

# Treaty of Versailles [Revision Cascade]

<b>Paris Peace Conference: facts</b>	Armistice, 11 Nov 1918	The First World War ended when Germany signed the (harsh) 'Armistice'
	The Conference opened, 18 Jan 1919	The first two months were chaotic – Wilson (who would talk of nothing but the League) reached deadlock with Clemenceau (pressing for punishment of Germany)
	Fontainebleau Memorandum, 25 Mar 1919	Lloyd George 'saved' the Conference by forcing Wilson & Clemenceau to compromise
	German delegation given the Treaty, 7 May 1919	The terms provoked fury in Germany; at first the German government refused to sign, then resigned
	Treaty of Versailles, 28 Jun 1919	Germany was forced to sign the Treaty in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles
<b>Why was the Conference chaotic?</b>	Thousands of lobbyists	Initially intended as a pre-Conference meeting of the 'Big Three', but everybody came to present their requests – e.g. American Zionists and Korean nationalists wanting their own state
	Armistice or Fourteen Points?	What was to be the basis of the Treaty: the lenient 14 Points or the harsh Armistice?
	Wilson v Clemenceau	Wilson wanted a League of Nations; Clemenceau wanted Germany destroyed
	Disorganised	The Big Three jumped from topic to topic, often no minutes were kept. Eventually the 'Big Four' met and decided on their own.
	Diktat	The Treaty was an imposed treaty; Germany was not involved in the negotiations
<b>Clemenceau's aims</b>	Revenge	For the damage and suffering of the war (e.g. Battle of Verdun)
	Punishment	For the damage and suffering of the war (e.g. Battle of Verdun)
	To secure peace by weakening Germany	So Germany would never be strong enough to attack France again
	Reparations	i.e. payments by Germany to repair the damage done in north-east France
	An independent Rhineland	Clemenceau wanted Germany split up to create an independent Rhineland

<b>Lloyd George's aims</b>	Make Germany Pay	He had won the 1918 election by promising to 'make Germany pay'
	Restore the economy	He wanted to secure peace and prosperity by restoring Germany as a prosperous trading partner
	The British Empire	He wanted to secure and increase the British Empire (by taking German colonies)
	The Royal Navy	He wanted to secure British sea-power by destroying the German navy
	Fontainebleau Memorandum	He forced Wilson and Clemenceau to compromise
<b>Why did Lloyd George want to 'make Germany pay'?</b>	Suffering of the War	e.g. 800,000 British soldiers killed/1.6m wounded – many disabled/shellshock
	Damage of the War	e.g. Hartlepool, Whitby, Scarborough shelled/London bombed by Zeppelins
	Germany's fault	British people believed that Germany had caused the war by invading Belgium
	Public demand	The public – believing war propaganda about Germans atrocities – wanted revenge
	Money	The war had cost Britain £6.2bn and reparations were needed to pay it back
<b>Woodrow Wilson's aims</b>	A world safe for democracy	He wanted a world where American-style democracy was safe
	International cooperation for peace	He wanted a League of Nations to keep world peace by a 'community of power'
	An end to 'old' diplomacy	He believed that European politics – with its secret treaties – had caused the war
	Self-determination	Independent nations and the end of the old Empires (especially the British Empire)
	The Fourteen Points, Jan 1918	The Fourteen Points were Wilson's proposed terms for a peace settlement, given in a speech to Congress in January 1918
<b>The Fourteen Points</b>	A League of Nations	A world 'parliament' to replace the old diplomacy
	No secret treaties	Wilson believed that old-fashioned European diplomacy had caused the war
	Self-determination	Independent nations (e.g. Poland) and an end to Empires (Britain oppose this)
	Disarmament	The League of Nations organised disarmament conferences (which failed)
	Freedom of the seas	Wilson also wanted free trade (Britain opposed this, because they threatened Britain's trade and empire)

