Chapter 12

The Cultural Geography of Europe
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Chapter Objectives

• Describe how physical geography and industrial growth have affected the distribution of Europe’s population.

• Explain how Europe’s ethnic diversity has been both a cause of conflict and a source of unity.

• Discuss the influence of European art and culture throughout the world.
Section Objectives

• Explain how Europe’s physical geography influences its population density and distribution.
• Describe the effects of industrialization and urbanization on Europe’s people.
• Discuss how recent patterns of migration have influenced European culture.
Terms to Know

- ethnic group
- ethnic cleansing
- refugee
- urbanization
A Geographic View

Immigrants shop at a London market.
Geographic Literacy

Of the world’s 30 largest cities in the year 2000, only one (Paris, France) was in Europe. In 1950, despite the devastation of World War II, Paris was the world’s fifth-largest city, with a population of 5.4 million. By 2000 its population had grown to 9.6 million, but this growth rate was much less than that of other world cities. Paris went from 5th to 22nd in population. Experts predict that by 2015, Paris will be 27th in population.
Ethnic Diversity

• **Ethnic Groups** Europe consists of more than 30 countries and about 160 ethnic groups.

• Although some countries have one major ethnic group, most European countries have two or more.

• **Ethnic Tensions** In the Balkan Peninsula, serious fighting erupted during the 1990s among ethnic groups that once formed the country of Yugoslavia.
Population Characteristics

- **Population Density**  Although Europe is the sixth-largest continent in land area, it is the third-largest in population.

- **Population Distribution**  The most densely populated areas of Europe are the places with the most temperate climates, plains, fertile soil, mineral deposits, and inland waterways.
Urbanization

- The Industrial Revolution that started in the late 1700s transformed Europe from a rural, agricultural society into an urban, manufacturing society.
- Today about 75 percent of all Europeans live in cities.
- **Urban Features** Europe’s largest cities face the challenge of overcrowding and pollution.
Urbanization

- **Population Movements**  Population movements have been a continual part of Europe’s history.
- Immigrants from North Africa, Southwest Asia, South Asia, and the Caribbean came to western Europe in the 1950s and 1960s, when it was experiencing a labor shortage.
- Despite immigration, Europe’s overall population is shrinking because of low birthrates.
History and Government

Section 2
Objectives

- Discuss the contributions early Europeans made to world culture.
- Describe the ways Europe’s geography has shaped its history.
- Explain how world wars and economic and political revolutions affected Europe.
Sarajevo, Bosnia, and Herzegovina
Throughout history, European universities have been meeting places for both religious and nonreligious philosophies. The earliest universities were founded in England, France, and Italy during the 1200s and 1300s. Students learned Greek and Roman philosophy, the ideas of Muslim thinkers, and the teachings of the Catholic Church. Prior to World War II, European students regularly studied Greek and Latin classics in the original languages.
The Rise of Europe

- **Early Peoples** Archaeological finds suggest that humans lived in Europe more than one million years ago.
- By 6000 B.C., farming spread from Southwest Asia to many parts of Europe. With the introduction of farming, Europeans settled in villages, some of which grew into large cities.
Ancient Greece and Rome

- The ancient Greeks laid the foundations of Western civilization.
- Greece’s mountains and maritime location led to the rise of separate city-states linked by a common Greek language and culture.
- Greek forms of government, art, literature, theater, and philosophy left a lasting mark on the Western world.
Ancient Greece and Rome

- In Italy, another people, the Romans, founded a republic and later, a Mediterranean empire.
- The Roman Empire at its height spanned much of Europe, some of Southwest Asia, and North Africa.
- The Romans imitated many aspects of Greek culture and added their own developments in government, law, and engineering.
The Rise of Europe

- **A Christian Europe** In the late A.D. 300s, the Roman Empire was divided into eastern and western halves.
- The Western form of Christianity, known as Roman Catholicism, became dominant in western Europe.
- The major form of Christianity in eastern Europe became Eastern Orthodoxy.
The Middle Ages

• **The Middle Ages** After the fall of the Roman Empire, Europe entered the **Middle Ages**.
• **Feudalism** replaced strong central government, and monasteries and cathedrals became centers of learning.
• Although generally Christian, Europe was influenced by other religious groups during the Middle Ages.
• Many Jews settled in eastern Europe, and Islam spread to Spain and left a lasting influence on European culture.
Expansion of Europe

- Western Europe’s Christians fought a series of brutal religious wars called the **Crusades** to regain Palestine—the birthplace of Christianity—from Muslim control.
- Although Crusaders failed to win Palestine, they did extend Europe’s trade routes to the eastern Mediterranean world.
- **The Renaissance** The Renaissance was an era of discovery and learning that revived interest in the classical past and sparked advances in European arts, education, and literature.
- A religious movement called the **Reformation** led to the beginnings of Protestantism.
Expansion of Europe

