

# Social history of Europe

Hartmut Kaelble

Presentation by Luigi Tenani

2° half of XX CE:

## HOT PEACE

- Unusually long peace
- Highly dynamical society
- Iron curtain: parallel Europes
- Link between society and politics
- Loss of global hegemony



## Distinctions to be considered

- **Industrialized core** (France, Germany, Belgium, Austria, UK...)  
**vs Rural periphery** (Italy, Iberia, Scandinavia, Ireland, Balkans...)
- **Hit by the war** (Germany, France, Italy, Balkans, Central East...)  
**vs Almost untouched** (Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Ireland...)  
**vs UK**
- **Colonial powers** (UK, France, Netherlands, Belgium...)
- **Aggressors** (Germany, Italy)



# The society we left behind: mid-20th CE Europe

- Predominance of agriculture
  - Family work
  - No labour market
- Lifelong marriage
  - Homecaring women
  - Breadwinning men
- Intensive within-family relations
  - Children growing at home
  - Rural life as centre even for urban laborers
- Streets and squares as social spaces



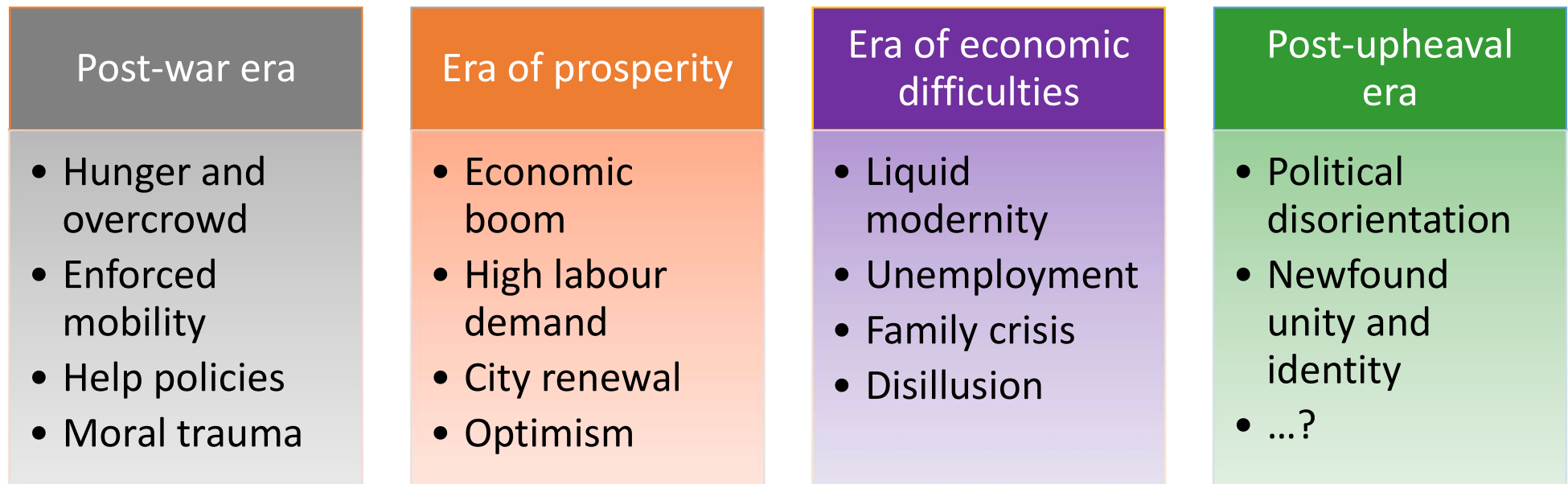


## The society we left behind: mid-20th CE Europe

- Strong distinction between social classes as well as nationalities, immigrants and natives, family clans
- Society of scarcity
- Low transport and communication possibilities
- Emigration towards America
  - Demographic growth
  - Very low immigration from Africa and Middle East



# The main periods of social history since 1945



# The processes of change

- Changes in work
- Changes in the nature of the family
- The rise of mass consumerism
- From class society to individualism
- Urban growth and immigration
- The rise of the modern welfare state

