[Template:About](/wiki/Template:About" \o "Template:About) [Template:Distinguish](/wiki/Template:Distinguish) [Template:Pp-move-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-move-indef) [Template:Use dmy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_dmy_dates) [Template:Infobox former country](/wiki/Template:Infobox_former_country)

**Prussia** ([Template:Audio-de](/wiki/Template:Audio-de); [Template:Lang-pl](/wiki/Template:Lang-pl)) was a historic state originating out of the [Duchy of Prussia](/wiki/Duchy_of_Prussia) and the [Margraviate of Brandenburg](/wiki/Margraviate_of_Brandenburg), and centered on the [region of Prussia](/wiki/Prussia_(region)). For centuries, the [House of Hohenzollern](/wiki/House_of_Hohenzollern) ruled Prussia, successfully expanding its size by way of an unusually well-organised and effective army. Prussia, with its capital in [Königsberg](/wiki/Königsberg) and from 1701 moved to [Berlin](/wiki/History_of_Berlin), shaped the [history of Germany](/wiki/History_of_Germany). In 1871, German states united to create the [German Empire](/wiki/German_Empire) under Prussian leadership. In November 1918, the monarchies were abolished and the nobility lost its political power during the [German Revolution of 1918–19](/wiki/German_Revolution_of_1918–19). The [Kingdom of Prussia](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Prussia) was thus abolished in favour of a republic—the [Free State of Prussia](/wiki/Free_State_of_Prussia), a [state](/wiki/States_of_the_Weimar_Republic) of Germany from 1918 until 1933. From 1933, Prussia lost its independence as a result of the [Prussian coup](/wiki/Preußenschlag), when the [Nazi regime](/wiki/Nazi_Germany) was successfully establishing its "[Gleichschaltung](/wiki/Gleichschaltung)" laws in pursuit of a [unitary state](/wiki/Unitary_state). With the end of the Nazi regime, the division of Germany into [allied-occupation zones](/wiki/Allied-occupied_Germany) and the separation of its territories east of the [Oder–Neisse line](/wiki/Oder–Neisse_line), which were incorporated into Poland and the Soviet Union, the State of Prussia ceased to exist de facto in 1945.[[1]](#cite_note-1)[[2]](#cite_note-2) Prussia existed [*de jure*](/wiki/De_jure) until its formal liquidation by the [Allied Control Council](/wiki/Allied_Control_Council) Enactment No. 46 of 25 February 1947.[[3]](#cite_note-3) The name *Prussia* derives from the [Old Prussians](/wiki/Old_Prussians). In the 13th century, the [Teutonic Knights](/wiki/Teutonic_Knights)—an organized [Catholic](/wiki/Catholic) medieval [military order](/wiki/Military_order_(society)) of [German crusaders](/wiki/Prussian_Crusade)—conquered the lands inhabited by them. In 1308, the Teutonic Knights conquered the formerly Polish region of [Pomerelia](/wiki/Pomerelia) with [Gdańsk](/wiki/Gdańsk) (Danzig). Their [monastic state](/wiki/State_of_the_Teutonic_Order) was mostly [Germanised](/wiki/Germanisation) through [immigration from central and western Germany](/wiki/Ostsiedlung) and in the south, it was [Polonised](/wiki/Polonisation) by settlers from [Masovia](/wiki/Masovia). The [Second Peace of Thorn](/wiki/Second_Peace_of_Thorn_(1466)) (1466) split Prussia into the western [Royal Prussia](/wiki/Royal_Prussia), a province of Poland, and the eastern part, from 1525 called the [Duchy of Prussia](/wiki/Duchy_of_Prussia), a fief of the [Crown of Poland](/wiki/Crown_of_Poland) up to 1657. The [union of Brandenburg and the Duchy of Prussia](/wiki/Brandenburg-Prussia) in 1618 led to the proclamation of the [Kingdom of Prussia](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Prussia) in 1701.

Prussia entered the ranks of the [great powers](/wiki/Great_power) shortly after becoming a kingdom,[[4]](#cite_note-4)[[5]](#cite_note-5)[[6]](#cite_note-6)[[7]](#cite_note-7) and exercised most influence in the 18th and 19th centuries. During the 18th century it had a major say in many international affairs under the reign of [Frederick the Great](/wiki/Frederick_II_of_Prussia). During the 19th century, Chancellor [Otto von Bismarck](/wiki/Otto_von_Bismarck) united the German principalities into a "[Lesser Germany](/wiki/Kleindeutsche_Lösung)" which excluded the [Austrian Empire](/wiki/Austrian_Empire).

