

BALMUN'26

TREATY OF VERSAILLES

STUDY GUIDE

Under-Secretary General

Ayşegül Koçak

Under-Secretary General

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Letter from Secretary-General

Esteemed Participants of BALMUN'26,

It is my utmost pleasure to welcome you to this year's annual session of BALMUN. It is truly an honour to host a platform where passionate minds gather to engage in a meaningful debate, diplomacy, and cooperation. BALMUN is not merely a conference; it is a created space where ideas are challenged, and perspectives are broadened.

My journey in this club began on the day that I stepped into this school. I started as a bot delegate, continued as an academic assistant, and now stand proudly as the Secretary General of this year's annual session. Our team has been working meticulously to ensure that this MUN offers not only a rigorous academic experience but also an inspiring and memorable one. We have overcome plenty of different challenges, but all of them have made us stronger than ever to mark our target. We have poured relentless effort into this conference.

With a highly dedicated academic and organizational team, we proudly present twelve committees, including two General Assembly committees, six Special committees, and four Crisis committees. Each committee is carefully designed to encourage critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. Over the course of three days, you will be able to defend your ideas, listen to opposing views, and seek compromise in the pursuit of meaningful solutions.

I hope that BALMUN'26 serves as a reminder that true leadership lies not in dominance, but in dialogue and not in certainty, but in openness to learning. As the academic and organizational team of BALMUN, we eagerly look forward to witnessing the ideas you will bring to life and the impact you will create throughout the conference.

Your Sincerely,

Kerem Kılıç

Secretary General of BALMUN'26

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Letter from Under-Secretary-General

Dear Delegates,

Firstly, I would like to welcome you all to the BALMUN'26. I am Ayşegül Koçak, and I'll be your Under-Secretary-General for these three days. Me and my co-usg have worked really hard to create an environment that will ensure a dynamic, fun, and hard-working place for you delegates.

We highly recommend you to read this study guide carefully to ensure the flow of the committee, to understand your country's policies towards other nations, and to maintain effective and sustainable communication throughout the three days of the conference.

If you have any questions about the guide or anything general, you can contact me via my e-mail address, aysegullkkocak@gmail.com . I wish you all the best, and I hope we will spend

these three days in an exciting and unforgettable way.

Warm Regards,

Ayşegül Koçak

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Letter from Under-Secretary-General

Dear Delegates,

It is my absolute pleasure to welcome you all to the Treaty of Versailles committee. Naturally, I am very thrilled, honored, and excited to be named the Under Secretary General of this committee at Balmun'26.

Model UN is an incredible opportunity to step into the world of diplomacy to discuss, negotiate, and collaborate on global issues while learning the importance of communication and empathy. Each one of you brings a unique perspective to our committee, and I encourage you to use this platform to express your ideas confidently and respectfully.

I hope this conference becomes a place where you not only grow as a delegate but also form friendships and memories that last beyond the sessions. I wish you all an engaging, inspiring, and enjoyable conference.

If you have any questions about the committee or the study guide, don't be afraid to get in touch with us.

Best Regards,

Ela Elif SARIKOÇ

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1. Introduction to the Committee

The Treaty of Versailles Committee takes us back to a key moment in history: the end of World War I and the creation of a peace agreement that changed the idea of Europe and the world. In 1919, world leaders gathered in Paris to sign the Treaty of Versailles. They hoped to ensure lasting peace while holding the Central Powers responsible for the war destruction. However, the harsh terms of the agreement and the complicated political forces behind them have sparked controversy for a long time. Many believe these conditions have led to the World War II.

In this committee, delegates will simulate the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, representing their assigned countries and defending their national interests. The committee will function through formal debate, motions, and sessions where delegates will discuss key issues such as war guilt, reparations, territorial changes, and the future of international relations.

Delegates are expected to adopt a historically accurate perspective and work collaboratively to draft resolutions that will reflect their perspective. The main goal of this committee is not only to understand the original Treaty of Versailles, but also to explore whether a more balanced and lasting peace agreement could have been achieved.

