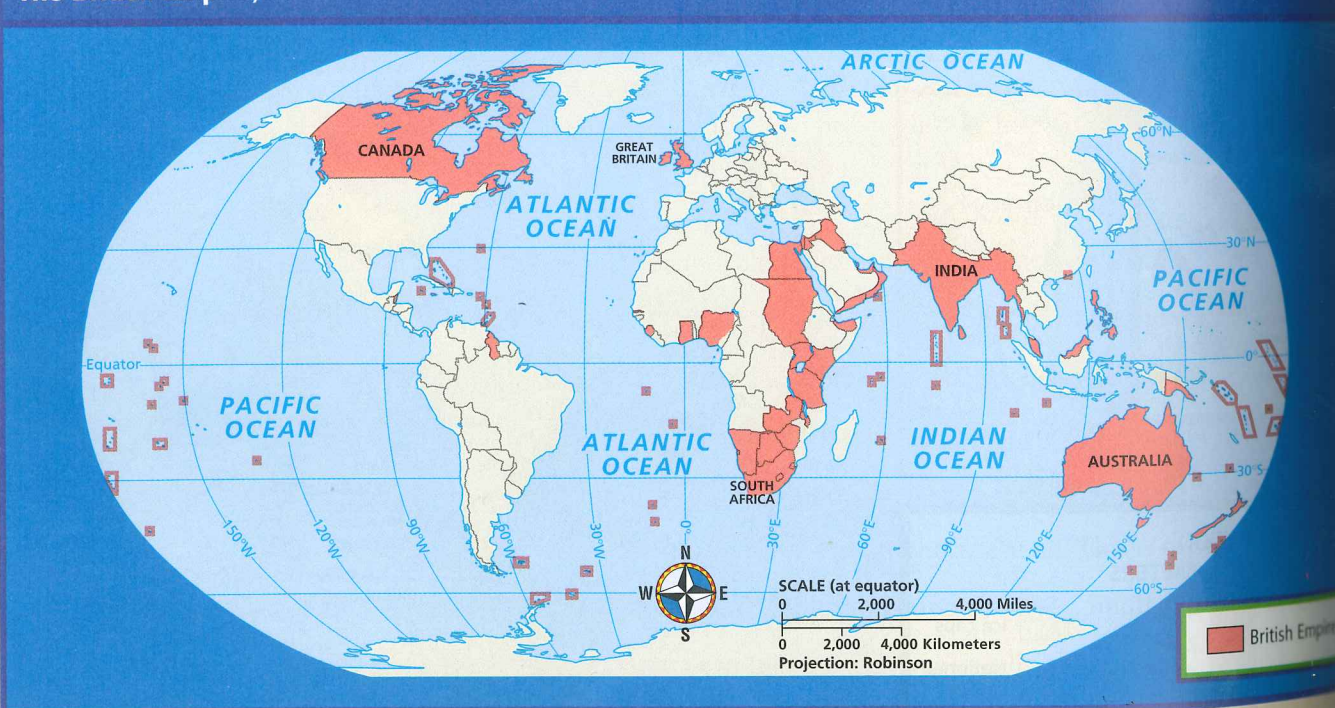
#### Irish Emigration during the Great Potato Famine



#### INTERPRETING THE MAP

Ireland's Great Potato Famine dramatically changed the country's population pattern as more than 1 million Irish immigrated to North America, Britain, and Australia. What geographic factors, both physical and cultural, might explain the migration patterns shown on the map?

#### The British Empire, 1920



**INTERPRETING THE MAP** The British Empire was a worldwide system of territories and dependencies administered by the British government. Areas within the empire had different levels of self-government, and by

1920, colonies such as Canada, South Africa, and Australia largely managed their own affairs. What geographic factors might help explain how Britain was able to control such a large empire?

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FOR: Web sites about northern and western Europe



Another important difference is religion. The vast majority of people in Ireland are Roman Catholic. However, Protestants make up a majority of the population in Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom. As you will read, tensions between Catholics and Protestants have led to violence in Northern Ireland.

Dublin is Ireland's capital and its most populous city. London is the largest city, the cultural center, a world financial center, and the capital of the United Kingdom. Both cities are home to government buildings and famous landmarks. Visitors to London can see historic buildings like the Houses of Parliament and Buckingham Palace. For centuries, London's location on the Thames (TEMZ) River made that city an ideal port for trade between continental Europe and the British Isles. Today Heathrow Airport, one of the world's busiest travel centers, ties London to thousands of cities around the globe.

**READING CHECK: Human Systems** What are some cultural features that Britain and Ireland share? What is one major difference?

## Economy

The Industrial Revolution began in Britain. By the 1700s the country had developed coal and iron mining and a large labor force. Britain also built a good transportation network that used rivers and canals. By the early 1800s the British had built the world's first railroads. Later in the century, London built the first subway system. (See Geography for Life: The London Underground and Mass Transit.) All of these features aided industrial development.

**Industrial Rise and Decline** Britain's early industries included iron and steel, shipbuilding, and textiles. Innovations such as spinning machines and steam power revolutionized how fabrics were produced. Wool and cotton from British colonies as well as from the United States supplied the textile industry. Industrial growth spread from London and central England to southern Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. Cities like Glasgow and Edinburgh became industrial centers. Trade of raw and finished products between Britain and its colonies further aided development.

Throughout much of the 1700s and 1800s, Britain dominated global trade. (See Case Study: Global Trade.) By 1900, however, the British had lost their dominance to foreign competition. By the mid-1900s Britain's coal mines and traditional industries were in rapid decline. British industries suffered because many were inefficient and because their products were not in demand. In the years after World War II, the United Kingdom **nationalized** many industries to try to stop the decline. Nationalized industries are those that are owned and operated by the government. They are protected from domestic competition.

