

# I.H.9

From the Cold War to the Fall of the Berlin Wall

## Inner-German Relations During the Cold War – Between Tension and Rapprochement

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Die Beziehungen zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik ab 1949 sind eng an die globalen Entwicklungen im Zuge des Kalten Krieges gekoppelt. Im Beitrag erfahren die Schülerinnen und Schüler mehr über die Gründung der beiden deutschen Staaten und ihre Einbindung in die verschiedenen Blocksysteme. Sie lernen wichtige Stationen von der Teilung über den Weg der Währungsunion bis hin zur Wiedervereinigung kennen.

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### KOMPETENZPROFIL

Klassenstufe: 9/10

Dauer: 8 Unterrichtsstunden

Kompetenzen: Beginn des Kalten Krieges kennen, Einbindung von BRD und DDR in das Blocksystem erklären, die neue Ostpolitik im Hinblick auf ihre Bedeutung zur deutschen Einheit analysieren, durch Tandem-Activities und Gruppenpuzzle Sozialkompetenz fördern

Thematische Bereiche: Gründung beider deutscher Staaten, Kalter Krieg, Blockbildung, Mauerbau, Ostverträge, Kredite, Kulturabkommen, Mauerfall

Medien: Videos, Texte, Bilder

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## Auf einen Blick

### 1./2. Stunde

<b>Thema:</b>	The “Iron Curtain” and the start of the Cold War
<b>M 1</b>	Germany and the world from 1945 to 1990 – What do you know already?
<b>M 2</b>	Start of the Cold War and division of Germany
<b>M 3</b>	Founding of the two German states (1) – The FRG
<b>M 4</b>	Founding of the two German states (2) – The GDR
<b>Inhalt:</b>	Vorwissen zum Kalten Krieg wird reaktiviert und die doppelte Staatsgründung mithilfe von zwei Videoclips erarbeitet.

### 3./4. Stunde

<b>Thema:</b>	Allied-occupied Germany
<b>M 5</b>	Occupation zones (1) – Establishing the FRG
<b>M 6</b>	Occupation zones (2) – Establishing the GDR
<b>M 7</b>	Occupation zones (3) – Tandem task
<b>M 8</b>	Occupation zones (4) – Creating a historical map
<b>M 9</b>	Two main blocks – Wall
<b>Inhalt:</b>	Durch eine Tandem-Übung und eine Kartenarbeit wird die Bildung des West- und Ostblockes bis zum Mauerbau erarbeitet.

### 5./6. Stunde

<b>Thema:</b>	New Eastern policy / (Neue) Ostpolitik
<b>M 10</b>	New Eastern policy – Change through rapprochement
<b>M 11</b>	Ostverträge (1) – Moscow, Warsaw, and Prague
<b>M 12</b>	Ostverträge (2) – Four Power Agreement on Berlin
	Ostverträge (3) – Transit Agreement
<b>M 14</b>	Ostverträge (4) – The Basic Treaty
<b>Inhalt:</b>	Bearbeitung eines Gruppenpuzzles zu den Ostverträgen.

### 7./8. Stunde

<b>Thema:</b>	FRG and GDR on their way to German reunification
<b>M 15</b>	1980s – Loans, culture, and German reunification
<b>Inhalt:</b>	Die Lernenden erstellen Präsentationen zu Verträgen und dem Mauerfall.

# Germany and the world from 1945 to 1990 – What do you know already?

M 1

## Task

Look at the pictures. Describe what you can see. Speculate on the historical meaning of what you see. If you need help, check out the vocabulary box at the bottom of the page.



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2 \_\_\_\_\_



3 \_\_\_\_\_



4 \_\_\_\_\_



5 \_\_\_\_\_



6 \_\_\_\_\_

Picture 1: grebenovmaxim/istock/Getty Images Plus; Picture 2: mehmetbuma/istock/Getty Images Plus; Picture 3: btjobj/istock/Getty Images Plus; Picture 4: Thierry Noir/Wikimedia Commons – CC BY-SA 3.0; Picture 5: Klaus Rose/Picture Alliance; Picture 6: Gerd Borchert/Wikimedia Commons – CC BY-SA 3.0

[Last accessed: 09/07/2024]

### Useful vocabulary

**hammer:** a tool to heavily pound on sth. – **pair of compasses:** a tool to draw a circle – **garland of corn:** a round piece of decoration made of corn – **banner:** a flag that often contains a slogan – **Brandenburg Gate:** symbolic monument in Berlin

## Founding of the two German states (1) – The FRG

M 3

After the currency reforms in both the West and the East and the crisis caused by the Berlin Blockade, Germany was soon permanently divided. On 23 May 1949, the **Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)** was established from the three occupation zones in the West; and on 7 October 1949, the Eastern occupation zone of the USSR became the **German Democratic Republic (GDR)**.

