Rebuilding to Expansion

Trace how postwar growth shaped a changing Europe.

MWH.C.7.6.G "Explore key components of Western Europe's postwar rise in prosperity and stability (e.g., economic recovery and development, trade and innovation, rising living standards) and how these conditions shaped Europe's post-Cold War trajectory."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two ways Western Europe rebuilt or expanded its economy, circle one change in daily life, and number two ways earlier cooperation shaped Europe after the Cold War.

From Recovery to a Larger Union

1 In 1948, a family in western Germany might have seen damaged rail lines and scarce goods left by World War II. Across Western Europe, governments rebuilt roads, factories, and power systems. The United States provided aid through the Marshall Plan, which helped countries buy supplies and machinery. Recovery also depended on European workers, businesses, and government policies. As factories reopened, people found jobs and produced goods that could be sold at home and abroad. Economic recovery was not instant or equal everywhere, but working infrastructure and rising production made further growth possible.

2 Western European countries then made trade easier with one another. In 1951, six countries signed a treaty to pool coal and steel production, which was vital to factories and construction. In 1957, the same six signed a treaty to create the European Economic Community, which worked to reduce barriers to trade. Larger markets encouraged firms to improve products and invest in new machinery. Governments also expanded public health care, education, or housing programs, though policies differed by country. More families gained access to appliances, better housing, and longer schooling. Growth helped fund these programs, while healthier, better-trained workers could support continued growth.

3 When the Cold War ended around 1991, Western Europe had decades of experience cooperating across borders. Its growing economies and public services made membership in European institutions attractive to many newly democratic countries to the east. The European Union, founded in 1993, built on earlier trade cooperation and developed shared rules in more areas. In 2004, it admitted ten new members, including Poland and the Czech Republic. Expansion connected markets and helped anchor democratic reforms, but it also brought difficult debates about income gaps, migration, and who should set common rules. Postwar prosperity shaped these choices; it did not erase disagreement.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Marshall Plan aid and rebuilt infrastructure work together to support economic recovery?

2. How could pooling coal and steel and reducing trade barriers help firms grow?

3. Explain how economic growth and public services could strengthen each other.

4. What was one benefit and one difficulty of the EU's expansion after the Cold War?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 75 to 95 word museum label explaining a chain of at least three linked developments from postwar economic recovery to the EU's 2004 expansion. Include one tension expansion brought and explain why it mattered.

ANSWER KEY

Rebuilding to Expansion

HIGH SCHOOL · MWH.C.7.6.G

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two ways Western Europe rebuilt or expanded its economy, circle one change in daily life, and number two ways earlier cooperation shaped Europe after the Cold War. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Marshall Plan aid and rebuilt infrastructure work together to support economic recovery?	**Aid helped countries buy supplies and machinery, while rebuilt roads, factories, and power systems helped workers produce and sell goods.**
2	How could pooling coal and steel and reducing trade barriers help firms grow?	**Pooling vital industrial materials supported production, and fewer trade barriers gave firms larger markets that encouraged investment and improved products.**
3	Explain how economic growth and public services could strengthen each other.	**Growth helped fund services such as health care and education. Healthier, better-trained workers could then support further growth.**
4	What was one benefit and one difficulty of the EU's expansion after the Cold War?	**Expansion connected markets and helped anchor democratic reforms, but it also raised debates about issues such as income gaps, migration, or shared rules.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

After World War II, rebuilt factories allowed Western European workers to produce more goods. Marshall Plan aid helped countries buy supplies, while local governments and businesses supported recovery. Six countries then lowered trade barriers, giving firms larger markets and reasons to invest in machinery. Growing economies helped fund health care and education, raising living standards. This history of growth and cooperation made European institutions attractive after the Cold War. The EU admitted ten countries in 2004, but income gaps raised questions about how to share the benefits of a larger market.

Accept other accurate causal chains grounded in the passage. For the museum label, look for at least three linked developments, a post-Cold War outcome, and a tension whose importance is explained.