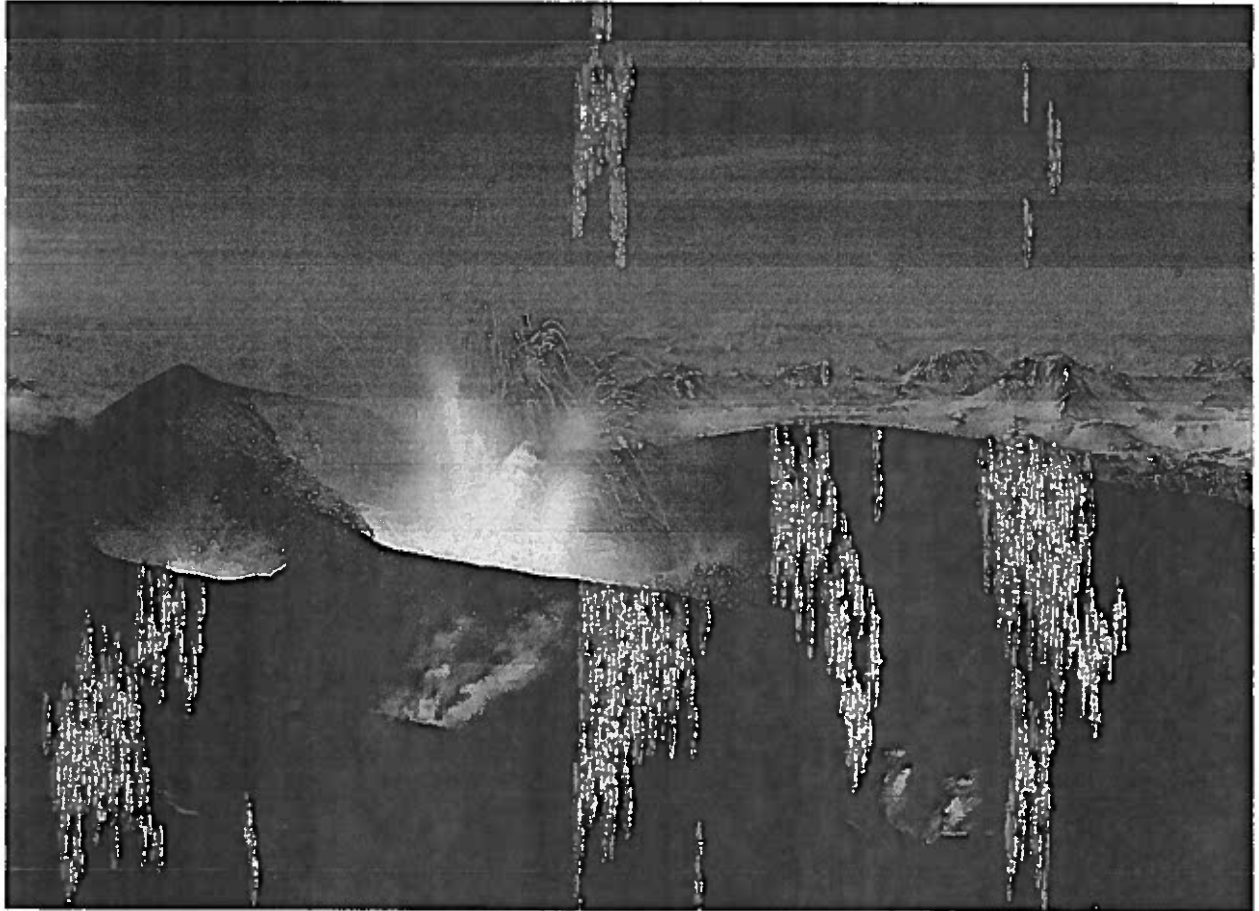


Iceland



The land of Fire and Ice

By Wyatt Peterson

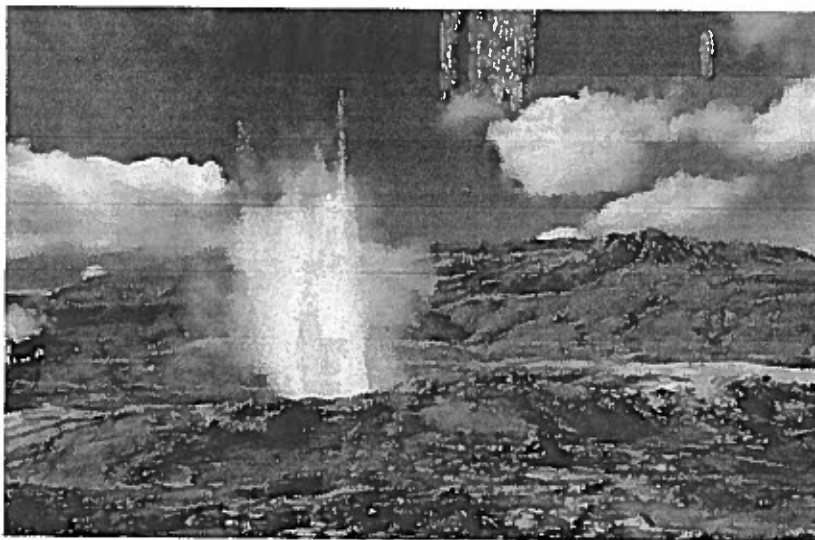
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Climate

In Iceland, the warm North Atlantic Current creates warmer temperatures. The summers are usually damp and cool. The average July temperature in the Southern part of the island is about 10 to 13 degrees Celsius. Warm summer days can reach 20 to 25 degrees Celsius. In Reykjavik, the capital city, the average sunshine hours per year are around 1300.

Iceland has mild, windy winters. The Southern lowlands average around 0 degrees Celsius and the highlands average -10 degrees Celsius. Iceland's coldest temperatures are in the Northern part of the island and range around -25 to -30 degrees Celsius.



Economy

The main exports from Iceland are fish and fish products, animal products, aluminum, ferrosilicon, diatomite. The fishing industry provides around 40 percent of exports. Iceland's imports are mainly machinery and equipment, textiles, foodstuffs, and petroleum products.

Iceland's main trading partner is Germany, followed by the U.S.A, Norway, and Denmark. The Krona is the currency of Iceland.

Food and Drinks

Fish, lamb, and dairy products are some of the main ingredients to Icelandic foods. Thorramatur is a traditional buffet, which is mainly meat and fish cured and cut into slices or bits. This is served around mid-winter. Also served for Thorramatur is rugbrauth, (a type of rye bread) butter, and brennivin. Brennivin is a nasty Schnapps made from potatoes and caraway.

Languages

Icelandic is the national language, but English and Danish are also spoken and understood. The Icelandic language has two letters of its own. The first one is called Eth Ð which is pronounced as the th in thing. Thorn Þ is the second letter, which is pronounced as the th in them.

Here are some Icelandic phrases:

- hello=hallo
- welcome=velkomin
- good morning= gothan daginn

Leisure

In their leisure time people like to ride Icelandic horses, play chess, and rifle shoot. Icelanders also like, and are very good at sports. Some popular sports are soccer, basketball, golf, tennis, swimming, ice climbing, rock climbing, and glima, which is a form of wrestling. Glima is thought to have come from the Vikings and is still played today.

Handball is very popular and referred to as Iceland's National sport. Iceland's handball team is one of the top ranked teams in the world. They recently won the silver at the summer Olympics in Beijing, China.

Athletics is a collection of sports, like track and field but with a few more. One of Iceland's greatest successes in sports is in the Strength Athletics. In the world's strongest man competition, Iceland holds the world record for most championships. This is why Icelanders are known for their strength.

