

Northern Europe

Section 1



MAIN IDEAS

1. The physical features of Northern Europe include low mountain ranges and jagged coastlines.
2. Northern Europe's natural resources include energy sources, soils, and seas.
3. The climates of Northern Europe range from a mild coastal climate to a freezing ice cap climate.

Key Terms and Places

British Isles a group of islands located across the English Channel from the rest of Europe

Scandinavia a region of islands and peninsulas in far northern Europe

fjord a narrow inlet of the sea set between high, rocky cliffs

geothermal energy energy from the heat of Earth's interior

North Atlantic Drift an ocean current that brings warm, moist air across the Atlantic Ocean

Section Summary

PHYSICAL FEATURES

Northern Europe consists of two regions. The **British Isles** are a group of islands located across the English Channel from the rest of Europe. **Scandinavia** is a region of islands and peninsulas in far northern Europe. Iceland, to the west, is often considered part of Scandinavia.

Fewer people live in the northern portion of the region, which is covered by rocky hills and low mountains. Farmland and plains stretch across the southern part of the region.

Slow moving sheets of ice called glaciers once covered the region. They carved lakes and **fjords**, narrow inlets between high, rocky cliffs. The fjords make the coast of Norway irregular and jagged.

Underline the sentence that describes the land in the northern portion of the region.

What two features were created by glaciers?

NATURAL RESOURCES

Northern Europe has many natural resources that have helped make it one of the world's wealthiest

Section 1, continued

regions. Energy resources include oil and natural gas in areas of the North Sea controlled by the United Kingdom and Norway. Hydroelectric energy is created by lakes and rivers. Iceland's hot springs produce **geothermal energy**, or energy from the heat of the Earth's interior.

Forests in Norway, Sweden, and Finland provide timber. Fertile farmland in southern areas provides crops such as wheat and potatoes. The seas and oceans that surround the region have provided fish to the people of Northern Europe for centuries.

CLIMATES

Although much of the region is very far north and close to the Arctic Circle, the climates in Northern Europe are surprisingly mild. The **North Atlantic Drift** is a warm ocean current that brings warm, moist air across the Atlantic Ocean to Northern Europe. It creates warmer temperatures than other areas located as far north.

Much of the region has a marine west coast climate with mild summers and frequent rainfall. Central Norway, Sweden, and southern Finland have a humid continental climate with four seasons. Farther north are subarctic regions, with long, cold winters and short summers. Tundra and ice cap climates produce extremely cold temperatures year-round.

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Making Inferences Fewer people live in the northern portion of the region than in the southern portion. List all of the factors that you can think of which might help explain this pattern.

Underline the sentences that describe energy resources located in the North Sea.

How does the North Atlantic Drift affect the climate?

Northern Europe

Section 2



MAIN IDEAS

1. Invaders and a global empire have shaped the history of the British Isles.
2. British culture, such as government and music, has influenced much of the world.
3. Efforts to bring peace to Northern Ireland and maintain strong economies are important issues in the British Isles today.

Key Terms and Places

constitutional monarchy a type of democracy in which a king or queen serves as head of state, but a legislature makes the laws

Magna Carta a document that limited the powers of kings and required everyone to obey the law

disarm give up all weapons

London the capital of the United Kingdom

Dublin the capital of Ireland

Section Summary

HISTORY

The Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom make up the British Isles. The United Kingdom consists of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Celts, Romans, Angles, Saxons, Vikings, and Normans invaded Britain in its early history. Over time England grew in strength, and by the 1500s it had become a world power. England eventually formed the United Kingdom with Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. It then developed a strong economy thanks to the Industrial Revolution and its colonies abroad.

The British Empire stretched around the world by 1900, but later declined. The Republic of Ireland won its independence in 1921. By the mid-1900s Britain had given up most of its colonies.

What two countries make up the British Isles?

Underline the sentence that lists the countries that formed the United Kingdom.

Section 2, *continued*

CULTURE

The United Kingdom is a **constitutional monarchy**, a type of democracy in which a monarch serves as head of state, but a legislature makes the laws. England first limited the power of monarchs during the Middle Ages in a document called the **Magna Carta**. Ireland has a president that serves as head of state and a prime minister who runs the government along with Parliament.

The people of the British Isles share many culture traits, but each culture is also unique. The people of Ireland and Scotland keep many traditions alive, and immigrants from all over the world add new traits to the culture of the British Isles.

British popular culture has influenced people around the world. British literature and music are well known and the English language is used in many countries.

In what ways are the governments of the United Kingdom and Ireland similar and different?

Underline the sentence that describes the importance of British popular culture.

BRITISH ISLES TODAY

Conflict in Northern Ireland remains an important issue. Many Catholics there feel they have not been treated fairly by Protestants who control the government. Some groups have refused to **disarm**, or give up all weapons. But hopes are high that a peaceful settlement will be reached.

The economies in the British Isles are very strong. **London**, the capital of the United Kingdom, is a center for world trade, and the country has reserves of oil and natural gas in the North Sea. **Dublin**, the capital of Ireland, has attracted new industries like computers and electronics.

What two groups are in conflict in Northern Ireland?

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Identify Cause and Effect Make a list of well-known British authors and/or musicians. Select one for further research and write a brief report about his or her accomplishments and influence.

