

16th & 17th Century European Colonizing Efforts

European Nation	Geographical Range of Colonies	Emphasis/Focus of Colonies	Of Special Note
Spain	Widest range of colonization, from the tip of South America to the current American southwest and throughout the Caribbean Sea.	Early attempts at discovering rich Indian cities diminished by 1560 as Spanish sought to defend their colonies and pacify tribes through Franciscan missionary efforts.	First established colonies by Columbus who brought slavery to the New World by sending Indians to Europe and importing Africans to work in Spanish settlements.
Portugal	Brazil	Vast world empire taken over by Spain's King Philip II in 1580. Relying more on agriculture than gold-mining, Portuguese colonial leaders often returned home within 10 years.	Earliest explorers of the 15 th century were Portuguese, but Portugal was the least influential European nation in the New World
The Netherlands	New York, Delaware, Caribbean islands, Dutch Guiana in South America.	Focused almost exclusively on commerce, the Dutch brought few settlers (only 1500 by 1665 in New Netherland—New York). Sugar and slave trade in Caribbean and South America dominated Dutch interests.	Because Dutch Governor Stuyvesant ruled arbitrarily, when English invaded in 1664, residents provided little resistance.
France	1 st permanent settlement at Quebec in 1608. Small colonies in Central and South America and the Caribbean.	Colony of New France (Canada) developed slowly with only 15,000 residents by 1700. Fur-hunting, rather than farming, became the chief economic activity. Jesuit missionaries attempted to bring humane treatment to Indians.	Contact with Indians resulted in death by disease (perhaps 90% of Great Lakes region killed) and by inter-tribal wars caused by the fur trade.
England	British Guiana, Central America, Caribbean, and east coast of the present U.S.	Early focus: search for wealth. Most successful of European nations at establishing self-sustaining colonies following early disasters in Virginia. 17 th century colonial emphasis was on the sugar trade in the Caribbean.	Personal economic advancement and religious freedom provided the main impetus to colonial growth. Price Revolution of 16 th century and crop failures forced many peasants and yeoman farmers to seek new lives.