Religion

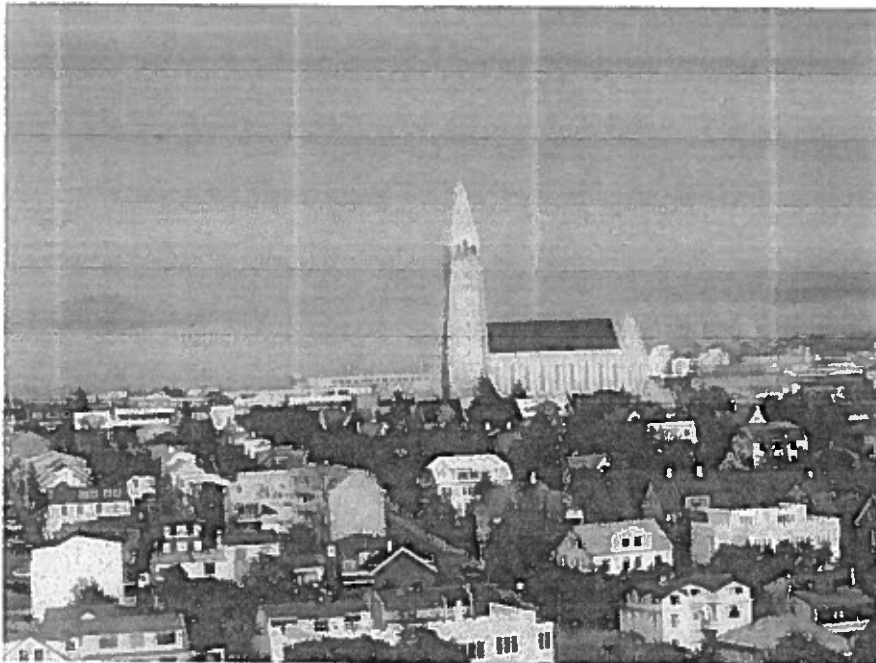
Around 82 percent of the Icelandic people belong to the Lutheran Church of Iceland. 11 percent of the people in Iceland believe in other Christian religions and 5 percent are unaffiliated.

Holidays in Iceland include:

June 17th - Icelandic National Day

December 24th to Dec.26th - Christmas

May 4th - The Labourer's Day.

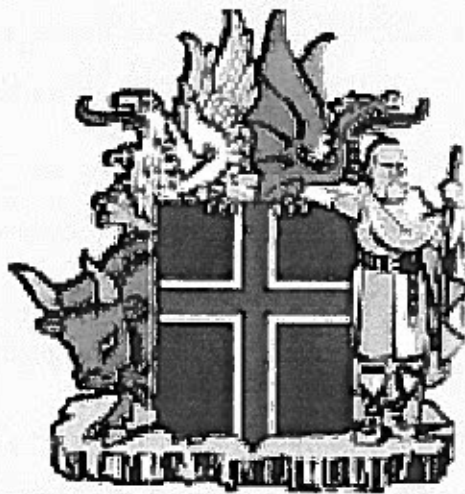


Hallgrímskirkja (Lutheran church), Reykjavík, Iceland.

Location

Iceland is in Europe, and it is between 16 to 24 degrees west. Iceland is also between 63 to 67 degrees north. The North Atlantic and Arctic Oceans are touching Iceland, as well as the Greenland Sea and the Norwegian Sea. Did you know Greenland, Ireland, Great Britain, and Norway are bordering Iceland? Iceland is located in the Northwest Hemisphere. Some interesting information about Iceland's location is that it is right under the Arctic. Since it was so nice and warm, the Vikings decided they would trick people with the name Iceland so they would go to Greenland, which is really cold.

Iceland



Physical Geography

Iceland is not landlocked because it is an island. The major bodies of water around Iceland are the Norwegian sea, the Greenland sea, and the Denmark strait. Thjorsa is a major river and the longest river in Iceland because it is 230 kilometers long. Iceland is full of volcanoes, geysers, natural hot springs, waterfalls, and green fields. The area of Iceland is around 103,000 kilometers squared.

Two of the famous mountains in Iceland are called Hekla, and Hvannadalshnukur. Hvannadalshnukur is 2,119 meters tall, which is the highest point in Iceland. The lowest point in Iceland is sea level along the coast.

Some additional information about Iceland's physical geography is that it's called the Land of Fire and Ice because of its glaciers and volcanoes.

Another interesting fact about Iceland is that it has warm mud pots and old lava fields.

