

Objective #13 - New farming technology, abundant labor, and widespread availability of horses contributed to agricultural success on the manors of Western Europe.

## Economy of Early Medieval Europe

### Population

Population dropped after fall of the Roman Empire.  
Fell drastically, from 36 to 26 million in 400 years.  
Population recovered, hitting 36 million again by 1000.  
Attributed to the economic expansion that stemmed from Europe's increasing influence in the Eastern hemisphere.

### Norse Merchant-Mariners

Sea trade flourished and North and Baltic Seas.  
Norse merchants went between Russia and Ireland, carrying animal goods, crops, and furs between the areas.  
Traveled down Russian rivers to the Black Sea, connected Western Europe with Byzantines and Abbasids.

### Agriculture

Heavy plows significantly increased agricultural production.  
Serfs cleared new lands for cultivation under lord's authority.  
Used horses instead of oxen to move plows faster.

### Rural Society

Agricultural production sustained political elite, but could not support development of cities.  
Region engaged in little commerce, as manors were self sufficient.  
Towns were few and not so populated, served as economic hubs only for areas around them.

### Mediterranean Trade

Local markets offered small-scale exchange between lands.  
Western Europeans traded with Muslims in Sicily, Spain, and Northern Africa.  
Never as prominent as the merchants of other lands.  
Caused spread of crops between Europe and Muslim realms.