At the [Congress of Vienna](/wiki/Congress_of_Vienna) (1814–15), which redrew the map of Europe following [Napoleon's](/wiki/Napoleon) defeat, Prussia acquired a large section of north western Germany, including the coal-rich Ruhr. The country then grew rapidly in influence economically and politically, and became the core of the [North German Confederation](/wiki/North_German_Confederation) in 1867, and then of the [German Empire](/wiki/German_Empire) in 1871. The Kingdom of Prussia was now so large and so dominant in the new Germany that [Junkers](/wiki/Junker_(Prussia)) and other Prussian élites identified more and more as Germans and less as Prussians.

The Kingdom ended in 1918. In the [Weimar Republic](/wiki/Weimar_Republic) the state of Prussia lost nearly all of its legal and political importance following the [1932 coup](/wiki/Preußenschlag) led by [Franz von Papen](/wiki/Franz_von_Papen). East Prussia lost all of its German population after 1945, as Poland and the [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union) absorbed its territory and [expelled](/wiki/Flight_and_expulsion_of_Germans) most of its inhabitants.

The term *Prussian* has often been used, especially outside of Germany, to emphasise the professionalism, aggressiveness, militarism and conservatism of the [Junker](/wiki/Junker) class of landed aristocrats in the East who dominated first Prussia and then the German Empire before 1918.

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## Symbols[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

The main [coat of arms of Prussia](/wiki/Coat_of_arms_of_Prussia), as well as the [flag of Prussia](/wiki/Flag_of_Prussia), depicted a [black eagle](/wiki/Black_eagle) on a white background.

The black and white [national colours](/wiki/National_colours) were already used by the [Teutonic Knights](/wiki/Teutonic_Knights) and by the [Hohenzollern dynasty](/wiki/Hohenzollern_dynasty). The Teutonic Order wore a white coat [embroidered](/wiki/Embroidery) with a black cross with gold insert and black imperial eagle. The combination of the black and white colours with the white and red [Hanseatic](/wiki/Hanseatic_League) colours of the free cities [Bremen](/wiki/Bremen), Hamburg and [Lübeck](/wiki/Free_City_of_Lübeck), as well as of [Brandenburg](/wiki/Brandenburg), resulted in the black-white-red commercial flag of the [North German Confederation](/wiki/North_German_Confederation), which became the flag of the German Empire in 1871.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

[*Suum cuique*](/wiki/Suum_cuique) ("to each, his own"), the motto of the [Order of the Black Eagle](/wiki/Order_of_the_Black_Eagle) created by King [Frederick I](/wiki/Frederick_I_of_Prussia) in 1701, was often associated with the whole of Prussia. The [Iron Cross](/wiki/Iron_Cross), a military decoration created by King [Frederick William III](/wiki/Frederick_William_III_of_Prussia) in 1813, was also commonly associated with the country.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) The region, originally populated by Baltic [Old Prussians](/wiki/Old_Prussians) who were Christianised, became a favoured location for immigration by (later mainly Protestant) [Germans](/wiki/Germans) (*see* [*Ostsiedlung*](/wiki/Ostsiedlung)), as well as [Poles](/wiki/Poles) and [Lithuanians](/wiki/Lithuanians) along the border regions.

