1B EUROPEAN REGIONS

REGIONS

The Mainland Core

Britain and Ireland

The Discontinuous South

The Discontinuous North

The Eastern Periphery

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- The EU: Croatia in, the UK out?
- The rebirth of east-central Europe
- Germany's persistent east-west divide
- The drive for Scottish independence
- Ethnicity and politics in the Balkans
- Turkey's new prominence

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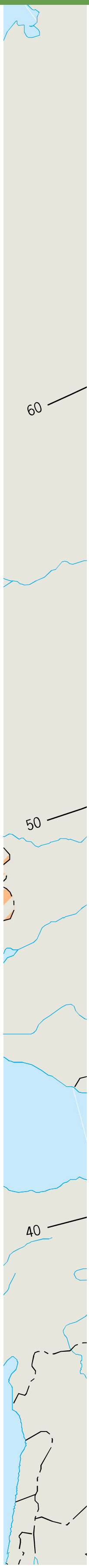

FIGURE 1B-1 © H. J. de Blij, P. O. Muller, and John Wiley & Sons, Inc

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Our objective in this and later regional **(B)** chapters is to become familiar with the regional and national frameworks of the realms under investigation, and to discover how various regions and individual states fit into the broader geographical mosaic. In these **B** chapters, therefore, we examine things at a finer scale. Even in this era of globalization, and especially within integrating Europe, the state still plays a key role in that process. The geography of these various regions and states, how they interact, and what their prospects may be in this changing world are among the key questions we will address.

REGIONS OF THE REALM

EUROPE'S REGIONAL COMPLEXITY

Europe presents us with a particular challenge because of its numerous countries and territories, and because of the continuing changes affecting its geography. Readers of this book who reside in North America tend to be accustomed to a relatively recent, familiar, and stable map of two (or three) countries: the United States and Canada, with Mexico to the south. In Europe, on the other hand, a long history of changing political geography continues to affect current developments. Just since 1990 no less than 15 new national names have appeared on the political map, some of them restorations of old entities such as Estonia and Lithuania, others new and less familiar (Moldova, Montenegro). And there may be more to come: Kosovo became nominally independent in 2008, and Belgium may yet fracture the way Czechoslovakia did more than two decades ago.

An additional contrast to North America lies in the protracted and tumultuous history of Europe. Many of Europe's cities were first built long before settlers reached the shores of the New World; a stroll through Venice, Bruges, or Prague takes us back many centuries. Because Europe's twenty-first-century cultures and political boundaries are the

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MAJOR CITIES OF THE REALM

Metropolitan Area	Population* (in millions)
Paris, France	11.0
London, UK	9.3
Madrid, Spain	7.1
Barcelona, Spain	5.9
Frankfurt, Germany	5.7
Milan, Italy	5.2
Berlin, Germany	3.5
Athens, Greece	3.5
Rome, Italy	3.3
Kiev, Ukraine	2.9
Stuttgart, Germany	2.4
Brussels, Belgium	2.0
Hamburg, Germany	1.8
Vienna, Austria	1.8
Budapest, Hungary	1.8
Warsaw, Poland	1.7
Lyon, France	1.6
Stockholm, Sweden	1.5
Prague, Czech Republic	1.3
Dublin, Ireland	1.2
Amsterdam, Netherlands	1.1

*Based on 2014 estimates.

result of deeply rooted historical processes that were conditioned by geography, we should keep that in mind when we examine the realm's current spatial framework.

And Europe displays something else North America does not: **microstates [1]** that do not have the attributes of "complete" states but are on the map as tiny, yet separate entities nonetheless, such as Monaco, Andorra, San Marino, and Liechtenstein. Add to these the Russian exclave (outlier) of Kaliningrad on the Baltic Sea and the British dependency of Gibraltar at the outlet of the Mediterranean Sea, and Europe seems to display a bewildering political mosaic indeed.

Traditional Formal Regions, Modern Spatial Network

In the old days, Europe divided rather easily into Western, Northern (Nordic), Mediterranean (Southern), and Eastern regions, and countries were grouped accordingly. Some of this traditional historical geography lingers in cultural landscapes and still has relevance. But in the era of European unification, a more dominant ***core-periphery*** framework has been superimposed on that regional scheme, defined in terms of how central—or peripheral—countries are to the workings of the EU. Put differently, Europe can be understood as a set of formal, more or less homogeneous, cultural regions; but at the same time, the entire realm increasingly functions as a tightly interdependent economic and political regional system, a spatial network that revolves around the EU.

The original Common Market of 1957 still anchors what has become a ***core area*** for all of the European realm. Both Britain and Ireland form part of this core, but the British—whose EU membership was delayed by a French veto and who never adopted the euro—still are not the full-fledged members the Germans, the French, and the Belgians are. It is therefore appropriate to consider the United Kingdom and Ireland as a geographically distinct, offshore component of the European Core.

Take a close look at the map in Figure 1B-1 and note that today the core area of the EU does not coincide with national borders—the core is primarily defined on the basis of regional economic performance, not political geography. For example, Northern Italy (but not the South) or Southern Sweden (but not the North) are part of this core. You see how complicated and challenging the work of geographers can be when trying to understand the world's spatial organization. And the European realm illustrates that challenge like no other. But this chapter will bring clarity to what at first glance may appear to be a chaotic regional landscape.

In the discussion that follows, we will focus first on countries such as Germany and France that lie entirely within the Core region. Next, we discuss countries with significant regions inside as well as outside the Core, such as Spain, Italy, and Sweden. Lastly, our attention focuses on Europe's Periphery.

THE MAINLAND CORE

Not counting the microstate of Liechtenstein, eight states form the Mainland Core of Europe: dominant Germany and France, the three Benelux countries, the two landlocked mountain states of Switzerland and Austria, and the Czech Republic (Fig. 1B-2). This is the European region sometimes still referred to as "Western Europe," and its most populous country (Germany) also contains Europe's largest economy.

Germany

Twice during the twentieth century Germany plunged Europe and the world into war, until, in 1945, the defeated and devastated German state was divided into two parts, West and East (see the red-line delimitation in Fig. 1B-3), the latter of which was forced to surrender some important industrial areas to Poland.

West and East Germany then set forth on widely different economic and political trajectories. Soviet rule in East Germany was established on the Soviet-communist model, and in return for the extreme hardships the USSR had suffered at German hands during the war, it was harshly punitive. The American-led authority in

FIGURE 1B-2

West Germany was less strict and aimed more at rehabilitation. When the Marshall Plan was instituted, West Germany was included, and its economy recovered rapidly. Meanwhile, West Germany was reorganized politically into a modern federal state based on democratic foundations.

West Germany's economy soon thrived. Between 1949 and 1964 its gross national income (GNI) tripled while industrial output rose 60 percent. Simultaneously, West Germany's political leaders participated enthusiastically in the negotiations that led to the six-member Common Market in 1957. Geography worked in West Germany's favor: it had common borders with all but one of the initial member-states. Its transport infrastructure, rapidly rebuilt, was second to none in the realm. More than compensating for its loss of Saxony and Silesia in the east were the expanding Ruhr (in the hinterland of the Dutch port of Rotterdam) and the newly emerging industrial complexes centered on Hamburg in the north, Frankfurt (the leading financial hub as well) in the center, and Stuttgart in the south. West Germany exported huge quantities of iron, steel, motor vehicles, machinery, textiles, and farm products. Until just a few years ago, Germany had the largest export economy by value in the world; today it is surpassed by China, but Germany is still second and outranks the third-place United States.

In 1990, West Germany had a population of about 62 million and East Germany 17 million. Communist misrule in the East had yielded outdated factories, crumbling infrastructures, polluted environments, drab cities,

FIGURE 1B-3

inefficient farming, and inadequate legal and other institutions. Reunification that year was more a rescue than a merger, and the cost to West Germany was gargantuan. Today, unemployment rates in the East are twice as high as in the West. Regional disparity will continue to plague Germany for some time to come.

Upon reunification, East Germany was reorganized into six new States to fit the federal system of West Germany. Today's reunified Federal Republic of Germany consists of 16 States (or *Länder*). Figure 1B-3 makes a key point: regional disparity in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) per person remains a serious problem between the former East and West. Note that more than half of former East Germany's six States are still in the lowest income category, while most of the ten former West German States rank in the two higher income categories.

Another challenge facing Germany, along with other western European countries, is the integration of sizeable immigrant minorities. Germany has more than 15 million immigrants, about 19 percent of the total population of 79.8 million. They are culturally different and economically worse off. About 40 percent of immigrant households live below the official poverty line, and immigrants are far

VOICE FROM THE Region

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Franziska Bader, 29 years of Age, Leipzig, Germany

"I was born and raised in the town of Gera, about 50 miles south of Leipzig in the former East Germany. I moved to the city ten years ago to study Geography and, since then, Leipzig has changed quite a lot. Right after the [1989] fall of the Iron Curtain, Leipzig lost almost 20 percent of its population due to outmigration and low birth rates. Houses were abandoned and often dilapidated. On the positive side, lower-income people and students like me had no trouble finding spacious and affordable housing. But after finishing their studies most of my friends were forced to move to other big cities (mostly in the south, such as Munich) to get a job. I was lucky to find one as a research and teaching assistant here at the University of Leipzig. In the past couple of years, Leipzig seems to be making a comeback, with national newspapers even calling it the *New Berlin*. The city became attractive to more and more students, artists, and cultural entrepreneurs, generally young people looking for housing in empty factories and other affordable spaces. Increasingly, you can see beautifully renovated houses, thriving shopping centers, and even groups of international tourists. The government has invested in major infrastructure projects to try to lure people back. Since 2000, the population has been increasing again and now stands at 550,000, close to where it was right before German reunification. But the city still has a long way to go. In one neighborhood you see newly built luxury apartments while others continue to stagnate. It may be some time before Leipzig returns to the prosperity of times past, but it is moving in the right direction."

more likely to be unemployed. And Germany, too, has suffered from the recession of recent years, if only because it has been dragged down by the EU as a whole. The German economy has barely grown since 2010, all the while making major contributions to the bailout of fiscally troubled Greece, Ireland, and Portugal.

Nonetheless, Germany traversed the global recession better than any other European country, and retains its dominance over Europe. However, warning signs in mid-2013 showed that even Germany is not immune to Europe's economic difficulties. Still, over the past several years, Germany has developed close ties with eastern Europe and, from the Balkans to the Baltic Sea, is widely perceived to be the realm's economic leader. Today, German trade with fast-growing Poland exceeds its trade with Russia.

France

Territorially, France is larger than Germany, and the map suggests that France has a superior relative location, with coastlines on the Mediterranean, the Atlantic Ocean, and, at Calais, even a window on the North Sea. But France does not have any good natural harbors, and oceangoing ships cannot navigate its rivers and other waterways very far inland.

The map of the Mainland Core region (Fig. 1B-2) reveals a significant contrast between France and Germany in terms of population distribution. France has one dominant city, Paris, and no other city comes close either in size or centrality: Paris has 11.0 million residents, whereas its closest rival, Lyon, contains only 1.6 million. Germany has no city to match Paris, but it does have a wider range of medium-sized cities: in the 100,000-plus category, Germany has more than 80 while France has less than 40.

Why should Paris, without major raw materials nearby, have grown so large? Whenever geographers investigate the evolution of a city, they focus on two important locational qualities: its **site [2]** (the physical attributes of the place it occupies) and its **situation [3]** (its location relative to surrounding areas). The site of the original settlement at Paris lay on an island in the Seine River, a defensible spot where the river was often crossed. This island, the Île de la Cité, was a Roman outpost 2000 years ago; for centuries its security ensured continuity. Eventually the island became overcrowded, and the city expanded along the banks of the river (Fig. 1B-4A).

Soon the settlement's advantageous situation stimulated its growth and prosperity. Its fertile agricultural

Leipzig is eastern Germany's biggest city after Berlin. It has a rich cultural history and has been home to, among others, Johann Sebastian Bach, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Richard Wagner, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Felix Mendelssohn. But during communist times Leipzig was dragged down along with the rest of East Germany. The city is now finally experiencing something of a revival but there are still many struggling neighborhoods.

