

## Northern and Southern Europe

### Lesson 1: Physical Geography of the Regions

#### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

*How do people adapt to their environment?*

#### Terms to Know

**glaciation** the weathering and erosion caused by the movement of glaciers

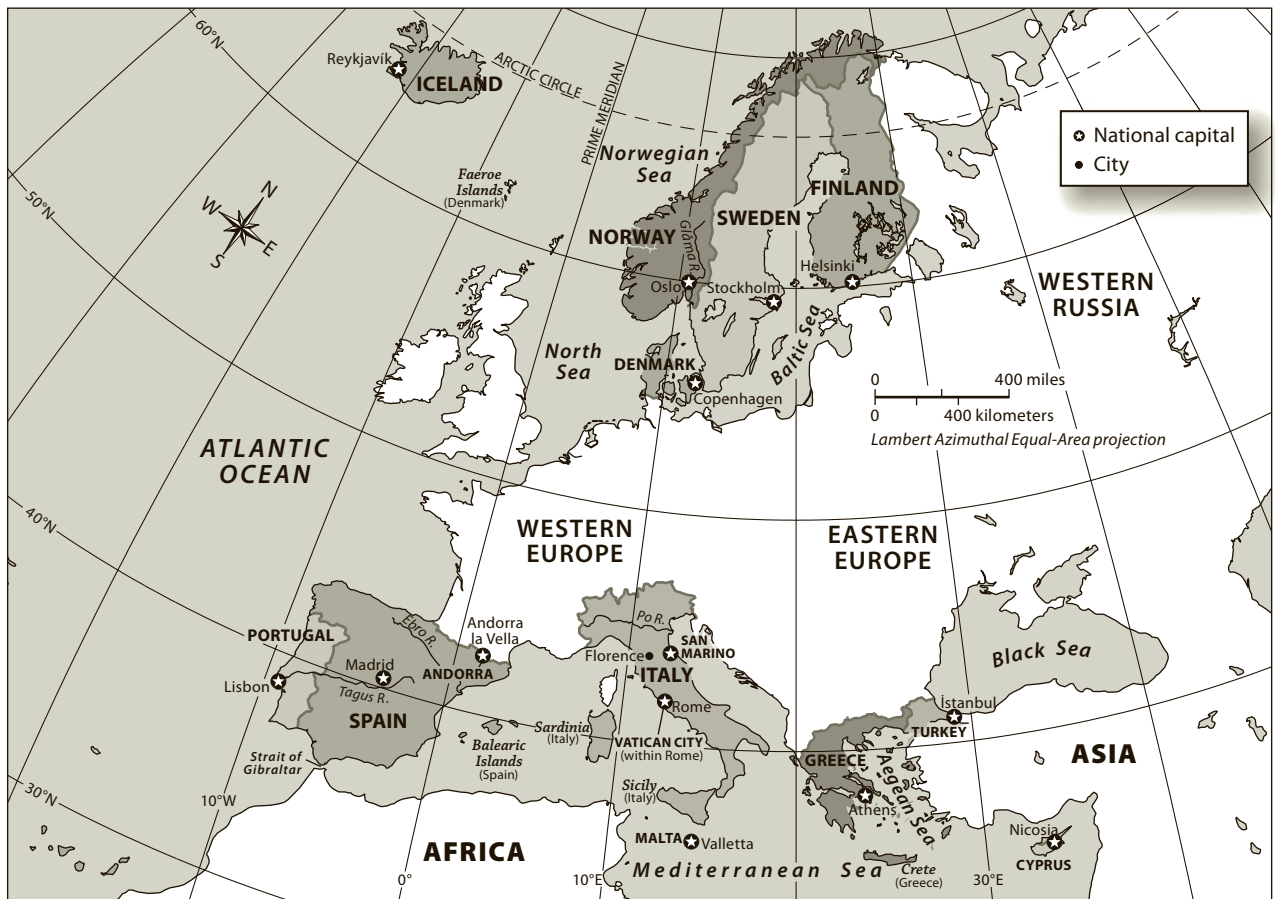
**fjord** a narrow, U-shaped coastal valley with steep sides formed by the action of glaciers

**tundra** a flat, treeless plain with permanently frozen ground

**scrubland** area with a dry climate where mostly short grasses and shrubs grow

**trawler** a large fishing boat

### Where in the World: Northern and Southern Europe



## Northern and Southern Europe

### Lesson 1: Physical Geography of the Regions, *continued*



#### Marking the Text

1. Read the text on the right. Underline all of the peninsulas in Northern and Southern Europe.



#### Marking the Text

2. Read the text on the right. Circle all the islands in Northern and Southern Europe. Underline the islands that are Italian. Double underline those that contain a Turkish territory.



#### Defining

3. In your own words, define *glaciation*.

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#### Reading Progress Check

4. Which landforms best characterize Northern Europe?

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## Landforms and Waterways

**Guiding Question** *How are the landforms in Northern and Southern Europe similar? How are they different?*

Much of Northern Europe is a land of rugged mountains, rocky soils, and jagged coasts. The coast of Southern Europe is dominated by the Mediterranean Sea. The table below lists the countries in both regions.

Region	Countries
<b>Northern Europe</b>	The Nordic Countries: Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Iceland
<b>Southern Europe</b>	Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece, Malta, Andorra, San Marino, Vatican City, Cyprus, western Turkey, Gibraltar

Two peninsulas make up most of Northern Europe. A peninsula is an area of land surrounded on three sides by water. Jutland extends northward from Germany and includes most of Denmark. The Scandinavian Peninsula is made up of Norway and Sweden. Finland is the large landmass east of Sweden. Northern Europe also has many islands. Iceland is a large island near the Arctic Circle, and Denmark has about 400 islands.

