



The Marshall Plan was an audacious, innovative strategy to tackle the most pressing challenges of its time. In 1947, Europe was reeling from the devastation of World War II. The United States put forward the Marshall Plan at this critical juncture, making economic and technical aid available with the goal of encouraging cooperation among recipient nations. The Marshall Plan is a concrete example of the scale of change made possible by bold thinking and international cooperation.

The spirit of the Marshall Plan is as needed now as it was seventy years ago. The early 20th Century was a time marked by unprecedented violence and destruction, rapid social and technological change, economic upheaval, and mass movement of peoples – many of the same challenges we face today. The values that the Marshall Plan represents and that GMF is dedicated to promoting – democracy, free enterprise, universal respect for all – are as essential now in addressing these challenges as they were in 1947.

The success of the Marshall Plan is cause for optimism that we can address the challenges we now face. The Marshall Plan still serves as a source of hope because it demonstrated that with shared purpose we can overcome seemingly insurmountable problems. As the organization founded to carry on the spirit of the Marshall Plan, GMF's work interpreting world events, building bridges between people and nations, and fostering civil society is more essential now than ever.

Key Facts

The Marshall Plan (or European Recovery Program, as it was officially known) delivered economic and technical aid to sixteen European nations.

Marshall aid was granted on a basis of respect for national autonomy and recognition of the need for cooperation between nations. To be eligible for funds, recipient nations mapped out how they would use the funds to rebuild their economies and further European integration.

When the Marshall Plan was launched in 1947, European economies were in real danger of faltering due to the devastation of World War II. Four years later, every country participating had regrown its economy beyond pre-war levels and the foundations of the transatlantic partnership had been established.

The strategic impact of Marshall Plan funds is still felt today. Western Europe has been whole, free and at peace for more than seventy years and the Marshall Plan is still invoked as a model for ambitious solutions to intractable problems.