**Changing Fortunes** Today Britain has returned most industry to private ownership, and the British economy is strong. Many early industrial cities, such as Glasgow and Birmingham, have benefited from urban renewal. They have also attracted

high-tech industries. Although the coal industry has declined, oil and gas wells in the North Sea have helped the economy. In addition, much of Britain's labor force works in service industries rather than manufacturing. Tourism is also an important industry.

The Irish economy traditionally was based on farming. However, Ireland now has one of Europe's most rapidly developing economies. Low taxes and a well-educated workforce have attracted foreign companies. They use the country as a door to other European markets. The main industries are now banking, computers, electronics, and food processing. Immigrants from other countries are moving to Ireland to get jobs. This situation is quite different from the past, when Irish emigrated from their poor country.

**READING CHECK: Human Systems** How has Ireland's economy changed over time?

## Issues and Challenges

One of the greatest challenges facing the people of the British Isles is violence in Northern Ireland. The Irish call the problems there "the troubles." Most of the people in Northern Ireland are descendants of Protestant English and Scottish settlers. A large minority are Irish Catholic. Many Catholics believe that union with the Republic of Ireland would protect them from discrimination in employment, housing, and government. However, Protestants want to stay part of the mostly Protestant United Kingdom.

The disagreement between the two groups has led to violence, particularly in the city of Belfast. British troops have tried to keep the peace. However, terrorist groups from both sides have killed thousands of people. A 1998 agreement created a shared government between Northern Ireland, the United Kingdom, and the Republic of Ireland. However, the future of this arrangement is not clear.

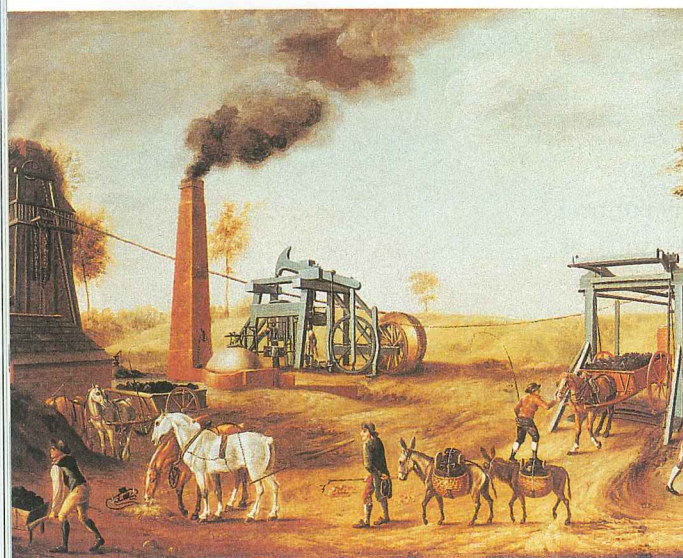
**READING CHECK: Human Systems** How do Roman Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland view their region differently?



Orangemen parade in Portadown, Northern Ireland. The Orangemen are members of the Orange Society, a Protestant organization formed in 1795 to try to maintain Protestant control in Northern Ireland. In recent years, Orangemen parades in the region have led to street violence between Protestants and Catholics.

### INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

This painting from the late 1700s shows a steam engine being used to dig a coal mine and represents the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution in England. How are people in this painting using technology to modify the physical environment?



### Section 1

## Review

### Define

requent occupation, famine, constitutional monarchy, nationalized

### Working with Sketch Maps

On a map of northern and western Europe that you draw or that your teacher provides, label the United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, British Isles, England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Dublin, London, Thames River, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Birmingham, and Belfast. In the margin of your map, identify the capital of the United Kingdom.

### Reading for the Main Idea

- Human Systems** How has London's location affected its growth?
- Human Systems** How have cultural differences led to the division of Ireland?
- Human Systems** How did Great Britain's history as a naval power contribute to the diffusion of cultural traits? How did innovation in Britain spur the Industrial Revolution?

### Critical Thinking

- Analyzing Information** What geographical factor has influenced Britain's power to control territory around the world? How do you think that factor has influenced Britain's role in foreign affairs?

### Homework Practice Online

Keyword: SW3 HP14

### Organizing What You Know

- Create a chart like the one below. Use it to list differences between Britain's old industrial economy and its modern economy. Write a paragraph describing how Britain's economy has changed over the past 200 years.

Britain's old industrial economy	Britain's modern economy



# Geography for Life

## The London Underground and Mass Transit

Greater London is home to about 7 million people. The city is also home to the world's first underground rail system. Plans for the Underground were part of an improvement plan of the mid-1800s. Construction began in 1860. Workers dug trenches along streets and built brick walls to support their sides. Then these trenches were covered with brick arches, and the roads were restored above them. London's clay soils made construction of the underground railways easier. The clay was easy to excavate and provided the raw material to make bricks for tunnel walls.

In 1863 the first subway line opened, using steam locomotives. These trains burned coal, producing unpleasant fumes. However, despite the pollution, the Underground was successful from the very beginning. During its first year, the line carried 9.5 million passengers! In 1890, electric trains began to replace steam engines.

Expansion of the Underground, which Londoners call the tube, continued over the years. Improved tunneling techniques were developed after World War I. These techniques made possible a rapid expansion of the underground network. As the system spread out from central London, large areas of rural land became prime locations for new housing developments. As a result, the expansion of the Underground contributed to the development of London's modern suburbs. Now 253 miles (408 km) of track connect 275 stations. Each year, passengers log more than 920 million journeys on the Underground.

London's transit system served as an example for others. Why are such mass-transit systems important? Cities

originally developed as places where people and resources were located close together. As cities grew and places became widely separated, improved transportation networks became more important.

