

# Failure of louis the 14 assignment

[History](#)



Explain why Louis XIV ultimately failed to establish France as the dominant power in Europe.

## 1.0 Introduction

Louis XIV also known as the “ Sun King”, was the longest serving monarch in European History (1643 - 1715). Louis XIV came to throne with one goal in mind: to achieve absolute monarch in Europe and establish France as the dominant power in Europe. During his reign Louis XIV went through series of economic, political and religious reforms and eventually established France as one of the dominant power in Europe. Although Louis XIV was proved himself as a hardworking ruler but his obsession for glory dragged France into three long wars: the War of Devolution, the Nine Years War and the War of Spanish Succession. Consequently the war drained France's treasury. On top of the three long wars France participated in, Louis also made some fatal governing mistakes while dealing with internal issues.

The series of internal and external error Louis XIV encountered eventually haul France down from its dominant position. evaluate how the internal and external error encountered by Louis XIV contributed to Louis XIV failure to establish France as a dominant power in Europe.

## 2.0 Internal errors

They are three fatal inter errors made by Louis XIV and his bureaucratic government. These three factors are failure to establish a modernized economy, inability to tolerate the existence of other religions and poor governing and , diplomatic failures.

## 2. 1 Failure to establish a modernized economy

Every potential dominant power needs an modernized and well functioning economy to finance all its activities. In the context of Louis XIV's France an modernized economy is even more essential since a well functioned economy will be able to decrease the burden on the treasury on financing all the wars and the palace of Versailles.

Jean Baptiste Colbert, Louis chief finance minister, tried to reform the French economy during his time in the office by introducing mercantilism into Louis absolutist France. He did this by trading manufactured goods produced by France to other countries in exchange for gold and silver. On top of that, Colbert also attempted to increase internal trade through building canals and decreasing internal barrier to trade by reducing toll fees. Colbert also introduced series of financial tariffs attempting to reduce foreign commercial activity. Colbert introduced the "trickle down" economy, a concept where the poor are taxed more than the rich.

Colbert died in 1683 along with his ideas. His idea of mercantilism eventually die out because France was not willing to buy from its partners, in the long run France's trading partner ran out of money eventually they can not buy from France anymore. Trade is a key way for countries to gain resources and money, even more so for the absolute monarch France. Since nobles are excluded from paying taxes importing is another alternative to increase indirect tax. The idea of "trickle down" economy also failed because Colberts idea of charging the rich less and the poor more caused the poor eventually relocated themselves into a lower tax region resulting in an huge

economic difference between regions, this difference between regions ultimately slowed down the internal trade. Despite the effort from Colbert trying to reduce the barrier to internal trade. The corrupted government official still setup toll gates for their own benefit, as a result transferring goods across country can result into paying around 100 local tolls. Since Louis XIV was a big believer of absolutism, his idea of centralized planning economy to some degree constrained the establishment of private enterprise. Colbert attempt trying to impose tariff on the Dutch goods eventually also harmed France, in 1667 the tariffs imposed on imported goods doubled. This act by Colbert eventually sparked the Franco-Dutch war in 1672.

Despite Colbert's failure in trying to modernize France's economy, he did manage to reduce France's national debt by a considerable amount. After Colbert's Louis XIV did little trying to strengthen the economy due to his obsession with glory. Instead of trying to save money earned by Colbert, Louis decided to spend them on wars and his lavish palace of Versailles. Ultimately Louis obsession to prove glory by going to war dragged France into a series of long wars, the financial burden created by the series of wars eventually bankrupted the French monarch.

## 2. 2 Inability to tolerate other religions

Theoretically there is nothing wrong with a ruler establishing a main religion in the country, at the main time the ruler must also be tolerate the existence of other religions in order for the society to function peacefully. The inability

to tolerate the other existence created big internal and external problems for France.

Louis XIV was a strong Roman Catholic believer, during his reign he attempted to establish Roman Catholic as the universal religion in France. The influence of Roman Catholicism grew even deeper in Louis XIV as he married his secret wife (although the marriage was never admitted). In 1685 Louis revoked the Edict of Nantes, this act of Louis eventually cause around 200, 000 Hugoneuts to relocate out of France.

This act by Louis damaged the economy of France since the Hugoneuts are some of most skilled labor in France. On top of that Louis XIV also hostilized the protestant state.