- **European Explorations** During the 1400s, Europeans began exploring other parts of the world.
A Changing Europe

- During the late 1600s and early 1700s, many educated Europeans emphasized the importance of reason and began questioning long-standing traditions and values.
- This movement, known as the Enlightenment, was followed by political and economic revolutions throughout Europe.
Revolution

- In the late 1600s, the power of the monarchy was limited in England.
- The French overthrew their king during the French Revolution in the late 1700s.
- By 1900 most European countries had achieved some measure of democracy.
- The Industrial Revolution transformed life in Europe. Changes in manufacturing, transportation, and communications led to the rise of industrial capitalism.
Revolution

- Inequalities among social classes and substandard working conditions for the poor led to the rise of **communism**—a philosophy that called for economic equality in which the workers would control the means of production.
World Wars

- **Conflict and Division** Two world wars in the 1900s drastically changed Europe.
- Several European monarchies collapsed following World War I, and new countries emerged.
- Unresolved political problems from World War I, plus the rise to power of Benito Mussolini in Italy and Adolf Hitler in Germany, led to the outbreak of World War II in Europe.
- More than 6 million Jews and others died at the hands of the Nazis during the **Holocaust**.
Cold War

- World War II left Europe ruined and divided.
- Eastern Europe came under Soviet Communist control, but western Europe backed democracy and received support from the United States.
- A divided Germany became a “hot point” of the Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union.
A Changing Europe

• **A New Era for Europe**  After years of popular unrest, the Soviet-backed communist governments of eastern Europe collapsed in 1989. The Berlin Wall—a symbol of the Cold War—came down in 1990, and Germany was reunified.

• The **European Union (EU)** became the organization promoting this goal.
Cultures and Lifestyles

Section 3
Objectives

• Explain how religion has influenced the cultural development of Europe.

• Discuss the ways European art and culture have been influential throughout the world.

• Describe how European governments meet the educational and healthcare needs of their peoples.
Geographic Literacy

- The tallest building in Europe is the Commerzbank Tower in Frankfurt, Germany. This 56-story, 981-foot (299 m) tower was built in 1997. Among the world’s 50 tallest buildings, the Commerzbank Tower is the only one that is in Europe.
Expression of Culture

- **Languages**  In Europe, there are about 50 different languages and more than 100 **dialects**, most of which belong to the Indo-European **language family**.

- **Religion**
  - Europe is predominantly Christian.
  - Most of southern Europe’s Christians are Roman Catholics, whereas most northern European Christians are Protestants.
  - In much of southeastern Europe, Eastern Orthodox Christians predominate.
  - Many Muslims also live in southeastern Europe, and Jewish communities exist in all major European cities.

- **Long History of Religious conflicts in Europe.**
Expression of Culture

- **The Arts** Europe has a rich history of painting, sculpture, music, theater, and literature.
- Religious beliefs and values are reflected in much of Europe’s premodern art and architecture.
- From the Renaissance onward, writers and artists have largely portrayed secular themes.
Quality of Life

- Western Europeans generally enjoy a higher standard of living than eastern and southern Europeans do. Eastern Europeans are still recovering from years of communist rule or the ravages of recent conflicts.

- **Education** Europeans are among the world’s best-educated people. Most European countries have literacy rates above 90 percent.

- **State-Sponsored Human Services** Many European countries provide citizens with social welfare programs for health care, higher education, and social security.
Quality of Life

- **Home Life**  Family life is still important in Europe, but many recent changes have taken place. Today, most women have entered the workforce, families are more mobile, and government agencies tend to many social concerns once handled by families.

- **Sports and Recreation**  Soccer is enormously popular in Europe.

- **Celebrations**  Europeans celebrate Christian, Jewish, and Muslim religious festivals, as well as national or patriotic holidays.
Europe’s cultures and ethnic groups are diverse.

Physical features, climate, and resources have affected the region’s population density and distribution.

Industrialization, urbanization, and patterns of migration have helped define Europe as a region.
Summary – Section 2

• The contributions of Greek and Roman civilizations have influenced much of European history.

• During the Middle Ages, Christianity played a major role in shaping European societies.

• Trade, colonization, and immigration spread European cultures to other continents.

• After World War II, the Cold War divided communist-controlled eastern Europe from noncommunist western Europe.

• The European Union was formed to promote economic unity and stability among European countries.
Summary – Section 3

• Most of Europe’s various languages belong to one language family.
• Religion has influenced European values and has sometimes contributed to conflicts.
• Because of colonialism, European art and culture have profoundly influenced the Western world.
• Eastern and western European countries have differences in standards of living.
• Some European governments provide comprehensive social services to their citizens.