<b>Treaty of Versailles: terms</b>	It was a Diktat	The Treaty was an imposed treaty; Germany was not involved in the negotiations
	War 'Guilt' (Article 231)	Article 231 declared Germany responsible for starting the war and all the damage
	Reparations (Article 232)	Article 232 said Germany should pay reparations (eventually set at £6.6 billion)
	Armed forces	The army was limited to 100,000, the navy cut to six battleships, Germany was forbidden an airforce or submarines and the Rhineland was demilitarised
	Territorial changes	Germany lost all its empire, Alsace-Lorraine, the Polish corridor and Danzig, the Saar coalfield (for 15 years) and Anschluss was forbidden
<b>Treaty of Versailles: military restrictions</b>	German army limited to 100,000	Conscription was forbidden and the army limited to 100,000 men
	German navy cut to six battleships	The German navy was limited to 6 battleships, plus 18 smaller ships and 12 torpedo boats
	Germany was forbidden an airforce	All the German air force had to be handed over to the Allies
	Germany was forbidden submarines	The Allies would break up all the German U-boats
	The Rhineland was demilitarised	The German army could not go into the area between France and the river Rhine
<b>Treaty of Versailles: territorial changes</b>	Germany lost all its empire	Former German colonies were administered by France and Britain as 'mandates'
	Alsace-Lorraine	Alsace-Lorraine was returned to France
	Polish corridor and Danzig	To give Poland access to the sea
	Saar coalfield	Given to France for 15 years to help pay for the damage done during the war
	Anschluss forbidden	Anschluss (union) between Germany and Austria was forbidden

<b>Why Germans hated the Treaty of Versailles</b>	Dolchstosslegende	The Germans denied they had been defeated and expected a peace based on the 14 Points; instead they were forced to sign a harsh imposed <i>Diktat</i>
	Article 231	The Germans denied they were guilty of causing the war and blamed Russia
	Reparations	The Germans stated that they could not afford the reparations, that it would ruin Germany and starve their children
	Military	The Germans believed the Treaty's military terms left them defenceless
	Territorial	The Germans hated the loss of German 'homelands' and vowed to get them back
<b>How did Germans challenge the Treaty of Versailles?</b>	Propaganda campaign	German newspapers such as the Deutsche Zeitung criticised the Treaty and threatened revenge
	Scuttled their Navy, Jun 1919	They sank their Navy at Scapa Flow in Orkney rather than hand it over
	Kapp Putsch, Mar 1920	A right-wing rebellion against the Treaty
	Dolchstosslegende	The 'November Criminals' were accused of stabbing the German army in the back
	Organisation Consul	A right-wing group which assassinated 'November criminals' (e.g. Erzberger, who had been Chairman of the Armistice Committee)
<b>To what extent did Wilson, Clemenceau and Lloyd George achieve their aims?</b>	Wilson – disappointed	He got the League and self-determination in eastern Europe, but none of the other 14 Points. The US Senate rejected the League and refused to ratify the Treaty.
	Clemenceau – too soft	Clemenceau accepted the small German Army and the demilitarised Rhineland, but he had wanted harsher reparations, the Saar and an independent Rhineland
	Lloyd George – too harsh	Lloyd George got some colonies and a small German Navy, but he feared the Treaty was too harsh and would damage Germany as a trading partner.
	Opportunity	All three presented the Treaty to their country as 'stern but just', and an opportunity for peace. Wilson called it a chance for the liberation and salvation of the world.
	Fears	All three feared that it would not be supported, especially Lloyd George, who expected war in 25 years' time.