However, planning for transportation needs has not always kept up with urban growth. Traffic jams on major highways and roads are common. Heavy traffic increases air pollution. Parking presents other problems. Building parking lots and garages takes up valuable land. Mass-transit systems, including buses, subways, and surface trains, can help solve these problems. Cities with efficient mass-transit systems usually run more smoothly than those in which people must depend mainly on cars. Mass-transit networks help make many of the world's big cities more livable. Examples include Mexico City, Moscow, New York, and Paris.

### Applying What You Know

- 1. Summarizing** How has the development of mass-transit systems made big cities more livable?
- 2. Drawing Inferences and Conclusions** How big do you think cities have to be to build and operate underground rail systems? What types of mass transit would you expect to find in smaller cities?

**INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD** London's mass-transit system includes the Underground and a citywide system of buses, which provide connections to the many Underground stations. Why do you think London's mass-transit system is so effective at moving large numbers of people?



## Section 2

## France

### READ TO DISCOVER

1. What is French culture like?
2. What are some of the main industries in France?
3. What challenges does France face today?

### Reading Strategy

**TAKING NOTES** Taking notes while you read will help you understand and remember the information in this section. Your notes will be useful for reviewing the material. As you read this section, create an outline using the headings from the section. Beneath each heading write the information you learn. Include key terms and their definitions.

### DEFINE

primate city

### LOCATE

Paris

Seine River

Lyon

Lille

Marseille

Alps

French Riviera

Corsica

## History and Culture

France is one of Europe's largest and most influential countries. Like the United Kingdom, France's culture shows the imprint of successive waves of migrants. Some of the peoples that have shaped French culture include the Gauls, Romans, Franks, and Vikings.

**French Society** France has a strong cultural identity unified by language and religion. Although some people also speak regional dialects and languages, most speak French. About 90 percent of France's population is Roman



The mistral, a powerful wind that blows from the Alps across southern France, can reach speeds of up to 100 miles per hour (161 kmh).

France has produced many world-famous artists, including Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841–1919). Renoir's *Le Moulin de la Galette*, a scene showing life in Paris, is considered a masterpiece of impressionism. Impressionism is a style of painting that developed mainly in France in the late 1800s. It attempts to show what one's first impression of a scene is.





The Eiffel Tower is a landmark and symbol of Paris. It was built from 1887 to 1889 to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of the French Revolution. At 984 feet (300 m), the Eiffel Tower was the tallest human-made structure in the world until the completion of New York City's Chrysler Building in 1930.

## Connecting to TECHNOLOGY

### French Waterways

In the 1800s canals and rivers were a popular and economical way to move goods. Later the waterways fell from favor with the introduction of railroads and long-distance trucking. However, today there is a new interest in using waterways for commerce. France is working to increase trade on its rivers and canals. It has Europe's longest system of canals deep enough to move commercial barges. By moving more goods by water, the government hopes to reduce traffic on its roads.

To accomplish this goal, the government lifted many old regulations. River channels have also been deepened, and locks have been removed. These changes have helped speed up travel on the waterways. As a result, more businesses are shipping their goods by water.

Why is such shipping important? Barges are more than twice as energy-efficient as trains and more than five times as efficient as trucks. The increased energy efficiency is good for the economy as well as for the environment. In addition, boats are not as noisy as trains or trucks. This means that they can operate at night in urban areas without bothering people. Boats also provide a safer way to carry dangerous goods.

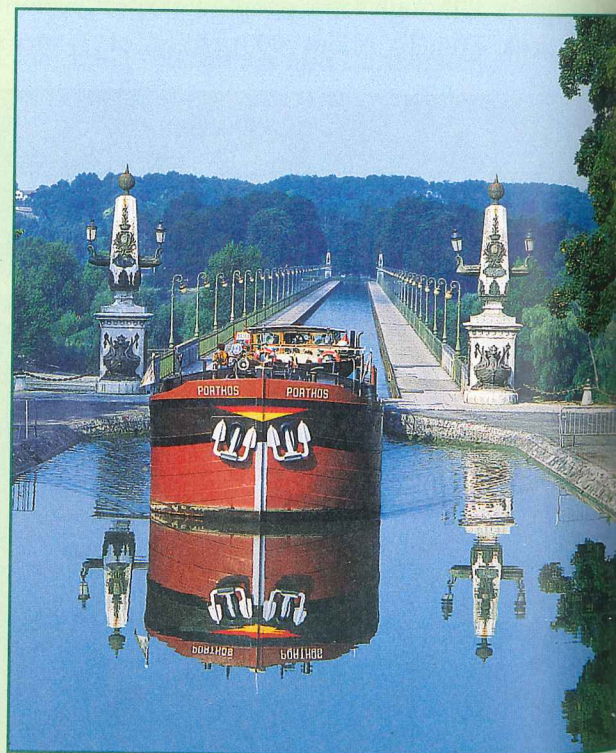
**Analyzing** How has the French perception of their water resources changed? What has been the result of this changed perception?

Catholic. The French government spends money to promote French culture and language.

