

What You Will Learn...

Main Ideas

1. After a history of division and two world wars, Germany is now a unified country.
2. German culture, known for its contributions to music, literature, and science, is growing more diverse.
3. Germany today has Europe's largest economy, but eastern Germany faces challenges.
4. The Alpine Countries reflect German culture and have strong economies based on tourism and services.

The Big Idea

Germany and the Alpine Countries are prosperous countries with similar cultures.

Key Terms and Places

Berlin, p. 437
 chancellor, p. 439
 Vienna, p. 441
 cantons, p. 441
 Bern, p. 441

TAKING NOTES

Draw a copy of the chart below. As you read, list facts about each country.

Germany

Alpine Countries

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Germany and the Alpine Countries

If YOU lived there...

You are walking with your grandfather through Berlin, Germany. He begins telling you about a time when Germany was divided into two countries—one democratic and one Communist. A large wall even divided the city of Berlin. Germans could not pass freely through the wall. You think of your friends who live in eastern Berlin. They would have been on the other side of the wall back then.

What do you think life in Berlin was like then?

BUILDING BACKGROUND Since the Middle Ages, Germany and France have been the dominant countries in West-Central Europe. Both are large and prosperous with hardworking people and good farmland. The two countries have often been at war, but today they are partners in building a cooperative European Union.

History of Germany

Some countries have had a strong influence on world events. Germany is one of these countries. From its location in the heart of Europe, Germany has shaped events across Europe and the world—for both good and bad.

Growth of a Nation

In ancient times, tribes from northern Europe settled in the land that is now Germany. The Romans called this region Germania, after the name of one of the tribes. Over time, many small German states developed in the region. Princes ruled these states. With the support of the Roman Catholic Church, these states became part of the Holy Roman Empire.

For hundreds of years, Germany remained a loose association of small states. Then in 1871, Prussia, the strongest state, united Germany into one nation. As a unified nation, Germany developed into an industrial and military world power.

Germany: Political



The Brandenburg Gate, above, connects eastern and western Berlin. For 28 years, the Berlin Wall blocked the gate. It reopened in 1989.



Geography Skills

Regions The former countries of East Germany and West Germany reunited in 1990 to form one country.

1. **Locate** Where is Germany's capital located?
2. **Contrast** How does river access to the sea differ between former East and West Germany?

War and Division

In 1914–1918, Germany fought and lost World War I. Payments for war damages and a major depression severely hurt the German economy. Looking for a strong leader, Germans found Adolf Hitler and his Nazi Party. Hitler promised the Germans to restore their country to its former glory.

In 1939 Germany attacked Poland, starting World War II. Soon, Germany had conquered much of Europe. The Nazis also sought to kill all European Jews in what is called the Holocaust. Germany lost the war, though. By 1945 it lay in ruins, defeated.

After the war, British, French, and U.S. troops occupied West Germany. The Soviet Union's troops occupied East Germany. Over time, two countries emerged.

The city of **Berlin** was in Communist East Germany. Even so, West Germany kept control of the western part of the city.

In 1961 Communist leaders built the Berlin Wall. The Wall's **purpose** was to prevent East Germans from fleeing to West Berlin.

A Reunited Germany

After World War II, U.S. aid helped West Germany rebuild rapidly. It soon became an economic power. East Germany rebuilt as well, but its economy lagged. In addition, its people had limited freedoms.

In 1989 movements for democracy swept through Eastern Europe. Communist governments began collapsing. Joyful East Germans tore down the Berlin Wall. In 1990 East and West Germany reunited.

READING CHECK **Finding Main Ideas** What major challenges has Germany overcome?

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

purpose the reason something is done

German Culture

Germany's long history has enriched its culture. Historic castles dot the landscape, and long-held traditions continue. Blending with this history is a modern culture that includes a love of sports.

A Bavarian Castle King Ludwig II of Bavaria had the fairy-tale Neuschwanstein (noy-SHWAHN-shtyn) Castle built in the mid-1800s. The castle sits amid the Bavarian Alps in southern Germany.



Culture of Germany

Germans are known as hardworking and efficient people. At the same time, they enjoy their traditions and celebrating their cultural achievements.

People

Most Germans share a common heritage. About 90 percent are ethnic German, and most speak German. In recent years, significant numbers of immigrants have come to Germany to live and work as well. These immigrants include Turks, Italians, and refugees from Eastern Europe. Their influence is making German culture more diverse.

