

Causes and consequences of world war 1

War



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The causes of World War I, which began in central Europe in July 1914, included many intertwined factors, such as the conflicts and hostility of the four decades leading up to the war. Militarism, alliances, imperialism, and nationalism played major roles in the conflict as well. However, the immediate origins of the war lay in the decisions taken by statesmen and generals during the July Crisis of 1914, casus belli for which was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and his wife by Gavrilo Princip, an irredentist Serb.

The crisis came after a long and difficult series of diplomatic clashes between the Great Powers (Italy, France, Germany, Great Britain, Austria-Hungarian Empire and Russia) over European and colonial issues in the decade before 1914 that had left tensions high. In turn these diplomatic clashes can be traced to changes in the balance of power in Europe since 1867. [2] The more immediate cause for the war was tensions over territory in the Balkans. Austria-Hungary competed with Serbia and Russia for territory and influence in the region and they pulled the rest of the Great Powers into the conflict through their various alliances and treaties.

The topic of the causes of World War I is one of the most studied in all of world history. Scholars have differed significantly in their interpretations of the event. Consequences of the War During and in the aftermath of the war the political, cultural, and social order was drastically changed in Europe, Asia and Africa, even outside the areas directly involved in the war. New countries were formed, old ones were abolished, international organizations were established, and many new and old ideologies took a firm hold in people's minds.

There were some general consequences from the creation of a large number of new small states in eastern Europe as a result of the dissolution of the German, Russian, Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires, and the regional disturbance of the Russian Civil War. Internally these new states tended to have substantial ethnic minorities, which wished to unite with neighboring states where their ethnicity dominated. One consequence of the massive redrawing of borders and the political changes in the aftermath of war was the large number of European refugees.

Economic and military cooperation amongst these small states was minimal ensuring that the defeated powers of Germany and the Soviet Union retained a latent capacity to dominate the region. In the immediate aftermath of the war, defeat drove cooperation between Germany and the Soviet Union but ultimately these two powers would compete to dominate Eastern Europe. Perhaps the single most important event precipitated by the privations of World War I was the Russian Revolution of 1917. A socialist and often explicitly Communist revolutionary wave occurred in many other European countries from 1917 onwards, notably in Germany and Hungary.