

The treaty of versailles

[Countries](#), [Germany](#)



The Treaty of Versailles The Treaty of Versailles (TOV) was signed on the 28th of June 1919 in the Palace of Versailles. The TOV was a compromise peace and was designed to end all wars, but this was not achieved as 20 years later, in 1939 another war broke out. The three nation leaders, Georges Clemenceau of France, David Lloyd-George of Britain and Woodrow Wilson of America, all had different ideas of the harshness that should be placed on Germany. France in particular, wanted to see the German armed forces and Navy reduced. Georges Clemenceau, the French President had a very negative attitude towards Germany. He wanted revenge, and for the Germans to remain forever weak, as this would prevent Germany from being a threat to the French ever again. Woodrow Wilson, the American President wanted a Treaty that did not treat Germany too harshly, and as an idealist he wanted the Treaty that was a perfect solution, so that WW1 became a war to end all wars. David Lloyd-George wanted to Germany to be punished harshly, but feels that the punishment demanded by Clemenceau was too harsh. He saw Germany as a valuable trading partner and thought that if the compensation demanded upon Germany was too high, they would become too weak to be able to continue with trade. As part of the TOV, the German armed forces were dramatically reduced in size and efficiency. Their Army, before the war was about 4.5 million men in size but under the treaty this was reduced to 100,000 men and was made to be a no conscription, volunteer only army. Other than this the Navy was also reduced to 6 ships and 10,000 men. No tanks, submarines, or heavy artillery was to be used. Alsace and Lorraine, lost to Germany during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871, were returned to France. Other than this the Saar Land was also

given to France for the period of 15 years. The Saar Land was a valuable economic source to Germany, as it was rich in Coal. This potentially lost Germany valuable export income. The treaty also stated that the Rhineland, situated between Germany and France, was to be demilitarized, and no troops were to be stationed there. Upper Silesia was lost to Poland, to create the Polish Corridor. Eupen and Malmedy were given to Belgium and Northern Schleswig also returned to Denmark. Altogether, 10% of German land was lost, containing 16% of its industry and 12.5% of its population, now living in foreign countries, which also went against Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points of Peace, and the Self-Determination of Countries that he wanted. In Article 231, the War Guilt Clause, Germany had to accept "War Guilt" and full blame for the war. Germany was made to pay £6.6 billion in compensation to victorious countries allies. These reparation payments were fixed in 1921, and were ordered to be paid over the course of 42 years. The German economy was already in ruins and the loss of the Saar Land to France meant an even bigger dent was made in the income of Germany. The Ruhr was also invaded by the French and Belgians, which was an industrial heartland of Germany. The Germans were humiliated when they had to agree that the war was their fault, as they believed otherwise. The Germans were not invited to the TOV negotiations, and were forced to sign, even though they were not satisfied with any part of the TOV. They saw the Treaty as a Diktat (dictated peace). They objected to the reparations payment, and declared themselves bankrupt at the end of the war. Germany was the only country that was forced to disarm, and as Germany was militaristic it was a blow to German Pride. My own views of the Treaty are that Germany was treated too

harshly, and were not allowed to dictate or have a say in any aspect of the TOV. I feel that, maybe some compensation and reduction in Navy may have been necessary, but the amount agreed upon by allied countries was too high and set Germany back massively economically. I feel that the TOV was unsuccessful as it was designed to put an end to all wars, and in 1939 WW2 broke out.