### Tasks

1. Work with a partner. Each partner watches one of the videos below.
2. Work on the tasks for “your video” and present your findings to your partner.
3. Compare and contrast how the founding of the FRG and GDR was approached.



### Foundation of the FRG

<https://raabe.click/Gruendung-BRD-1949> [Last access: 19/07/2024]



1. Describe if (and if so how) the foundation of the FRG on 23 May 1949 was celebrated.

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2. Summarise the structure of the Parliamentary Council (*Parlamentarischer Rat*) and its main purpose.

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3. Name the primary consideration most members of the Parliamentary Council had, when entering the negotiations.

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4. Name other topics that were addressed during the negotiations as well.

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5. Explain the role both the Allies and their secret services had during the foundation of the FRG.

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6. Explain in what ways the new constitution stirred up hope of a new democracy.

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## Occupation zones (3) – Tandem task

M 7

This is how it works:

1. Work with a partner. Take the task sheet about the topic you have not prepared before (e.g., the person who has read the text about the FRG takes the tandem task about the GDR (B) and vice versa).
2. Alternatingly, pose each other the questions of the tandem tasks.
3. Check and correct you partner's answers using the suggested solutions in *italics* next to each question.



Tandem task about the FRG (A)
1. This <b>economic recovery program</b> was signed in 1947 and was supposed to provide foreign aid to Western Europe. ( <i>The Marshall Plan</i> )
2. Which countries benefitted from the financial aid provided by the <b>Marshall Plan</b> ? Name four countries. ( <i>Great Britain, France, Italy, FRG/Western Germany</i> )
3. The FRG contributed to an <b>economic agreement</b> in 1951. Name it. ( <i>European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)</i> )
4. Name other agreements that supported a <b>military and economic alliance</b> in the West. ( <i>Bonn-Paris Conventions (1952) = FRG joined NATO and the Western European Union (WEU); Treaties of Rome (1957) = establishment of a European economic area and promotion of peaceful use of nuclear energy (EURATOM)</i> )
5. Explain why critics worried about a <b>permanent division</b> between the FRG and the GDR. ( <i>FRG was more and more integrated in Western structures and did not recognise the GDR officially; no common ground for a future reunification.</i> )

Tandem task about the GDR (B)
1. What was regulated by the <b>Treaty of Görlitz</b> in 1950? ( <i>Both states abstained from mutual territorial claims; definition of border between GDR and Poland</i> )
2. Summarise the events in 1955 which led to a further <b>integration of the GDR</b> in the socialist system of the USSR. ( <i>GDR became a member of the CMEA and joined a meeting of Eastern European foreign ministers.</i> )
3. Name one reason why the Western powers rejected the <b>Stalin Note</b> . ( <i>They thought it was a bluff and did not want to stop the Western integration of the FRG.</i> )
4. Summarise other negotiations that supported the <b>alignment of the GDR</b> with the countries of the Eastern Bloc. ( <i>1954: Official recognition by the USSR, 1955 member of Warsaw Pact</i> )
5. Summarise the central message of Otto Grotewohl's statement on the <b>GDR's claim to sole representation</b> . ( <i>According to Grotewohl, the GDR had been the only legitimate German state and therefore, its government represented all of Germany.</i> )





## Ostverträge (3) – Transit Agreement

M 13

### Tasks

1. Get together in home groups (Stammgruppen) of four people and split up the texts M 11–M 14.
2. To become an expert, read the text assigned to you. Highlight the most important aspects.
3. With your expert group members, explain why the state surveillance of the transit routes were increased by the national safety authorities of the GDR after the transit agreement.
4. In your home group, summarise the content of the Transit Agreement. Collect your findings in a table that has four columns (one for each text).
5. In your home group, discuss the meaning of the treaties that were part of the new eastern policy, when it comes to the German reunification.