Political Geography

Reykjavik is the capital city of Iceland. Iceland is divided into 8 regions, these regions are Austurland, Hofudhborgarsvaedhi, Nordhurland Eystra, Nordhurland Vesta, Sudhurland, Sudhurnes, Vestfirdhir, and Vesturland. These 8 regions are then subdivided into counties.

In Iceland there is a Prime Minister and a President. The Prime Minister's name is Johanna Sigurdardottir, and the President is Olafur Ragnar Grimsson. Olafur Ragnar Grimsson has been the President since 1996 and the Johanna Sigurdardottir has been the Prime Minister since 2009.

An interesting fact is that the President is Chief of State and is voted for and then the Prime Minister is chosen by the President. The Prime Minister is responsible for presenting ideas to the parliament.

The Flag

Iceland's flag is blue with a red cross outlined in white which extends and makes the border. Did you know that the vertical part of the cross is shifted to the left of the flag and the flag was adopted in the year 1915?

The colours on the Icelandic flag represent the three elements that make up the island:

- Red is for the volcanic fire and the lava
- White represents the snow, glaciers and ice fields
- Blue is for the surrounding ocean.

An interesting fact about Iceland's flag is that it is the exact same as Norway's except two colours are switched around.

Population

The current population in Iceland is around 312,000 people. Iceland is ranked 179th in population compared to other countries. The urban population of Iceland is 93 percent and the rural population is 7 percent. Some major cities in Iceland are Reykjavik, Akureyri, Keflavik, Egkisstadir, and Isafjordur. The population density in Iceland is 3.1 people per kilometer squared.

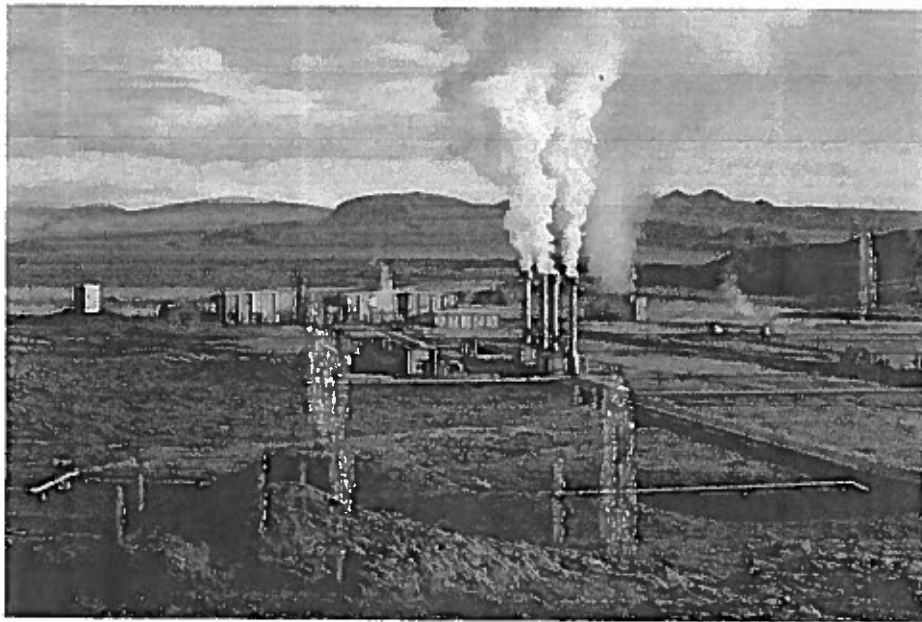
In Iceland they have a different last name system. If you are a boy and your Dad's name is John, then your last name would be Johnsson. If you are a girl, your last name would be Johnsdottir.

Health

In Iceland the life expectancy for a male is 79 years and for a female it's 83 years. There are 4 doctors for every 1,000 people. One interesting fact is that Iceland is ranked 19th in life expectancy.

Additional Information

One thing I find very interesting is that Iceland is basically on top of a Hot Spring which gives them geothermal power. The geothermal power heats 89 percent of the houses in Iceland. Over 54 percent of the primary energy comes from the geothermal sources.



The Nesjavellir Geothermal Power Station services the Greater Reykjavík Area's hot water and electricity needs. Virtually all of Iceland's electricity comes from renewable resources.