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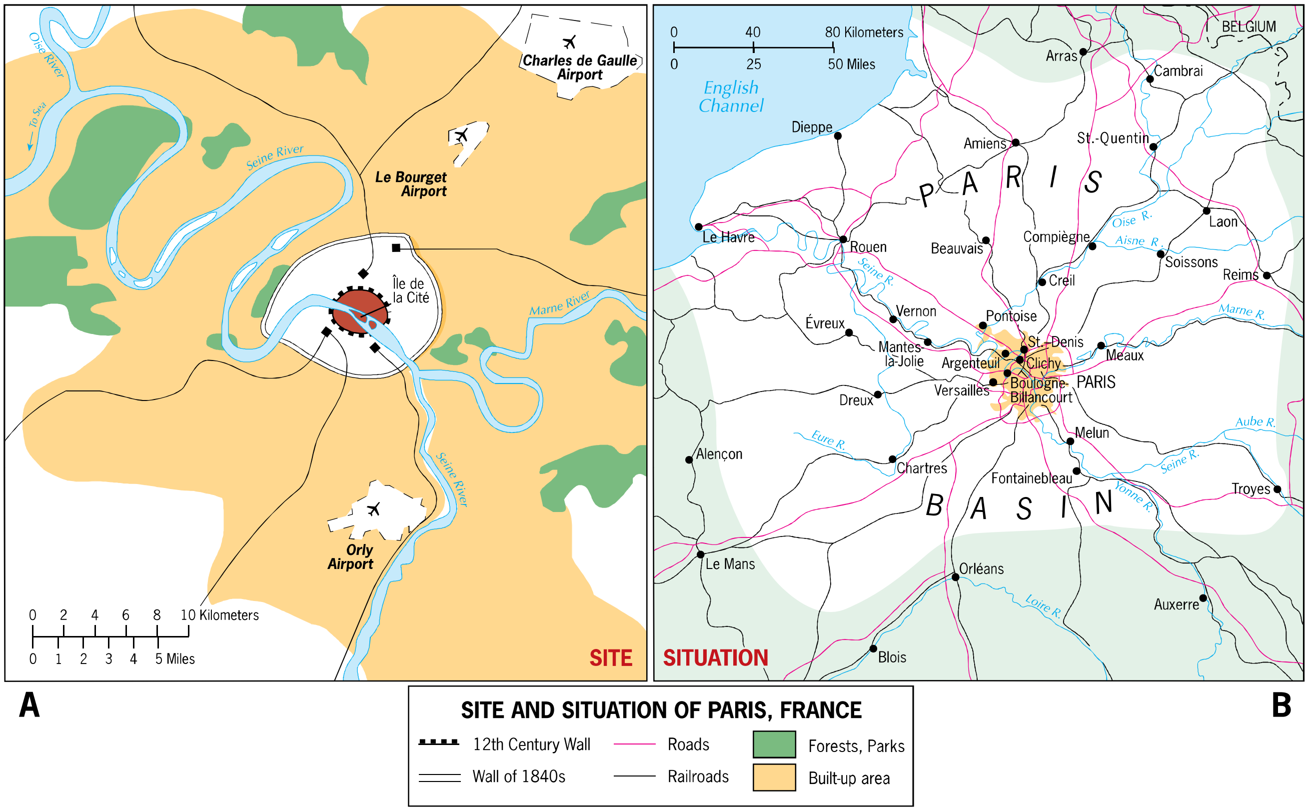


FIGURE 1B-4

hinterland thrived, and, as an enlarging market, Paris's focality increased steadily. The Seine River is joined near Paris by several navigable tributaries (the Oise, Marne, and Yonne). When canals extended these waterways even farther, Paris was linked to the Loire Valley, the Rhône-Saône Basin, Lorraine (an industrial area in the northeast), and the northern border zone with Belgium. When Napoleon reorganized France and built a radial system of roads—followed later by railroads—that focused on Paris from all parts of the country, the city's *primacy* was assured (Fig. 1B-4B). A **primate city [4]** is one that is disproportionately large compared to all others in the urban system and exceptionally expressive of the nation's culture. Paris is the quintessential example, not only personifying France but also serving as its capital.

France early on developed the strong tradition of a highly centralized state, in which the central government in Paris maintained tight control over 96 *départements*. It remained so for nearly two centuries, but today France is decentralizing. A new layer of governance, consisting of 26 larger *régions*, has been inserted at the level between Paris and the *départements* both to accommodate devolutionary forces as well as seize the opportunities of regional and local growth throughout the country (Fig. 1B-5).

France has one of the world's most productive and diversified economies. Northern French agriculture remains vigorous and varied, exploiting the country's wide range of soils and microclimates and enjoying state subsidies and protections. In the southeast, Lyon, France's second city and headquarters of the *région* named Rhône-Alpes, has become a focus for growth industries and multinational firms. This *région* is evolving into a self-standing economic powerhouse that is becoming a driving force in the European economy. Indeed, it is one of the *Four Motors of Europe* (discussed in Chapter 1A) with its own international business connections to countries as far away as China and Chile. France's economic geography is marked by new high-technology industries, and it is a leading producer of high-speed trains, aircraft, fiber-optic communications systems, and space-related technologies. It also is the world leader in nuclear power, which currently supplies about 75 percent of its electricity and thereby reduces dependence on foreign oil imports; but rising public opposition today makes it unlikely that France will build many more nuclear plants.

France is also one of those European states with a rapidly aging population, posing some major challenges for the years ahead. Natural population growth is negative and must be compensated for through immigration. However, most immigrants hail from poor Islamic countries with very different cultures, and their integration and acceptance in French society has been a painful process. The graying of the French population means that in the future more and more elderly people must be cared for with the incomes earned by a shrinking productive workforce.

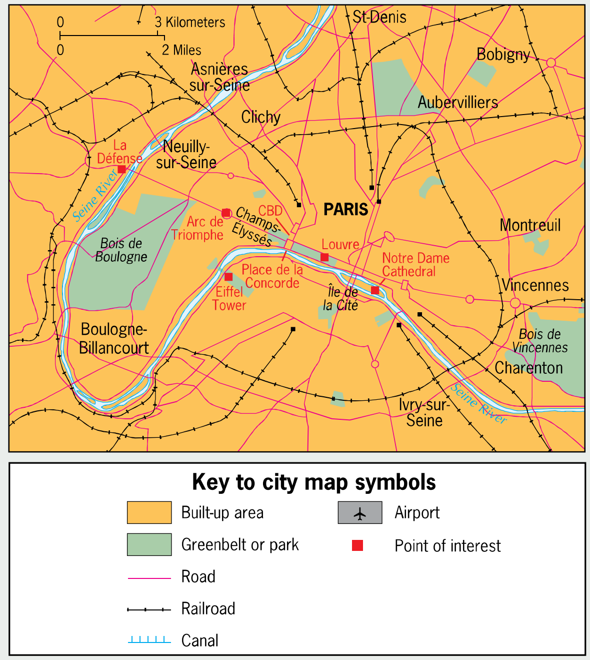
The French economy has already displayed evidence that it might encounter the same kinds of problems that

AMONG THE REALM'S GREAT CITIES . . .

PARIS

IF THE GREATNESS of a city were to be measured solely by its number of inhabitants, Paris (11 million) would not even rank in the world's top 20. But if greatness is measured by a city's historic heritage, cultural content, and international influence, Paris has no peer. Old Paris, near the Île de la Cité that housed the original village where Paris began (Fig. 1B-4A) and carries the eight-century-old Notre Dame Cathedral, contains an unparalleled assemblage of architectural and artistic landmarks old and new. The Arc de Triomphe, erected by Napoleon in 1806 (though not completed until 1836), commemorates the emperor's victories and stands as a monument to French neoclassical architecture, overlooking one of the world's most famous avenues, the Champs Elysées, which leads to the grandest of city squares, the Place de la Concorde, and continues on to the magnificent palace-turned-museum, the Louvre.

Even the Eiffel Tower, built for the 1889 International Exposition over the objections of Parisians who regarded it as ugly and unsafe, became a treasure. From its beautiful Seine River bridges to its palaces and parks, Paris embodies French culture and tradition. It is perhaps the ultimate primate city in the world.



As the capital of a globe-girdling empire, Paris was the hearth from which radiated the cultural forces of Francophone assimilation, transforming much of North, West, and Equatorial Africa, Madagascar, Indochina, and many smaller colonies into societies on the French model. Distant cities such as Dakar, Abidjan, Brazzaville, and Saigon acquired a Parisian atmosphere. France, meanwhile, spent heavily to keep Paris, especially Old Paris, well maintained—not just as a relic of history, but as a functioning, vibrant center, an example to which other cities can aspire.

Today, Old Paris is ringed by a new and different Paris. Stand atop the Arc de Triomphe and turn around 180° from the Champs Elysées, and the tree-lined avenue gives way to the vista of *La Défense*, an ultramodern high-rise complex that is one of Europe's leading business districts (see photo in Chapter 1A). But from the top of the Eiffel Tower you can see as far as 80 kilometers (50 mi) and discern parts of a Paris visitors rarely experience: grimy, aging industrial quarters, and poor, crowded neighborhoods where discontent and unemployment fester—and where immigrants cluster in a world apart from the splendor of the old city.

have bedeviled countries like Greece and Spain—which would raise major concerns because France's economy is much bigger and more important to the EU as a whole. Government debt is high and rising; the public sector is very large (nearly twice the size as Germany's), draining expenditures while youth unemployment hovers around 25 percent. The French electorate did not take kindly to austerity measures, and in 2012 they elected a new president from the Socialist Party. By mid-2013, the French economy showed weaknesses similar to those afflicting Greece, Portugal, and Italy, a troubling prospect indeed.

Benelux

Three small countries are crowded into the northwestern corner of the Mainland Core—Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg—and are collectively referred to by their first syllables (***Be-Ne-Lux***). Their total population, 28.4 million, reminds us that this is one of the most densely peopled corners of our planet. Not coincidentally, the *Low Countries*, as they are also sometimes called, are situated at the **estuary [5]** of the great Rhine and Scheldt rivers and have access to the seas that has, throughout modern history, been the envy of the Germans and the French. They are a highly productive trio: both the Netherlands and Belgium rank among the top 20 economies of the world, and tiny Luxembourg has the world's highest per capita gross national income. The seafaring Dutch had a thriving agricultural economy and amassed a rich colonial empire; the Belgians forged ahead during the Industrial Revolution; and Luxembourg came into its own after the Second World War as

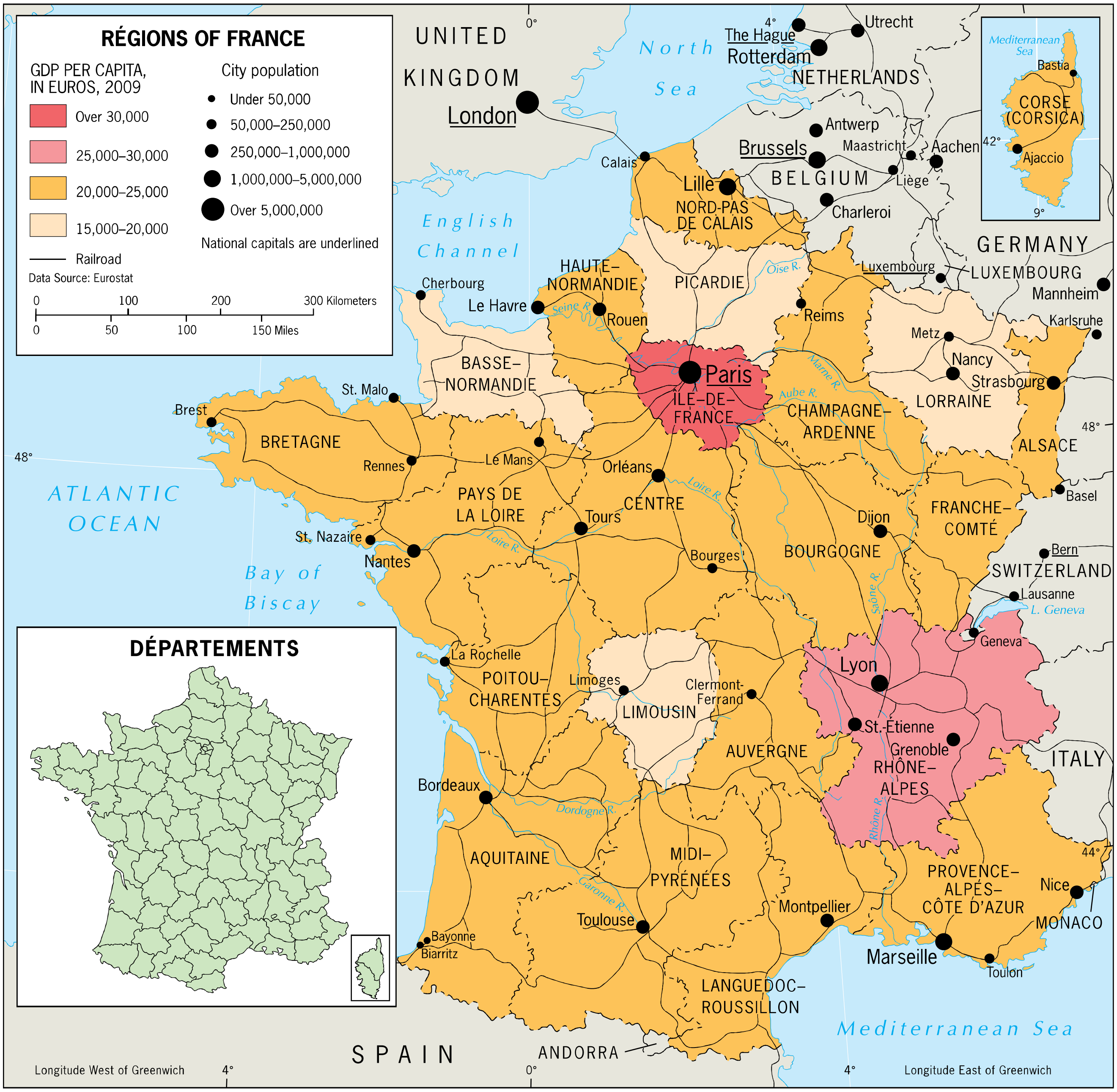


FIGURE 1B-5

a financial center for the evolving European Union and, indeed, the world.

The Netherlands, one of Europe's oldest democracies and a constitutional monarchy today, has for centuries been expanding its territory—not by warring with its neighbors but by wresting land from the sea. Its greatest project so far, the draining and reclaiming of almost the entire Zuider Zee (Southern Sea), started in 1932 and continues. About a quarter of the country lies below sea level, land the Dutch refer to as ***polders***. In the far southwestern province of Zeeland, islands have been connected by dikes and bridges in a project known as the Delta Works, an ingenious system that protects against flooding and storm surges yet leaves the coastal ecosystem intact. Dutch water management became famous for it and the country's engineering firms are employed around the world.

The regional geography of this highly urbanized country (16.8 million) is noted for the ***Randstad***, a roughly triangular urban core area anchored by Amsterdam, the constitutional capital; Rotterdam, Europe's largest port; and The Hague, the seat of government. This **conurbation [6]**, as geographers call large urban areas when two or more cities merge spatially, now forms a ring-shaped complex that surrounds a still-rural center (in Dutch, *rand* means edge or margin; *stad* means city).

From the Field Notes . . .

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"Amsterdam has a latitude and a near-coastal location similar to that of Seattle—and it has comparable weather. It takes a very serious cold wave for the canals to freeze over, and on average it happens only once every six or seven years. When it does, as in January 2012, people cannot wait to put on their skates. It gets dark early here at that time of year, but there is just enough daylight after school or work to get out on the ice and experience the city in a different way."

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The Netherlands' economic geography, like that of the other states in this subregion, is heavily dominated by services, finance, and trade; manufacturing contributes about 15 percent of the value of the GDP annually, but farming, once a mainstay, has dropped to below 3 percent. Amsterdam's airport, Schiphol, is regularly recognized as Europe's best; Rotterdam, one of the world's busiest seaports, is rated as the most efficient as well.