As a delegate in this committee, you will address the political, diplomatic, and economic challenges that shaped the world after the war. You will examine why certain terms were included in the Treaty, question the fairness of reparations, and debate whether the resulting peace was truly lasting or simply punitive.

Discussions will focus on the perspectives of major nations such as France, Britain, the United States, and Germany, as well as other countries affected by the redrawing of borders and reparations. Delegates are expected to think critically, question historical decisions, and work together to produce a resolution that reflects a balanced and productive process while aiming to rebuild lasting peace.

2. Introduction to the Agenda

The Treaty of Versailles is a key agreement that was signed on June 28, 1919, which is a conclusion of World War 1 and is mainly written to accomplish a long lasting peace in Europe. The Treaty contained various restrictions to Germany and its allies such as territorial, military, and economic restrictions. These restrictions aimed to prevent future aggression while compensating for the losses of allied forces. Despite these restrictions, they soon became subjects of criticism by others. Many people think that these terms contributed to the outbreak of World War 2.

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This agenda invites delegates to evaluate the objectives, fairness, and long term impact on international relations of the treaty. You'll not only realise the importance of the treaty, but also analyse whether the balance between justice and peace was achieved, and how decisions that were given in 1919 influenced global politics in the following decades.

3. Pre-Treaty Territorial Situation

a. Map and Political Landscape of the Allied and Central Powers



Before the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, there were two major factors in Europe. These were the Allied Powers, which included nations such as France, Britain, Russia, Italy, and later the US, and the Central Powers, which included Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, and Bulgaria. The world conflict had affected the political and geographical borders and landscape of Europe significantly.

The Central Powers had been through a complete collapse. Empires such as Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire had disintegrated. In addition, Germany had experienced revolution and instability. The Allied nations had fought a winning battle

but had become economically drained. In addition, they had become divided on how to rebuild Europe.

In terms of territory, Europe had remained as it had been in the 19th century, with large empires dominating Central and Eastern Europe. However, with the emergence of nationalist movements, especially in Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans, these nations had begun calling and fighting for self-determination and independence.

Pre-treaty map:

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These two maps mainly show the borders and the lands of the nations in Europe, before the Treaty of Versailles was agreed on 28 June, 1919. It describes the political situation in Europe during and after World War I, showing the difference between the periods of time before and after the war. By comparing these two periods, it is clear how the treaty changed the political structure in Europe and the balance of power among the nations.

Analysis of the Pre-Treaty Situation

To fully understand the territorial and political conditions before the Treaty of Versailles, it is necessary to discuss the deeper structural causes that shaped Europe before the war. The situation in 1919 was not created suddenly; instead, it was the result of decades of political tension, economic rivalry, and ideological transformation between nations.

1. The Role of Imperialism and Great Power Rivalry

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, European powers were in an intense imperial competition. Major empires such as Britain, France, Germany, and Russia competed for

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overseas colonies, resources, and strategic influence. This competition not only created tensions outside Europe but also contributed to a lack of trust among European states themselves. Germany, as a relatively new power, sought to expand its influence and challenge the dominance of older empires like Britain and France.

This rivalry between these nations extended into Europe, where the balance of power became extremely fragile. Their desire to maintain dominance often led states to prioritize military strength over diplomacy, creating an environment where conflicts became more common.

2. Nationalism and Internal Instability

One of the most significant root causes of the pre-treaty situation was the rise of nationalism. While nationalism had contributed to the unification of countries like Germany and Italy in the 19th century, it also created serious challenges to those who contained a variety of ethnicities. Within the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires, numerous ethnic groups fought for independence and self-governance.

The Balkans became a particularly unstable region due to competing national movements and external influence from larger powers. These tensions made the region highly open to any kind of conflict, turning it into what many historians refer to as the “powder keg of Europe.” The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914 acted as a breaking point of the war, but the underlying nationalist tensions had been building for years.