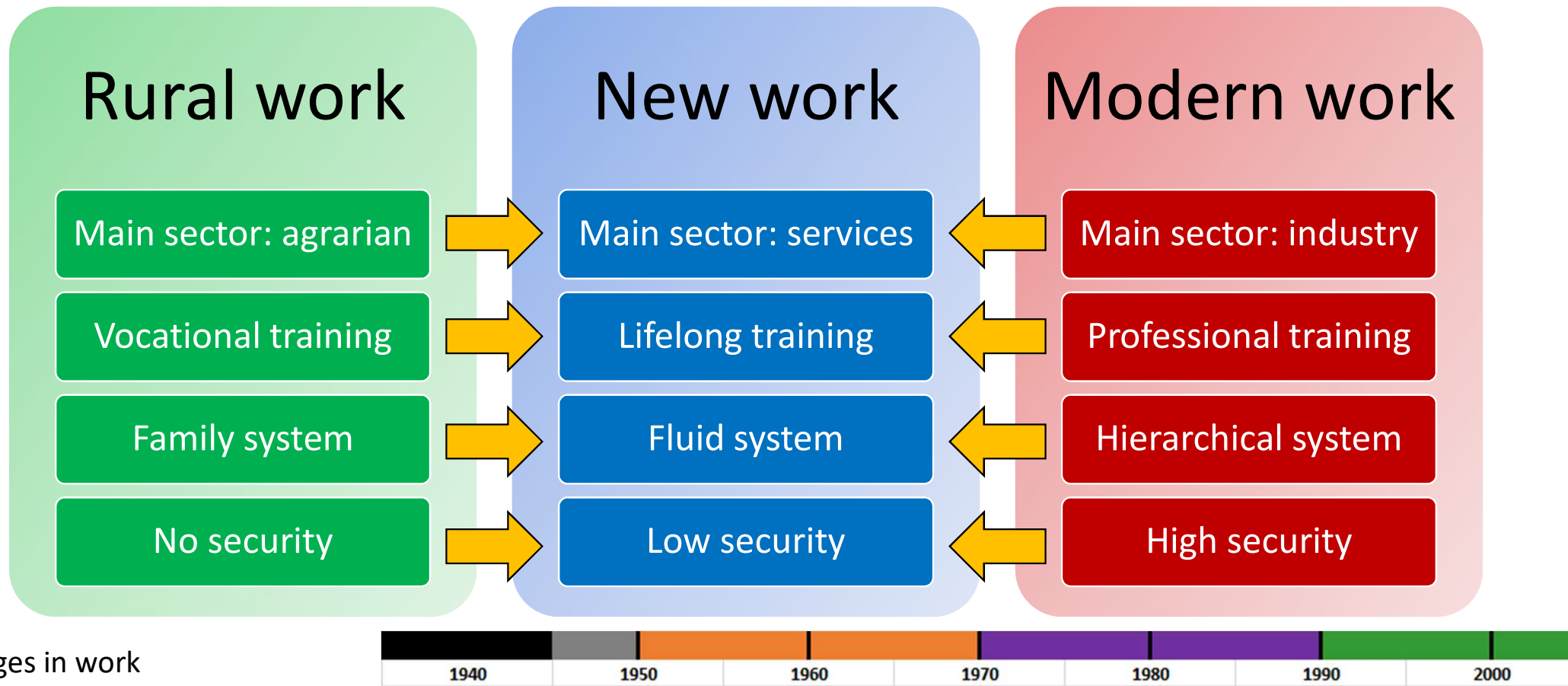


Changes in work





# From the dual society to the homogeneous society



Agriculture is still the main sector

Industry becomes the main sector

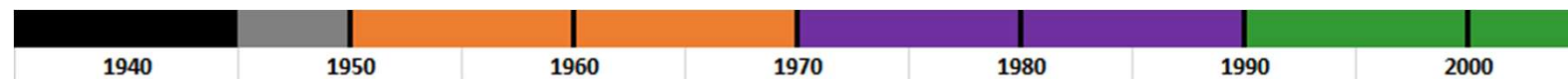
Service society penetrates  
rural areas

Industry still prevails

Service society rules

Service sector booms, causing  
unemployment in industry

Changes in work



## From hierarchical work...

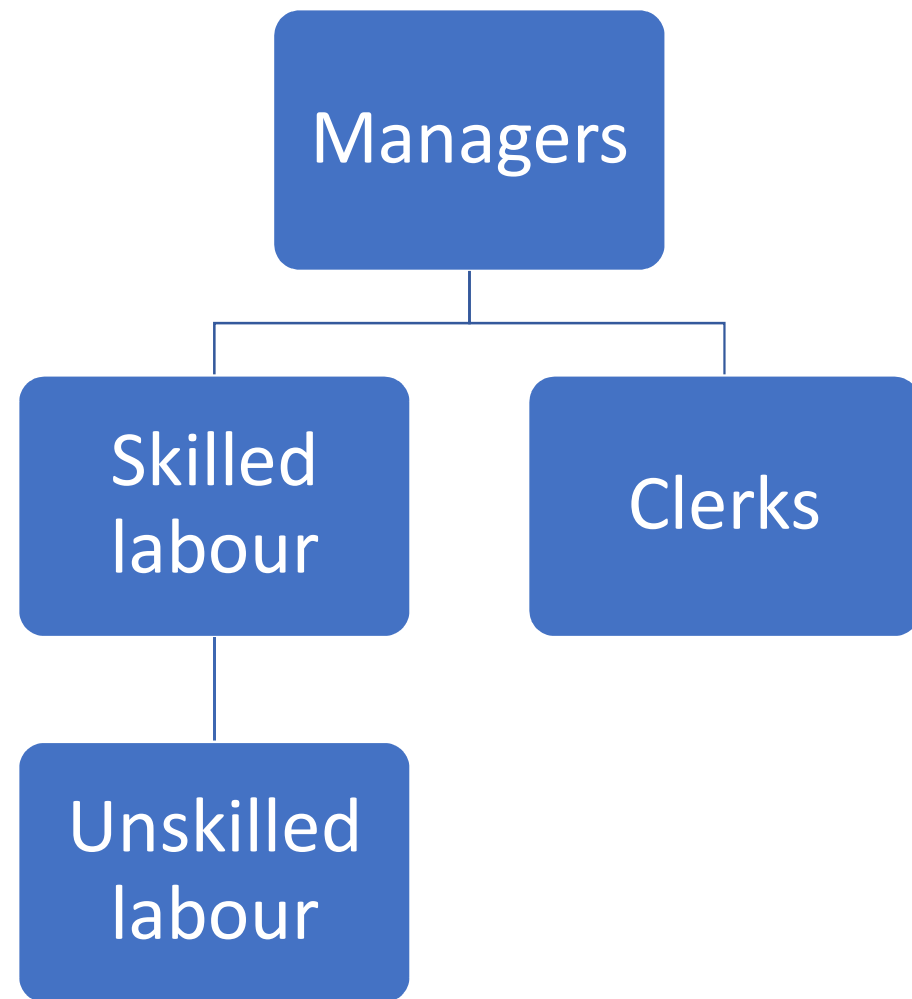
Higher and middle ranks are mostly male, highly specialized, and well-paid.

Lower ranks carry mindless work which require little specialization.