## Territory[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

Before its abolition, the territory of the [Kingdom of Prussia](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Prussia) included the provinces of [West Prussia](/wiki/West_Prussia_Province); [East Prussia](/wiki/East_Prussia_Province); [Brandenburg](/wiki/Brandenburg_Province); [Saxony](/wiki/Saxony_Province) (including much of the present-day state of [Saxony-Anhalt](/wiki/Saxony-Anhalt) and parts of the state of [Thuringia](/wiki/Thuringia) in Germany); [Pomerania](/wiki/Province_of_Pomerania_(1815–1945)); [Rhineland](/wiki/Rhineland_Province); [Westphalia](/wiki/Westphalia_Province); [Silesia](/wiki/Silesia_Province) (without [Austrian Silesia](/wiki/Czech_Silesia)); [Lusatia](/wiki/Lusatia); [Schleswig-Holstein](/wiki/Schleswig-Holstein); [Hanover](/wiki/Hanover_Province); [Hesse-Nassau](/wiki/Hesse-Nassau_Province); and a small detached area in the south called [Hohenzollern](/wiki/Hohenzollern_Province), the ancestral home of the Prussian ruling family. The land that the Teutonic Knights occupied was flat and covered with rich soil. The land was perfectly suited to the large-scale raising of wheat.[[8]](#cite_note-8) The rise of early Prussia was based on the raising and selling of wheat. Teutonic Prussia became known as the "bread basket of Western Europe" (in German, *Kornkammer*, or granary). The port cities of Stettin ([Szczecin](/wiki/Szczecin)) in Pomerania, Danzig ([Gdańsk](/wiki/Gdańsk)) in Prussia, [Riga](/wiki/Riga) in Livonia, Königsberg ([Kaliningrad](/wiki/Kaliningrad)) and Memel ([Klaipėda](/wiki/Klaipėda)) rose on the back of this wheat production. Wheat production and trade brought Prussia into close relationship with the [Hanseatic League](/wiki/Hanseatic_League) during the period of time from 1356 (official founding of the Hanseatic League) until the decline of the League in about 1500.

The expansion of Prussia based on its connection with the [Hanseatic League](/wiki/Hanseatic_League) cut both [Poland](/wiki/Poland) and [Lithuania](/wiki/Lithuania) off from the coast of the [Baltic Sea](/wiki/Baltic_Sea) and trade abroad.[[9]](#cite_note-9) This meant that Poland and Lithuania would be traditional enemies of Prussia—which was still called the Teutonic Knights.[[10]](#cite_note-10)

## Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

### Population[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

In 1871, Prussia's population numbered 24.69 million, accounting for 60% of the [German Empire's](/wiki/German_Empire) population.<ref name=Handbuch>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref> In 1910, the population had increased to 40.17 million (62% of the Empire's population).<ref name=Handbuch/> In 1914, Prussia had an area of 354,490 km². In May 1939 Prussia had an area of 297,007 km² and a population of 41,915,040 inhabitants. The Principality of [Neuenburg](/wiki/Neuchâtel), now the [Canton of Neuchâtel](/wiki/Canton_of_Neuchâtel) in Switzerland, was a part of the Prussian kingdom from 1707 to 1848.

### Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

Prussia was dominated by two Protestant confessions. [Lutherans](/wiki/Lutheranism) made up the majority, and there were some [Reformed](/wiki/Reformed_churches) minorities in the central and western part of the state. In 1613, [John Sigismund, Elector of Brandenburg](/wiki/John_Sigismund,_Elector_of_Brandenburg) and Grand Duke of Prussia, declared himself for the Reformed creed and transferred the cathedral in Berlin from the Lutheran to the Reformed church. Lutherans and Reformed were merged after 1817 by the [Prussian Union of churches](/wiki/Prussian_Union_of_churches), which came under tight royal control.[[11]](#cite_note-11) In Protestant regions, writes Nipperdey:

Much of religious life was often conventional and superficial by any normal, human standard. The state and the bureaucracy kept their distance, preferring to spoon-feed the churches and treat them like children. They saw the churches as channels for education, as a means of instilling morality and obedience, or for propagating useful things, just like bee-keeping or potato-farming.[[12]](#cite_note-12)

After 1814, Prussia contained millions of Roman Catholics in the west and in Poland. East Prussia's southern region of [Masuria](/wiki/Masuria) was mostly made up of Germanised Lutheran [Masurians](/wiki/Masurians). There were numerous Roman Catholic populations in the [Rhineland](/wiki/Rhineland) and parts of [Westphalia](/wiki/Westphalia). West Prussia and the [Province of Posen](/wiki/Province_of_Posen) had predominantly Roman Catholic [Polish-speaking](/wiki/Polish_language) populations.[[13]](#cite_note-13)

### Non-German population[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[thumb|right|175px|In 1649,](/wiki/Image:Curonians_kursenieki_in_1649.png) [Kursenieki](/wiki/Kursenieki) settlement along the [Baltic](/wiki/Baltic_Sea) coastline of [East Prussia](/wiki/East_Prussia) spanned from [Memel (Klaipėda)](/wiki/Klaipėda) to [Danzig (Gdańsk)](/wiki/Gdańsk). In 1871, approximately 2.4 million Poles lived in Prussia, constituting the largest minority.<ref name=Handbuch/> Other minorities were Jews, Danes, [Frisians](/wiki/Frisians), [Kashubians](/wiki/Kashubians) (72,500 in 1905), [Masurians](/wiki/Masurians) (248,000 in 1905), [Lithuanians](/wiki/Lithuanians) (101,500 in 1905), [Walloons](/wiki/Walloons), [Czechs](/wiki/Czechs), [Kursenieki](/wiki/Kursenieki), and [Sorbs](/wiki/Sorbs).<ref name=Handbuch/>