Belgium also has a thriving economy and a leading port in the city of Antwerp. With 11.1 million people, Belgium's regional geography is dominated by a cultural fault line that cuts diagonally across the country, separating a Flemish-speaking majority (59 percent) centered on Flanders in the northwest from a French-speaking minority in southeastern Wallonia (40 percent). Brussels, the predominantly French-speaking capital, lies like a cultural island in the Flemish-speaking sector; but the city also is one of Belgium's greatest assets because it serves as the headquarters, and in many ways as the functional capital, of the European Union (though it is important to note that the EU does not have an official capital city). Still, devolution is a looming problem for Belgium, with political parties espousing Flemish separatism roiling the social landscape.

Luxembourg, one of the realm's numerous ministates, lies between Germany, Belgium, and France, with a Grand Duke as head of state (its official name is the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg), a territory of only 2600 square kilometers (1000 sq mi), and a population of just half a million. Luxembourg has translated sovereignty, relative location, and stability into a haven for financial, service, and information-technology industries. In the late 2000s, there were more than 160 banks in this tiny country and nearly 14,000 holding companies (corporations that hold controlling stock in other businesses in Europe and worldwide). With its unmatched per capita income (U.S. $61,240), Luxembourg is in some ways the greatest beneficiary of the advent of the European Union. And in no country in Europe is support for the EU stronger than it is here.

One of Europe's most beautiful central squares is found in the heart of the bilingual, EU headquarters city of Brussels. The "Grande Place" (French) or "Grote Markt" (Flemish) dates from the late Middle Ages and is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

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The Alpine States

Switzerland, Austria, and the ***microstate*** of Liechtenstein on their border share an absence of coasts and the mountainous terrain of the Alps and little else (Fig. 1B-2). Austria speaks one language; the Swiss speak German in their north, French in the west, Italian in the southeast, and even a bit of Rhaeto-Romansch in the remote central highlands (Fig. 1A-7). Austria has a large primate city; multicultural Switzerland does not. Austria has a substantial range of domestic raw materials; Switzerland does not. Austria is twice the size of Switzerland and has a larger population, but far more trade moves across the Swiss Alps between western and Mediterranean Europe than crosses Austria.

Switzerland, not Austria, is in most ways the leading state in the Alpine subregion of the Mainland Core. Mountainous terrain and **landlocked location [7]** can constitute crucial barriers to economic development but, as is so often the case, geography poses constraints in one way while offering opportunities in another. That is why Switzerland is such an important lesson in the complexities of human geography. Through the skillful maximization of their limited opportunities (including the transfer needs of their neighbors), the Swiss have transformed their seemingly restrictive environment into a prosperous state. They deftly utilized the waters cascading from their mountains to generate hydroelectric power to develop highly specialized industries. Swiss farmers perfected ways to optimize the productivity of mountain pastures and valley soils. Swiss leaders converted their country's isolation into stability, security, and neutrality, making it a world banking behemoth, a global magnet for money. Zürich, in the German-speaking sector, is the financial center; Geneva, in the French-speaking sector, is one of the world's most internationalized cities. The Swiss feel that they do not need to join the EU—and they have not done so to this day.

Austria, which joined the EU in 1995, is a remnant of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire and has a historical geography that is far more reminiscent of unstable eastern Europe than that of Switzerland. In fact, even Austria's physical geography seems to demand that the country look eastward: it is at its widest, lowest, and most productive in the east, where the Danube links it to Hungary, its old ally in the anti-Muslim wars of the past.

Vienna, by far the Alpine subregion's largest city, also lies on the country's eastern perimeter. One of the world's most expressive primate cities with magnificent architecture and monumental art, Vienna today is the Mainland Core's easternmost major city, but Vienna's relative location changed dramatically with EU enlargement over the past decade. Vienna found itself in a far more centralized position when the EU border shifted eastward but many Austrians had their doubts about their neighbors to the east becoming EU members of potentially equal standing. In Austria public support for the European Union has fallen to low levels.

The Czech Republic

The Czech Republic, product of the 1993 Czech-Slovak "velvet divorce," centers on the historic province of Bohemia, the mountain-encircled national core area that focuses on the capital, Prague. This is a classic primate city as well, its cultural landscape faithful to Czech traditions, and it is also an important industrial center. The surrounding mountains contain many valleys with small towns that specialize, Swiss-style, in fabricating high-quality goods. In the old Eastern Europe, even during the communist period, the Czechs always were leaders in technology and engineering; their products could be found on markets in foreign countries near and far.

Bohemia always was cosmopolitan and Western in its exposure, outlook, development, and linkages; Prague lies in the upper basin of the Elbe River, its traditional outlet through northern Germany to the North Sea. Today, the Czech Republic (10.5 million) is reclaiming its position at the center of European action.

THE CORE OFFSHORE: BRITAIN AND IRELAND

As Figure 1B-1 shows, two countries form the maritime component of the European Core Area: the United Kingdom and Ireland. These countries lie on two major islands, surrounded by a constellation of tiny ones. The larger island, a mere 34 kilometers (21 mi) off the mainland at the closest point, is ***Britain***; its smaller neighbor to the west is ***Ireland*** (Fig. 1B-6).

The names attached to these islands and the countries they encompass are the source of some confusion, even irritation. They are sometimes still referred to as the British Isles, a usage that should have terminated when British dominance over most of Ireland ended almost a century ago. The state that occupies Britain and the northeastern corner of Ireland is officially called the United Kingdom—abbreviated UK. But this country often is referred to simply as Britain, and its people are known as the British. The state of Ireland officially is known as the Republic of Ireland (*Eire* in Irish Gaelic), but it does not include the entire island of Ireland.

During the long British occupation of Ireland, which is overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, many Protestants from northern Britain settled in northeastern Ireland. In 1921, when British domination ended, the Irish were set free—except in that corner in the north, where London kept control to protect the area's Protestant settlers. That is why the country to this day is officially known as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland was home not only to Protestants from Britain, but also to a substantial population of Irish Catholics who found themselves on the wrong side of the border when Ireland was liberated. Ever since, conflict has intermittently engulfed Northern Ireland and spilled over into Britain.

Although all of Britain lies in the United Kingdom, political divisions exist here as well. England is the largest of these units, the center of power from which the rest of the region was originally brought under unified control. The English conquered Wales in the Middle Ages, and

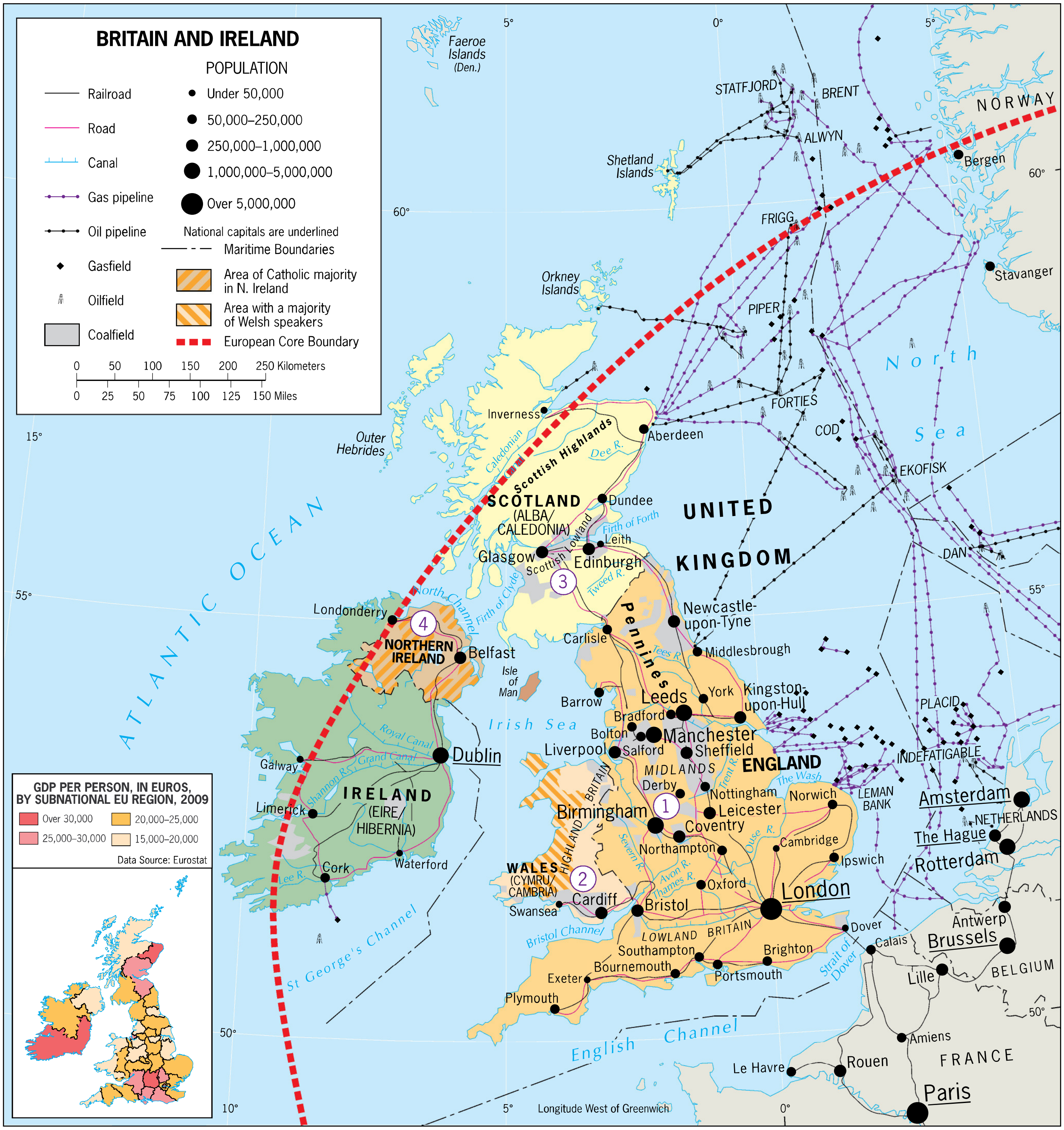


FIGURE 1B-6

Scotland's link to England, cemented when a Scottish king ascended the English throne in 1603, was ratified by the Act of Union of 1707. Thus England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland became the United Kingdom.

Having united the Welsh, Scots, and Irish, the British set out to forge what would become the world's largest colonial empire. An era of mercantilism (competitive accumulation of wealth among countries) and domestic manufacturing (the latter based on water power from streams flowing off the Pennines, Britain's highland backbone) foreshadowed the momentous Industrial Revolution that transformed Britain—and much of the world.

But British **hegemony [8]** (all-out dominance) came to an end in the early twentieth century, challenged by the rise of other powers such as Russia, Germany, Japan, and the United States. World War II marked the end of the age of colonial empires and the beginning of U.S. global dominance—now with Britain as a "junior partner." For Britain, change after 1945 was profound: not only was it forced to let go of most of its overseas territories (though many

AMONG THE REALM'S GREAT CITIES . . .

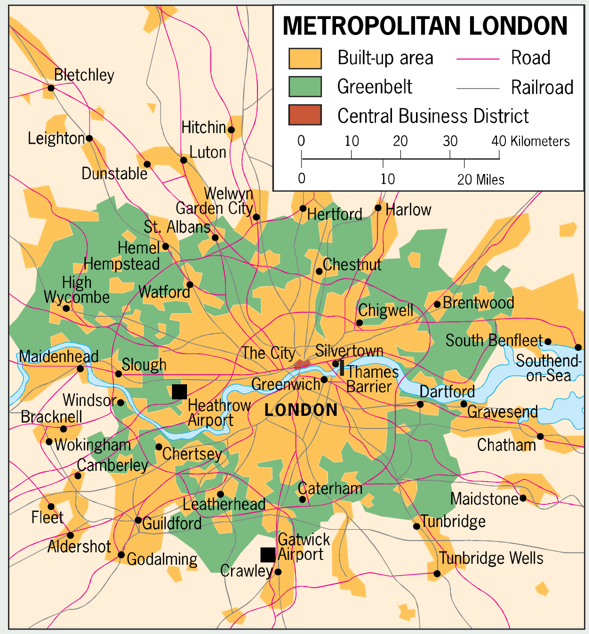
LONDON

ALONG THE BANKS of the Thames, this city of more than 9 million inhabitants displays the heritage of state and empire: the Tower and the Tower Bridge, the Victoria Embankment, and the Houses of Parliament (officially known as the Palace of Westminster). But in recent times this historic landscape has become studded with ultramodern office buildings, museums, and entertainment parks such as the EYE, the giant ferris wheel that provides a panoramic view of this giant **metropolis [9]** (central city plus its suburban ring). A bit further downriver, the economic heart of the city (and of the UK) beats 24/7 in what is known as the *City of London*, an incredibly dense concentration of office activity surrounding the Bank of England that houses London's enormous finance sector and related producer services (accounting, advertising, consulting, insurance, etc.). London, together with New York, is one of the most pre-eminent world-cities, in which business decisions are made, on a daily basis, that have consequences all across the globe.

This is also one of the world's most cosmopolitan cities, with countless nationalities and immigrant ethnic communities. But London has also become hugely expensive and the gulf between its rich and poor has steadily widened. Lately, a substantial number of lower- and middle-income households have had no choice but to move to the suburbs or even farther away because life in this city simply became unaffordable.

The urban layout of the London region reveals much about the internal spatial structure of the European metropolis in general. Such a ***metropolitan area*** remains focused on the large city at its center, especially the downtown **central business district (CBD) [10]**, which is the oldest commercial hub of the urban agglomeration. Cities with a preindustrial past are often located on a river (or harbor), expanding from their historical nucleus in a more or less concentric manner—as the case of London illustrates. It should also be noted that an encircling greenbelt was set aside during the 1930s for recreation, horticultural farming, and other nonresidential, noncommercial uses. Although London's growth eroded parts of this greenbelt, in places leaving only "green wedges," the design preserved critically needed open space in and around the city, channeling suburbanization outward into the urban fringe beyond 40 kilometers (25 mi) from the center.