Another fact that I found interesting was the last name system. In Iceland, since my last name is Peterson, my Dad`s name would have been Peter or I would be named Wyatt Gordonsson. What would your name be in Iceland?

Iceland was a very interesting country to study because there were so many things I didn`t know. I hope you enjoyed reading my country report!

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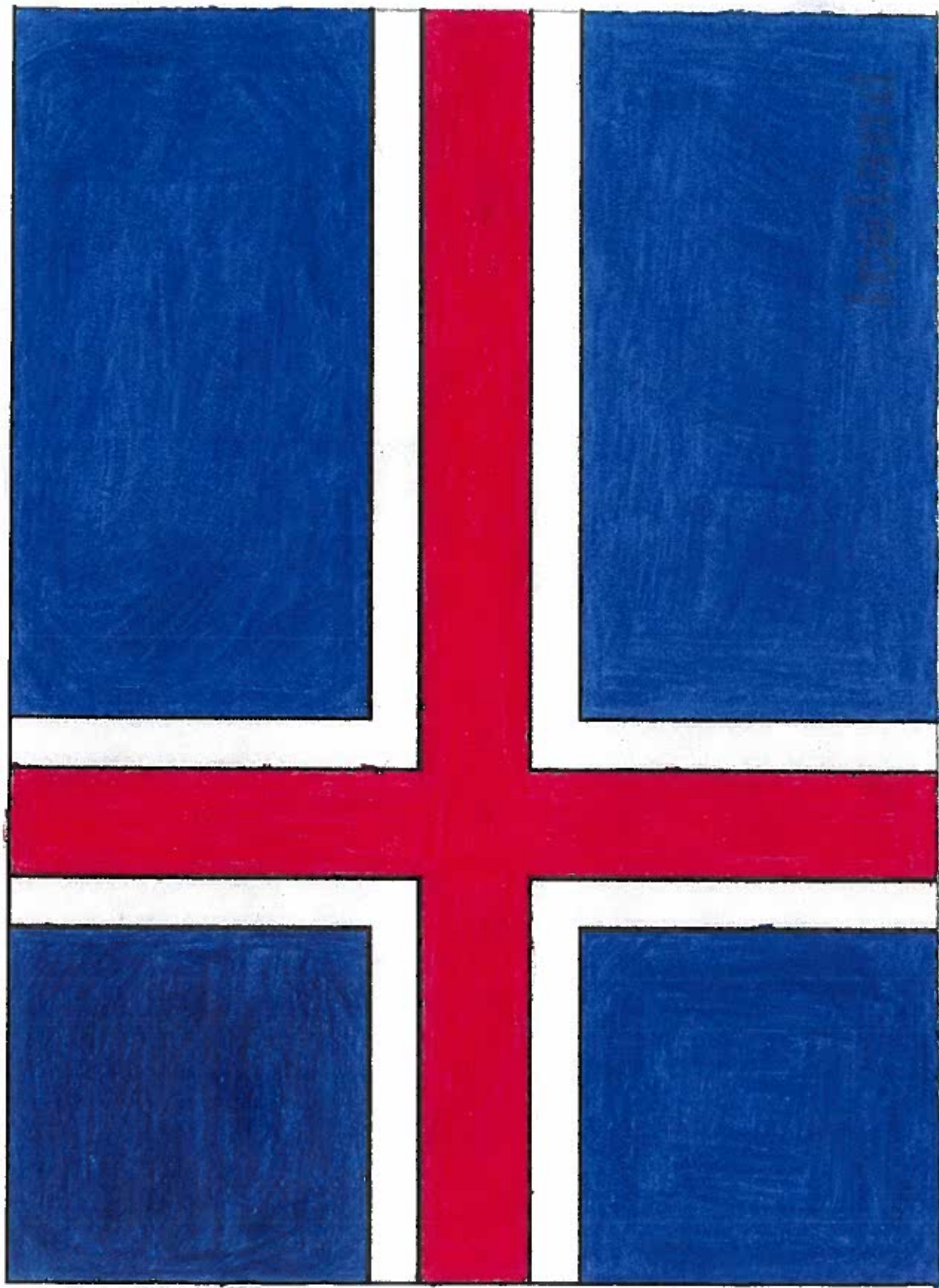
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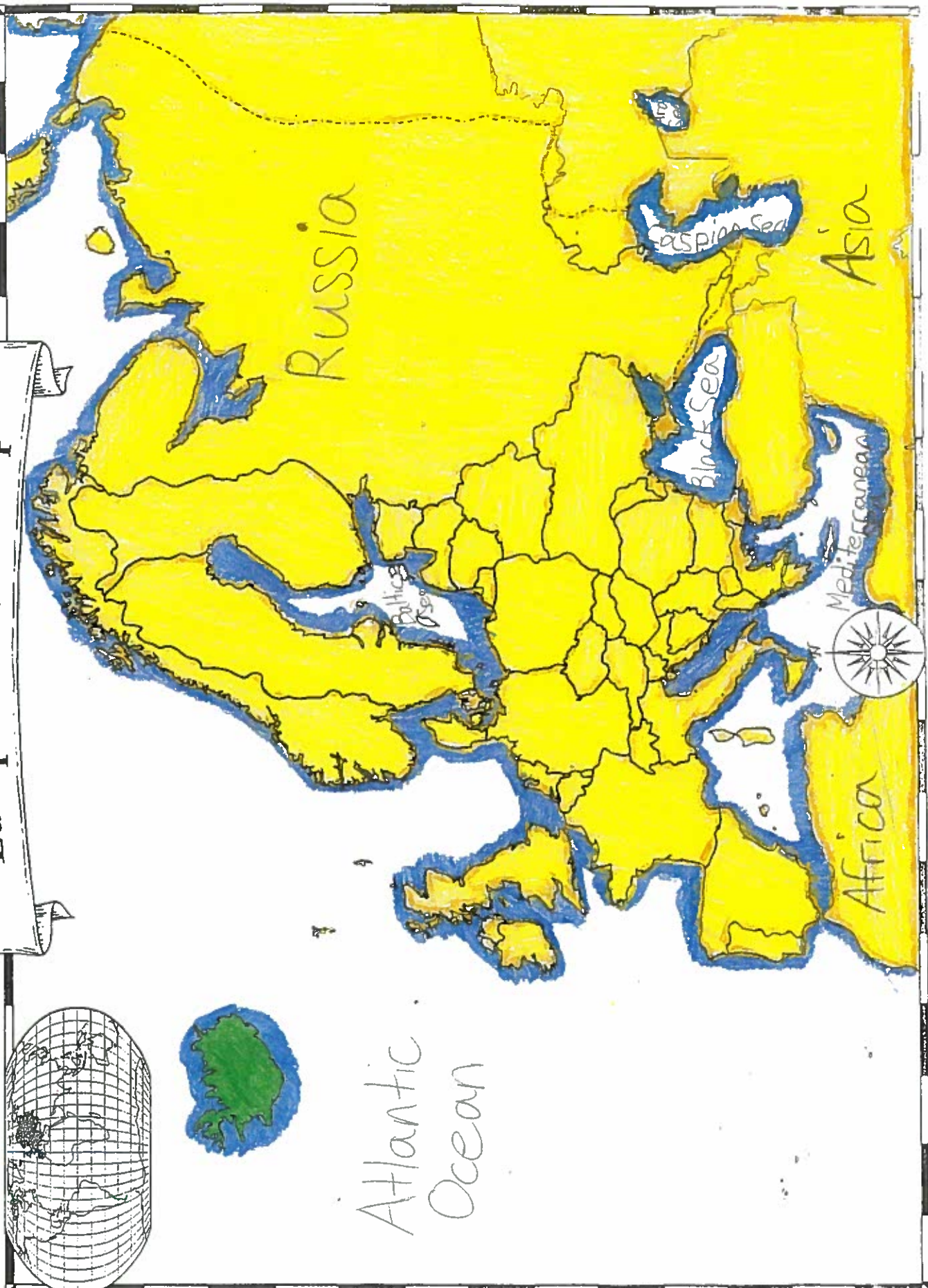
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Europe: Political Map



