

DUAL ALLIANCE (1879) → TRIPLE ALLIANCE (1882)

1. HOW did the Dual Alliance came about (1879)

- The Dual Alliance came about because of the failure of the Three Emperors' League (1873) – a treaty between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia to keep things as they were in eastern Europe.
- In 1878, Russia defeated the Ottoman Empire in the Russo-Turkish War, and the resulting Treaty of San Stefano gave Russia considerable influence in the Balkans. This angered A-H. Germany organised the Treaty of Berlin which changed the provisions of San Stefano.
- As a result, the Three Emperors' League collapsed → Germany and A-H signed a Dual Alliance.

2. WHY the Dual Alliance came about

- **Germany's needs:** Germany's Chancellor Bismarck feared:
 - Germany being isolated after the collapse of the Three Emperors' League,
 - that France would take revenge for losing the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71)
 - a war on two fronts if France and Russia united and needed an ally.
- **A-H's needs:** Emperor Franz Joseph of A-H was worried about Russian influence in the Balkans and rising Slavic nationalism (which looked to Russia for help) – especially now the Three Emperor's League had collapsed. He needed an ally to protect his empire.
- **Mutual benefit:** Both countries gained protection from Russia. Germany gained safety on its southern borders. A-H gained support against Slavic revolts.

3. KEY CHARACTERISTICS of the Dual Alliance

- Defensive only – not a plan for war but for protection; if Russia attacked either country, the other would help. If another country attacked, they would remain neutral.
- The terms were at first kept secret to reduce the risk of triggering hostility. However, news leaked out.

4. HOW did the Dual Alliance become the Triple Alliance (1882)

- Italy had lost Tunisia to France (1881) and wanted support against French expansion in North Africa. → Italy joined Germany and A-H to form the Triple Alliance in 1882.

5. WHY the Triple Alliance came about

- **Germany's benefit:** a third power isolated France diplomatically and formed a strong central power-bloc.
- **A-H's benefit:** Gained security on its southern borders and an ally in southern Europe.
- **Italy's benefit:** A promise of help in North Africa, and recognition as a significant world power.

6. KEY CHARACTERISTICS of the Triple Alliance

- Three-way mutual defence pact – if any member was attacked by two or more powers, the others would help – nb still a defensive, not an offensive alliance.
- Less unified than it seemed:
 - Italy was uncommitted militarily – in 1902, Italy secretly signed a treaty of mutual neutrality with France, and when war broke out in 1914, Italy did NOT join in on Germany's side.
 - There were tensions between Italy and A-H over certain territories in the Alps
 - A-H was not happy about Italy getting a say in what happened in the Balkans.

7. CONSEQUENCES of the Alliance

- It increased tensions in Europe – especially between the Alliance and France and Russia, who felt insecure about the growing closeness of Germany, A-H and Italy, increasing mutual suspicion.
- It encouraged France and Russia to move closer together, and led to a Franco-Russian Alliance (1894) – thus polarising Europe into two hostile camps and making war more likely.
- Although a defensive alliances, it was a sign of growing militarisation ... that countries were preparing for war rather than trusting diplomacy to solve their differences.
- It increased tension in the Balkans. Austria became more confident/aggressive, and occupied Bosnia in 1879-80. In 1887, after another crisis, France and Russia agreed to both lend money to Bulgaria.
- It precipitated WWI, leading Germany to give A-H a 'blank cheque' for dealing with Serbia in 1914.