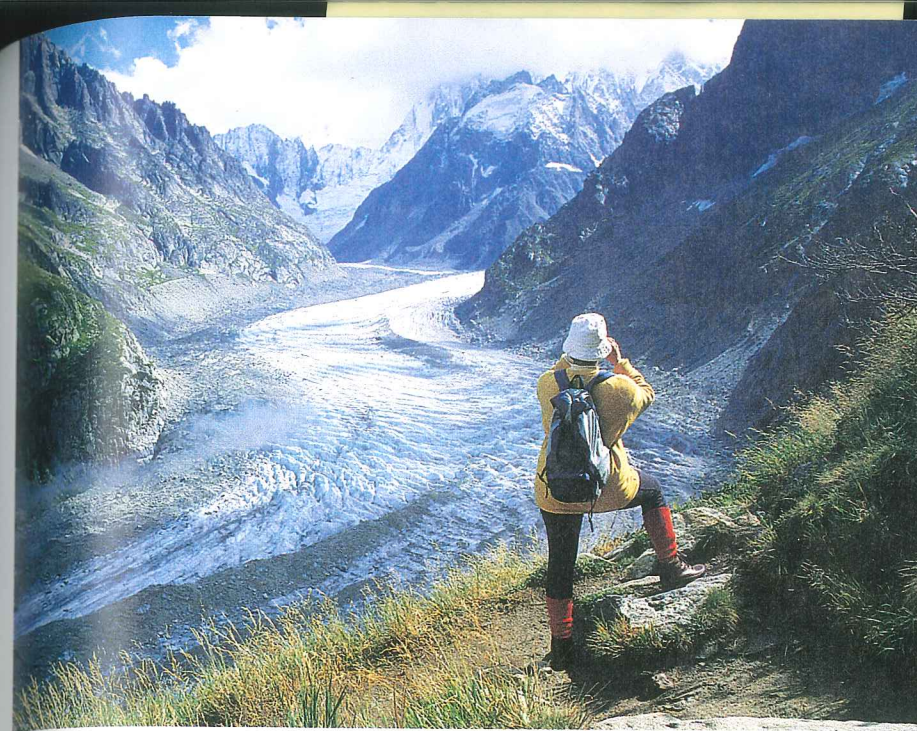
France has had a long and friendly relationship with the United States. However, today some French people worry about the influence of American culture in Europe. They see the spread of American fast food and media, such as movies, as a threat to their own culture. Some French dislike the fact that English words are creeping into French. They think the United States is responsible because English is becoming the global language of business and technology. To counter this trend, a 366-year-old government agency guards the French language from foreign influences. For example, it has declared that e-mail must be called *courrier électronique* (KOOH-ree-ay ay-lek-trohn-EEK). Some French are also concerned that American corporations are buying a growing number of French businesses.

**Cities** Paris is the capital and **primate city** of France. A primate city is one that ranks first and dominates a country in terms of population and economy. Paris is also one of Europe's largest and most important cities. About 11 million people live in the metropolitan area. The city was founded more than 2,000 years ago on an island in the middle of the Seine (SAYN) River. Today Paris is France's center for banking, business, communications, education, government, and transportation. The city is also a center for fashion, French culture, and tourism. Important regional cities include Lyon (LYOHN), Lille (LEEL), and the Mediterranean seaport of Marseille (mar-SAY).

✓ **READING CHECK: Human Systems** How has France reacted to the influences of American culture?



A canal bridge over the Loire River



## INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

A hiker views mountain scenery near Chamonix in the French Alps. France's physical and cultural landscapes attract tourists from around the world and help make tourism one of the country's leading industries. What type of physical feature is shown in this photo? What physical processes created it?

## Economy

France has a highly diversified, developed economy. Its workers are some of the most productive in the world. This is true even though they have the shortest workweek—35 hours—and some of the longest vacations—one month—of any workers in the industrial countries.

The French are famous for fashion design. They also produce perfumes, cosmetics, jewelry, glassware, and furniture. Tourism is also important. Millions of people visit Paris, ski in the French Alps, and enjoy the famous Mediterranean coast known as the French Riviera.

Farming remains an important part of the economy. France is second only to the United States in agricultural exports. The French produce high-quality food products and a great variety of agricultural produce. Farmers provide wheat, sugar beets, olives, grapes, and dairy products. France is the world's leading wine producer in both variety and export income.

France's early industries were centered in the northeast near large deposits of coal and iron ore. Those heavy industries are now in decline. However, the country's high-tech industries are developing rapidly. The south is a growing center for aviation, communications industries, and space technology.

✓ **READING CHECK: Environment and Society** Where were early French industries centered? What natural resources were found there?

## Issues and Challenges

One of the major issues facing France today is the government's powerful influence over the economy. The French economy is both highly taxed and highly regulated, and many industries are government-owned. Many argue that these controls hurt innovation and creativity. They also make it hard for private businesses to grow. This situation is changing as state-owned businesses and industries are turned over to private owners. This process is called privatization. However, as privatization occurs, many government workers are faced with unemployment.

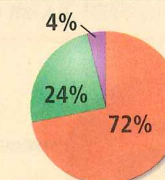
### France's Exports

machinery and transportation equipment; chemicals; iron and steel products; agricultural products; textiles and clothing

Source: Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook 2000



### France's Labor Force



Labor force by occupation:

- Agriculture
- Industry
- Services

Source: CIA World Factbook

## INTERPRETING THE GRAPH

How does the distribution of France's labor force by occupation relate to France's exports?





Corsica is known for its beautiful Mediterranean landscape, which features rugged mountains and dramatic coastal cliffs. However, economically the island is less developed than much of France, which has led many Corsicans to migrate to the mainland for jobs.

Since the early 1900s many Algerians and Moroccans have been migrating to France in search of jobs. In fact, North Africans now form the largest immigrant group in the country. Immigrants have also come from former French Indochina—Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos—and from former French colonies in West Africa. Many immigrants live in poorer sections of the major French cities. France's many immigrant communities have helped create distinctive urban landscapes. Many neighborhoods where immigrants live feature non-European restaurants and shops. Bringing these immigrants into French society is another important challenge.