In Southern Europe, Spain and Portugal are part of the Iberian Peninsula. Most of Italy is on the long, boot-shaped Italian peninsula. East of Italy, the larger Balkan Peninsula includes several Eastern European nations, with Greece on its southern tip. The islands of Southern Europe include the Italian islands of Sicily and Sardinia and the Greek island of Crete. Malta is made up of several islands. The island of Cyprus contains both the independent nation of Cyprus and the Turkish territory of North Cyprus.

In the north, the Scandinavian Peninsula contains a spine of rugged mountains. Its terrain also has mountains and plateaus which were formed by **glaciation**. Glaciation occurs when glaciers, or moving masses of ice, cause weathering and erosion. Iceland's rugged terrain was formed by volcanoes. Iceland has more than 200 volcanoes and Europe's largest glacier.

In the south, the Pyrenees mark the boundary between France and the Iberian Peninsula. The Alps form the northern boundary of Italy, while the Apennines extend along Italy's length. Greece has rugged highlands. Most of Spain lies on a plateau called the Meseta Central. The Tagus River divides Portugal into areas of rolling plains and hills and valleys.

## Northern and Southern Europe

### Lesson 1: Physical Geography of the Regions, *continued*

Northern Europe has few important rivers, but has a long coastline with many seas and bays. Much of Norway's west coast is dotted by **fjords**, or narrow, water-filled valleys formed by glaciers. The Baltic Sea borders Sweden and Finland.

The most important body of water in Southern Europe is the Mediterranean Sea. It stretches almost 2,500 miles (4,023 km) from the southern coast of Spain to the west coasts of Greece, Turkey, and parts of Southwest Asia. Important rivers in Southern Europe include the Po in Italy, the Ebro in Spain, and the Tagus on the Iberian Peninsula.

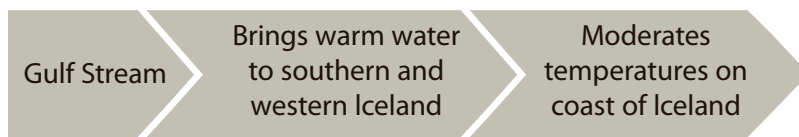
### Contrasting Climates

**Guiding Question** *How is the climate of Northern Europe different from the climate of Southern Europe?*

In Northern Europe, the Norwegian Current flows past Norway carrying warm water from the tropics. This gives western Norway a marine climate with mild winters and cool summers. Mountains reduce the air going west, so eastern Norway has colder and snowier winters.

Finland's climate is continental because the seas do not influence it. It has cold winters and hot summers. In northern Finland, the land is mostly **tundra**. This is where subsoil is frozen and only plants such as lichens and mosses can survive.

The Gulf Stream brings warm water to the southern and western coasts of Iceland. This moderates the temperatures in these parts of Iceland. The effect does not reach northern Iceland, though, where temperatures are colder year-round than elsewhere in the country.



Most of Southern Europe has a Mediterranean climate. Summers are warm or hot, and winters are cool or mild. Spring and fall are rainy, but summers are dry.

Temperatures are not the same across Southern Europe. Northern Italy is nearer the Alps and has a cooler mountain climate. Winters there are colder than in southern Italy, and snow is heavy at higher elevations. The Meseta Central in Spain has a continental climate. Its high elevation and mountains cause dry winds and drought throughout the year. This brings cold winters and hot summers.

#### **Marking the Text**

- Read the text on the left. Highlight the vocabulary word that describes an area where only lichens and mosses can survive.

#### **Marking the Text**

- Underline how the Gulf Stream affects temperatures in Iceland.

#### **Identifying**

- What kind of climate does most of Southern Europe have?

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#### **Reading Progress Check**

- How do landforms and waterways affect the climates of Norway and Italy?

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**Northern and Southern Europe**

**Lesson 1: Physical Geography of the Regions, *continued***

**? Identifying**

9. How do the countries of Northern Europe get much of their energy?

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**✓ Reading Progress Check**

10. How can a thriving fishing industry be a positive and a negative factor for a country?

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**Natural Resources**

**Guiding Question** *What natural resources are available to the people of Northern and Southern Europe?*

In Southern Europe’s dry climate, plants need to be resistant to drought. In fact, many areas are **scrubland**, or places where short grasses and shrubs are the most common plants. Grapes and olives are important crops, while wine and olive oil are important exports.

Northern Europe has forests, so the main plant resource there is wood. Finland exports birch, spruce, pine wood, and paper products. Sweden’s forests produce timber, paper, pulp, and furniture. Norway is Europe’s biggest exporter of oil and one of its leading suppliers of natural gas. Northern Europe also has rich mineral ore resources, with deposits of iron ore, copper, titanium, lead, nickel, and zinc.

Denmark uses wind turbines to supply much of its electricity. Sweden and Norway use hydroelectric power plants. Because of its volcanoes, Iceland has a great deal of geothermal energy.

Norway has one of the biggest fishing industries in Europe. Today, fewer people work in this industry, because ships that tow large nets behind them are able to catch large amounts of fish. These ships are called **trawlers**.

Spain and Portugal have long Atlantic Ocean coastlines, so fishing is an important industry there. It is also important to countries along the Mediterranean Sea, such as Italy and Greece. However, overfishing and pollution have hurt fish populations in the Mediterranean.

**Writing**

**Check for Understanding**

1. **Informative/Explanatory** How are the climates of Northern and Southern Europe alike and different?

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