3. Militarism and the Arms Race

Another crucial factor was the widespread adoption of militarism across Europe. Militarism was held way beyond politics; many countries significantly increased their military spending and developed advanced weaponry in preparation for the possibility of any conflict. This military power created a sense of constant readiness for war, reducing the willingness of nations to resolve conflicts peacefully.

Military strategies also played a role in escalating the conflict. Germany’s rapid mobilization plans showed that countries expected a war and were getting ready for it beforehand. As a result, when war broke out, it escalated quickly and became a total war, involving the world.

4. Alliance System and the Escalation of War

The alliance system was originally designed to maintain peace by creating a balance of power. However, it ultimately had the opposite effect. Europe became divided into two major blocs: the Allied Powers and the Central Powers. While these alliances were meant to deter aggression, they instead ensured that any conflict between two nations would involve multiple countries.

When war began in 1914, these alliances triggered a chain reaction, transforming a regional dispute into a global conflict. This connected system made it nearly impossible to stop the war once it had started.

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5. Economic Consequences and War Exhaustion

By the end of the war, both sides had suffered severe economic damage. The Allied Powers, despite winning the war, were financially exhausted due to the enormous cost of sustaining military operations. Infrastructure had been destroyed, industries had been disrupted, and millions of lives had been lost.

For the Central Powers, the situation was even worse. Economic collapse, food shortages, and social unrest led to political instability. In Germany, a revolution broke out, also known as the November Revolution, leading to the establishment of a new government. Similarly, the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires disintegrated under the pressure of military defeat and internal divisions.

6. Collapse of Empires and the Transitional Nature of Europe

The collapse of major empires marked a turning point in European history. The old system, based on large empires made up of different ethnic groups, was replaced by a new system where national identity became more important. However, this transition was far from smooth. The borders of new states were often drawn without fully considering ethnic, cultural, and historical realities.

This created a situation in which many minority groups found themselves within the borders of new states, leading to tensions and conflicts that would continue in the following decades.

7. Ideological Shifts and the Vision for a New Order

The end of the war also brought new ideas about international relations. Leaders such as Woodrow Wilson supported the idea of creating a fair and cooperative international system, where nations could manage themselves and work together to prevent future conflicts. However, these ideals often disagreed with the strategic interests of European powers, particularly those that had suffered greatly during the war and demanded compensation.

This tension between idealism and realism would play a crucial role in shaping the outcomes of the treaty negotiations.

8. Analytical Perspective on the Pre-Treaty Environment

From a perspective, the pre-treaty situation can be understood as a complex interaction between structural forces and immediate events of the nations. Long-term factors such as nationalism, imperialism, and militarism created the conditions for conflict, while short-term triggers such as political crises and alliances led to the outbreak of war.

By 1919, Europe had entered a period marked by instability and uncertainty. The old order had collapsed, but a stable new system hadn't been fully established yet. This created a significant challenge for policymakers, who had to balance goals such as justice, security, and economic recovery.

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9. Evaluation and Long-Term Implications

When we look at the immediate historical context, the pre-treaty situation can also be assessed from the point of view of its long term effects. The decisions taken during this period were not only a response to the past, but also an effort to build a future for world relations.

Nevertheless, the difference between the winning and losing states, as well as the existing national tensions, meant that the base for the new world order was unstable from the beginning. In this sense, the territorial and political situation before the treaty did not only stop with the war; rather, it continued to shape world politics over the coming decades.

4. Historical Background

a. Major Events of World War I

World War I (1914-1918) was one of the most destructive and bloodiest wars of all time. The war began with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, in Sarajevo, and this chaos evolved into a chain of alliances, becoming a global conflict. Even though a lot of people thought that the war between the Allied Powers (France, Britain, Russia, and then the USA) and the Central Powers (Germany, Austro-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire) would shortly come to an end, the war continued for years, which led to the loss of millions.