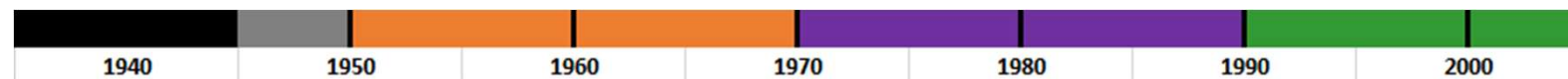
Middle and lower ranks associate in and are protected by **trade unions**.

Unemployment is low; workers expect to stay stably in the same company.

Social distinction is still remarkable.



Changes in work



## ...to flexible work

Robotics and computers replace many clerks and unskilled labour.

Organizations become less centralized.

Highly specialized labour is rarely linked to one company, and constantly changes workplace.

Unemployment rises.

Trade unions decline, failing to adapt to the new liquidity.

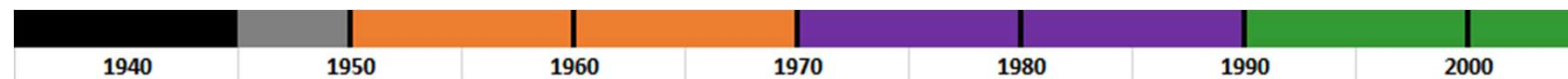
### Former worker's virtues

- Punctuality
- Loyalty
- Obedience
- Reliability

### New worker's virtues

- Flexibility
- Innovation
- Imagination
- Achievement

Changes in work



# Changes in the nature of the family



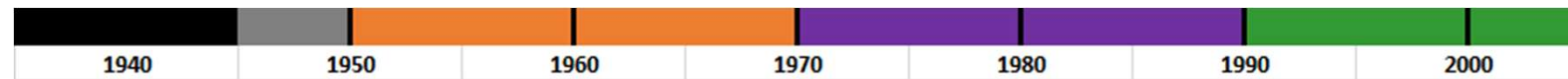
# Evolution of women's role in family and work

## Working mothers

- As men are conscripted, women start breadwinning.
- Divorce and illegitimate births are commonplace.
- As the state and market are broken, home returns the one fixed point in life.



Changes in the nature  
of the family





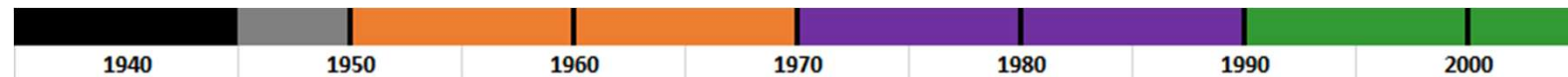
# Evolution of women's role in family and work

## Wives with incomes

- Mass consumption targets women as customers.
- Women are now economically independent, so marriages centre on love instead of convenience.