Compared to large North American cities, London is highly compact. This allows for effective public transportation but it also requires careful urban planning. Consider this: Heathrow is the world busiest international airport but it has only two runways. It has long been operating at full capacity, but London's ever-growing air traffic now requires additional landing facilities. There are four other airports in the metropolis—Gatwick, Stansted, Luton, and City—but they are insufficient. So now the government is planning yet another sizeable airport to the east of London near Gravesend on the south bank of the Thames.



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From the national government's point of view, London poses a dilemma of sorts: it is absolutely vital to the British economy but as a highest-echelon global city it is in certain ways better connected to the rest of the world than it is to, say, the outer reaches of the UK. One result is the still-widening gap in prosperity between southeastern England and the rest of the country. Yet London's needs are always top-priority: for example, it receives almost 90 percent of UK government funding for major transportation projects in order to keep this premier world-city moving.

remained part of the largely symbolic British Commonwealth), but it also had to deal with the rapid resurgence of the European mainland. Always ambivalent about the EC and EU, and with its first membership application vetoed by the French in 1963, Britain (admitted in 1973) has worked to restrain moves toward tighter integration. When most member-states in 2002 adopted the new euro in favor of their national currencies, the British kept their pound sterling and delayed their participation in the European Monetary Union (EMU)—a decision that they did not regret when the 'euro crisis' developed in the late 2000s.

Indeed, British criticism of the European Union has only increased in recent years, so much so that the UK's prime minister in 2013 announced his support for a referendum to discontinue EU membership. Importantly, the date for that referendum would not be until 2017, with the opportunity to renegotiate the terms of UK membership and the general direction of the EU. In other words, the prime minister may be gambling that, with the threat of a referendum and a possible UK exit, the EU will be more forthcoming on British demands for less political integration, cutting red tape, and greater support for business.

The United Kingdom

The UK, with an area about the size of Oregon and a population of 63.7 million, is by European standards quite a large country. Based on a combination of physiographic, historical, cultural, economic, and political criteria, the United Kingdom can be divided into four subregions (numbered in Fig. 1B-6):

1. ***England.*** So dominant is this subregion of the United Kingdom that the entire country is sometimes referred to by this name. Small wonder: England is anchored by the huge London metropolitan area, which by itself contains more than one-seventh of the UK's total population. Indeed, along with New York, London is regarded as one of the most prominent leading **world-cities [11]**, with financial, high-technology, communications, engineering, and related industries reflecting the momentum of its long-term growth and agglomeration. Within England, there is a notable difference between the crowded, fast-paced, and globally connected southeast centered on London, and the far less prosperous north and west (see inset map in Fig. 1B-6); the latter were the hearth of the Industrial Revolution, but have now lost their dynamism and portions of their populations in the age of deindustrialization. Inequality in England has also been on the rise between rich and poor within regions and cities. This became painfully clear when the country was rocked by violent riots in London and many other cities during the summer of 2011. These riots were triggered by the police shooting of a biracial man in London, but the deeper causes were generally said to lie within the growing socioeconomic polarization among England's classes.

2. ***Wales.*** This nearly rectangular, rugged territory was a refuge for ancient Celtic peoples, and in its western counties more than half the inhabitants still speak Welsh. Because of the high-quality coal reserves in its southern tier, Wales too was engulfed by the Industrial Revolution, and Cardiff, the capital, was once the world's leading coal exporter. But the fortunes of Wales also declined, and many Welsh emigrated. Among the 3 million who remained, the flame of Welsh nationalism survived, and in 1997 voters approved the establishment of a Welsh Assembly to administer public services in Wales, a first devolutionary step. But in many respects, economically and culturally, Wales is closely wedded to England and independence is not in the cards. In the Welsh Assembly, the nationalist party has only 11 of the 60 seats. The situation in Scotland, however, is quite different.

3. ***Scotland.*** Nearly twice as large as the Netherlands but with a population of just 5.3 million, Scotland is a major component of the United Kingdom. It is also relatively removed from Britain's thriving core in the southeast. Most of the population resides in the Scottish Lowlands, anchored by Edinburgh, the capital, in the east and Glasgow in the west. Attracted there by the labor demands of the Industrial Revolution (coal and iron reserves lay in the area), the Scots developed a world-class shipbuilding industry. Subsequent decline and obsolescence were followed by high-tech development, notably in the hinterland of Glasgow, and Scottish participation in the exploitation of oil and gas reserves beneath the North Sea, which transformed the eastern ports of Aberdeen and Leith (Edinburgh). But many Scots feel that they are disadvantaged within the UK and should play a major role in the EU. Therefore, when the British government placed the option of a Scottish Parliament before the voters in 1997, 74 percent approved. Unlike the situation in Wales, the Scottish nationalist party has a comfortable majority in their parliament. And it may not end there: a scheduled referendum in 2014 for full independence might deliver just that, although much will depend on the exact terms of "independence." The breakup of the UK seems too much for many people to even contemplate, but it could happen.

4. ***Northern Ireland.*** A declining majority of the overall population of 1.8 million, now just under 42 percent, are Protestants and trace their ancestry to Scotland or England; a growing minority, currently very close behind at 41 percent, are Roman Catholics and share their religion with the Irish Republic on the other side of the border. Although Figure 1B-6 suggests that there are majority areas of Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland, no such clear separation exists; mostly they live in clusters throughout the territory, including the walled-off neighborhoods that mark the major cities of Belfast and Londonderry (see photo). Partition is no solution to a conflict that has raged for more than four decades at a cost of thousands of lives; Catholics accuse London as well as the local Protestant-dominated administration of discrimination, whereas Protestants accuse Catholics of seeking union with the Republic of Ireland. The Northern Ireland Assembly, to which powers are supposed to be devolved from London, had to be suspended from 2002 to 2007 before the parties could be brought together at the table again. The prospects for greater autonomy are clouded.

Republic of Ireland

The Republic of Ireland fought itself free from British colonial rule just three generations ago. Its cool, moist climate had earlier led to the adoption of the American potato as the staple crop, but excessive rain and a blight in the late 1840s, coupled with colonial mismanagement, caused famine and

"The Troubles" between Protestants and Catholics, pro- and anti-British factions that have torn Northern Ireland apart for decades at a cost of more than 3000 lives, are etched in the cultural landscape. The so-called Peace Wall across West Belfast, shown here separating Catholic and Protestant neighborhoods, is a tragic monument to the failure of accommodation and compromise, a physical manifestation of the emotional divide that still runs deep. A steady stream of sectarian-based attacks continue across Belfast (2012 was a particularly violent year). Political negotiations and agreements have in a way become even more difficult since the original Irish Republican Army (IRA) splintered during the 1990s into numerous factions with different perspectives and strategies. What an analyst said to one of the authors back in 2005 still is the view across the cityscape you see here: "Good fences make good neighbors . . . the Peace Wall will have to stay up for a few more decades yet."

cost over a million lives. Another 2 million Irish left for North America and other shores.

Hard-won independence in 1921 did not bring real economic prosperity until the final decades of the twentieth century, when Ireland became known as the ***Celtic Tiger*** (likening it to the miraculous, Hong Kong-style economic development of the so-called *Asian Tigers*). Participation in the EU, adoption of the euro, business-friendly tax policies, comparatively low wages, an English-speaking workforce, and an advantageous relative location for some time combined to produce the highest rate of economic growth in the entire European Union. In the 1990s, this booming, service-based economy, accompanied by burgeoning cities and towns, skyrocketing real estate prices, mushrooming industrial parks, and bustling traffic, transformed a country long known for emigration into a magnet for industrial workers, producing new social challenges for a closely knit, long-isolated society. Among these immigrants were thousands of people of Irish descent returning from foreign places to take jobs at home, workers from elsewhere in the European Union (including large numbers of Poles), and job-seekers from African and Caribbean countries. For some time, Ireland had the highest economic growth rate in the EU, and its capital, Dublin, became an international business node almost overnight.

By 2007, however, Ireland's economic boom began to fade, and a year later things proceeded to fall apart: the real estate market stagnated, service industries found more favorable conditions in eastern Europe, and unemployment accelerated. Soon it became painfully clear that the country's financial troubles were far greater than initially thought: several banks failed after overextending credit (part of the global financial crisis that took hold in the United States in 2008), and the government itself had amassed such huge deficits that an EU bailout was required in 2011. In the Irish case, there is hope that the bailout was a one-time event, and by 2013 the economy showed signs of recovery. But keep in mind that Ireland relies heavily on foreign investment, so its fiscal health depends heavily on the fortunes of the EU and U.S. economies.

THE DISCONTINUOUS SOUTH

As Figures 1B-1 and 1B-7 reveal, the northern sectors of two major southern states (Italy and Spain) form parts of the European Core. Portugal, on the western flank of the Iberian Peninsula, remains outside the European Core Area, far less urbanized, much more agrarian, and not strongly integrated into it. The fourth national entity in this southern domain is the island mini-state of Malta, south of Sicily, an historically important crossroads with a population of approximately 400,000 and a booming tourist industry.

Italy

Centrally located within Mediterranean Europe, most populous of the realm's southern states, best connected to the European Core, and economically most advanced is Italy (population: 60.8 million), a charter member of Europe's Common Market.

Administratively, Italy is organized into 20 internal regions, many with historic roots dating back centuries (Fig. 1B-8). Several of these regions have become powerful economic entities centered on major cities, such as Lombardy (Milan) and Piedmont (Turin); others are historic hearths of Italian culture, most prominently Tuscany (Florence) and Veneto (Venice). These regions in the

FIGURE 1B-7

northern half of Italy stand in strong social, economic, and political contrast to such southern regions as Calabria (the "toe" of the Italian "boot") and Italy's two major Mediterranean islands, Sicily and Sardinia. Not surprisingly, Italy is often described as two countries—a progressive north and a stagnant south (known as the ***Mezzogiorno***). The urbanized, industrialized north is part of Europe's Core; the low-income south typifies the Periphery.

North and south are bound by the ancient headquarters, Rome, which lies astride the narrow transition zone between Italy's contrasting halves. This clear manifestation of Europe's Core-Periphery contrast is referred to in Italy as the ***Ancona Line***, named after the city on the Adriatic coast where it reaches the other side of the peninsula (Fig. 1B-8, blue line). Whereas Rome remains Italy's capital and cultural focus, the functional core area of the country has shifted northward into Lombardy in the basin of the Po River. Here lies southern Europe's leading manufacturing complex. The Milan–Turin–Genoa triangle exports appliances, instruments, automobiles, ships, and many specialized products. Meanwhile, the Po Basin, lying on the margins of southern Europe's dominant Mediterranean climatic regime (with its hot, dry summers), enjoys a more even pattern of rainfall distribution throughout the year, making it a productive agricultural zone as well.

Metropolitan Milan embodies the new, modern Italy. Not only is Milan (5.2 million) Italy's largest city and leading manufacturing center—making Lombardy one of Europe's Four Motors—but it also is the country's financial and service-industry headquarters. Today the Milan area, a cornerstone of the European Core, contains just 7 percent of Italy's population but accounts for more than one-third of the entire country's national income. Overall, however, Italy's economic prospects are now so troubled that a crisis may be unavoidable.

Spain, Portugal, and Malta

At the western end of southern Europe lies the broad Iberian Peninsula, separated from France and western Europe by the rugged mountain wall of the Pyrenees and from North Africa by the narrow Strait of Gibraltar. Spain (population: 46.4 million) occupies most of this compact Mediterranean landmass, and peripheral Portugal lies in its southwestern corner. Both countries benefited enormously from their admission to the European Union in 1986, an advantage that soon withered.

FIGURE 1B-8

Spain followed the leads of Germany and France and decentralized its administrative structure in response to devolutionary pressures. These pressures were especially strong in Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Galicia, and in response the Madrid government created so-called *Autonomous Communities (ACs)* for all 17 of its regions (Fig. 1B-9). Every AC has its own parliament and administration that control planning, public works, cultural affairs, education, environmental policy, and even, to some extent, international commerce. Each AC can negotiate its own degree of autonomy with the central government in the capital. Some Spanish observers feel that devolution has gone too far and that a federal system (such as Germany's) would have been preferable, but now there is no turning back.

Even so, the AC framework has not defused the secessionist-minded movements. Relations between Madrid and the Basque Country remain tense and in Catalonia the urge for independence is strengthening as the Spanish economy struggles while Catalonia continues to do quite well. Centered on the prosperous, productive coastal city of Barcelona, the AC named Catalonia is Spain's leading industrial area and has become one of Europe's Four Motors. Catalonia is endowed with its own distinctive language and culture that find vivid expression in Barcelona's urban landscape. In recent years, Catalonia—with 6 percent of Spain's territory and 17 percent of its population—has annually produced 25 percent of all Spanish exports and nearly 40 percent of its industrial exports.

AMONG THE REALM'S GREAT CITIES . . .

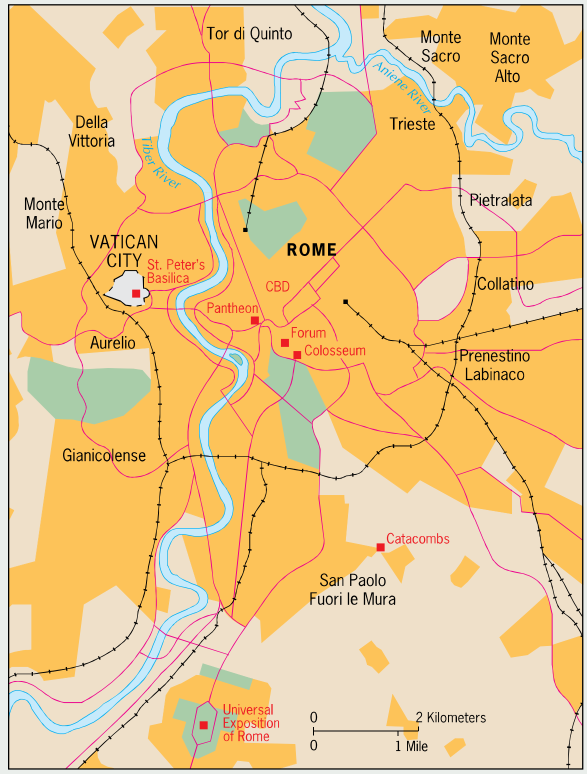
ROME

FROM A HIGH vantage point, Rome seems to consist of an endless sea of tiled roofs, above which rise numerous white, ochre, and gray domes of various sizes; in the distance, the urban perimeter is marked by high-rises fading into the urban haze. This historic city lives amid its past as perhaps no other as busy traffic encircles the Colosseum, the Forum, the Pantheon, and other legacies of Europe's greatest empire.