With new and devastating weapons such as tanks, planes, machine guns, and chemical substances such as gases and liquids that are highly toxic, the war had evolved into something else. Millions of civilians and soldiers have lost their lives on fronts such as Verdun, Somme, and Gallipoli. With the United States' entry into the war in 1917, the Allied Powers received a significant morale and economic boost. In the same year, with the Russian Revolution, a part of the Central Powers, Russia, withdrew from the war, which led to a huge loss on the Central Powers' side. In 1918, the Central Powers had completely collapsed, and with the 11 November 1918 Armistice, also known as the Compiegne Armistice, the war had finally come to an end. At the end, Europe was devastated, and the question of how to achieve peace became a major issue.

b. Collapse of the Empires and the Rise of New Nations

With the end of the war, the empires that had determined the balance between nations and other continents for centuries collapsed. Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire completely disintegrated, and because these two empires had contained a lot of ethnic diversity, these people started to rebel and create new nation-states such as Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, and Finland. The German Empire transformed into the Weimar Republic,

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which struggled with political and economic crises because of its defeat. In the Russian Empire, the Bolshevik Revolution led to the establishment of the Soviet Union.

During this process, the concept of national self-determination, as highlighted in the Fourteen Points declaration by the US President Woodrow Wilson, came to acquire greater significance. In this context, it is important to note that there was a lack of attention to ethnic groups and their historical associations in the establishment of borders, which paved the way for new conflicts and tensions to happen. While some nations were celebrating their newly achieved freedom, others had to go through political, economic, and social crises. In this context, it can be highlighted that while the new order that emerged as a result of the war was a positive move towards peace, on the other hand, it led to the peace that was established by the Treaty of Versailles to be the beginning of new crises.

5. The Treaty of Versailles

a. Content of the Treaty

The Treaty of Versailles, which was signed on the 28th of June in the year 1919, is the most significant of the various peace treaties that were instrumental in bringing the World War to a close. This was not merely a ceasefire; rather, it was the rearrangement of the world map itself. The treaty is composed of 440 articles and can be broadly classified into four main sections: territorial issues, military issues, financial issues, and the 'War Guilt' clause.

1. Territorial Changes and Mandates

Germany lost 13% of its European territory and all colonial possessions.

- Alsace-Lorraine: Given back to France.
- Polish Corridor: Given to Poland to gain access to the Baltic Sea, thereby splitting East Prussia from Germany.
- Danzig: Given League of Nations status as a "Free City."
- Colonies: German colonial possessions in Africa and the Pacific were taken away and distributed as "mandates" among the victors, mainly Britain and France.

2. Military Restrictions

In order to ensure that Germany would never again start another war in the future, the treaty placed the following restrictions on Germany's military capabilities:

- The German army was limited to 100,000 men.
- The German navy was limited to ships of less than 10,000 tons, with no submarines (U-boats) allowed.
- Germany was forbidden from having an air force (Luftwaffe).
- The Rhineland was to be permanently demilitarized to serve as a buffer zone for France.

3. Financial Reparations and Article 231

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The most contentious issue was Article 231, also called the War Guilt Clause. It made Germany take full blame for the damages caused due to the war.

- It provided the Allies with the opportunity to demand massive reparations.
- In 1921, the total amount was fixed at 132 billion gold marks, which equaled approximately \$33 billion at that time. However, economists, including John Maynard Keynes, believed that this would cause the German economy to collapse.

4. The League of Nations

The first 26 articles of the treaty established the League of Nations, which would arbitrate conflicts between nations to ensure that there were no wars.

- Ironically, the brainchild of US President Woodrow Wilson, the League of Nations, was never joined by the US.

b. Main Clauses and Key Terms

In an effort to transform Europe following World War I, the Treaty of Versailles included a number of political, territorial, military, and economic provisions. These provisions sought to weaken Germany, make amends to the Allies, and set up systems for preserving world peace.

1. Article 231, the War Guilt Clause

The War Guilt Clause, or Article 231, was one of the treaty's most contentious clauses. According to this article, Germany and its allies were solely to blame for starting the war and the harm it caused.