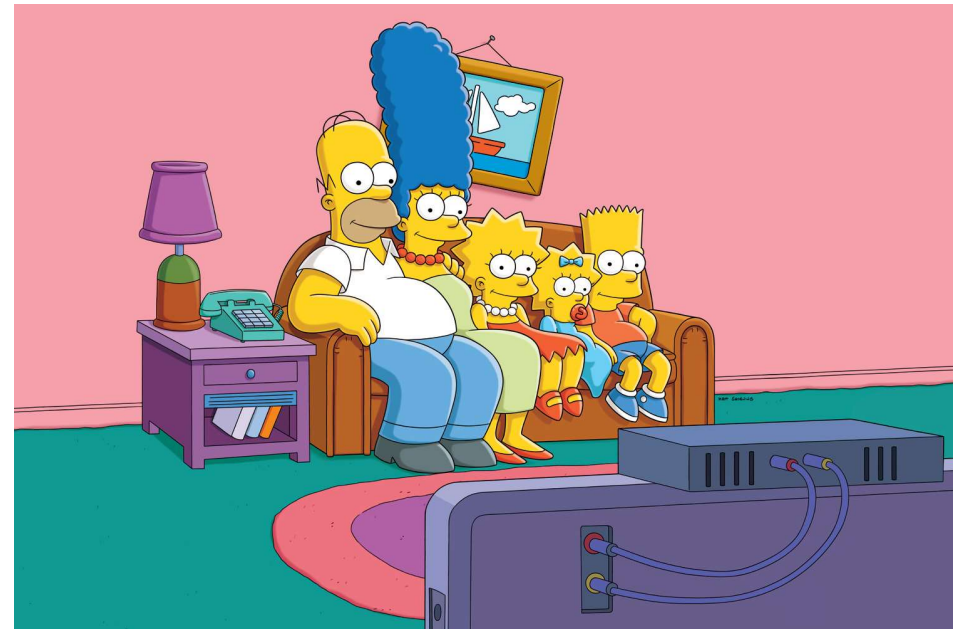


Changes in the nature  
of the family

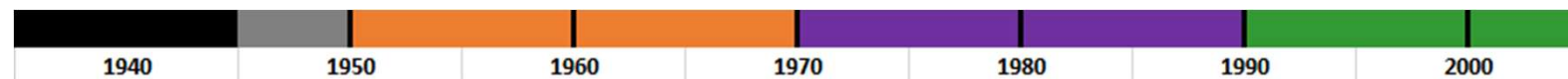


# Ambivalence in family development

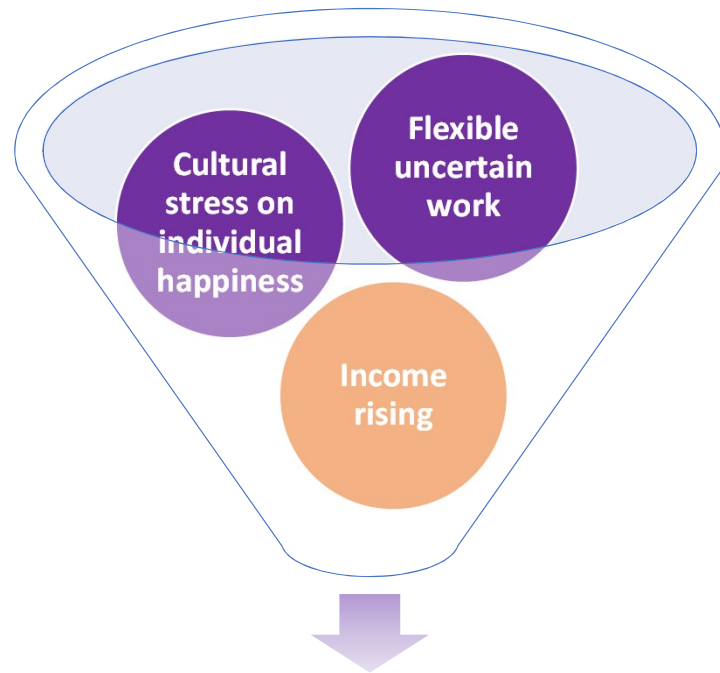
- More divided: children go to school while parents work. Family life is confined at dinners and weekends.
- More united: the TV becomes the new fireplace. As incomes rise, holiday becomes a common habit for European families. The governments create work and social policies with traditional families in mind.



Changes in the nature  
of the family



# The crisis of traditional family

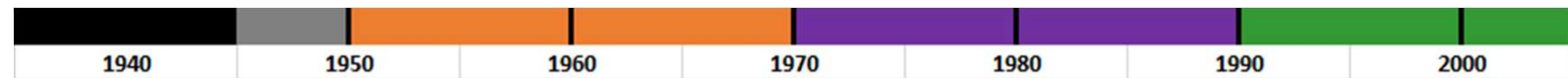


Traditional family crisis

New family models rise:

- Stable partnership without marriage
- One-parent family (usually mother)
- Children from more marriages
- Lifelong single status
- (later) Homosexual partnership

Changes in the nature  
of the family



# The rise of mass consumerism



Real income  
increase



More money is  
spent on food



Even MOAR money  
is spent on durable  
goods

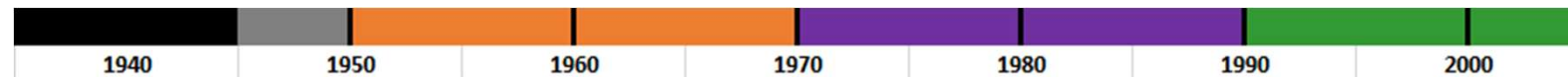


The income increase is so great that not only a higher amount of money is spent on food, but the relative salary spent on food actually decreases.

Families now invest in houses, cars, furniture and appliances.

Commerce replaces producer-consumer contact: supermarkets spawn and spread.

The rise of mass consumerism





# End of regional autarchy

- Holidays make Europeans travel the continent
- Common markets regulate international commerce
- Regional goods spread across the world



The rise of mass consumerism





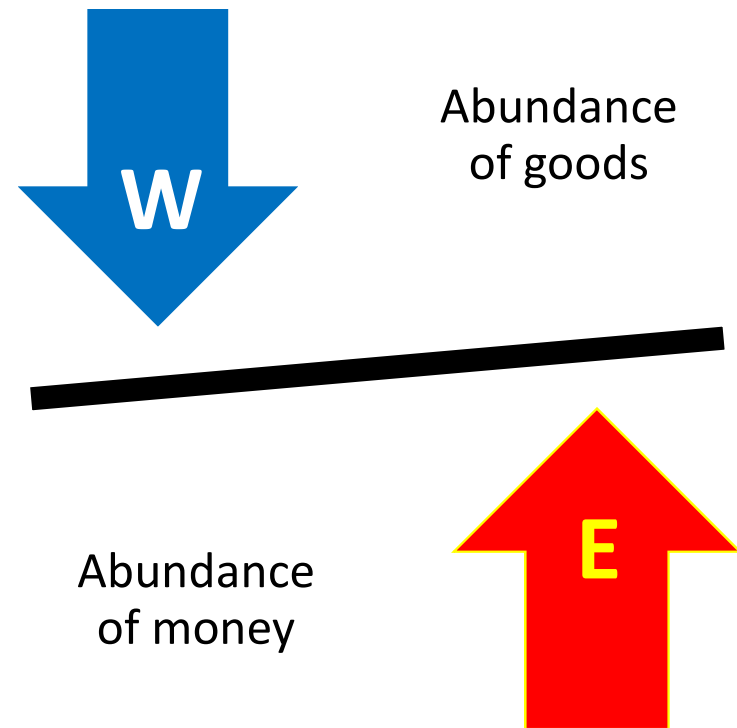
# The trend in Eastern Europe

The state, not the market, distributes goods.

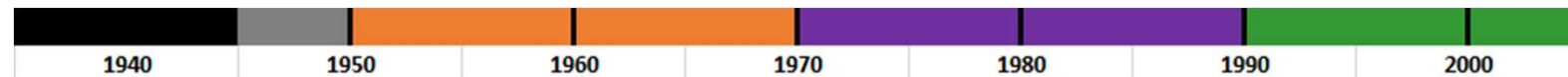
The socialist states of Eastern Europe never managed to produce enough to sustain their internal demand.

Many people can not afford to buy expensive durable goods. People's protests are regular.

