

THE RHINELANDS

The Rhine lands is a region in Western Europe drained by the river Rhine and its major tributaries.

The countries that make up the Rhineland include Switzerland, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. The subdivision of the Rhine lands made up of Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg is referred to as the **Benelux**.

The Rhine lands is well developed industrial region in Western Europe characterized by a high standard of living shown by a high Per Capita Income.

Position

The region is located in the northern hemisphere and extends between latitude 48° N and 56°N.

The Rhine lands derives its name from one of the longest rivers in Western Europe whose source is in Alpine Mountains (Alps) that lie in the Southern part of the region. The waters of the river flow northwards into the North Sea.

Countries of the Rhine lands and their relative sizes and capitals

Country	Capital City	Size	Population
Germany	Berlin	356,910 km ²	82.0 million
Netherlands	Amsterdam	41,863 km ²	17.0 million
Switzerland	Bern	41,293 km ²	8.0 million
Belgium	Brussels	30,519 km ²	10.5 million
Luxembourg	Luxembourg City	2,586 km ²	0.5 million
	TOTAL	473,171 km²	118.0 million

COMPARISON OF THE RHINE LANDS AND EAST AFRICA

1. Size:

The Rhineland is quite small as compared to East Africa. It is about $\frac{1}{5}$ the size of East Africa and about $\frac{1}{3}$ the size of Tanzania. It covers an area of 473,171 km² while East Africa is 1,777,000 km²

2. Population:

The Rhineland has around 118 million people while East Africa has about 115 million people i.e. Kenya-39 million; Tanzania-43 million; and Uganda-33 million.

In addition, the population density in the Rhine lands is higher than that in East Africa. Population density in Rhineland is 249 persons/sq. km when East Africa is 65 persons/sq. km. The population growth rate in Rhine lands is low compared to population growth rate in East Africa. That of the Rhineland is 0 - 0.2% and that of East Africa is 3.0%.

3. Climate:

The Rhineland has a temperate type of climate because of its latitudinal position i.e. lies in high latitudes. Some areas experience warm temperate while others cool temperate climate.

Alpine region experiences montane or cold climatic conditions. In the Rhineland temperatures are generally lower than those in East Africa and also four seasons are experienced i.e. winter, spring, summer and autumn.

East Africa lies within the tropics and experiences moist tropical climate (or modified equatorial while others experience dry tropical climate).

As compared to the Rhineland, temperatures are high and the region experiences 2 seasons i.e. dry and wet season.

4. Relief:

The Rhineland is generally a highland region and more so in the south where we find the Alps. The major highland areas include the Alps which were formed as a result of folding.

Many of these highlands were modified by glaciation. Much of the Northern part has lowlands some of which have been reclaimed from the sea and in Netherlands some lands lie below sea level.

East Africa is generally a plateau; there are some highlands resulting from faulting and volcanicity. Some of the highlands have been modified by denudational processes like weathering and erosion, leading to residual hills such as Inselbergs or even peneplains.

In East Africa glaciation is very limited to the peaks of mountains Kilimanjaro, Kenya and Rwenzori. Both East Africa and the Rhineland have rift valleys resulted from faulting. There is Rhine Rift Valley and in East Africa there is the Western and Eastern Arm of the great African Rift Valley.

5. Altitude:

Rhineland is on a lower altitude than East Africa. Some lands in the Rhine lands are even below sea level.

6. Geology:

Rhineland is made of recently formed rocks. It has younger rocks influenced by glacial erosion and deposition. East Africa has old basement rocks especially in the plateau regions. East Africa also has volcanic rocks especially in the volcanic areas.

7. Natural vegetation:

The vegetation in highland regions of the Rhineland is temperate forest e.g. trees such as spruce, pines, firs etc. There are also deciduous species like oak and beech. There are also temperate grasslands or meadows that characterize the Rhineland vegetation.

In East Africa, it is mainly savannah grasslands and woodlands as well as tropical forests and semi-desert vegetation e.g. scrub, thicket and thorn bush.

8. Mineral resources:

The Rhineland has coal, gold, and some other mineral though in small quantities. Coal is mined in the Ruhr Coal fields of Germany and is a source of power. Coal is the original basis for industrial development in the region. East Africa lacks coal deposits except in southern Tanzania where exploitation has been hindered by transport problems to the market.

East Africa has diamonds in Mwadui mines in Shinyanga; salt in Lake Katwe; Soda ash in Lake Magadi; gold in Karamoja; limestone in Bamburi - Mombasa, Hima, Tororo, Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam; Copper and cobalt in Kilembe - Western Uganda (They are mined co-currently); There are Iron ore, wolfram and Beryllium deposits in Kabale - Western Uganda.

9. Economic Activities:

The Rhineland specializes in manufacturing industry and tourism. There are both heavy and light industries. Other activities like forestry, agriculture, lumbering and mining.

East Africa is mainly agricultural and other activities include forestry, fishing, mining, lumbering and tourism.

10. Transport and Communication:

The Rhineland has a highly developed road and railway transport. Water transport is also well developed. A number of rivers such as the Rhine, Rhone, Ticino, Aare, Danube have been used for navigation.

There are also a number of canals used for navigation. East Africa lacks a well developed road and railway system. Major rivers are not navigable because several sections have rapids/cataracts, waterfalls, shallow channels, narrow sections and floating vegetation. Navigation in East Africa is mainly on major lakes e.g. Victoria, Albert, and Tanganyika etc.

11. Nationalities, Ethnicity and Languages:

The Rhineland has Germans, Swiss, Belgians, Dutch and Luxembourgers.

People are of several ethnic grouping e.g. Slavs, Semites etc.

Languages spoken include German, French, Flemish, Belgian, Dutch, Luxembourgish, English and Romansch.

In East Africa nationalities are Ugandans, Kenyans and Tanzanians.

There are ethnic groups such as Bantu, Nilotics, Nilo-hermites. The tribes include Bakiga, Kikuyu, Luo, Sukuma, Luya, Nyamwezi, Kamba, Taita, Gogo, Mijikenda, Kamba, Baganda etc.

Languages spoken include English, Swahili, Luganda, Luo, Runyankole, Rukiga etc.

A Sketch map of the Rhinelands region showing countries, drainage features and Major cities