Founded about 3000 years ago at an island crossing point on the Tiber River about 25 kilometers (15 mi) from the sea, Rome had a high, defensible site. A millennium later, with a population some scholars estimate as high as 1 million, it was the capital of a Roman domain that extended from Britain to the head of the Persian Gulf and from the shores of the Black Sea to North Africa. Rome's emperors endowed the city with magnificent, marble-faced, columned public buildings, baths, stadiums, obelisks, arches, and statuary; when Rome became a Christian city, the domes and spires of churches and chapels further added to its luster.

It is almost inconceivable that such a city could collapse, but that is what happened after the center of Roman power shifted eastward to Constantinople (now Istanbul). By the end of the sixth century, Rome probably had fewer than 50,000 inhabitants, and in the thirteenth, a mere 30,000. Papal rule and a Renaissance revival lay ahead, but in 1870, when Rome became the capital of newly united Italy, it still had a population of only 200,000.

Now began a growth cycle that eclipsed all previous records. As Italy's political, religious, and cultural focus (though not an industrial center to match), Rome grew to 1 million by 1930, to 2 million by 1960, and subsequently to 3.3 million where it has leveled off today. The religious enclave of Vatican City, Roman Catholicism's headquarters, makes Rome a twin capital; the Vatican functions as an independent entity and exerts a global influence that Italy cannot equal.



Rome today remains a city whose economy is dominated by service industries; national and local government, finance and banking, insurance, retailing, and tourism employ three-quarters of the labor force. The new city sprawls far beyond the old, walled, traffic-choked center where the Roman past and the Italian future come face to face.

Relations between Catalonia and Castile (where Madrid is located) are also a product of history. During the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), the military dictator Francisco Franco brought all of Spain under his command by violently crushing the resistance in several corners of the country, especially in independent-minded Catalonia. From 1939 to 1975, Franco's dictatorial rule was bitterly resented in Barcelona. Even though things have greatly improved since Spain converted to democracy after his death in 1975, there has always remained a sense of animosity that is nowadays perhaps best expressed (and more happily so) in "*el clasico*"—the highly anticipated annual soccer match between the country's leading teams, Barcelona and Real Madrid. But secession remains a serious issue: on September 11, 2012, the important Catalan holiday of National Day, well over a million protesters (more than one-seventh of the AC's population) marched in the streets of Barcelona to demand full independence.

As Figure 1B-9 shows, Spain's capital and largest city, Madrid, lies near the geographic center of the state. It also lies within an economic-geographic transition zone. In terms of personal annual income, the Spanish north is far more affluent than the south, a direct result of the country's distribution of resources, climate (the south suffers from drought and inferior soils), and overall development opportunities. The most prosperous ACs, apart from Madrid, are located to the north along the Pyrenees, and they include Catalonia and Basque Country.

Economically, Spain is going through a rough patch. Economic growth has declined since 2008, and fears persist that the country's banking and financial sectors may be following those of Greece, Ireland, and Portugal. Unemployment in

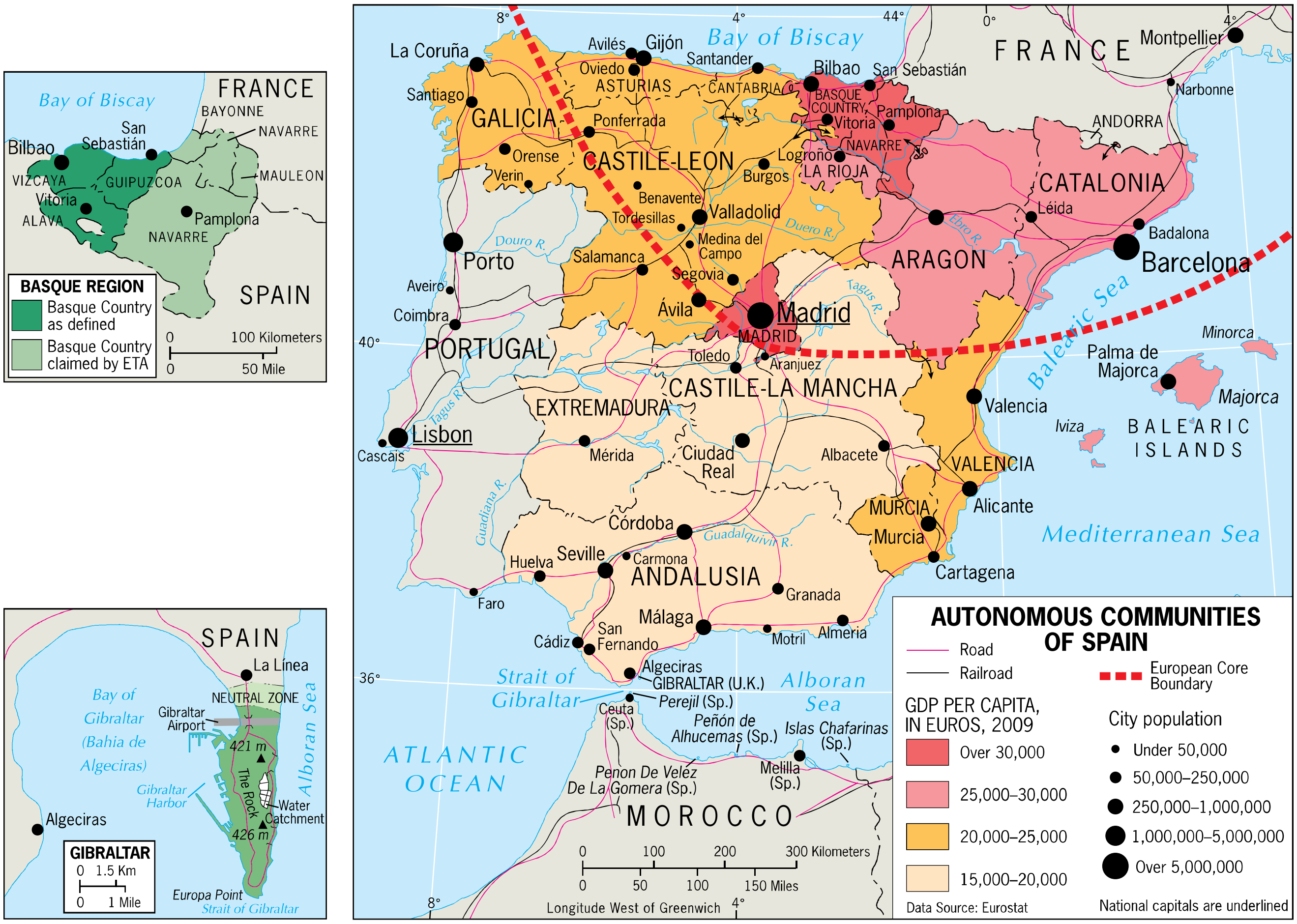


FIGURE 1B-9

From the Field Notes . . .

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"Catalonian nationalism is visible both obviously and subtly in Barcelona's urban landscape. Walking toward the Catalonian Parliament, I noticed that the flags of Spain (left) and Catalonia (right) flew from slightly diverging flagpoles above the entrance to the historic building. Is there a message here?"

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Gibraltar, Ceuta, and Melilla

ALTHOUGH SPAIN AND the United Kingdom are both EU members committed to cooperative resolution of territorial problems, the two countries are embroiled in a dispute over a sliver of land at the southern tip of Iberia: legendary ***Gibraltar*** (see lower inset map, Fig. 1B-9). "The Rock" was ceded by Spain to the British in perpetuity in 1713 (though not the neck of the peninsula linking it to the mainland, which the British later occupied), and has been a British colony ever since. Its 30,000-odd residents are used to British institutions, legal traditions, and schools. Successive Spanish governments have demanded that Gibraltar be returned to Madrid's rule, but the colony's residents are against it. And under their 1969 constitution, Gibraltarians have the right to vote on any transfer of sovereignty.

The British and Spanish governments have been trying for years to reach an agreement under which they would share the administration of Gibraltar for an indefinite period; since both are EU members, little would have to change. The advantages would be many: economic development would no longer be slowed by the longstanding dispute, border checks would be lifted, EU benefits would flow. But Gibraltarians have their doubts and want to put the issue to a referendum. Spain will not accept the idea of a referendum, and the matter remains far from resolution.

Spain's refusal to allow, and abide by, a referendum in Gibraltar stands in marked contrast to its demand for a referendum in its own outposts, two small *exclaves* (territorial outliers) on the coast of Morocco, ***Ceuta*** and ***Melilla*** (Fig. 1B-9). Morocco has been demanding the return of these two small cities, but Spain has refused on the grounds that the local residents do not want this. The matter has long simmered quietly but came to international attention in 2002 when a small detachment of Moroccan soldiers seized the island of Perejil, an uninhabited Spanish possession off the Moroccan coast also wanted by that country. In the diplomatic standoff that followed, the entire question of Spain's holdings in North Africa (and its anti-Moroccan stance in the larger matter of Western Sahara [an issue discussed in Chapter 7B]) exposed some contradictions Madrid had preferred to conceal.

mid-2013 hovered around 25 percent (exceeding 50 percent among youths), and government debt ranked among the highest in the EU. One of the fastest-growing immigration countries since 2000, job-seeking foreigners are now widely viewed as a major social problem. And because Spain's economy accounts for a much larger proportion of the EU than Greece's or Ireland's, a Spanish default could be far more consequential. Whether Spain's financial sector will hold in order to enable the country to turn the economic corner once the extended recession gives way to renewed growth, remains to be seen.

Much the same can be said of **Portugal** (10.6 million), which occupies the southwestern corner of the Iberian Peninsula. Because EU agricultural policies entail transfers from rich to poor areas in the Union and because the EU funds major infrastructural projects in hitherto isolated areas, Portugal at first benefited substantially from its 1986 admission to the EU—but today it remains far behind Europe's leading economies. Unlike Spain, which has major population clusters on its interior plateau as well as its coastal lowlands, the Portuguese are concentrated along and near the Atlantic coast. Lisbon and the second city, Porto, are coastal cities. The country has some excellent natural harbors, including Lisbon and Sines (Fig. 1B-7), with considerable potential to attract a larger share of container shipping (especially for transferring onto freight trains bound for Spain), but these ports need to become more efficient and competitive. The best farmlands lie in the moister western and northern zones of the country; but farms here are small and inefficient, and even though Portugal remains dominantly rural it must import as much as half of its food. Most recently, Portugal's shaky finances and its struggle to get beyond the prolonged recession required an EU bailout in 2011—amidst a shrinking economy, major cuts in public-sector spending, and high unemployment levels (that reached 15 percent in mid-2013). The economic outlook remains dim, and expectations are that the Portuguese government will require a second EU bailout to make ends meet.

Southernmost Europe also contains the mini-state of **Malta**, located in the central Mediterranean Sea just south of Sicily. Malta is a small archipelago (island chain) of three inhabited and two uninhabited islands with a population of just over 400,000 (Fig. 1B-7, inset map). An ancient crossroads and culturally rich with Phoenician, Arab, Italian, and British infusions, Malta became a British dependency and has long served the UK's shipping and its military. It suffered terribly during World War II bombings, but despite limited natural resources Malta recovered strongly during the postwar era. Today it has a booming tourist industry and a relatively high standard of living, and was one of the ten new member-states to join the European Union as part of the historic expansion of 2004.

Greece and Cyprus

If the label "discontinuous geography" applies anywhere, it is the area between Austria and the Aegean Sea, covering the western Balkans (former Yugoslavia) and Greece. This is an area encompassing various (and conflicting) religions and linguistic groups; prosperous as well as very poor nations; lands with volatile and violent histories; EU members and nonmembers (some without any prospect of gaining entry anytime soon); and, furthest removed from the Core is Greece, the birthplace of European civilization and a longtime EU member and

Western ally. We turn first to Greece and the Greek-connected island-state of Cyprus, and then to the Balkans.

Seemingly dangling from the southern end of eastern Europe, **Greece** was the wellspring of one of the ancient world's greatest civilizations, its scientists and philosophers still cited to this day, its famous tragedies still staged in the amphitheaters built more than 2000 years ago. Its familiar peninsulas and islands are bounded by Turkey to the east and by Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Albania to the north (Fig. 1B-10). Note that some of Greece's islands in the Aegean Sea lie on the very doorstep of Turkey; in addition, Greeks represent the majority of the population of Cyprus in the distant northeast corner of the Mediterranean Sea.

A member of the EU since 1981, Greece has endured a turbulent modern history, with alternating leftist and fascist

FIGURE 1B-10

dictatorships giving way to more democratic government in the 1980s and economic upheavals marking the EU period. Economic stagnation in the 1980s was followed by such progress that Greece came to be called the "locomotive of the Balkans," an EU beacon in its remote corner of the Union. Metropolitan Athens burgeoned, benefiting from EU assistance, the hosting of the 2004 Olympics, and membership in the EMU. Arriving by air, you find yourself at one of the world's most modern airports followed by a ride on world-class superhighways or subways. Metropolitan Athens and its busy port, Piraeus, contain almost one-third of the country's population of 10.8 million.

But EU membership had other, less favorable consequences. When the Union expanded to include poorer states such as Bulgaria and Romania, Greece lost much of its EU subsidy as Brussels had to divert its equalization funds to needier members. Then the global financial crisis hit Greece especially hard after 2008, and it became increasingly difficult to pay for social provisions and subsidies like early retirement, loose tax enforcement, lifetime government employment, and protection against competition.

