

# The French Revolution

The **French Revolution** (1789–1799) was a period of major political and social upheaval in France, with repercussions across Europe.

- **Main causes:** economic crisis (state debts, famines), social injustices between the three estates (privileged nobility and clergy vs. oppressed Third Estate), spread of Enlightenment ideas.
- **1789:** meeting of the Estates-General → creation of the National Assembly → storming of the Bastille (July 14), symbol of tyranny.
- **Early reforms:** abolition of feudal privileges, Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen.
- **1791:** France becomes a constitutional monarchy, but King Louis XVI attempts to flee and loses credibility.
- **1792–1793:** proclamation of the Republic, execution of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, wars with European monarchies.
- **Reign of Terror** (1793–1794): Robespierre and the Jacobins establish a radical regime, with mass executions by guillotine.
- **1794–1799:** Directory phase, marked by instability and corruption.
- **1799:** coup d'état by Napoleon Bonaparte (18 Brumaire), ending the Revolution and starting the Napoleonic era.