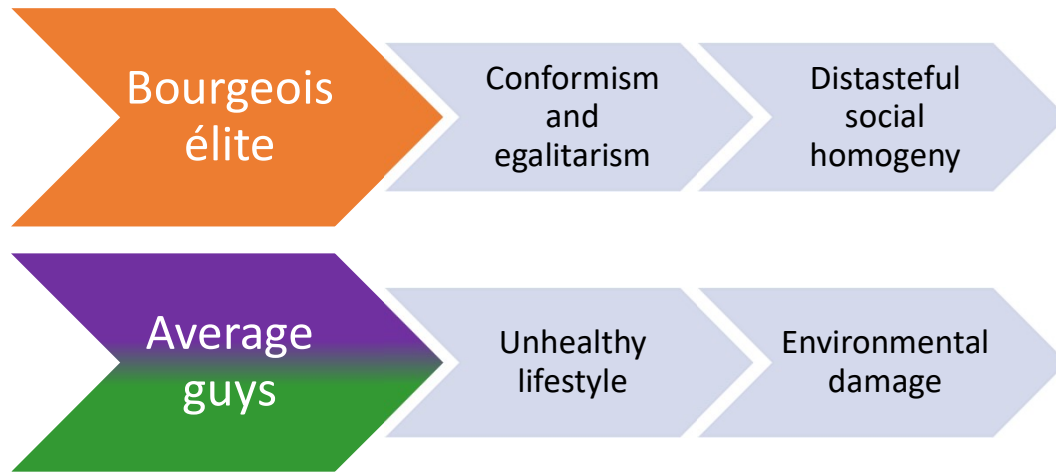
This has been the cardinal failure of the communist experiment, and the major cause of its breakdown.



The rise of mass consumerism



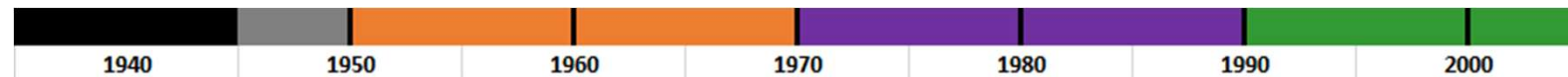
# Western protests against consumerism



Both currents accused Europe of  
**AMERICANIZATION.**

Is that nailed?

The rise of mass consumerism










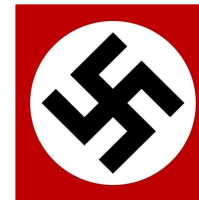
From class society  
to individualism



# Decline of social classes

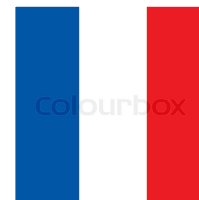
With different paces across Europe, the middle and lower classes have blended together.

-  The main difference, secure property, has been canceled by welfare.
-  Mass consumerism deleted the visible differences in clothing and lifestyle.
-   Fluid modernity brought novelty to the before immobile higher working ranks.
-   In Eastern countries, the class conflict evolved in a conflict with government.
-  After an initial time of massive social mobility, the bureaucratic élite cemented.