<b>Reactions to the Treaty of Versailles</b>	Germany – hated it	The Germans thought the treaty was an attempt to leave them defenceless and to starve their children; they hated the loss of German 'homelands'
	America – rejection	The USA was 'isolationist' and the Senate (March 1920) did not ratify the Treaty and refused to join the League (May 1920)
	France – too soft	The French had wanted a more punitive Treaty, and Clemenceau quickly fell from power
	Britain – too harsh	Harold Nicolson thought the Treaty 'neither just nor wise'. The British economist JM Keynes believed reparations would ruin the world economy
	Other countries	China and Russia never signed; Japan and Italy felt aggrieved
<b>Treaty of Versailles: strengths</b>	Signed by 45 countries	It was the best compromise possible, supported by the world's governments
	League of Nations	It created a world meeting to maintain peace – a principle continued by the United Nations
	Self-determination	It created nation states which still survive today
	Reasonable	Less harsh than the Germans made it out to be, and much less than the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. It did not declare Germany 'guilty', and reparations (despite the outcry) were less than Britain's war debt
	Enduring	Most of its territorial arrangements lasted more than a century
<b>Treaty of Versailles: weaknesses</b>	Satisfied nobody	Clemenceau thought it not harsh enough; Wilson and Lloyd George thought it too harsh; Keynes thought reparations were too punitive; the Senate thought it too binding; China and Russia never signed; Japan and Italy felt aggrieved
	Angered Germany	It created a feeling of anger in Germany which may have helped the rise of Hitler and led to World War Two
	Strengthened Germany	Far from weakening Germany, the treaty created small and weak countries in central Europe, which Hitler found it easy to dominate.
	Unfair	The feeling that Germany had been treated unfairly gave Hitler a moral advantage. Reparations were reduced (Dawes Plan/Young Plan) and never collected
	Failed	Lloyd George predicted there would be a war in 25 years; and he was correct

<b>Other treaties</b>	Saint Germain	AUSTRIA lost land to Czechoslovakia, Poland & Italy/ army reduced to 30,000/ went bankrupt before reparations set
	Neuilly	BULGARIA lost land to Greece/ army reduced to 20,000/ reparations £90 million
	Trianon	HUNGARY lost land to Romania & Yugoslavia/ army reduced to 35,000/ went bankrupt before reparations set
	Sèvres	TURKEY lost her empire to France & Britain. Was supposed to lose land to Greece/ army reduced to 50,000/ pay reparations BUT there was a revolution and the new government renounced the Treaty, instead a new treaty was agreed at Lausanne
	Lausanne	Turkey was allowed an unlimited army, reparations were cancelled, and land given to Greece was returned
<b>Self-determination – new nation states</b>	Czechoslovakia	By the Treaty of Saint Germain
	Hungary	By the Treaty of Trianon
	Austria	By the Treaty of Saint Germain
	Poland	By the Treaty of Saint Germain
	Yugoslavia	By the Treaty of Trianon
<b>Self-determination – problems</b>	Conflict	Self-determination caused three small wars: 1. Poland went to war with Russia and took more land.  2. Czechs and Poles fought over the town of Teschen.  3. An army of Italians marched into the Yugoslavian town of Fiume.
	Ethnic minorities	It was impossible to create nation states which didn't include Ethnic minorities
	Anschluss forbidden	Germans, as the defeated power, were not allowed self-determination
	Small and weak countries	Far from weakening Germany, self-determination created small and weak countries in central Europe, which Hitler found it easy to dominate.
	Empires remained	Britain and France refused to allow self-determination for their colonies

<b>Interpretations: Historiography</b>	Keynes v Baker	Ray Stannard Baker (1923) eulogised Wilson, but Harold Nicolson (1933) thought the peacemakers 'stupid men and JM Keynes declared it 'abhorrent and detestable' (1919).
	Robert Binkley	Binkley (1929) realised that the Treaty declared Germany 'responsible' but the Germans had translated the word by Schuld ('guilty')
	The Classic version'	Wilson was honourable but soft & naïve, Clemenceau bitter & punitive, Lloyd George imperialistic & manipulative, and the Treaty was imposed, too harsh and caused the Second World War.
	AJP Taylor	Taylor (1961) declared that Germany was inveterately expansionist, wanted to dominate Europe, and would never have accepted ANY treaty. To stop this, Versailles was too weak and should have been harsher.
	"The best they could"	Modern historians such as Margaret Macmillan (2003) and Sally Marks (2013) believe that the Treaty was reasonable and a genuine attempt to build a better world. World War Two "was the result of twenty years of decisions taken or not taken, not of arrangements made in 1919".