The area of [Greater Poland](/wiki/Greater_Poland), where the Polish nation had originated, became the [Province of Posen](/wiki/Province_of_Posen) after the [Partitions of Poland](/wiki/Partitions_of_Poland). Poles in this Polish-majority province (62% Polish, 38% German) resisted German rule. Also, the southeast portion of Silesia ([Upper Silesia](/wiki/Upper_Silesia)) had a Polish majority. But Catholics and Jews did not have equal status with Protestants.[[14]](#cite_note-14) As a result of the [Treaty of Versailles](/wiki/Treaty_of_Versailles) in 1919, the [Second Polish Republic](/wiki/Second_Polish_Republic) was granted not only these two areas, but also areas with a German majority in the Province of West Prussia. After [World War II](/wiki/World_War_II), East Prussia, Silesia, most of Pomerania and the eastern part of Brandenburg were either annexed by the Soviet Union or given to Poland, and the [German-speaking](/wiki/German_language) populations expelled.

## Administrative and constitutional frameworks[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

In the mid-16th century the [margraves of Brandenburg](/wiki/Margraves_of_Brandenburg) had become highly dependent on the Estates (representing counts, lords, knights and towns - but not prelates, due to the [Protestant Reformation](/wiki/Protestant_Reformation) in 1538).<ref name=Kotulla262>Kotulla (2008), p. 262</ref> The margraviate's liabilities and tax income as well as the margrave's finances were in the hands of the *Kreditwerk*, an institution not controlled by the elector, and of the *Großer Ausschuß* ("Great Committee") of the Estates.<ref name=Kotulla263>Kotulla (2008), p. 263</ref> This was due to concessions made by [Elector Joachim II](/wiki/Joachim_II,_Elector_of_Brandenburg) in 1541 in return for financial aid by the estates; however, the *Kreditwerk* went bankrupt between 1618 and 1625.<ref name=Kotulla263/> The margraves further had to yield to the veto of the Estates in all issues concerning the "better or worse of the country", in all legal commitments, and in all issues concerning pawn or sale of the elector's real property.<ref name=Kotulla263/>

[Template:Multiple image](/wiki/Template:Multiple_image)

To reduce the influence of the Estates, [Joachim Frederick](/wiki/Joachim_Frederick,_Elector_of_Brandenburg) in 1604 created a council called *Geheimer Rat für die Kurmark* ("Privy Council for the Electorate"), which instead of the Estates was to function as the supreme advisory council for the elector.<ref name=Kotulla263/> While the council was permanently established in 1613, it failed to gain any influence until 1651 due to the [Thirty Years' War](/wiki/Thirty_Years'_War)<ref name=Kotulla263/> (1618-1648)

Until after the [Thirty Years' War](/wiki/Thirty_Years'_War), the various territories of Brandenburg-Prussia remained politically independent from each other,<ref name=Kotulla262/><ref name=Duchhardt101>Duchhardt (2006), p. 101</ref> connected only by the common feudal superior.<ref name=Duchhardt101/><ref name=Kotulla265>Kotulla (2008), p. 265</ref> [Frederick William](/wiki/Frederick_William_I,_Elector_of_Brandenburg) (ruled 1640-1688), who envisioned the transformation of the [personal union](/wiki/Personal_union) into a [real union](/wiki/Real_union),<ref name=Kotulla265/> started to centralise the Brandenburg-Prussian government with an attempt to establish the *Geheimer Rat* as a central authority for all territories in 1651, but this project proved infeasible.<ref name=Kotulla267/> Instead, the elector continued to appoint a governor (*Kurfürstlicher Rat*) for each territory, who in most cases was a member of the *Geheimer Rat*.<ref name=Kotulla267/> The most powerful institution in the territories remained the governments of the estates (*Landständische Regierung*, named *Oberratsstube* in Prussia and *Geheime Landesregierung* in Mark and Cleves), which were the highest government agencies regarding jurisdiction, finances and administration.<ref name=Kotulla267/> The elector attempted to balance the Estates' governments by creating *Amtskammer* chambers to administer and coordinate the elector's domains, tax income and privileges.<ref name=Kotulla267/> Such chambers were introduced in Brandenburg in 1652, in Cleves and Mark in 1653, in Pomerania in 1654, in Prussia in 1661 and in Magdeburg in 1680.<ref name=Kotulla267>Kotulla (2008), p. 267</ref> Also in 1680, the *Kreditwerk* came under the aegis of the elector.<ref name=Kotulla266>Kotulla (2008), p. 266</ref>