After the British, the French maintained the second-largest colonial empire in the world. France has tried to maintain ties with some of those former colonies, particularly in Africa. The French also have overseas territories that are departments of France. In other words, they are considered part of France. One such department is French Guiana, in South America. Other French territories are mainly islands in the Caribbean, the South Pacific, and the Indian Ocean. They include Guadeloupe, Tahiti, and Réunion. Recent independence movements on the South Pacific island of New Caledonia have led to violence. Violence has also occurred on the large and rugged Mediterranean island of Corsica. Corsica has been part of France since 1768. However, many Corsicans consider themselves culturally distinct from France and want their island to become independent.

✓ **READING CHECK: Environment and Society** Why have many Moroccans, Algerians, and other groups of people been immigrating to France?

## Section 2

### Review

**Define** primate city

**Working with Sketch Maps** On the map you created in Section 1, label France, Paris, Seine River, Lyon, Lille, Marseille, Alps, French Riviera, and Corsica. What is the primate city of France?

**Reading for the Main Idea**

1. **Human Systems** How is France's culture important to its economy?

2. **Human Systems** How are public policies and decision making influenced by French cultural beliefs?
3. **Human Systems** Where does France still have overseas possessions?

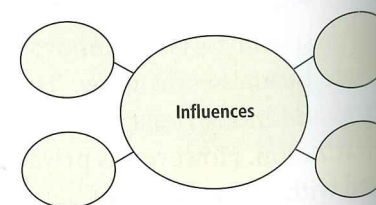
**Critical Thinking**

4. **Making Generalizations** Why do you think some French workers at government-owned companies might face losing their jobs as their companies are turned over to private ownership?

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**Organizing What You Know**

5. Construct a word web like the one below. Use it to identify sources of American influence on French culture.



## Section 3

### The Benelux Countries

**READ TO DISCOVER**

1. What historical ties do the Benelux countries share?
2. What are the cities and economies of the Benelux countries like?

**Reading Strategy**

**READING ORGANIZER** As you read, create a concept map on a sheet of paper by using the large and small headings in the section. Find details to support each idea in your concept map. Include key terms and their definitions.

**IDENTIFY**

European Union

**DEFINE**

cosmopolitan

**LOCATE**

North Sea

Flanders

Wallonia

Brussels

Antwerp

Amsterdam

Rotterdam

The Hague

### History and Culture

Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg make up the Benelux countries. For many years, Belgium and Luxembourg were part of the Netherlands. Because of their position between three powerful countries—France, Germany, and the United Kingdom—all three of the Benelux countries have been fought over by foreign powers. After World War II, the Benelux countries established a political and economic union. Their early economic association planted the seed that eventually led to the creation of the **European Union**.



Vianden Castle in Luxembourg was built between the A.D. 1000s and 1300s.



**FOCUS ON GOVERNMENT**

**The European Union** The European Union, or EU, is an organization of countries interested in increasing economic and political cooperation between its members. The EU was established on November 1, 1993. However, its origins date back to the 1950s.

In the past, many European leaders tried to unite the continent politically and economically. They failed because they used force rather than cooperation to bring different countries together. After World War II, some European countries began forming alliances based on mutual aid rather than military strength. These alliances tried to tie members more closely together economically and politically. One way of doing this was to eliminate trade barriers among members of the same alliance.

Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, France, Italy, and West Germany formed such an organization in 1957. They called it the European Economic Community, or EEC. Later the name was shortened to just the EC. Over time, the EC grew, joined with other organizations, and became the EU.





**INTERPRETING THE MAP** As of May 2004, 25 countries belonged to the European Union. The 10 countries that joined in 2004 are shown in light green. How has the EU affected earlier boundaries and political divisions within Europe?

The EU has increased cooperation among members in the areas of trade, lawmaking, and social issues. The EU also introduced a common currency, the euro. Most, but not all, EU countries adopted the euro in 2002.

In February 2002 the EU held a constitutional convention to address issues such as common defense and taxes and how an enlarged EU will work. In December 2002 the EU voted to admit 10 new members—mostly from Eastern Europe—and these 10 countries became members on May 1, 2004. The EU must decide whether, and how, to expand membership to other countries—such as Turkey—that want to join.

**READING CHECK: Human Systems** What role does the EU play in Europe today?

**Land Reclamation** The name *Netherlands* means “low lands.” Large areas of this country are below sea level. In fact, early in the country’s history, much of the land in the Netherlands was coastal marshes and wetlands. However, people in the region have long worked to reclaim land from the sea. Today farms, towns, and industrial centers are located on polders below sea level. The dike and polder system has been very successful. However, the Dutch—the people of the Netherlands—worry about floods during severe North Sea storms. Rising global sea levels might

also become a problem.

**Language** Dutch is spoken in the Netherlands and in northern Belgium. The dialect of Dutch spoken in northern Belgium is also called Flemish. About 60 percent of Belgians speak Dutch. Many Belgians also speak French. In fact, the country is divided into two cultural regions. The northern coastal region is known as Flanders. The French-speaking Belgians in the southern portion of Belgium are known as Walloons, and the region is known as Wallonia. The people in Belgium generally view themselves as either Flemish or Walloon rather than Belgian. Luxembourg, to the south, has three official languages: German, French, and Luxembourgian. Luxembourgian is a language related to German and Dutch.

**READING CHECK: Human Systems** What ties exist among the Benelux countries?

## Urban and Economic Environments

The headquarters for the EU is in Brussels, the capital of Belgium. The city’s central location in Europe and good transportation connections make it an ideal headquarters for the EU. Brussels is also the headquarters for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and many international corporations. As you might expect, Brussels is one of Europe’s most **cosmopolitan** cities. A cosmopolitan city is one that is characterized by many foreign influences. The

cosmopolitan city is one that is characterized by many foreign influences. The port of Antwerp is Belgium’s second-most-important city. The Belgian economy is based on industry, agriculture, and services for international business. The country is also known for diamond cutting, quality carpets, and chocolate.