Proletariat is quickly destroyed

Bourgeoisie is quickly destroyed

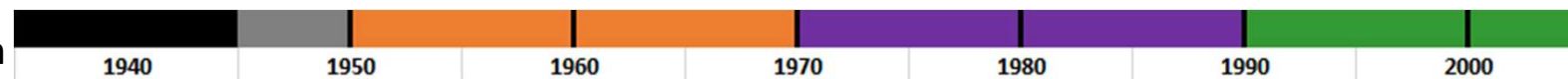


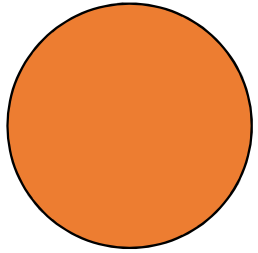
Bourgeoisie vanishes most slowly

Proletariat vanishes most slowly

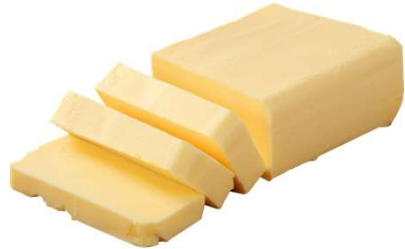


From class society to individualism

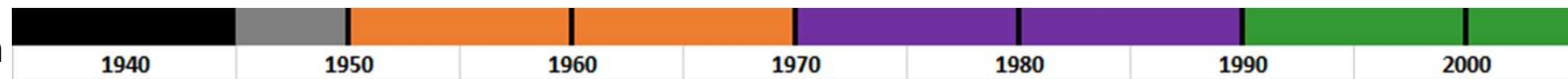




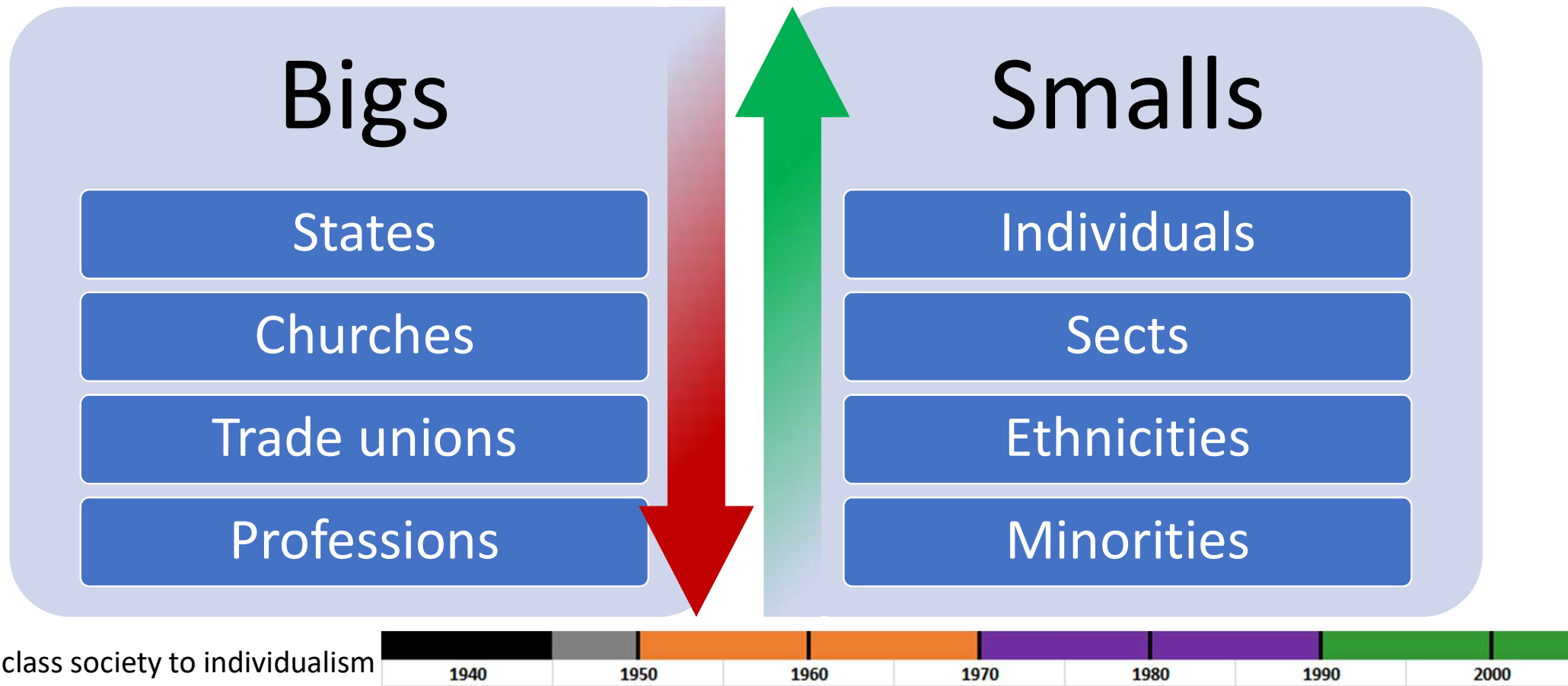
Mass consumerism deleted the visible differences in clothing and lifestyle



From class society to individualism



# SMALL institutions trump BIG institutions





# Urban growth and immigration



## Cities are dead

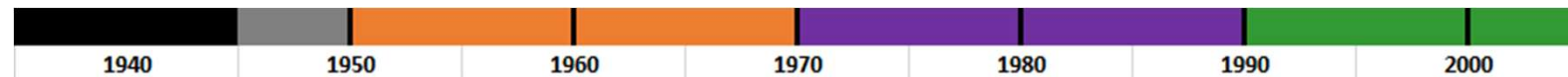
War has left many city centres destroyed.

Returning soldiers, refugees, dispersed families lead to overcrowd.

Housing and living conditions are depressing.



Urban growth and immigration



## Cities resurrect: urban planning

What remains of old centres is demolished and rebuilt.

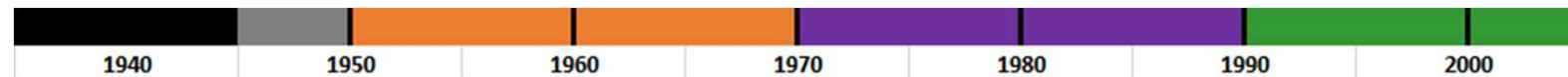
Cities are subdivided in districts and invaded by motorways.

Urban architecture consciously breaks with the past.

Service society establishes.



Urban growth and immigration



## The transformation is complete

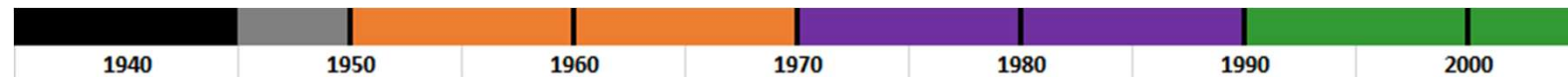
Europe is now homogeneously urbanized. The rural division is no more.

Cities feel unhealthy: cars rule the streets, pollution rises, waste and trash become real problems.

People demand new policies: pedestrian zones, parks, public transport systems.



Urban growth and immigration




# Migration to cities



Villages vanish as people transfer in towns for living and work.

Migration flows arrive from Southern Mediterranean and former colonies.

Migration policies become more restrictive.

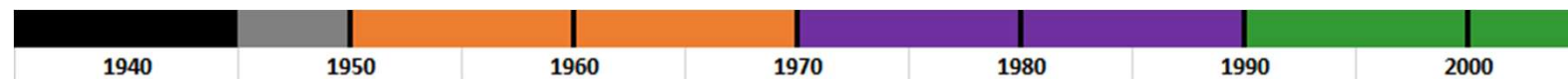


The iron curtain falls: people flow en masse from the East to the West.

Migrant communities become full societies.

Ethnic restaurants spread.

Urban growth and immigration





# The rise of the modern welfare state



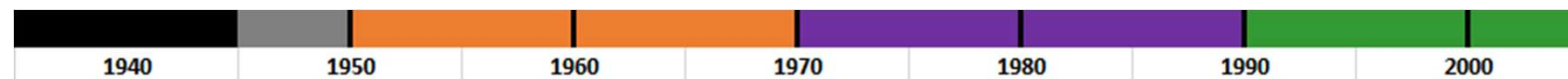


# Characteristics of the welfare state

- Minimum material well-being (income, housing, education)
- Guaranteed for everybody
- Right, not charity
- Help in specific situations (illness, unemployment, poverty...)



