

Brief

The 19th century was a pivotal era for Germany, marked by intense political struggles, wars, and shifting alliances that eventually led to the unification of the German states. This period witnessed a complex interplay of military conflicts and diplomatic maneuvering, with key figures and events shaping the course of history. In MCC's inaugural crisis committee, delegates will navigate political strife, a perpetual state of crisis, and form alliances to achieve the best possible outcome for their character – which will vary widely depending on whom you represent.

Background:

At the beginning of the 19th century, Most of what is considered modern day Germany was a loose amalgamation of German speaking lands under the Holy-Roman empire. The Holy Roman Empire's dissolution in 1806 left the German states fragmented and politically divided. The Congress of Vienna in 1814-1815 aimed to reorganize Europe, leading to the creation of the German Confederation consisting of 39 sovereign states. There were many agreements between various states pulling them closer together both militarily and economically. Such events are listed below.

Key Events and Dates:

The Zollverein (1834): The establishment of the Zollverein, a customs union among various German states, facilitated economic cooperation and paved the way for closer integration.

The Hambach Festival (1832): A large patriotic gathering advocating for unity, civil liberties, and democratic reforms, symbolizing the growing desire for a united Germany.

Revolutions of 1848: Widespread uprisings across Europe, including in Germany, demanding political reforms and unification.

Frankfurt Parliament (1848): convened in May of 1848, an attempt to create a unified German nation, but internal divisions and external pressures led to its ultimate failure.

Second Schleswig War (1864): Prussia and Austria allied to defeat Denmark, gaining the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein and expanding Prussia's influence.

Austro-Prussian War (1866): A decisive conflict between Prussia and Austria, resulting in a quick Prussian victory. The German Confederation dissolved, and the North German Confederation led by Prussia emerged under Prussian leadership.

Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871): Sparked by a diplomatic crisis over the Spanish throne, this war united German states against a common enemy - France. The war culminated in the capture of Napoleon III and the proclamation of Wilhelm I as German Emperor in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, marking the unification of Germany.

Formation of the German Empire (1871): On January 18, 1871, the German Empire was officially proclaimed in the Hall of Mirrors.

Timeline:

1832: Hambach Festival

1834: Zollverein established

1848: Revolutions across Europe, Frankfurt Parliament convenes

1864: Second Schleswig War

1866: Austro-Prussian War, German Confederation dissolved

1870-1871: Franco-Prussian War

January 18, 1871: Proclamation of the German Empire

The German unification of the 19th century remains a significant chapter in European history, showcasing both the determination for unity and the complexity of political alliances that shaped a modern nation.

Policy Statement Requirements

You are expected to write a two page policy statement (graded out of 100 points) regarding four key points:

1. Context of The Overall Situation – Feel free to use the information found above in the brief, but make sure to conduct your own research. This was a very complex development, decades in the making, so this brief only scratches the surface of what you should know to be successful in this committee.
2. Character Specific Background – Devote a chunk of your statement to give a brief background summary of where your character is from, and the historical situation of the time (i.e., if you are the French foreign minister, consider France's POV and historical situation.) This section isn't necessarily about your character.
3. Who is Your Character? – This should be where the bulk of your research takes place. You should describe who your character is, what their historical significance, and what powers they have. After all, knowing the influences and boundaries of your character is the best way to draw inspiration for the various crises that will arise. Equally as important is your character's point of view on the situation and how/why they went about the complexities of German unification.
4. What Are You Trying to Achieve? – Arguably the most important section of your paper addresses what it is exactly that you as your character are trying to gain from this crisis. Your personal goals can range from becoming emperor of Germany to stopping German unification or even just simply causing as much chaos as possible. While writing this section, remember that it is impossible to predict the course of events within committee. Think of this as a statement of general principle that will guide your actions during the conference.