The Dutch economy is known for agriculture, particularly dairy products and flowers. For example, Dutch cheese and tulips are world famous. The Dutch economy today is very diversified, and exports are important. The economy is also one of the best performers in the EU. Natural gas deposits are found in the coastal and offshore region of the North Sea. However, the Netherlands is very dependent on imported oil.

The most urbanized and industrialized area in the Netherlands is known as the Randstad, or “Ring City.” Here you will find the largest cities—including Amsterdam, the capital, and Rotterdam, one of the world’s busiest seaports. These cities are strung together in a crescent shape. The Dutch parliament and International Court of Justice are located in The Hague. The Dutch population is well educated, productive, and supported by expensive government social programs.

Luxembourg is a forested and hilly country between Belgium, France, and Germany. It is the smallest member of the European Union, but it has the highest per capita GDP in the world—\$36,400. Luxembourg has long been a steel producer. However, today international banking is most important. The small country has a constitutional monarchy.

**READING CHECK: Environment and Society** Why is Brussels an ideal location for the headquarters of many European businesses?

## Section 3 Review

**Identify** European Union

**Define** cosmopolitan

**Working with Sketch Maps** On the map you created in Section 2, label the three Benelux countries, North Sea, Flanders, Wallonia, Brussels, Antwerp, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and The Hague. Where is the headquarters of the EU?

**Reading for the Main Idea**

**1. The World in Spatial Terms** How has the location of the Benelux countries influenced their history?

**2. Human Systems** What large European organization promotes cooperation among members in the areas of trade, lawmaking, and social issues? What are two important issues debated by members today?

**Critical Thinking**

**3. Making Generalizations** Why would rising sea levels be a concern in the Netherlands?

**4. Comparing and Contrasting** How do you think the Randstad in the Netherlands compares to the megalopolis of the northeastern United States? What similar political, economic, social, and environmental features would you expect to find in the two regions?



### INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

The Netherlands is an important exporter of flowers and is famous for its brightly colored tulip fields. Tulips are one of the most popular garden flowers in the world, and almost 4,000 varieties have been developed. **Based on the photo, what environmental factors might make the Netherlands ideally suited to using modern technology in agriculture?**

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### Organizing What You Know

**5.** Copy the chart. Use it to list the languages spoken in each of the Benelux countries.

Countries	Languages
Belgium	
The Netherlands	
Luxembourg	



## READ TO DISCOVER

1. How are the cultures of Scandinavia similar to and different from each other?
2. What does the economy of this region rely on?
3. In what areas do most people in Scandinavia live?

## Reading Strategy

**PAIRED SUMMARIZING** Read this section silently, making notes as you read. Working with a partner, take turns summarizing the material and your notes. Stop to discuss ideas that seem confusing. Include key terms and their definitions.

## DEFINE

uninhabitable  
geysers  
socialism

## LOCATE

Lapland	Stockholm
Copenhagen	Greenland
Oslo	Faeroe Islands
Helsinki	Reykjavik



Norway is sometimes called the Land of the Midnight Sun because the Sun does not set in the northern parts of the country for about one month every summer.

## History and Culture

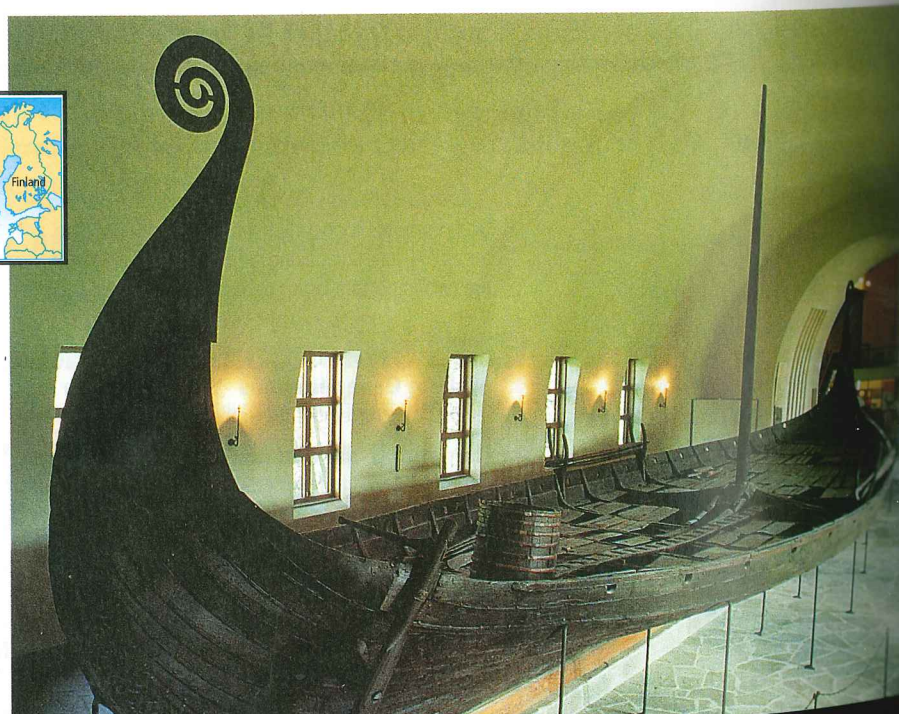
Five countries make up Scandinavia—Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Iceland. These countries are the northernmost countries in Europe. In the past the region was known for the fierce Viking sailors and warriors who raided the shores of Europe. However, today the countries of Scandinavia are known for their modern economies and high standards of living.

Scandinavians share many cultural traits. For example, almost all Scandinavians are Protestant Lutheran. Except for Finnish, Scandinavian languages are closely related. Finnish belongs to the same language family as Hungarian and Estonian. However, speakers of Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian can generally understand one another. Also, all of the Scandinavian countries have democratic governments. These cultural similarities help make Scandinavia a clear cultural region.



## INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

Viking longships, like this one from Norway, featured many technological innovations. They were lighter, faster, easier to sail, and more durable than other ships of their time. **How might Viking improvements in ship design have allowed the diffusion of Viking culture?**



Lapland stretches across northern Norway, Sweden, and Finland. This region is mainly tundra and is populated by the Lapps—or Sami, as they call themselves. The Sami probably originated in central Asia. Their economy was traditionally based on reindeer herding, but today most Sami earn a living from tourism. Despite this, many Sami have maintained some of their traditional culture.

**Settlement Patterns** Most Scandinavians live in the southern parts of their countries, where climates are warmer. For example, most Norwegians live in coastal plains areas or along narrow fjords. More than half of the population lives along the southeastern coast of the country. Most of the ports on that coast remain free of ice all year.

Scandinavian countries have healthy and well-educated populations with long life spans and low birthrates. In general, their populations are growing slowly and are heavily urban. About 85 percent of Sweden's population is found in urban areas. More than one fourth of Danes and Norwegians live in or around their respective capital cities of Copenhagen and Oslo. Most Finns live near Helsinki, the country's capital and leading seaport. Stockholm is Sweden's capital and largest city.

**READING CHECK: Human Systems** Which country's language is not related to the languages of the other Scandinavian countries?

**Greenland and Iceland** Greenland is not really green. About 85 percent of it is covered by a thick ice cap. The icy interior of the island is **uninhabitable**. An uninhabitable region is one that cannot support human life and settlements. Only Greenland's rocky coastline is fit for human habitation. Most Greenlanders live along the southwestern coast. In the 900s, the Vikings founded settlements on Greenland's coast. Early Viking settlers tried to attract others by describing the island as a place with plenty of vegetation and a mild climate. This description drew new settlers to Greenland. However, these early settlements died out in the 1400s. Scandinavian settlers did not colonize the island again until the 1700s. Today Greenland is a self-governing territory of Denmark. Denmark also governs the Faeroe (FAHR-oh) Islands in the North Atlantic Ocean.

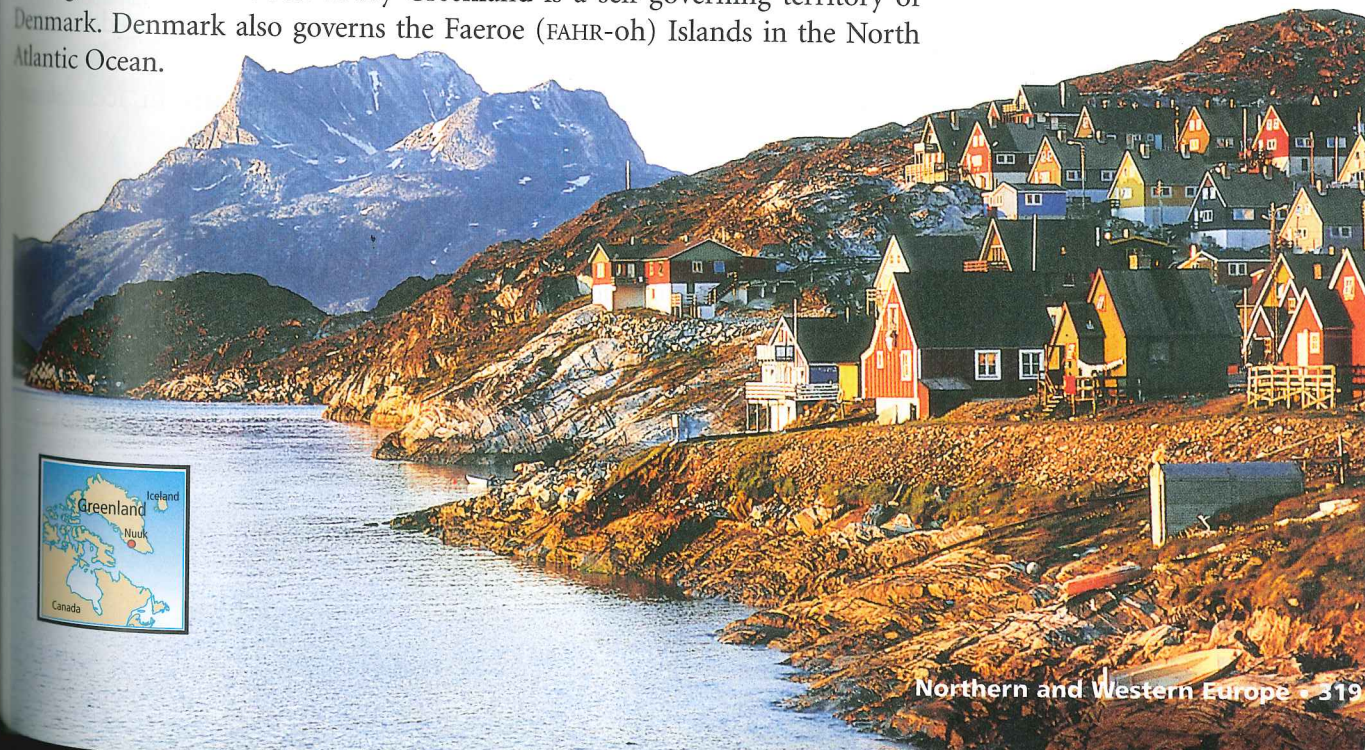


## INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

The Scandinavian countries all have a primate city. For example, Copenhagen is Denmark's capital and cultural, artistic, and economic center. **What are the primate cities of the other Scandinavian countries?**

## INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

Greenland's capital, Nuuk, is located on the island's western coast, where the warm West Greenland Current helps moderate temperatures. **How do you think this ocean current has influenced settlement patterns in Greenland?**







Volcanic activity in Iceland generates many geysers. Some can shoot water as high as 1,640 feet (500 m).