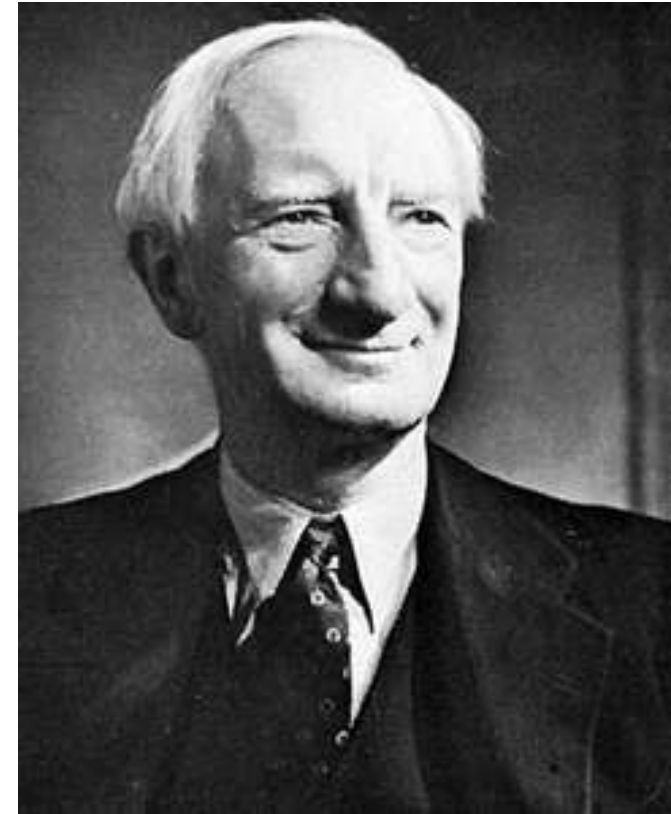
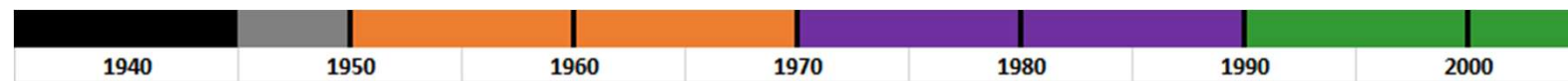
The rise of the modern welfare state



- Right after the war, public health and pension are established to help returning soldiers.
- With the economic boom, taxes flow into the states: governments can finance even bolder initiatives.



The rise of the modern welfare state

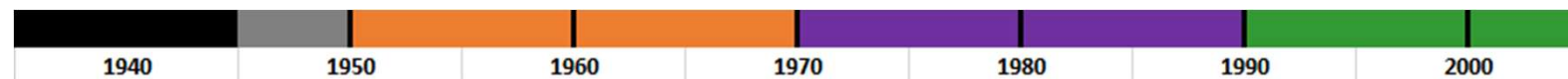


Willaim Beveridge (1879-1963)

# Differences between West and East

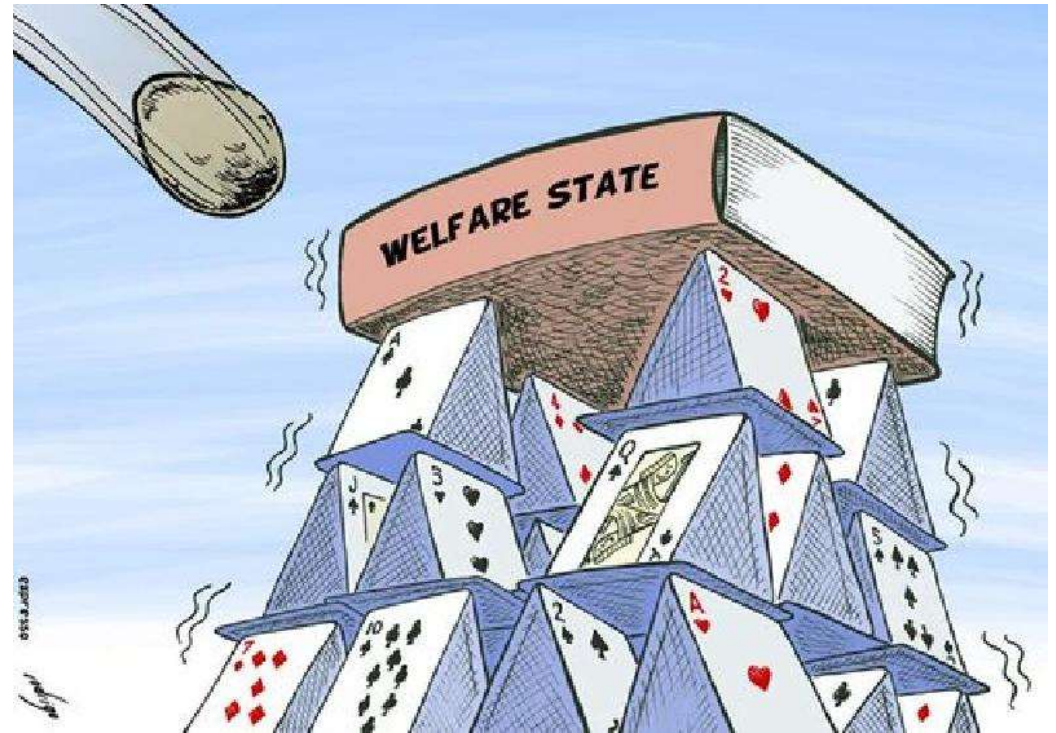
- Necessity reason
  - Unemployment safeguard
  - Partially dependent on privates
  - Actively seeking client  
= annoying bureaucracy
- Ideological reason
  - Guaranteed employment
  - Fully integrated with the state
  - Passively receiving client  
= obscure bureaucracy