Religion

In 1517 Martin Luther, a German monk, helped start the Reformation. This religious reform movement led to the development of Protestant churches. Many Germanic states became Protestant; others remained Roman Catholic. Today in north and central Germany, most people are Protestant. In the south, most are Catholic. In eastern Germany, fewer Germans have religious ties, reflecting the area's Communist past.

Customs

Festivals and holidays tell us much about German culture. Religious festivals are very popular. For example, many areas hold festivals before the Christian season of Lent. In addition, Christmas is a major family event. The tradition of the Christmas tree even began in Germany.

Each region has local festivals as well. The best known is Oktoberfest in Bavaria, the region of southeast Germany. This festival is held each fall in Munich (MYOO-nik) to celebrate the region's food and drink.

The Arts and Sciences

Germany's contributions to the arts and sciences are widely admired. In music, Germany has produced famed classical composers, such as Johann Sebastian Bach and Ludwig van Beethoven. In literature, author Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (GOOH-tuh) ranks among Europe's most important writers. In science, Germans have made contributions in chemistry, engineering, medicine, and physics.

READING CHECK Summarizing What contributions have Germans made to world culture?

Soccer Fans

German soccer fans celebrate a victory. Soccer is the most popular sport in Germany. The country hosted the soccer World Cup in 2006.



Christmas Markets

German Christmas markets and fairs like this one have been popular for centuries. Booths sell trees, crafts, and food. Rides and music provide entertainment.



Germany Today

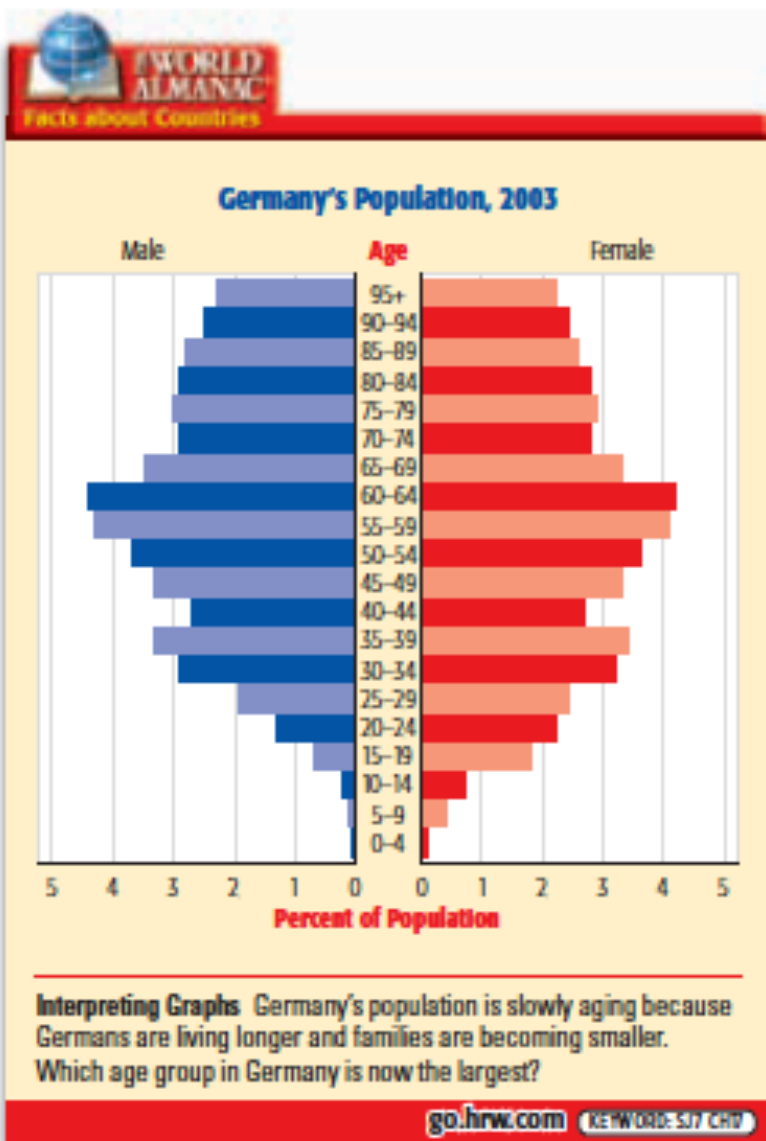
Despite a stormy history, Germany has endured. Today the country is a leading power in Europe and the world.

Government and Economy

Germany is a federal republic. A parliament chooses a **chancellor, or prime minister**, to run the government. The parliament also helps elect a president, whose duties are largely ceremonial. On the world stage, Germany belongs to the EU and NATO.