On 17 December 1971, the GDR and the FRG signed the **Transit Agreement**, which regulated travel between West Berlin and West Germany. The recently concluded **Four Power Agreement on Berlin** was the basis for these negotiations. It had the Soviet Union (USSR) guarantee residents from West Germany free travel between West Germany and West Berlin, areas previously restricted by tight East German border controls. The details of these travel regulations were to be negotiated by the German states.

The Transit Agreement removed the earlier harassments<sup>1</sup> and strict controls, making travel easier, faster, and cheaper. Visas were now issued at the border crossings and stamped in the passports, replacing the need for complex applications. The fees for using the transit routes, previously paid by travellers, were now covered by a single payment made by West Germany. Residents of West Berlin also benefited: starting on 20 December 1971, they could travel more frequently to East Berlin or East Germany. The Transit Agreement also regulated the treatment of former GDR citizens who had fled to the FRG. According to GDR law, they had committed a criminal act by fleeing to the West and could expect severe penalties upon re-entering the GDR. They were now granted entry, except for those wanted for violent crimes<sup>2</sup>.

The GDR feared that the new traffic regulations might lead to an increase in refugees or the smuggling of goods from West Germany. Therefore, additional regulations were put in place to prevent abuse of the Transit Agreement. For instance, deviations<sup>4</sup> from official routes, picking up passengers along the way or carrying prohibited items (such as literature banned in the GDR) could lead to criminal charges.

Until the collapse of the GDR in 1989, transit traffic steadily improved, and tourism between the FRG and the GDR increased significantly.

*Text by author (translated); Picture: BRD-Pass mit Visastempeln der DDR, mehrfarbige Stempel bei Transit mit dem Auto, schwarze beim Transit mit der Bahn © Clemensfranz, GNU free / Wikimedia Commons [Last access: 19/07/2024]*

1 **harassment**: unwanted actions that annoy or scare so., happening repeatedly – 2 **(to) issue**: (to) prepare and deliver e.g., a document – 3 **violent crime**: Gewaltverbrechen – 4 **deviation**: the opposite of the common way of doing sth. – 5 **(to) cede**: (to) be forced to allow so. else to own sth.



## M 14

**Ostverträge (4) – The Basic Treaty**

On 21 December 1972, East and West Germany signed the Basic Treaty<sup>1</sup> (full name: Treaty concerning the basis of relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic), which set the foundation for their future relations. This treaty regulated in what ways the two German states would interact with each other while moving forward.

**Tasks**

1. Get together in home groups of four people and split up the texts M 11–M 14.
2. To become an expert, read the text assigned to you. Highlight the most important aspects.
3. With your expert group members, explain why detractors criticised that the Basic Treaty did not meet the interests of GDR citizens in a satisfactory manner.
4. In your core group (Stammgruppe), summarise the content of the Basic Treaty in English. Collect your findings in a table that has four columns (one for each text).
5. In your core group, discuss the meaning of the treaties that were part of the new eastern policy, when it comes to the German reunification.

**Vertrag**

über die Grundlagen der Beziehungen zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik [...]

„**Artikel 1:** Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und die Deutsche Demokratische Republik entwickeln in freundschaftlicher Zusammenarbeit die Beziehungen zueinander auf der Grundlage der Gleichberechtigung.

**Artikel 2:** Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und die Deutsche Demokratische Republik werden sich in allen [...] Prinzipien leiten lassen, die in der Charta der Vereinten Nationen niedergelegt sind [...].

**Artikel 3:** Entsprechend der Charta der Vereinten Nationen werden die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und die Deutsche Demokratische Republik ihre Streitfragen ausschließlich mit friedlichen Mitteln lösen und sich der Drohung mit Gewalt oder der Anwendung von Gewalt enthalten. Sie bekräftigen die Unverletzlichkeit der zwischen ihnen bestehenden Grenze jetzt und in der Zukunft und verpflichten sich zur uneingeschränkten Achtung ihrer territorialen Integrität.

**Artikel 4:** Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und die Deutsche Demokratische Republik gehen davon aus, daß keiner der beiden Staaten den anderen international vertreten oder in seinem Namen handeln kann.

**Artikel 5:** Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und die Deutsche Demokratische Republik werden friedliche Beziehungen zwischen den europäischen Staaten fördern und zur Sicherheit und Zusammenarbeit in Europa beitragen. [...]

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