And so, as the 2010s opened, Greece was at the center of an unfolding tragedy as its inefficient, hamstrung government was mired in debt, street riots repeatedly greeted efforts at painful reform, and a proud historic nation found itself forced to conform to the bailout terms imposed by the EU powers providing the necessary loans, first in 2010 and then again in 2012 and 2013. The austerity measures that had to be imposed with the acceptance of the bailouts provoked more violent protests on the streets of Athens (see Chapter 1A), which led to the resignation of a Greek prime minister, and left the increasingly unpopular government with the choice of either becoming a pariah in Europe or facing ever wider popular revolts at home.

This southeastern corner of the European Periphery also contains the island country of **Cyprus** (an EU member since 2004), whose political geography merits special attention because of the complications it created, and continues to create, for the EU. As Figure 1B-1 shows, Cyprus lies closer to Turkey than it does to any part of Europe, and for more than three centuries it was ruled by the Turkish Ottoman Empire. But today's population of 1.2 million is predominantly Greek, the people who have been there the longest. When the British, who had taken control of the island in 1878, were ready to give Cyprus independence after World War II, the 80-percent-Greek majority mostly preferred union with Greece. Ethnic conflict followed, but in 1960 the British granted Cyprus independence under a constitution that prescribed majority rule but guaranteed minority rights. This fragile order broke down in 1974, and civil war engulfed the island. Turkey sent in troops and massive dislocation followed, resulting in the partitioning of Cyprus into northern Turkish and southern Greek sectors (Fig. 1B-10, inset maps). In 1983, the 40 percent of Cyprus under Turkish control, with about 100,000 inhabitants (plus more than 30,000 Turkish soldiers), declared itself the independent ***Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus***. Only Turkey recognizes this mini-state (which today contains a population of about 300,000); meanwhile, the international community recognizes the government on the Greek side as legitimate.

Things got even more complicated when only the Greek side of the island was admitted to the EU in 2004. Resentment was high on both the Turkish side and in Turkey itself—just as discussions on Turkey's own admission to the EU were beginning. It was—and remains—a reminder that Cyprus's "Green Line" separating the Greek and Turkish communities constitutes not just a regional border but a boundary between geographic realms. This reality took on stronger meaning when, in 2013, the Cypriot economy suffered a meltdown. A combination of mismanagement, corruption, and foreign (notably Russian) fiscal opportunism caused a banking crisis with wide social repercussions.

The Balkans

We now turn to a component of Europe that has undergone wrenching changes since 1990, a process that started with the violent dismantling of communist Yugoslavia during the final decade of the twentieth century and continues (fortunately less violently) today. Here the European Union has made only limited progress, and only two of the countries that emerged from Yugoslavia's disintegration have thus far joined the EU: Slovenia in 2004 and, after drawn-out discussions, neighboring Croatia in 2013.

This part of Europe has had a particularly volatile history, and it is a classic example of what geographers call a **shatter belt [12]**, a zone of persistent splintering and fracturing. Geographic terminology uses several expressions to describe the breakup of established order, and these tend to have their roots in this part of the world. One of those expressions is **balkanization [13]**. The southern half of eastern Europe is referred to as the Balkans or Balkan Peninsula (named after a mountain range in Bulgaria). Balkanization denotes the recurrent division and fragmentation of a region.

The key state on the new map is **Serbia**, the name of what is left of a much larger domain once ruled by the Serbs—who were dominant in the former Yugoslavia. Centered on the historic capital of Belgrade on the Danube River, Serbia (7.0 million) is the largest and potentially most important new country in the area. But the Serbs are having to accommodate some major changes. First, more than one million of them live in neighboring Bosnia and Herzegovina, where they have an uneasy relationship with the local Muslims and Croats (Fig. 1B-11). Second, the coastal province named ***Montenegro*** broke away in 2006, when voters there decided to form an independent state. Third, its Muslim-majority province of ***Kosovo*** declared independence in 2008, its sovereignty immediately recognized by the United States and a majority of (but not all) European governments. And fourth, Serbia still incorporates a Hungarian minority of some 280,000 in its northern province of ***Vojvodina*** on the northern side of the Danube at a time when Hungary has already joined the

FIGURE 1B-11

EU. Clearly, the Balkans represent a virtual kaleidoscope of ethnic identities that severely complicates any kind of territorial arrangement (see Fig. 1B-11), but in early 2013 Serbia and Kosovo signed a compromise agreement that may allow both to pursue EU membership.

EU expansion into this southeastern sector in 2013 incorporated **Croatia**, which had previously joined NATO in 2009 (see Chapter 1A). But here, too, in this crescent-shaped country with prongs along the Hungarian border and the Adriatic coast, there are significant challenges. About 91 percent of Croatia's 4.3 million citizens are ethnic Croats, but the country's Serb minority has faced discrimination and has declined from 12 percent of the population to less than 5. The EU took a dim view of human rights issues in Croatia, but these improved as EU membership was being negotiated. Meanwhile, about 600,000 Croats live outside Croatia in neighboring Bosnia, where their relationships with Muslims and Serbs are not always cooperative.

When former Yugoslavia collapsed, **Bosnia and Herzegovina** (***Bosnia*** in our shorthand form) was the cauldron of calamity. No ethnic group was overwhelmingly dominant here, and this multicultural, effectively landlocked triangle of territory, lying between the Serbian stronghold to the east and the Croatian republic to the west and north, fell victim to disastrous conflict among Serbs, Croats, and ***Bosniaks*** (now the official name for Bosnia's Muslims, who constitute about 41 percent of the population of 3.8 million). As many as 250,000 people perished in concentration camps associated with ***ethnic cleansing*** practices; in 1995, a U.S. diplomatic effort resulted in a truce that partitioned the country as shown in Figure 1B-11. This remains one rough corner of Europe, and fears of renewed conflict linger.

The southernmost "republic" of former Yugoslavia was **Macedonia**, which emerged from the collapse as a state with a mere 2 million inhabitants, of whom two-thirds are Macedonian Slavs. As the map shows, Macedonia adjoins Muslim Albania and Kosovo, and its northwestern corner is home to the 37 percent of the Macedonians who are nominally Muslims. The remainder of this culturally diverse population are Turks, Serbs, and Roma (discussed later in this chapter under Slovakia). Macedonia is one of Europe's poorest countries, landlocked and powerless. Even its very name caused it problems: Greece, Macedonia's neighbor to the south, argued that this name was Greek property and therefore would not recognize it. Next, Macedonia faced an autonomy movement among its Albanian citizens, requiring allocation of scarce resources in the effort to hold the fledgling state together. Macedonians cling to the hope that eventual EU admission will bring it subsidies and better economic times.

The mini-state of **Montenegro** has a mere 600,000 inhabitants, about 29 percent of them Serbs, a small capital (Podgorica), some scenic mountains, and a short but spectacular Adriatic coastline—and very little else to justify its rank as one of Europe's 40 countries. Some tourism, a black market, trickles of Russian investment, and a scattering of farms sum up the assets of this country.

In 1999, amid the chaos of disintegrating Yugoslavia, NATO took charge in **Kosovo**, then still a formal Serbian province, after a brief but damaging military campaign. With an overwhelmingly Albanian-Muslim population of more than 2 million and a Serb minority of about 150,000 mostly tucked away in its northern corner, landlocked Kosovo has few of the attributes of a fully-formed state. NATO eventually turned over Kosovo's administration to the United Nations, and in 2008 the capital of Pristina witnessed independence celebrations as the UN administration yielded to a newly elected national government. Now the challenge is to repair relations with Serbia.

The only other dominantly Muslim country in Europe is **Albania**, where 82 percent of the population of 2.8 million adhere to Islam. Albania shares with one other country—Moldova—the status of being Europe's poorest state. It has one of Europe's higher rates of natural population growth, and many Albanians try to emigrate to the EU by crossing the Adriatic Sea to Italy. Most Albanians subsist on livestock herding and farming, but the poverty-stricken Gegs in the north lag behind the somewhat better-off Tosks in the south, with the capital of Tirane lying close to this cultural divide. For all of Europe's globalization, Albania would represent the symptoms of the global periphery anywhere in the world.

THE DISCONTINUOUS NORTH

It is a long way from the Balkans to the basin of the Baltic Sea—in terms of distance, physiography, and culture. The north's remoteness, isolation, and environmental severity, especially at higher latitudes, have had positive binding effects for part of this domain and seem to have fostered similar cultures. The Scandinavian Peninsula lay removed from most of the wars of mainland Europe and developed in relatively tranquil circumstances (even though Norway was overrun by Nazi Germany during World War II). The three major languages (Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish) are mutually intelligible, and in terms of religion there is overwhelming adherence to the same Lutheran church in the three Scandinavian countries as well as Iceland, Finland, Estonia, and Latvia. Lithuania and Latvia have distinct languages, and in Lithuania the Roman Catholic religion prevails—but all these northern states have a shared history on the shores of the Baltic Sea and in their proximity to Russia. In Scandinavia, democratic and representative governments emerged early, and individual rights and social welfare have been carefully protected for centuries. Women participate more fully in government and politics here than in any other part of the world.

But consider the implications of Figures 1B-1 and 1B-12, and it is obvious why we refer to the *Discontinuous North*: the southern, coastal, and urban areas of the region form part of the Core, but the remainder does not. In the aggregate, economic indicators for most of the region are very strong, but almost all development is concentrated within that smaller Core zone. Territorially, most of northern Norway, Sweden, and Finland form part of the European Periphery.

The countries of this northern domain of Europe have a combined population of only 32.3 million, about half of Italy's. But the core areas of Scandinavian Sweden, Norway, and Denmark make up in prosperity and external linkages what they lack in size.

Sweden

Sweden is the Discontinuous North's largest country in terms of both population (9.5 million) and territory. Most Swedes live south of 60° North latitude (which passes through Uppsala just north of the capital, Stockholm) in what is climatically the most moderate part of the country (Fig. 1B-12). Here lie the primate city, core area, and the main industrial districts; here, too, are the main agricultural areas that benefit from the lower relief, better soils, and milder climate.

Outer Stockholm's prosperous suburban landscape along the shore of Lilla Värtan, the narrow strait that separates the Swedish capital from the adjacent island of Lidingö. Stockholm, which today is home to 1.5 million people, has a long history that dates back to the thirteenth century. Southeastern Sweden is interlaced with myriad waterways, and Stockholm is no exception. Its layout is quite unusual in that this metropolis has been built on a cluster of no less than 14 islands.

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FIGURE 1B-12

Sweden long exported raw or semi-finished materials to industrial countries, but today the Swedes make finished products themselves, including motor vehicles, electronics, stainless steel, furniture, and glassware. Much of this production is based on local resources, including a major iron ore reserve at Kiruna in the far north (there is a steel mill at Luleå). Swedish manufacturing, in contrast to that of several western European countries, is based in dozens of small and medium-sized towns specializing in particular products. Energy-poor Sweden was a pioneer in the development of nuclear power, but a national debate over the risks involved has reversed that course. Sweden joined the EU in 1995, but opted out of the eurozone in 2002.

This is northern Europe's biggest and most influential country. Historically, Sweden has dominated both Norway and Denmark. Culturally, Sweden has time and again made its presence known on the global scene, from popular music to films to works of fiction. Most recently, the crime novels of the late Stieg Larsson (which include *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*) have become best-sellers around the world.

Norway

Norway does not need a nuclear power industry to supply its energy needs. It has found its economic opportunities on, in, and beneath the sea. Norway's fishing industry, now augmented by highly efficient fish farms, has long been a cornerstone of the economy, and its merchant marine spans the world. But since the 1970s, Norway's economic life has been transformed by the bounty of oil and natural gas discovered in its sector of the North Sea.

With its limited patches of cultivable soil, high relief, extensive forests, frigid northland, and spectacular ***fjords***, Norway has nothing to compare to Sweden's agricultural or industrial development. Its cities, from the capital Oslo and the North Sea port of Bergen to the historic national focus of Trondheim as well as Arctic Hammerfest, lie on the coast and have difficult overland connections. The isolated northern province of Finnmark has even become the scene of a devolutionary movement among the reindeer-herding indigenous Saami (Fig. 1A-11). The distribution of Norway's population of 5.0 million has been described as a necklace, its beads linked by the thinnest of strands. But this has not constrained national development. Norway at the end of the 2000s had the second-lowest unemployment rate in Europe (after tiny Luxembourg). And in terms of income per capita, Norway is one of the richest countries in the world.

Norwegians have a strong national consciousness and spirit of independence. In the mid-1990s, when Sweden and Finland voted to join the European Union, the Norwegians again said no. They did not want to trade their economic independence for the regulations of a larger, even possibly safer, Europe.

Denmark

Territorially small by Scandinavian standards, Denmark has a population of 5.6 million, the North's second-largest country after Sweden. It consists of the Jutland Peninsula and several islands to the east at the gateway to the Baltic Sea; it is on one of these islands, Sjaelland, that the capital of Copenhagen is located. Copenhagen has long been a port that collects, stores, and transships large quantities of goods. This **break-of-bulk [14]** function exists because many oceangoing vessels cannot enter the shallow Baltic Sea, making the city an ***entrepôt* [15]** where transfer facilities and activities prevail. The completion of the Øresund bridge-tunnel link to southern Sweden in 2000 further enhanced Copenhagen's situation (Fig. 1B-12).

Denmark remains a kingdom, and in centuries past Danish influence extended far beyond its present confines. Remnants of that period continue to challenge Denmark's governance. Greenland came under Danish rule following union with Norway (1380) and continued as a Danish possession when that union ended in 1814. In 1953, Greenland's status changed from colony to province, and in 1979 its 60,000 inhabitants were granted home rule under the new, Inuit name of ***Kalaallit Nunaat***. They promptly exercised their rights by withdrawing from the European Union, of which they had become a part when Denmark joined in 1973.

Greenland is still highly dependent on financial support from Denmark but this may change in the near future. After decades of exploration, oil was discovered in 2010 off Greenland's west coast, north of the Arctic Circle. Oil extraction in the Arctic carries substantial environmental risk, and it may be a while before operations are in place and revenues start flowing in; but when they do, they are likely to bring profound change to Greenland.