Germany's market economy has helped the country become an economic giant. It is Europe's largest economy, producing nearly one-fifth of all goods and services in the EU. The nation exports a wide range of products. You may be familiar with German cars, such as BMWs or Volkswagens.

The German economy is based on industry, such as chemicals, engineering, and steel. The main industrial district is the Ruhr, located in western Germany. Fewer Germans farm than in the past, but agriculture remains important. Major crops include grain, potatoes, and grapes. Timber is harvested in the south.



FOCUS ON READING

Use a dictionary to find the origin of *lag*. How does the word's origin relate to its meaning here?

Economic growth has slowed since East and West Germany reunited, however. The economy of former East Germany continues to lag. The region also suffers high unemployment. Germany's government is working to solve these problems.

Cities

Most Germans live in cities. The largest city is Berlin, the capital. During World War II, Berlin suffered major destruction. Today Germans have restored their capital to its former splendor. A historic city, it has wide boulevards and many parks.

Other major German cities include Hamburg, a key port city on the North Sea, and Munich, a cultural and manufacturing center. Like France, Germany has an excellent transportation system that links its cities. Germany's highway system, the Autobahn, is one of the best in the world.

READING CHECK Analyzing How has the reunification of Germany affected its economy?

The Alpine Countries

The beauty of the Alps draws many tourists to Austria and Switzerland. These countries are called the Alpine Countries after the Alps, which cover much of them.

Austria and Switzerland have many similarities. Both are landlocked. Both are heavily influenced by German culture and were once part of the Holy Roman Empire. Yet, the countries have their differences.

Austria

Austria was once the center of one of the most powerful empires in Europe. The royal Habsburg family came to control this empire. At its height, the Habsburg line ruled the Netherlands, Spain, and much of Germany, Italy, and Eastern Europe.

In 1918, however, the Habsburgs were on the losing side of World War I. After the war, Austria became a republic. Since then, Austria has grown into a modern, industrialized nation. Today it is a federal republic and EU member.

The Alpine Countries



Austria and Switzerland draw millions of tourists each year. Above, tourists ride through Vienna, Austria, famous for its history and culture. At left, a mountain village shows the beauty of the Swiss Alps.

Most Austrians speak German and are Roman Catholic. The city of **Vienna** is Austria's capital and largest city. Located on the banks of the Danube, Vienna was once the center of Habsburg rule. Today historic palaces grace the city, which is a center of music and the fine arts.

Austria has a prosperous economy with little unemployment. Service industries, such as banking, are important and employ more than half of Austria's workforce. Tourism is important as well.

Switzerland

Since the 1600s Switzerland has been an independent country. Today it is a federal republic with 26 districts called **cantons**. Citizens are active in local government. In addition, all male citizens serve for a period in the militia, a citizen army.

Switzerland's location in the Alps has helped it remain **neutral** for centuries. To stay neutral, Switzerland has not joined the EU or NATO. The Swiss are active in international organizations, however.

As the map shows, the Swiss speak several languages. The main languages are German and French. Switzerland's capital, **Bern**, is centrally located to be near both German- and French-speaking regions.

Switzerland has one of the world's highest standards of living. It is famous for its banks, watches and other precision devices, and chocolate and cheese.

READING CHECK **Contrasting** How are the countries of Austria and Switzerland different?

SUMMARY AND PREVIEW You have read that Germany is an economic power with a rich culture, while the Alpine Countries are prosperous with beautiful mountain scenery. In the next chapter you will learn about Northern Europe.



Section 3 Assessment

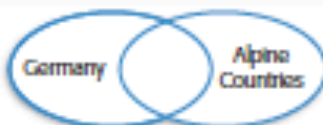
go.hrw.com
Online Quiz
KEYWORD: SJ7 HPV

Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and Places

1. **a. Identify** Why is Adolf Hitler significant in history?
b. Sequence What events led to German reunification?
2. **a. Recall** What are some popular festivals in Germany?
b. Contrast How does religion differ across Germany?
3. **a. Describe** What is the role of Germany's **chancellor**?
b. Explain Why has Germany's economy slowed?
4. **a. Define** What are **cantons**, and where are they found?
b. Analyze How are the Alps a valuable resource?

Critical Thinking

5. **Comparing and Contrasting**
Draw a Venn diagram like this one. Use your notes to list the differences and similarities.



FOCUS ON SPEAKING

6. **Describing Germany and the Alpine Countries** For each country, note one issue for your speech. For example, you might argue that the Alps are the region's loveliest area.