The clause was widely seen in Germany as a humiliating declaration of sole blame, which fueled political resentment and instability even though its main purpose was to provide a legal foundation for demanding reparations.

2. Reparations

The treaty required Germany to compensate the Allied powers for the destruction caused during the war. In 1921, the Allied Reparations Commission set the total amount at 132 billion gold marks.

These payments were meant to cover civilian damages and reconstruction costs. However, critics argued that such financial demands placed a heavy burden on the German economy and could destabilize the country politically and economically.

3. Territorial Changes

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Germany was required to surrender significant portions of its territory and all of its overseas colonies.

Key territorial provisions included:

- Alsace-Lorraine was returned to France.
- The Polish Corridor was created to give Poland access to the Baltic Sea, separating East Prussia from the rest of Germany.
- Danzig was declared a Free City under the supervision of the League of Nations.
- Eupen-Malmedy was transferred to Belgium.
- The Saar Basin was placed under League of Nations administration for fifteen years, while France gained control of its coal mines.
- Germany lost all of its colonial territories, which were distributed among the victorious powers as League of Nations mandates.

4. Military Limitations

The treaty placed stringent restrictions on Germany's armed forces to keep it from posing a military threat in the future.

Among the main limitations were:

- There could only be 100,000 soldiers in the German army.
- Since conscription was prohibited, mandatory military service could not be implemented.
- It was forbidden for Germany to own military aircraft, tanks, heavy artillery, or submarines.
- The size of the German navy was severely constrained
- A buffer zone was established along the French border after the Rhineland was permanently demilitarized.

5. The League of Nations

The first 26 articles of the treaty created the League of Nations, which was an international organization that would help in maintaining world peace and fostering international cooperation.

The main purpose of the League was to settle disputes between countries through diplomacy, promote disarmament, and advocate for collective security. However, the United States, which was to be led by President Woodrow Wilson, did not end up joining the League due to the Senate's refusal to ratify the treaty.

6. Consequences and Circumstances

a. Immediate Effects on Europe's Borders

The end of World War I and the signing of the Treaty of Versailles altered the map of Europe significantly. Germany was forced to cede some vital territories. Alsace and Lorraine were returned to France, and the eastern territories were given to Poland, which was re-established as a country. Poland was given access to the Baltic Sea through the Polish Corridor, which also cut Germany in two, separating East Prussia from the mainland.

The city of Danzig, now known as Gdansk, was given to the League of Nations and made a Free City. Germany was also forced to cede its overseas colonies, which were mandated to other countries like Britain and France.

Post-war border arrangements affected not only Germany but all of Europe. New states emerged. States with multinational structures such as Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia brought together different ethnic and religious groups under a single political structure. For this reason, these states were able to experience internal conflicts in the future. In addition, the division between East and West in Germany negatively affected the country's unity and damaged its economy. In other words, border arrangements led to instability and problems in Europe in the long term.

Key points to remember:

Germany was forced to cede some vital land in Europe and overseas colonies.

Alsace and Lorraine were given back to France.

Poland was given access to the sea and some land, creating the Polish Corridor.

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Danzig was given to the League of Nations and made a Free City.

The Treaty of Versailles altered the map of Europe to weaken Germany and strengthen some new countries in Europe.

b. Economic and Social Impact

The treaty imposed heavy economic costs on the Germans. The most disputed provision of the treaty was Article 231, also known as the War Guilt Clause, which held the Germans responsible for the war. This provision meant that the Germans had to pay reparations to the Allied Powers for damages caused by the war.

The hyperinflation crisis that occurred in 1923 was one of the consequences of the economic burdens. During this period, the German mark rapidly lost its value and prices were in constant fluctuation. The purchasing power of money remained extremely low. This situation created economic insecurity and anxiety about the future among large segments of society.

The reparations imposed by the treaty caused serious economic problems in the early years of the Weimar Republic. There was inflation, economic instability, and unemployment in the country, which affected the people of Germany seriously.