Russia

Asia

Africa

Atlantic Ocean

Caspian Sea

Black Sea

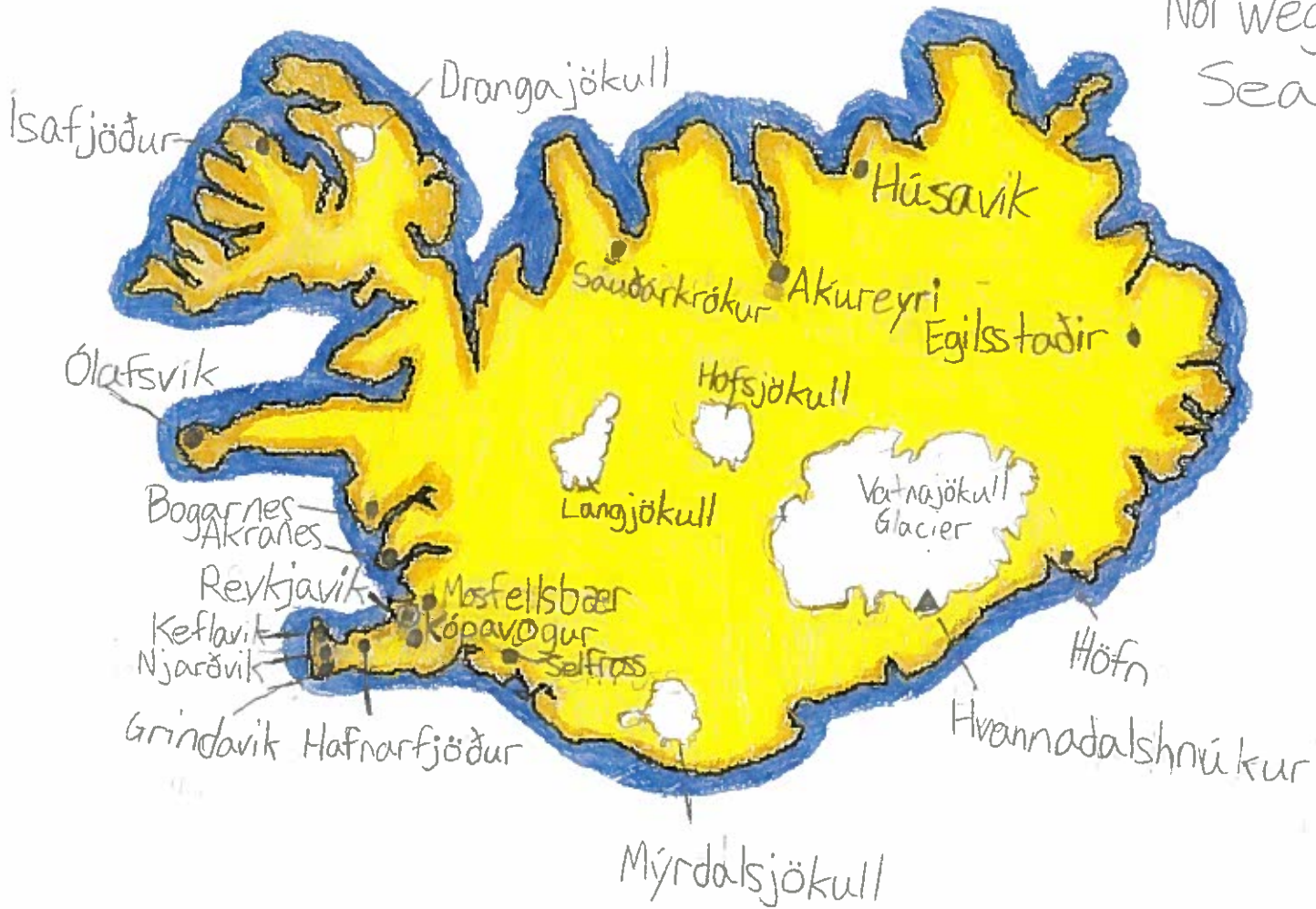
Mediterranean

Baltic Sea

Grimsey Island

Greenland Sea

Norwegian Sea



North Atlantic Ocean