Since its beginnings, Europe has been a continent of many nations, ethnicities, and religions. Although it has been making efforts to achieve differing levels of unity since the days of the Holy Roman Empire, some of the most significant unifying/dividing forces have occurred during the years between 1945 and 2001. The forces that rose to unify Europe and help it recover from the devastation of WWII included the formation of NATO, the re-unification of Germany in 1989, and the formation of the European Union. The forces that countered the spirit of European unity included the communist vs. capitalism conflict, nationalism, and finally (later) the dissolution of the USSR.

Europe has been paving the way for significant unification since the creation of NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization following WWII. NATO, an alliance of almost all Western European nations allows Europeans to work together to achieve common military/diplomatic goals and ensure that justice is maintained when it is needed. In order for NATO to act, its member nations must decide to act together, a process that...
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...which encourages unity. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 was also another step in the European unification process. Since Yalta, Germany had been divided into eastern and western portions. But the fall of the Berlin Wall allowed the two Germans to reunite, and though it was on a smaller scale than say, NATO, it nevertheless made one less nation in Europe. Finally, the European Union was a key factor in uniting Europe. At Maastricht (the place where the EU was born), many western and eastern nations came together economically, advocating a common currency standards for education, trade, regulation, etc. (with the exception of Great Britain, which kept its old currency). Maastricht and the EU helped promote European Unity by installing a common economic bond between the various European nations.

Despite great strides, factors continue to...
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prevented Europe from unity and accomplishing greater economic goals. The communist v. capitalist conflict created tension and hostility between the two halves opposite "the Iron Curtain" that was characteristic of the early Cold War. The dissolution of the USSR also contributed to the diversity of the European continent. Though there had been many differences between USSR territories and the system had not been entirely effective, it nevertheless added an element of unity to its members. When the USSR collapsed (after some "Velvet" and not-so-velvet revolutions), this element of unity disappeared from the European political-economic arena. A final factor that contributed to the diversity of the European continent was ethnic nationalism. In fact, nationalist struggles continue to divide Europe to this day. The War in Bosna was due to Serb/Croatian nationalism. The conflicts in Palestine and Israel are due largely to nationalistic/territorial "rights." Both conflicts have prevented peaceful coexistence and unity between the nations of these various ethnic groups. The international mobility of two ethnic groups to reconcile their differences involves not only the nations themselves, but also the rest of Europe, which divides itself over who to support in the conflict.
Since 1945, Europe has continually been in a tug-of-war between unifying/disuniting factors. While some factors, like Communism's role in this struggle have significantly diminished, others, like NATO, the EU, and nationalism, continue on to this day. In more years, the trend has been more and more steadily in favor of unity and peace and one can only hope that Europe will continue on this path.
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After the end of World War II, many factors have worked for and against European unity from 1945 to 2001. Such factors are to include economic factors, political factors, and social factors. The world experiences advances in technology and communication past 1945 that have been unparalleled throughout history. Along with these technologies there was the Cold War and the tensions between Democracy and Communism.

Many things occurred economically between 1945 and 2001 that have worked to unify Europe. The largest of which was the formation of the European Union (EU). This union worked to bring our collective economy to European countries. There was also the establishment of free trade among these countries. A common currency, called the euro, was put into place and used by many of the members of the EU. One exception to this was England who continued to use the pound.

Political factors basically split Europe between east and west. Democracy was the favored government in the west, while communism was favored in the east. Winston Churchill referred to this split as a "iron curtain" that split Europe in half. From this political war spread the cold war. New technologies including spy planes were used in this mostly nonviolent arms race. Eventually behind communism would fall (1989 fall of the Berlin Wall) and the East and West Europe would more or less have resolved their major political differences.

Social factors along with new technologies and advances
Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the examination.

Communications in the late 20th century have really worked to unite Europe. The invention and popularization of the internet have been important to the spread at which information and conversation can be spread throughout Europe. A message can be sent by the common citizen to anyone else they desire in Europe, or throughout the world. After World War II and during the massive reconstruction of Europe, different countries began to rebuild themselves in the rebuilding of their infrastructure in order to allow for easier transportation and mobility trade among European nations. An example of this is the tunnel built between England and France across the English Channel.

The Cold War has been one of the only factors keeping Europe apart since 1945. Since the EEC, or the EU, has been able to unify Europe economically while ensuring Europeans have been able to assimilate through increased communication technologies. Post-Cold War, Europe continues to develop closer and closer together as more countries become active in the United Nations, and as more countries except the EU.