Another restive Danish dependency is the Faroe Islands, located between Scotland and Iceland. These 17 small islands and their 50,000 inhabitants were awarded self-government in 1948, complete with their own flag and currency, but Denmark remains sovereign and debates continue about full independence.

Finland

Finland, territorially almost as large as Germany, has only 5.4 million residents, most of them concentrated in the southern triangle formed by the capital, Helsinki, the textile-producing complex of Tampere, and the shipbuilding center of Turku (Fig. 1B-12). A land of evergreen forests and glacial lakes, Finland's national income has long been sustained by wood and wood-product exports. But the Finns have now developed a more diversified economy with staple agricultural crops and the manufacture of precision machinery and telecommunications equipment.

Finland's environmental challenges and relative location have created cultural landscapes similar to those of Sweden and Norway, but the Finns are not a Scandinavian people; their linguistic and historical links are instead with the Estonians across the Gulf of Finland to the south. In fact, other ethnic groups speaking these Finno-Ugric languages are also widely dispersed across what is today western Russia.

Estonia

The northernmost of the three "Baltic states," Estonia has longstanding ethnic and linguistic ties to Finland. But during the period of Soviet control from 1940 to 1991, Estonia's demographic structure transformed drastically: today about 27 percent of its 1.3 million inhabitants are Russians, most of whom came there as colonizers.

After a difficult period of adjustment, Estonia today is forging well ahead of its Baltic neighbors, Latvia and Lithuania (see Appendix B). Busy traffic links Tallinn, the capital, with its counterpart in Finland, Helsinki, and a free-trade zone at Muuga Harbor facilitates commerce with Russia. But more important for this country's future was its entry into the European Union in 2004. Since then, Estonia has gained attention as a result of its economic

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"The most cheerful corner of Nuuk, the capital of Greenland, is enlivened by the bright colors of the homes built on what was the original site of settlement here on the Davis Strait. Nuuk offers a few surprises: a supermarket featuring vegetables grown in Greenland, a nine-hole golf course being expanded to 18 holes, and a vigorous debate over the prospect of independence. With a population of only about 60,000, considerable autonomy from former colonial power Denmark, and substantial investment from Copenhagen, the citizens of *Kalaallit Nunaat* are nonetheless divided on the question of their future. Climate change, the prospect of oil reserves to be found offshore, and freedom to fish (including whales) like the Norwegians do, are factors seen by many indigenous Greenlanders as potential rewards of independence. Danish residents and those of Danish (but local) ancestry tend to see it differently. In the 2009 election, the party representing indigenous interests did better than expected, and 'KN' seemed to be on course toward sovereignty."

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advances, particularly its creative entrepreneurship in the high-tech and software industries (Skype, for instance, was originally an Estonian company). Having entered the eurozone in 2011, Estonia's economy has remained relatively stable, and this country may soon be joining the ranks of the European Core.

Latvia

As Figure 1B-12 reminds us, the boundary of the European Core that traverses Europe's North includes southern Norway and Sweden but excludes Estonia and the other two Baltic states. The latter have experienced economic improvement in recent years, but are not yet on a par with Estonia, let alone Scandinavia. Latvia, the middle Baltic state centered on the port and capital city of Riga, was tightly integrated into the Soviet system throughout Moscow's long domination. As a consequence, today only 63 percent of the population of 2.0 million is Latvian, and about 27 percent is Russian.

Following independence, ethnic tensions arose between these Baltic and Slavic sectors, but the prospect of EU membership mandated an end to discriminatory practices. Latvians concentrated instead on the economy (which had been left in dreadful shape), and by 2004 the country qualified for admission. Consider this: 25 years ago, virtually all of Latvia's trade was with the Soviet Union. Today its principal trading partners are Germany, the United Kingdom, and Sweden. Russia figures in only one category: Latvia's import of oil and gas.

Nevertheless, Latvia was hammered by the fiscal crisis, and by 2012 its economy had contracted by one-fifth as unemployment approached 20 percent. Even though Latvia also required an EU bailout in 2012 to keep government finances afloat, plans remained in place for the country to join the eurozone in 2014.

Lithuania

This southernmost Baltic state of 3.2 million has a residual Russian minority of only about 5 percent, but relations with this gigantic neighbor are tense—despite a continuing dependence on Russia as a trading partner. One reason for this strained relationship has to do with neighboring ***Kaliningrad***, Russia's **exclave [16]** facing the Baltic Sea (Fig. 1B-12). When Kaliningrad became a Russian territory after World War II (Russia still regards this exclave as an important outpost), Lithuania was left with only about 80 kilometers (50 mi) of Baltic coastline and a small port that was not even connected by rail to the interior capital of Vilnius. Significantly, Lithuania joined NATO in 2004 and a year later it called for the demilitarization of Kaliningrad as a matter of national security. Russia did not oblige.

Economically, things at first went well, initially, spurred by growing foreign investment and profits from the oil refinery at Mazeikiai. Lithuania's economy in 2003 had the highest growth rate in Europe and it was in a mood of optimism that it joined the EU in 2004 (without adopting the euro). Here as in so many other countries, the fiscal crisis at the end of the decade hit the economy hard and austerity measures had to be introduced. There seemed to be light at the end of the tunnel in mid-2013, and there was talk of joining the eurozone by 2017. Whether enthusiasm for the euro continues both here and in Latvia, remains to be seen.

Iceland

Iceland, the volcanic, glacier-studded island in the frigid waters of the North Atlantic just south of the Arctic Circle, is the eighth country of the Discontinuous North. Inhabited by people with Scandinavian ancestries (population: 330,000), Iceland and its small neighboring archipelago, the Westermann Islands, are of special scientific interest because they lie astride the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. Here, the Eurasian and North American tectonic plates of the Earth's crust are diverging (see Fig. G-4), new land can be seen forming, and spectacular volcanic eruptions are periodically on display (as occurred memorably in 2010 when the Eyjafjallajökull volcano brought transatlantic and domestic air traffic across northern Europe to a halt for several days).

Iceland's population is almost completely urban, and the capital, Reykjavik, contains about half the country's inhabitants. The nation's economic geography is traditionally oriented to the surrounding waters, whose seafood harvests have given Iceland a high standard of living. In the 1990s, Iceland embarked on economic liberalization policies and its financial industries and banks grew rapidly. For a while, Iceland was referred to as the *Nordic Tiger*; but then, not unlike Ireland, which experienced a similar boom, the economy went into a nosedive with the onset of global recession in 2008. Iceland's government, closely involved with some of the troubled banks, had to be bailed out by the International Monetary Fund. There were plans to join the EU in 2012, but the application process was suspended in early 2013 as an unexpectedly rapid economic recovery took hold, giving Icelanders pause as to whether joining the European trading bloc was their best option.

THE EASTERN PERIPHERY

Europe's Eastern Periphery is a fascinating region, not least because it is so difficult to discern exactly where its boundaries lie. It is a region that in some ways becomes less European toward the east and less Slavic going westward; one that throughout history has found itself in the path of the territorial ambitions of major powers on either side; and with a changeable political geography to match. Some historians have morbidly dubbed the area extending from the Baltic to the Black Sea "Bloodlands," the arena in which Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union did their most murderous work during the second quarter of the twentieth century. By far, more civilians and military personnel died here than in any other part of Europe. After World War II, the countries of eastern Europe were, forcibly for the most part, incorporated into the Soviet orbit as satellites, their various national identities suppressed along with basic freedoms and their economies subjugated to Moscow's interests and commands.

Europe has changed fundamentally in the quarter-century since the end of the Cold War. The old Eastern Europe, its western edge sharply defined by the Iron Curtain, no longer exists, and in some ways we have seen the rebirth of the older cultural region known as Central Europe or, in its prevailing German language, *Mitteleuropa*. Many of these changes were consolidated as NATO and the EU expanded eastward. As we saw, the Czech Republic has already been integrated into Europe's Core, and Slovenia is on track to become the first component of former Yugoslavia to merit similar inclusion. By 2013, a relatively large number of states in the Eastern Periphery had already joined the Union, and others are knocking on the door. Undoubtedly, the transformation of this sector of the European realm will continue to advance steadily as this decade unfolds.

East-Central Europe

As Figures 1B-1 and 1B-13 show, the four states in this group are all immediately adjacent to or already partially integrated into the European Core. All have four joined NATO as well: Poland and Hungary in 1999, and Slovakia and Slovenia in 2004. The largest and most populous of these countries is **Poland**. With 38.2 million people and lying between two historic enemies, Poland has borders that have shifted time and again; but its current status

FIGURE 1B-13

appears to be more durable than in the past. As the map shows, the historic and once-central capital of Warsaw now lies closer to Russia than to Germany, but the country today looks westward, not to the east. Throughout the Soviet-communist period, Silesia in the southwest was Poland's industrial heartland, and Katowice, Wroclaw, and Krakow grew into major manufacturing centers amid some of the world's worst environmental degradation. The Soviets invested far less in agriculture, collectivizing farms without modernizing technologies and leaving post-Soviet farming in abysmal condition. All this made governing Poland difficult, but the prospect of EU membership (with the promise of EU subsidies) motivated the government to get its house in order.

After entering the EU in 2004, Poland saw hundreds of thousands of workers depart for jobs in the European Core, but many have now returned and the economy is growing robustly. Today, Poland is in the best shape it has been in for a very long time, and its economic relations with Germany are closer than ever.

Government also was the problem in neighboring, landlocked **Slovakia**, where during the communist period its people were far more pro-Soviet than the Czechs next door (with whom they were united within the old Czechoslovakia before it broke up in 1993). Many observers of the 2004 EU expansion wondered whether misgoverned Slovakia should be admitted at all because its capital city, Bratislava, had become synonymous with corruption and inefficiency. Slovakia's Hungarian minority, comprising about 10 percent of the population of 5.4 million and concentrated in the south along the Danube River, was at odds with the Slovak regime. Moreover, additional

Europe's Stateless Nation

EVERY ETHNIC GROUP in Europe's intricate social mosaic, it seems, has its own homeland, either in a state or a subnational unit. From the Frisians to the Corsicans and from the Norwegians to the Greeks, everyone has a historic base, whether it is a State or a province or some other political entity, no matter how small.

But there is one significant exception: the ***Roma***, Europe's largest single minority. Perhaps as many as 14 million Roma—formerly (and derisively) called *gypsies*—constitute the realm's troubled, stateless nation. Although their origins are uncertain, the Roma are believed to have originated in India and migrated westward along several routes, one of which carried them via what is now Iran and Turkey into Europe. They never established a territorial base; they have retained their mobile, nomadic lifestyle to the present day; and they mostly live, nearly always in poverty, in a discontinuous arc across Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. Wherever they have gone, they have found themselves facing discrimination, resentment, unemployment, and poor health conditions (see photo below). Their mobile lifestyle contributes to low educational levels and to the perception and reality of associated crime.

The Roma were an issue during the debate preceding the EU's 2004 enlargement and again prior to the accession of Bulgaria and Romania in 2007, when many Europeans talked of a "Roma deluge" as a reason to oppose expansion. Even before 2004, some Roma had been entering the European Core as asylum-seekers, arriving in English towns and setting up their wagons and encampments in public parks and village squares. When several Core countries toughened their asylum rules, their objective was not only to stem the flow from Islamic countries but also within the EU itself, with the Roma the primary target.

But they came anyway: there are now close to a million Roma in Spain and perhaps half that number in France, and their presence has been cause for highly charged public debate. In 2010, the French government expelled a group of more than a thousand Roma after violent clashes with police in the town of Saint Aignan and the city of Grenoble, both sites of illegal Roma encampments. The problem is that the situation for the Roma in eastern European countries is even worse. EU efforts to help the Roma in their source countries through subsidies and other assistance have been hampered by the high levels of corruption in those states where Roma minorities are largest.

Tomasz Tomaszewski/ngs/Getty Images, Inc.

Europe's largest minority, the stateless Roma, also are the realm's poorest. Slovakia is one of several European countries with substantial Roma populations, and its government has been criticized by the EU for its treatment of Roma citizens. This depressing photograph of a Roma settlement in Hermanovce shows a cluster of makeshift dwellings virtually encircled by a moat bridged only by a walkway. The village of Hermanovce may itself not be very prosperous, but that moat represents a social chasm between comparative comfort and inescapable deprivation.

concerns were raised over reports of mistreatment of the smaller Roma (Gypsy) minority (see the box titled "Europe's Stateless Nation"). But again the promise of EU membership led to sufficient reforms, and after 2004 the economy perked up. Following another downturn in 2007, a more enlightened administration took over, and in 2008 Slovakia surprised many by meeting the terms of admission to the EMU, adopting the euro in 2009 before the Poles or the Hungarians could.

Many economic geographers anticipated a bright future for also-landlocked **Hungary** following the collapse of the Soviet Empire and the dismantling of the Iron Curtain. The Hungarians (Magyars) moved into the middle Danube Basin more than a thousand years ago from an Asian source; they have neither Slavic nor Germanic roots. They converted their fertile lowland into a thriving nation-state and also created an imperial power that held sway over an area far larger than present-day Hungary.

FIGURE 1B-14

Ethnic Magyar remnants of this Greater Hungary can still be found in parts of Romania, Serbia, and Slovakia (Fig. 1B-14), and the government in the twin-cities capital astride the Danube River, Budapest, has a history of irredentism toward these external minorities.

The concept of **irredentism [17]**—a government's open support for fellow ethnic or cultural cohorts in neighboring or more distant countries—derives from a nineteenth-century campaign by Italy to incorporate the territory inhabited by an Italian-speaking minority of Austria, calling it ***Italia Irredenta*** or "Unredeemed Italy." One advantage of joining the EU, obviously, was that much of the reason for Hungarian irredentism disappeared. If and when Serbia joins the EU, it may disappear altogether.