The treaty also had serious social and political implications. The Germans felt humiliated by the treaty and felt that it was unfair to their country. This led to a lack of trust in the democratic government of the time. A sense of being unjustly punished developed within society, and alongside this, structures such as the Nazi Party led by Adolf Hitler began to influence large segments of the population through propaganda.

This led to political extremism in the country, which ultimately caused the instability that led to the outbreak of the Second World War.

In addition, international institutions such as the League of Nations were unable to effectively manage the emerging economic and political crises. In particular, the prioritization of their own interests by major powers and the weakness of enforcement mechanisms limited the effectiveness of this institution. This situation led to a lack of trust in the international system and made it more difficult to prevent a new war.

Key points to remember:

Germany was held responsible for the war.

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The reparations imposed by the treaty damaged the German economy.

There was inflation and unemployment in the country.

The Germans felt humiliated by the treaty.

Post-Treaty Map:



7. Political Stances of Major Powers

1) France

France was a key country in the Allied Powers, and it had the most aggressive stance by far at the treaty. One of many reasons for this political stance was shaped after the France - Prussia war and German invasion between 1914 and 1918, which ended up with Germans invading the Alsace-Lorraine territory and also destroying industrial territories. With 1.4 million losses of French soldiers, France obviously wanted to have the upper hand, and their approach was more demanding for harsh restrictions and compensations in order to prevent future attempts at invasion and militarization. France strongly opposed the idea of Germany uniting with Austria, so France prohibited them from getting united again. The harsh compensations were not just money; Germany's payment would be done in industrial goods, natural resources such as coal, and production of ships, which would be sent to the Allied Powers.

France's demands for the treaty were;

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- i. Restitution of Alsace-Lorraine and the Saar territories
- ii. Demilitarization of the Rhineland Region
- iii. limiting the German military to 100,000 soldiers while prohibiting compulsory military service, halting biological weapon, tank, and machinery production, and forbidding Germany from having armed and unarmed submarines.
- iv. Germany would be announced as the one who is responsible for the war.

2) Britain

Britain was one of the main powers in the Allied Powers, and it played a big role in deciding the terms of the Versailles Treaty. Unlike France, Britain's actions in the situation were more stable. Even though Britain's opinion towards Germany was to restrict and punish them because of the war crimes that they committed for a long time, hard circumstances would upset the balance of power in Europe, and also new problems would occur. Also, Britain was trying to keep its economy in balance because, before World War I, Germany was one of Britain's biggest allies in commerce. Britain strongly agreed on blaming Germany due to the losses suffered during the war, and especially the destruction caused by German naval attacks. But British leaders were aware that completely weakening Germany would cause political instability and strengthen revolutionary movements like communism. Therefore, while Britain wanted Germany's military power limited and for it to pay reparations for the damages of the war, it also did not want Germany to collapse economically.

Britain's demands for the treaty were:

- i. The reduction of the German navy and serious limitations on its naval power in order to preserve British naval supremacy.
- ii. To pay reparations to the Allied Powers for the destruction and losses caused by the war.
- iii. Germany to lose its overseas colonies, and these territories to be administered mostly by the Allied Powers under a League of Nations mandate system.
- iv. Various limitations on Germany's military power to prevent future attacks and to maintain the balance of power in Europe.

3) Germany

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Germany, as the defeated power of World War I, was placed in a very difficult position during the negotiations of the Treaty of Versailles. After the war, the German monarchy collapsed and the country was reorganized as the Weimar Republic. However, the new government had to deal with severe economic problems, political instability, and social unrest caused by the war and its consequences. The idea that Germany alone would be held responsible for the war and forced to pay heavy reparations created strong opposition among the German public.

German leaders believed that the conditions of the treaty were extremely harsh and would make it very difficult for the country to recover economically and politically. Germany also faced significant territorial losses and strict military restrictions, which greatly weakened its position in Europe. For this reason, German representatives argued that the treaty should include more balanced and fair conditions.

