

Elizabeth's foreign
policy, mix of
astounding
successful missions,
securing engla...

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' Elizabeth's foreign policy was mostly a series of disasters.' Assess the validity of this view.

Elizabeth's foreign policy although having some failures was not a series of disasters, her policy would be more accurately described as fairly successful in achieving her aims though decreasingly so throughout her reign. It can be considered disastrous due to the fact that her support for the French Huguenots backfired and her involvement in Netherlands had many floors. The success of Elizabeth's foreign policy can be evaluated by the degree to which it met her foreign policy aims of: securing alliances; protecting England's borders and being inexpensive. As Elizabeth achieved her biggest success in 1560 with her involvement in Scotland then having merely small success' of the alliance with France 1578 and the defeat of the Spanish armada 1588 it can be considered that Elizabeth's policy was not a disaster but was less successful towards the end of her reign.

Elizabeth's foreign policy can be considered a failure when considering the involvement in the French Civil War. In 1562 Elizabeth provided aid the French Huguenots in the civil war against the Catholics, sending them 3000 troops. This policy was a failure as although it immediately secured an alliance with France the alliance was lost due to the Earl of Warwick's capturing of Le Havre and demanding the Huguenots give them Calais in exchange for it. This can further be considered a failure as Elizabeth put the borders at risk, as the Catholic side who Elizabeth had opposed won the Civil War Elizabeth was in a weak position as she had angered both the French Protestants by her attempt at pushing her aims before aid theirs and

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Catholics by directly supporting the Protestants in their attempt to remove them. Additionally, it was fairly costly as Elizabeth paid for the 3000 troops she sent in aid, it was also costly as it caused her to lose Calais which was a useful port. Hence this venture was completely unsuccessful and caused Elizabeth many losses, though they were not significant as relations with France were recovered, France did not invade and the loss of Calais did save Elizabeth the money that had been spent on maintaining garrisons and troops in Calais.

Furthermore, Elizabeth's policy towards Netherlands was overall unsuccessful. Elizabeth was involved in the Netherlands war against Spain from 1568-1588, with Elizabeth's policy changing from an embargo against Netherlands, to funding French efforts in Netherlands 1579, to direct involvement 1588. The policy was unsuccessful as the alliance made with the Netherlands soldiers was short lived, as in 1585 some of Elizabeth's soldiers turned against Netherlands joining Duke Parma thus jeopardising the relations with the Netherlands and losing the alliance with the Netherlands. The involvement in Netherlands also put the English borders at risk as the support of Netherlands against Spanish Duke Parma aggravated Philip of Spain and was a contributing factor to the Spanish armada being launched 1588, which although was unsuccessful put England at a significant risk. The involvement in Netherlands was expensive as Elizabeth gave Anjou 30, 000 crowns to pay for his troops, then sent 6, 400 foot soldiers and 1, 000 cavalries, which is a highly costly policy. Although there may have been financial gains from trade with Antwerp when Antwerp was independent from

Spain, it was not as independent for a significant period of time for financial gains that would counteract the significant cost. Hence the policy in Netherlands was highly unsuccessful due to its large costs, lack of gains, insecurity it caused due to angering Spain; it can be considered more of a failure than the involvement in the French Civil War.

Despite some significant failures in policy, Elizabeth had some success' such as her assistance of the Scottish. In 1559 Elizabeth sent troops to the Protestant Lords of Congregation of Scotland to prevent the French reinforcements landing. This gained an alliance with the protestant Lords of Congregation that broke the Auld alliance forming a new alliance with Scotland. The involvement also helped to secure the borders and Elizabeth's throne as Mary Queen of Scots relinquished her

claim to the throne of England in response to Elizabeth's assistance, the alliance with the Scottish Protestants meant that Elizabeth wasn't at risk of invasion from Scotland either. Elizabeth did have to send the navy though which would have cost Elizabeth. Overall this was a highly successful foreign policy as it made significant gains in alliance and security.

Further, success in was Elizabeth's defeat of the Spanish armada in 1588. The defeat of the Spanish armada was a significant success as the armada was made up of 150 ships thus posed a significant threat to the English borders, thus the defeat of the armada secured them. Though it did not secure an alliance as the Spanish continued to pose a threat to England. It also would have cost Elizabeth to defeat the armada though due to the use

of fire ships and surprise attacks the cost limited. Hence the policy can overall be considered successful.

Another way in which Elizabeth's policy can be considered successful is through the alliance with France. In 1572 England signed the Treaty of Blois with France, which allied the two powers against Spain. This alliance continued until Anjou's death in 1584, which broke up the Auld alliance and protected England from threat from the strong power of France. After Anjou's death, the alliance broke down as the French Guise League signed a treaty with Phillip against Protestants thus putting Elizabeth at risk of invasion. Though the alliance was fairly costly as Elizabeth sent Anjou £30, 000 in 1581 and £60, 000 in 1582 this was a significant financial cost, but the cost may have been incurred anyway as they funds were towards a joint venture in the Netherlands hence overall the alliance can be considered very successful.

In conclusion, it can be considered that Elizabeth's foreign policy was fairly successful, though the success declined over Elizabeth's reign. The involvement in the French Civil War was a large failure and the involvement in the Netherlands was more of a failure as it had a bigger cost and put England at a bigger risk. The success of Elizabeth in forming alliances with France, protecting England from Spain and assisting Scotland in 1559 were all successful though to a limited extent and with her early policy in Scotland being more successful than her later policy in defeating the armada hence the success was declining.