Europe Today
Europe Today
Chapter Objectives

• Examine recent economic changes in Europe as they relate to industry, agriculture, transportation, and communications.

• Discuss the impact of industrialization and urban development on Europe’s environment, focusing on the challenges of acid rain, global warming, and air and water pollution.
Living in Europe

Section 1
Section Objectives

• Discuss the types of economic systems found in Europe.
• Explain why economic changes are taking place in Europe.
• Describe how transportation and communications systems link European countries to one another and to the rest of the world.
Terms to Know

- European Union (EU)
- Maastricht Treaty
- heavy industry
- light industry
- mixed farming
- farm cooperative
- state farm
- genetically modified food
- organic farming
A Geographic View

Eastern European miners
Geographic Literacy

In 1998, eight of the world’s thirteen busiest airports (excluding those in the United States) were in Europe. Airports in London, England; Frankfurt, Germany; Paris, France; Amsterdam, Holland; Madrid, Spain; and Rome, Italy, had between 24.9 and 60.7 million people pass through them in just one year.
Changing Economies

• Today Europe is one of the world’s major manufacturing and trading regions.

• The European Union, which unites much of western Europe into one trading community, enjoys a greater volume of trade than any single country in the world.

• The European Union was formed in the 1990s.

• Member countries agreed to eliminate restrictions on trade and travel among themselves.

• The European Union also paved the way for a common European currency, the euro; a central bank; and a common foreign policy.
Changing Economies

- **Eastern Europe** Since communism’s fall in 1989, eastern European countries have been moving from command economies to market economies.

- Loans and investments from foreign countries have helped them in their efforts, but many workers have lost the social “safety net”—free health care, child care, lifetime jobs, and other social benefits—provided by the communist system.
Industry

- **Manufacturing** Great manufacturing centers in Germany, France, Italy, Poland, and the Czech Republic are located near natural resources such as deposits of coal and iron ore.
- Countries without these resources, such as the Netherlands or Denmark, specialize in light industry.
Industry

- **Service and Technology Industries** About 60 percent of workers in western Europe work in service industries, such as banking, insurance, and tourism.
Agriculture

- The percentage of farmers in each European country varies greatly, from 2% in the highly industrialized United Kingdom to about 50% in largely agricultural Albania.
- Olives, fruits, and vegetables grow in southern areas; grains and livestock are raised in northern areas.
- **Farming Techniques** Many western European farmers practice *mixed farming*, raising several kinds of crops and livestock on the same farm.
- **Farm cooperatives**, modern equipment, and fertilizers are helping improve efficiency on Europe’s farms.
Agriculture

- Farmers in eastern Europe are adjusting to the change from collective farms or state farms to private ownership of land.

- **Agricultural Issues** More and more European farmers are using organic farming methods.
Transportation and Communication

- Europe’s transportation network is among the best in the world.
- Modern communications systems also link most parts of Europe to one another and to the rest of the world.
- **Railways and Highways** Railroads move freight and passengers throughout Europe. Europe has one of the best highway systems.
- More Europeans own cars than do people in any other part of the world except the United States.
Transportation
Transportation and Communication

- **Seaports and Waterways** European ports handle more than half of the world’s international shipping.

- Communications systems in western Europe are similar to those in the United States; people use fax machines, cellular phones, and the Internet as well as regular telephones and surface mail. In Eastern Europe it lags further behind.
People and Their Environment

Section 2
Objectives

• Explain how industry and farming practices have affected Europe’s environment.
• Identify the steps that are being taken to protect Europe’s environment.
• Discuss the successes Europeans have had in recent decades in reversing the effects of pollution.
Terms to Know

- dry farming
- acid rain
- meltwater
- acid deposition
- environmentalist
- greenhouse effect
- global warming
- biologist
A Geographic View
Geographic Literacy

In 1997, an international summit on global warming was held in Kyoto, Japan. Representatives of the European Union proposed a goal to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide, methane, and other greenhouse gases by 15 percent by the year 2012. At the end of the summit, the European Union member countries agreed to a reduction of 8 percent.
Humans and the Environment

- Geological forces such as earthquakes and volcanoes helped create the landscape of Europe.
- **The Delta Project** After a severe flood in 1953 that killed about 1,800 people, a system of dams and dikes was built in the Netherlands to protect its coastline from flooding.
- Scientists debate whether the cause of the flooding is a natural climate cycle or global warming.
Pollution

- Years of industrialization have had a devastating impact on Europe’s air, water, and soil.
- To meet this challenge, the European Union now requires environmental protection and cleanup from its members.
- **Acid Rain** Air pollution containing acid-producing chemicals creates acid precipitation.
- The effects of acid precipitation are especially severe in eastern Europe, where lignite coal is still burned for fuel, but acid rain does not respect a country’s borders.
Pollution

- **Air Pollution** Breathing polluted air greatly affects public health in Europe.
- As a result, life expectancy is lower in the more heavily polluted countries of eastern Europe.
- Air pollution also poisons crops.
Pollution
Pollution

- **Global Warming**  Many *environmentalists* believe that increased carbon dioxide from vehicle exhausts and industrial pollution is responsible for the gradual warming of Earth’s atmosphere.

- **Water Pollution**  Waste disposal is the source of most water pollution in Europe.
Pollution
Reducing Pollution

- **Concern for the Environment** Europeans today feel responsible for protecting and preserving the environment for future generations.

- **Cleanup Efforts** The European Union has strict environmental regulations for its member countries.

- They can face fines and legal action if they do not comply.
Reducing Pollution
Reducing Pollution

• **Plans for the Future**  By 2010 the European Union wanted all member countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions to 15 percent below 1990 levels.
Reducing Pollution
Summary – Section 1

- The countries of the European Union work toward bringing the continent economic and political unity.
- After years of communist rule, countries in eastern Europe face a difficult transition to market economies.
- Europe’s economic activities include manufacturing, service and technology industries, and agriculture.
- Much of Europe has well-developed communications and transportation systems.
Summary – Section 2

- Acid rain is damaging Europe’s forests, waterways, wildlife, and buildings.
- Air pollution from Europe’s factories endangers public health and the environment.
- Greenhouse gases contribute to global warming.
- Pollution threatens the water quality and wildlife in the Mediterranean Sea and eastern Europe.
- European countries are taking steps to reduce pollution and clean up the environment.