Germany's demands for the treaty were:

- i. That the full responsibility for the war would not be placed solely on Germany.
- ii. Reduction or reconsideration of the reparations imposed on Germany.
- iii. More flexible conditions that would allow Germany to recover economically.
- iv. Limiting territorial losses and protecting Germany's national integrity.

4) United States

The United States joined the war later than most of the Allied powers, but it played a major role in shaping the discussions surrounding the post-war peace settlement. The American president, Woodrow Wilson, promoted a more idealistic approach to peace. Wilson believed that the post-war order should focus on fairness, cooperation, and long-term stability rather than harsh punishment.

To achieve this vision, Wilson introduced the Fourteen Points, a set of principles intended to guide the creation of a stable international system. These points emphasized open diplomacy, national self-determination, and the creation of an international organization that would prevent future conflicts. However, this more moderate approach sometimes conflicted with the demands of countries such as France, which supported harsher penalties for Germany.

The United States' demands for the treaty were:

- i. Support for the principle of national self-determination.
- ii. The creation of an international organization to maintain peace (the League of Nations,5.).
- iii. Establishing balanced conditions that would ensure long-term peace rather than revenge.
- iv. Encouraging open diplomacy and international cooperation.

Other Relevant Nations

Besides the major powers, several other countries played important roles in the discussions surrounding the Treaty of Versailles. Many countries that had just gained independence or expected border changes tried to secure their political interests in the new international system.

For example, Italy joined the Allied Powers during the war with the expectation of gaining territory, particularly in regions along the Adriatic Sea. At the same time, newly established states such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia aimed to secure international recognition and stable borders. For these countries, the treaty represented both an opportunity to establish national independence and a challenge in maintaining stability in a rapidly changing Europe.

Demands of these nations were:

- i. International recognition of newly established states and their borders.
- ii. Fulfillment of territorial promises made during the war.
- iii. Establishing regional security and preventing future conflicts.
- iv. Maintaining political and economic stability with the new international order.

8. Timeline of the Events

1918

- November 11 1918 World War I ends and Germany signs the Armistice of Compiègne Fighting stops but the state of war continues until the treaty is signed
- Germany begins to face economic and political problems following the end of the war The German Monarchy is overthrown and amidst internal turmoil the Weimar Republic is established

1919

- January 18 1919 The Paris Peace Conference begins The Allied powers meet to discuss post-war peace terms Germany and its allies are initially not invited

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- January – June 1919 Delegates discuss territorial adjustments reparations and security measures British Prime Minister Lloyd George warns that overly harsh terms could push Germany into extremism
- June 16–22 1919 Ultimatum and Resignation The Allies issue an ultimatum sign within 24 hours or face occupation The German cabinet led by Scheidemann resigns in protest rather than sign
- June 28 1919 The treaty is signed at the Palace of Versailles Germany is forced to accept harsh terms

1920

- January 10 1920 The treaty officially comes into force Although the US Senate refuses to ratify the treaty the League of Nations is established Germany experiences political backlash and social unrest
- April 27 1921 The Allied Reparations Commission sets the final bill at 132 billion gold marks
- Germany struggles with reparations payments and in 1923 faces a hyperinflation crisis

9. Questions to be Answered

1. What qualities should the treaty have to ensure a stable and lasting peace in Europe?
2. Could the reparations ensure a future conflict?
3. How much did the loss of territories violate people's right to decide their own future self-determination?
4. Will making the Rhineland demilitarized really make France safer, or will it leave Central Europe without strong protection?
5. Can the League of Nations function as a "world parliament" if the defeated powers are excluded and the United States Senate refuses to ratify the treaty?
6. Should the reparations be adjusted based on Germany's "ability to pay" rather than the cost of the war?

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7. Will the new borders drawn after the war create stability in Europe or future ethnic tensions?
8. How can the treaty balance justice for the victors with stability for the defeated nations?
9. How can the rights of different ethnic groups be protected in the newly drawn borders?
10. What mechanisms should be created to prevent another large-scale war in Europe?

10. Bibliography

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