Northern Europe

Section 3



MAIN IDEAS

1. The history of Scandinavia dates back to the time of the Vikings.
2. Scandinavia today is known for its peaceful and prosperous countries.

Key Terms and Places

Vikings Scandinavian warriors who raided Europe in the early Middle Ages

Stockholm Sweden's capital and largest city

neutral not taking sides in an international conflict

uninhabitable not able to support human settlement

Oslo the capital of Norway

Helsinki Finland's capital and largest city

geyser a spring that shoots hot water and steam into the air

Section Summary

HISTORY

Vikings were Scandinavian warriors who raided Europe during the Middle Ages. They were greatly feared and conquered the British Isles, Finland, and parts of France, Germany, and Russia.

Vikings were excellent sailors. They were the first Europeans with settlements in Iceland and Greenland and the first Europeans to reach North America. They stopped raiding in the 1100s and focused on strengthening their kingdoms. Norway, Sweden, and Denmark competed for control of the region, and by the late 1300s Denmark ruled all the Scandinavian Kingdoms and territories. Sweden eventually broke away, taking Finland, and later Norway, with it. Norway, Finland, and Iceland became independent countries during the 1900s. Greenland remains part of Denmark as a self-ruling territory.

Underline the sentence that tells areas that Vikings explored.

What three countries did not become independent until the 1900s?

Section 3, *continued*

SCANDINAVIA TODAY

Scandinavians share many things, including culture traits like similar political views, languages, and religions. They enjoy high standards of living, are well-educated, and get free health care. The countries have strong economies and large cities.

Each country is unique as well. Sweden has the largest area and population. Most people live in the south in large town and cities. **Stockholm** is Sweden’s capital and largest city. For about 200 years, Sweden has been **neutral**, choosing not to take sides in international conflicts.

Denmark is the smallest country and the most densely populated. Its economy relies on excellent farmland and modern industries. Greenland is a territory of Denmark but most of it is covered with ice and is **uninhabitable**, or not able to support human settlement.

Norway has one of the longest coastlines in the world. **Oslo** is Norway’s capital, a leading seaport and industrial center. Important industries include timber, shipping and fishing. Oil and natural gas provide Scandinavia with the highest per capita **GDP** in the region, however, oil fields in the North Sea are expected to run out during the next century.

Finland relies on trade and exports paper and other forest products. Shipbuilding and electronics are also important. **Helsinki** is its capital and largest city.

Iceland has fertile farmland and rich fishing grounds. Tourists come to see its volcanoes, glaciers, and **geysers**, springs that shoot hot water and steam into the air. Geothermal energy heats many buildings.

Underline the sentence that lists culture traits Scandinavians share.

What is the largest country in area? What is the smallest?

Why are tourists attracted to Iceland?

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Compare and Contrast Compare and contrast the countries of Scandinavia with the United States. In what ways are they similar? In what ways are they different?

Mary, Queen of Scots

1542–1587



HOW SHE AFFECTED THE WORLD Mary, Queen of Scots is Scotland's most famous queen, known for her beauty and charm. She was a successful ruler for a time. Eventually, she was forced out of Scotland and beheaded in England at the age of 44.



As you read the biography below, think about how likeable Mary must have been to win over the Scottish people.



Mary Stuart was only six days old when her father died, making her Queen of Scotland. At age five, Mary's mother, a Frenchwoman, sent her to France to be brought up at the court of King Henry II. At that time, she was **betrothed** to the heir to the French throne.

During her time in France, Mary became a true **Renaissance** princess, educated in several languages, music, and poetry. She also loved outdoor activities such as golf, archery, and hunting. Through her marriage to Francis II in 1558, Mary actually became the queen of France. It was short-lived, however, as Francis died in 1560.

Mary returned to Scotland the next year, only to find that she was a Catholic queen in a Protestant country. Because of her French education and manners, Scottish people thought of her as a Frenchwoman. Despite these challenges, she won the people over and ruled successfully for a time.

Mary's downfall started with her marriage to her English cousin, Lord Darnley, in 1565. Lord Darnley was unpopular with the people. Royal counselors advised Mary to get rid of him. In 1567 Darnley

VOCABULARY

betrothed arranged to marry

Renaissance period of cultural, scientific, and artistic change in European history

treason act of betraying one's country

was murdered. A few months later, Mary married the prime suspect. This made her unpopular with the Scots, and in 1567, she was imprisoned and forced to give up the throne to her infant son, James. In 1568, she fled to England.

Queen Elizabeth I, a cousin of Mary's, kept Mary imprisoned in England rather than turning her over to the Scottish government. Over the next 18 years, Mary tried unsuccessfully to escape. Mary was also linked to many plots to overthrow or kill Queen Elizabeth, as her family lineage gave her a claim to the English throne. Tired of the constant threat, Elizabeth eventually had her cousin tried for **treason**. Mary was beheaded in 1587.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

1. Analyze and Make Judgments How did Mary's choice in husbands affect her life?

2. Drawing Conclusions Why do you think Mary may have plotted against Queen Elizabeth?

ACTIVITY

Conduct additional research about Mary Stuart's life, and create a detailed family tree to show how she was related to other rulers of the time.