With a population of 9.8 million, a distinctive culture, and a considerable and diversified resource base, Hungary should have good prospects, and its economic potential was a strong factor in its 2004 admission into the EU. But developments soon spiraled downward with the onset of global recession. The Hungarian government came into conflict with Brussels about the violation of EU monetary policies and the state of Hungary's finances (racking up debt) while local political parties accused the government of a dictatorial turn. Hungary's challenges are both political and economic.

The success story among the four countries in this regional grouping remains rather modest, with most of it accounted for by progressive **Slovenia**, which lies wedged against Austria and Italy in the hilly terrain near the head of the Adriatic Sea. With 2.1 million people, a nearly homogeneous ethnic complexion, and a productive economy, Slovenia was the first "republic" of the seven that emerged from the collapse of Yugoslavia to be invited to join the EU. Shortly thereafter, Slovenia also became part of the eurozone.

The Southeast: Romania and Bulgaria

Just how **Romania** managed to persuade EU leaders to endorse its 2007 accession remains a mystery to many Europeans. As the Data Table in Appendix B indicates, Romania exhibits some of Europe's worst social indicators: its economy is weak, incomes are low, its governmental operations have not been sufficiently upgraded from communist times (a number of "apparatchiks" acquired state assets under the guise of "privatization" and control the political process), and political infighting and corruption are endemic.

But Romania is an important country, located in the lower basin of the Danube River and occupying much of the heart of eastern Europe. And like a good number of other countries in eastern Europe, it was incorporated into NATO before it was allowed to join the EU. With 21.2 million inhabitants and a pivotal situation on the Black Sea, Romania is a bridge between central Europe and the realm's southeastern corner, where EU member Greece and potential member Turkey (bitter adversaries for much of the past two centuries) face each other across land and water (Fig. 1B-15).

Romania's drab and decaying capital of Bucharest (once known as the "Paris of the Balkans") and its surrounding core area lie in the interior, linked by rail to the Black Sea port of Constanta. The country's once-productive oilfields have now been fully depleted, about a third of the labor force works in agriculture, poverty is widespread throughout the countryside as well as the towns, and unemployment is high. Many talented Romanians continue to leave the country in search of opportunities elsewhere.

Across the Danube lies Romania's southern neighbor, **Bulgaria**. The rugged Balkan Mountains form Bulgaria's physiographic backbone, separating the Danube and Maritsa basins. As the map shows, Bulgaria has five neighbors, several of which are in political turmoil. Bulgaria became a member of the European Union, which required judicial and other social reforms. But today it is still the Union's poorest country, and its prospects are not particularly enticing.

Bulgaria has a Black Sea coast and an outlet, the port of Varna, but the main advantage it derives from its coastal location is the tourist trade its beaches generate. The capital, Sofia, lies not on the coast but near the opposite border with Serbia, and in its core-area hinterland some foreign investment is changing the economic landscape—but slowly (Fig. 1B-15).

Bulgarians, too, are emigrating in substantial numbers—and this worries the countries of western Europe, where an uncontrolled influx of immigrants with newly-won access to their job markets would create serious problems. As far back as 2006, the United Kingdom announced that it would place severe restrictions on workers from Romania and Bulgaria—a surprising reversal for a country that had long championed openness in the EU job market. It was a signal that admitting these two states had been a stretch, the wisdom of which remains to be proven. Not surprisingly, they remain the Union's poorest members.

Europe's Eastern Edge

In Europe's far east, and on Russia's doorstep, are three countries of which one, the key state of **Ukraine**, is territorially the largest in all of Europe. Demographically, with a population totalling 45.2 million, Ukraine ranks in the second tier of European states, along with Poland and Spain. As Figure 1B-15 shows, Ukraine's relative location is crucial. Not only does it link the core of Russia to the periphery of the European Union: it forms the northern shore of the Black Sea from Russia to Romania, and incorporates the strategically important Crimea Peninsula. And most importantly, oil and gas pipelines connect Russian fields to European markets across Ukrainian territory.

Ukraine's capital, Kiev (Kyyiv), is a major historic, cultural, and political nexus. Briefly independent before the communist takeover of Russia in 1917, Ukraine regained its sovereignty as a much-changed country in 1991. Once a land of farmers tilling its famously fertile soils, Ukraine emerged from the Soviet period with a huge industrial complex in its east and with a substantial (18 percent) Russian minority. Most of the Russians are concentrated in the zone that stretches eastward from the Dnieper Valley, which is why that part of the country is mapped as a transition zone in Figures 1B-1 and G-3. Ukraine's boundaries also changed during the Soviet era. In 1954, a Soviet dictator capriciously transferred the entire Crimea Peninsula, including its Russian inhabitants, to Ukraine as a reward for its productivity.

The Dnieper River forms a valuable geographic reference to comprehend Ukraine's spatial division that creates the transition zone (Fig. 1B-15). To its west lies agrarian, rural, mainly Roman Catholic Ukraine; in its great southern bend and eastward lies industrial, urban, Russified (and Russian Orthodox) Ukraine. Soviet planners transformed eastern Ukraine into a communist Ruhr based on abundant local coal and iron ore, making the Donets Basin (*Donbas* for short) a key industrial complex. Meanwhile, the Russian Soviet Republic supplied Ukraine with oil and gas.

As the map shows, Ukraine, with the exception of its eastern, urban-concentrated Russian minority (still 18 percent today), possesses an ethnically homogeneous population by eastern European standards. Ukraine is a critically


Riga
LATVIA
Rzhev
Moscow
Liepaja
Baltic Sea
Klaipeda
LITHUANIA
Kaunas
KALININGRAD (RUSSIA)
Kaliningrad
Vilnius
Western Dvina R.
Tula
RUSSIA
Mensk (Minsk)
Bryansk
Orel
BELARUS
Voronezh
Homyel
Kursk
Warsaw
Brest
Chernihiv
POLAND
Don R.
50°
Lublin
Chornobyl
Kiev (Kyyiv)
Kharkiv
Krakow
Lviv
Poltava
Dnieper R.
Luhansk
DONBAS
Yenakiyeve
Makiyivka
Vinnytsya
Dnipropetrovsk
Horlivka
SLOVAKIA
Kosice
Dniester R.
UKRAINE
Donetsk
Rostov
Zaporizhya
Chernivtsi
TRANSDNIESTRIA
Kryvyy Rih
Mariupol
Debrecen
HUNGARY
Sea of Azov
Oradea
Chisinau
MOLDOVA
Odesa
Cluj
ROMANIA
45°
Szeged
Arad
Crimea Peninsula
Novorossiysk
Krasnodar
Timisoara
Brasov
Galati
Braila
Sevastopol
Yalta
Belgrade
Bucharest
Constanta
Black Sea
SERBIA
Danube R.
Ruse
Nis
Varna
Pristina
Sofia
BULGARIA
Burgas
KOSOVO
Maritsa R.
Zonguldak
Samsun
Ordu
Skopje
Plovdiv
Edirne
Istanbul
40°
Corum
MACEDONIA
TURKEY
Gebze
Izmit
ALB.
Sivas
Thessaloniki
Bursa
Ankara
Eskisehir
TURKEY
Balikesir
Kayseri
Lárisa
Vólos
Aegean Sea
GREECE
Afyon
20°
25°
Usak
30°
Longitude East of Greenwich
35°
POPULATION
Under 50,000
50,000–250,000
250,000–1,000,000
1,000,000–5,000,000
Over 5,000,000
National capitals are underlined
Road
Railroad
Gas Pipeline
Oil Pipeline
EASTERN EUROPEAN PERIPHERIES
0 100 200 300 Kilometers
0 50 100 150 Miles

FIGURE 1B-15

important country for Europe's future because it has access to international shipping lanes, a large resource base, massive farm production, an educated and skilled labor force, and a large domestic market. But it suffers from numerous problems ranging from political mismanagement and corruption to a faltering economy and rising crime.

A presidential election in 2004 first drew international attention to Ukraine's unique political geography, and the pattern was neatly replicated in the elections of 2010. For the most part, Ukraine's electorate is divided between a pro-Western (and pro-EU) northwest and a pro-Russian southeast, resulting in a situation reminiscent of Czechoslovakia's before its "velvet divorce." The 2010 elections rendered a split of 46/49 percent for the pro-Western and pro-Russian candidates, respectively, putting Victor Yanukovych in office. In Ukraine's case, the transit of much needed energy supplies through the east creates a complication. Ukraine's own dependence on Russian supplies makes it vulnerable to Moscow's decisions on prices as well as supplies. Some of Ukraine's leaders urge speedy integration into the European sphere; others tend to prefer a middle road between Europe and Russia. A 2012 law that recognized Russian as a second official language was seen as a tilt toward the east and away from Europe. On the other hand, the 2013 mega-deal with the Shell Oil Company to exploit Ukraine's large gas reserves will make it less dependent on energy from Russia and provide greater freedom to strengthen relations with the West. For the time being, EU membership prospects are dim, and ongoing discussions about affiliating with NATO are proceeding slowly and cautiously.

Moldova, Ukraine's small and impoverished neighbor (by many measures Europe's poorest country), was a Romanian province seized by the Soviets in 1940 and converted into a landlocked "Soviet Socialist Republic." A half-century later, along with other such "republics," Moldova gained independence when the Soviet Union disintegrated. Romanians remain in the majority among its 4.1 million people, but many of the Russians and Ukrainians (each about 13 percent) have migrated across the Dniester River to an industrialized strip of land between that waterway and the Ukrainian border, proclaiming there a "Republic of Transdniestria" (see Fig. 1B-15).

Separatist movements constitute only one of Moldova's multiple problems. Its economy, dominated by farming, is in decline; an estimated 40 percent of the population works at jobs outside its borders because unemployment in Moldova is typically as high as 30 percent; smuggling and illegal arms trafficking are rife. These many misfortunes translate into weakness, and Russia's malign influence in the form of support for Transdniestria's separatists keeps the country in turmoil. In fact, since 2007 the Moldovan government has been pressured by Russia to recognize the regime of breakaway Transdniestria as legitimate. The country also is highly dependent on Russian energy supplies, so these attempts at coercion cannot be totally disregarded.

Belarus is the third state in this eastern margin of the European Periphery and in many ways it is the most peripheral of all. Landlocked, autocratic, and heavy-handedly misgoverned, sustained in part by the transit of energy supplies from Russia to Europe's Core countries, Belarus has few functional links to Europe and little prospect of progress. Nearly 85 percent of Belarus's 9.4 million inhabitants are Belarussians ("White" Russians), a West Slavic people; only some 8 percent are (East Slavic) Russians.

The economy of Belarus is reminiscent of a bygone era. No less than four-fifths of the workforce is employed by the state, and housing is provided through employment. Private property, for most citizens, does not exist, and neither do chambers of commerce or unions. All education is tightly controlled by the state: high school students are told they must join the government's Youth Union if they want to attend university, but a university education is not worth much unless you want to prepare for a career in government. This is a society stuck in old Soviet ways in a realm that continues to undergo profound change. In effect, Belarus trades energy subsidies for serving as a stable and willing buffer to European encroachment on Russia's doorstep.

Finally, there is **Turkey**, a mighty country of 76.7 million that straddles Europe and Asia. Turkey is the successor of the great Ottoman Empire that, before it disintegrated a century ago, ruled large parts of Asia, North Africa, and southeastern Europe. Thereafter, Turkey experienced notable secularization and Westernization, beginning in the 1920s under the charismatic leadership of Kemal Atatürk. It is a Muslim country with considerable influence in the Arab and Islamic worlds, but also a key military ally of the West and a longtime member of NATO. Bordering no less than eight countries, controlling the straits between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, and facing three seas, Turkey commands a pivotal geostrategic position (Fig. 1B-1).

This country also plays a key role in any Western efforts to do something about the terrible civil war in Syria, which borders southeastern Turkey. Indeed, Turkey itself has been the strongest voice arguing for intervention to put an end to the especially bloody uprising that has raged there since early 2011. But the Turkish government finds itself in a complicated position here because it is already involved in a costly struggle with the Kurds of eastern Turkey. The Syrian conflict in its full regional geopolitical context is elaborated in Chapters 7A and 7B.

Turkey has been an associate member of the EU for four decades, and its application for full membership was first submitted in 1987. But is this country European enough? Or is it perhaps too big (second in population size only to Germany) and potentially destabilizing? Or is the Turkish case less urgent than others because it is already firmly embedded within NATO and related security structures led by the United States? At any rate, full Turkish membership in the EU remains on hold. The primary reasons, it is said, are the continuing poor treatment of Kurds in eastern Turkey and the apparent inability of the Turkish government to conform to the Union's economic standards—issues that are not likely to be resolved in the immediate future. Ironically, in recent years Turkey's economy has performed extremely well while its stature in the Islamic world has grown (see Chapters 7A and 7B). Whereas an economically troubled Europe is still unable to make up its mind about Turkey, the Turks themselves are steadily losing interest in the EU altogether.

With its 600 million inhabitants in 40 countries, including some of the world's highest-income economies, a politically stable and economically integrated Europe would be a superpower in any new world order. However, Europe's political geography is anything but stable as devolutionary forces and cultural stresses continue to trouble the realm even as EU expansion proceeds. The global economic crisis of the past few years has underscored the enormous difficulty of managing such a large and diverse realm as a single economic system. Europeans have not yet found a way to give voice to collective viewpoints in the world, or to generate collective action in times of crisis. Importantly, even after the latest expansion, the EU incorporates just over two-thirds of the realm's national economies, and additional enlargement will become increasingly difficult for economic, political, and cultural reasons.

POINTS TO PONDER

- Surveys show that a small European state, the Netherlands, has the world's most globalized economy.
- Scotland will hold a referendum on independence from the UK in 2014; the UK government wants to hold a referendum on continuing membership in the European Union.
- Brussels is the main seat of the European Union, yet it is the capital of a country that threatens to come apart.
- In northern European countries, the south tends to be more developed than the north, whereas in southern European countries the north tends to be more developed than the south.
- Fiscally troubled national governments in the eurozone that accept conditions for a bailout from the EU must impose austerity measures on their population and thereby risk losing the next election.
- By admitting such countries as Romania, Bulgaria, and Croatia while keeping Turkey at arm's length, the EU has made some debatable choices.