In Iceland, which is greener than its name implies, all the people live along the narrow coastal plains. That is because the island's interior of ice-covered lava rock is also uninhabitable. Most Icelanders live in or near the capital Reykjavik (RAY-kyah-veek). The country is a member of NATO but has not shown an interest in joining the EU.

Iceland has tremendous geothermal energy because of its location on a mid-ocean ridge where volcanic activity is common. Underground water rises and steams as **geysers** in many locations on the island. A geyser is a hot spring that shoots water into the air. The hot water is used to heat homes and vegetable greenhouses. The island also has hydropower potential. In the future, Iceland may be able to export geothermal energy and hydroelectricity to Europe across an underwater cable.

✓ **READING CHECK: Environment and Society** Where will you find the human populations of Greenland and Iceland?

## Economy

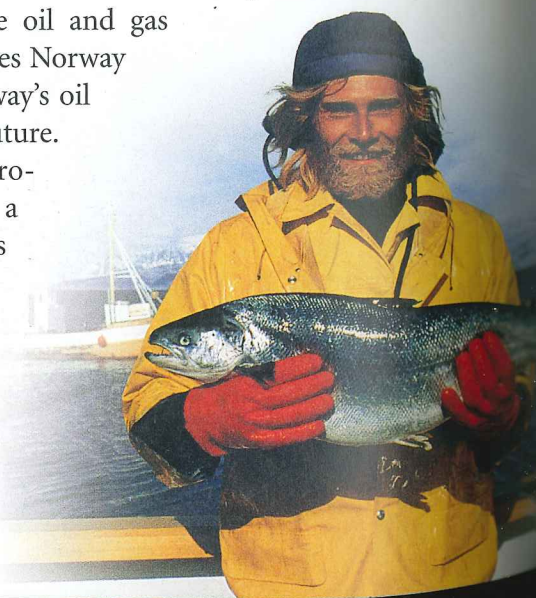
The Scandinavian countries all have high standards of living. For example, Denmark is one of the EU's most prosperous countries and has one of the highest per capita GDPs in Europe. High-tech industries and export-oriented economies maintain the high standards of living.

**Economic Development** Finland has been transformed from an exporter of natural resources to a manufacturing country. Finland produces and exports high-tech goods. Its products include advanced telecommunications equipment, cellular phones, and computer software. The Swedes produce a variety of high-tech and high-value products. These goods include automobiles, cellular phones, aircraft, and industrial robots.

In addition to manufacturing, commercial agriculture—particularly the dairy and meatpacking industries—is important to the Danish economy. The paper- and wood-products industries are well developed in Sweden, where forests cover half the country.

Fishing is also important in Scandinavia, particularly in Iceland and Norway. Norway has a large commercial fishing fleet. However, it is offshore oil and gas from the North Sea that makes Norway a rich country. Most of Norway's oil profits are invested for the future. The country also has hydroelectric plants that produce a surplus of electricity, which is exported.

*Fishing has long been important to Norway's economy. In fact, Norway has one of the largest commercial fishing industries in the world and exports more fish than any other European country.*



**Economic Change** During much of the last half of the 1900s, Sweden's economy was a mix of capitalism and **socialism**. Socialism is an economic system in which the government owns and controls the means of producing goods. Most of Sweden's industries remained privately owned. However, the government controlled some businesses, and it levied high taxes. These high taxes still pay for a large system of government welfare and services. For example, the government pays for almost all the educational, medical, and childcare needs of its citizens. For example, all residents of Sweden are covered by national health insurance. Compared to many other countries, health conditions in Sweden are very good. The government also pays for programs to help parents raise their children. For example, parents can share up to one year of paid time off from work before their child reaches the age of eight. They also receive tax-free payments to help pay for the costs of raising children.

By the late 1990s about 60 percent of Swedes relied on the government for work or welfare payments. The Danes also have a well-developed welfare system. High taxes in Scandinavia pay for environmental protection and support sports and the arts.

Many Swedish economists blame a costly welfare system for the economic problems the country has been experiencing since 1991. In recent years Sweden's government has tried to lessen its influence over the economy. Still, many Swedes do not like the idea of cutting back the welfare system that they have. As a result, the government has preserved many of its expensive social programs.

✓ **READING CHECK: Human Systems** Why are taxes in Scandinavian countries like Sweden so high?



**INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD** The Øresund bridge, which connects Copenhagen, Denmark, with Malmö, Sweden, opened in 2000. The massive bridge cost more than \$2 billion and provides road and rail connections between the Scandinavian Peninsula and the rest of Europe. How might this bridge affect the locations and patterns of economic activities in Scandinavia?

## Section 4

## Review

**Define** uninhabitable, geysers, socialism

### Working with Sketch Maps

On the map you created in Section 3, label the Scandinavian countries, Lapland, Copenhagen, Oslo, Helsinki, Stockholm, Greenland, Faeroe Islands, and Reykjavik. Which large island is part of Denmark?

### Reading for the Main Idea

- Environment and Society** How did early Viking settlers try to shape perceptions of Greenland to draw others there? How accurate were their descriptions of the island?
- Human Systems** What are the standards of living and the economies of Scandinavian countries like?
- Human Systems** What is the major source of Norway's wealth?

### Critical Thinking

- Making Generalizations** What might be one advantage and one disadvantage of the social welfare system found in many Scandinavian countries?

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### Organizing What You Know

- Create a chart like the one below. Use it to list important economic activities and energy resources in the Scandinavian countries.

Countries	Economic activities and energy resources