The rise of the modern  
welfare state

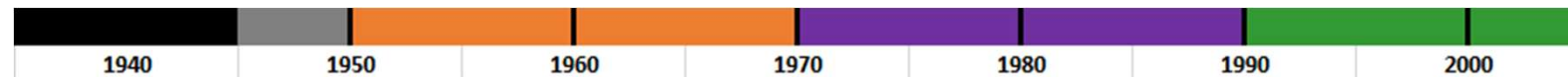


# Crisis of the system

- Old-age sanity cost grows more than expected.
- Unable to quickly adapt to new problems (long-term unemployment, immigration)
- Free market and anti-bureaucratic critiques



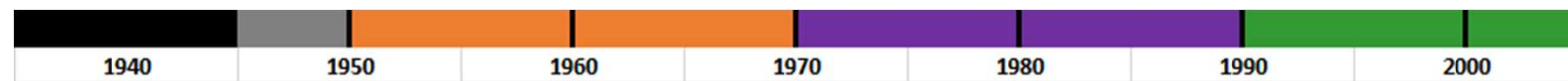
The rise of the modern welfare state



# Conclusion



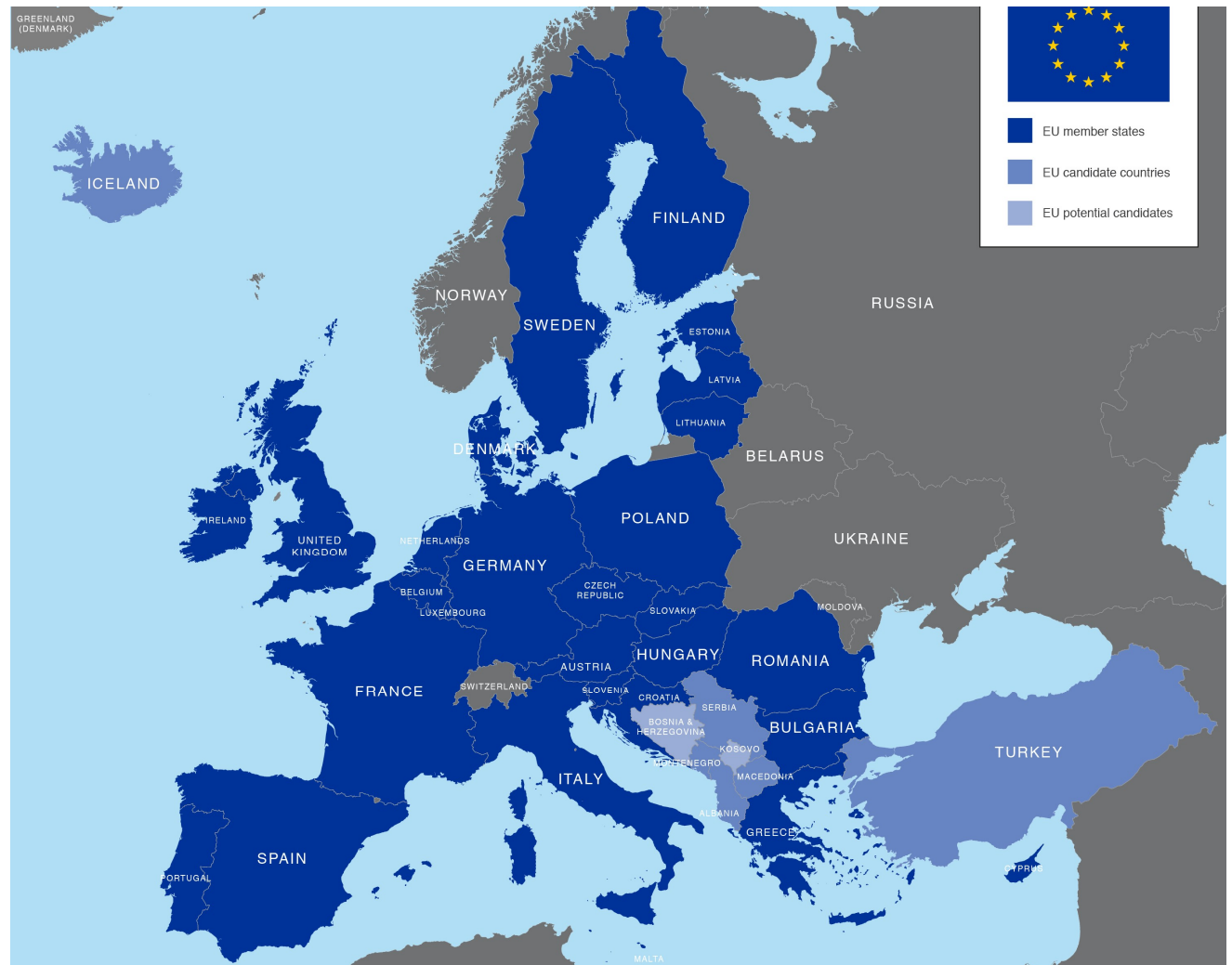
Conclusion



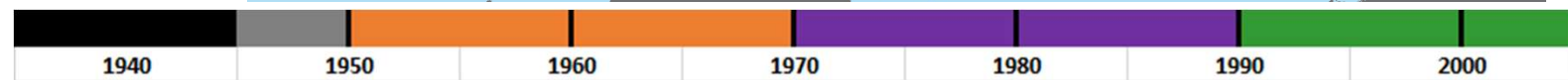


# Conclusion

Convergence in politics  
Convergence in economy  
Convergence in society



Conclusion



## Conclusion...?

## Conclusion...?

