

RESOURCE LIBRARY  
ACTIVITY : 50 MINS

## Compare Changes in Europe to Your State or Region

Students compare changes in Europe over the past 100 years to maps of their own state or region and identify similarities.

### GRADES

6 - 8

### SUBJECTS

*Geography, Human Geography, Social Studies, World History*

## OVERVIEW

Students compare changes in Europe over the past 100 years to maps of their own state or region and identify similarities.

For the complete activity with media resources, visit:

<http://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/compare-changes-in-europe-to-your-state-or-region/>

## DIRECTIONS

### 1. View maps of your local area or state over time.

Project or distribute the maps you gathered of your local area or state over time. For each map, make sure students can identify the type of map, recognize key map elements, and interpret the information in the maps. Answer questions, as needed.

### 2. Have small groups compare changes in Europe to your state or region.

Divide students into small groups. Remind them of the changes in Europe over the past 100 years that they explored in Lesson 9, Activity 1. Write the following question on the board: *Compare the changes in Europe over the past 100 years to our own state or region. Think about physical and cultural features, and changes in borders over time. Do you see any similarities between changes in Europe and changes in our own state?* Provide groups with enough time to analyze the maps, discuss the questions, and write notes about their ideas.

### 3. Have a whole-class discussion about groups' ideas.

Regroup as a whole class and invite volunteers from each small group to share their group's ideas about similarities between changes in Europe and changes in your local area or state. Encourage students to back up any opinions with facts and examples of physical features, cultural features, and border changes over time. Provide guidance, as needed, to help students discriminate between: true parallels in the changing borders of Europe and your state or region; and changes from causes not based on language, religion, or physical boundaries.

## Informal Assessment

Assess student answers to the question in the activity or have students write a brief summary about their own state in comparison to Europe.

## OBJECTIVES

## Subjects & Disciplines

### Geography

- Human Geography

### Social Studies

- World History

## Learning Objectives

Students will:

- make generalizations about what they have learned about changes in Europe
- identify similar patterns of change in their local area or state

# Teaching Approach

- Learning-for-use

# Teaching Methods

- Cooperative learning
- Discussions

# Skills Summary

This activity targets the following skills:

- Critical Thinking Skills
  - Analyzing
  - Applying
  - Understanding
- Geographic Skills
  - Acquiring Geographic Information
  - Analyzing Geographic Information

# National Standards, Principles, and Practices

## NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM STANDARDS

- Theme 2:

Time, Continuity, and Change

- Theme 3:

People, Places, and Environments

## NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS

- Standard 1:

How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information

• **Standard 17:**

How to apply geography to interpret the past

• **Standard 18:**

How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.

## **Preparation**

## **What You'll Need**

### **MATERIALS YOU PROVIDE**

- Maps of your state or local area over time
- Pencils
- Pens

### **REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY**

- Internet Access: Optional
- Tech Setup: 1 computer per classroom, Projector

### **PHYSICAL SPACE**

- Classroom

### **GROUPING**

- Large-group instruction
- Small-group instruction

### **OTHER NOTES**

Before starting this activity, you will need to gather electronic or hard copy versions of several maps of your state or local area over time.

## **BACKGROUND & VOCABULARY**

# **Background Information**

During this unit on using maps to understand European physical and cultural landscapes, students have developed skills in map analysis and mapping that analysis to specific situations. Having students compare changes in Europe to changes in their own state, local area, or communities through maps serves a dual purpose: it helps move students toward the goal of seeing maps as tools for understanding our world; and it also helps students find personal relevance in the content, which will help them to retain the information they have learned.

## Prior Knowledge

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## Recommended Prior Activities

- None

## Vocabulary

<b>Term</b>	<b>Part of Speech</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>border</b>	<i>noun</i>	natural or artificial line separating two pieces of land.
<b>country</b>	<i>noun</i>	geographic territory with a distinct name, flag, population, boundaries, and government.
<b>map</b>	<i>noun</i>	symbolic representation of selected characteristics of a place, usually drawn on a flat surface.
<b>physical features</b>	<i>noun</i>	naturally occurring geographic characteristics.
<b>region</b>	<i>noun</i>	any area on Earth with one or more common characteristics. Regions are the basic units of geography.
<b>state</b>	<i>noun</i>	political unit in a nation, such as the United States, Mexico, or Australia.

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### For Further Exploration

#### Articles & Profiles

- [National Geographic Education: Europe—Physical Geography](#)

- [National Geographic Education: Europe—Human Geography](#)

## Maps

- [NG MapMaker 1-Page Map: Europe](#)
- [National Geographic Education: Europe MapMaker Kit](#)
- [NG MapMaker Interactive: Europe](#)

## Websites

- [National Geographic Education: National Teacher Leadership Academy \(NTLA\)](#)



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