Frederick William I's excise tax (*Akzise*), which from 1667 replaced the property tax raised in Brandenburg for Brandenburg-Prussia's standing army with the Estates' consent, was raised by the elector without consultation with the Estates.<ref name=Kotulla266/> The conclusion of the [Second Northern War](/wiki/Second_Northern_War) of 1655-1660 had strengthened the elector politically, enabling him to reform the constitution of Cleves and Mark in 1660 and 1661 to introduce officials loyal to him and independent of the local estates.<ref name=Kotulla266/> In the Duchy of Prussia he confirmed the traditional privileges of the Estates in 1663,<ref name=Kotulla266/> but the latter accepted the caveat that these privileges were not to be used to interfere with the exertion of the elector's sovereignty.<ref name=Kotulla267/> As in Brandenburg, Frederick William ignored the privilege of the Prussian Estates to confirm or veto taxes raised by the elector: while in 1656, an *Akzise* was raised with the Estates' consent, the elector by force collected taxes not approved by the Prussian Estates for the first time in 1674.<ref name=Kotulla267/> From 1704 the Prussian estates *de facto* relinquished their right to approve the elector's taxes while formally still entitled to do so.<ref name=Kotulla267/> In 1682 the elector introduced an *Akzise* to Pomerania and in 1688 to Magdeburg,<ref name=Kotulla267/> while in Cleves and Mark an *Akzise* was introduced only between 1716 and 1720.<ref name=Kotulla266/> Due to Frederick William I's reforms, the state income increased threefold during his reign,<ref name=Duchhardt101/> and the tax burden per subject reached a level twice as high as in France.<ref name=Duchhardt108>Duchhardt (2006), p. 108</ref>

Under the rule of [Frederick III (I)](/wiki/Frederick_I_of_Prussia) (in office: 1688-1713), the Brandenburg Prussian territories were *de facto* reduced to provinces of the [monarchy](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Prussia).<ref name=Kotulla265/> Frederick William's testament would have divided Brandenburg-Prussia among his sons, but his firstborn son Frederick III (I), with the [emperor's](/wiki/Leopold_I,_Holy_Roman_Emperor) backing, succeeded in becoming the sole ruler based on the [Treaty of Gera](/wiki/House_Treaty_of_Gera) of 1599, which forbade a division of Hohenzollern territories.<ref name=Kotulla269>Kotulla (2008), p. 269</ref> In 1689, a new central chamber for all Brandenburg-Prussian territories was established, called *Geheime Hofkammer* (from 1713: *Generalfinanzdirektorium*).<ref name=Kotulla270>Kotulla (2008), p. 270</ref> This chamber functioned as a superior agency of the territories' *Amtskammer* chambers.<ref name=Kotulla270/> The [General War Commissariat](/wiki/General_War_Commissariat) (*Generalkriegskommissariat*) emerged as a second central agency, superior to the local *Kriegskommissariat* agencies initially concerned with the administration of the army, but before 1712 transformed into an agency also concerned with general tax and police tasks.<ref name=Kotulla270/>

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Corona_Prusia-mj2.jpg)[Prussian King's Crown](/wiki/Crown_of_William_II) ([Hohenzollern Castle](/wiki/Hohenzollern_Castle) Collection) The Kingdom of Prussia functioned as an [absolute monarchy](/wiki/Absolute_monarchy) until the [Revolutions of 1848 in the German states](/wiki/Revolutions_of_1848_in_the_German_states), after which Prussia became a [constitutional monarchy](/wiki/Constitutional_monarchy) and [Adolf Heinrich von Arnim-Boitzenburg](/wiki/Adolf_Heinrich_von_Arnim-Boitzenburg) was elected[Template:By whom](/wiki/Template:By_whom) as Prussia's first [prime minister](/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_Prussia) (*Ministerpräsident*). [Prussia's first constitution](/wiki/Constitution_of_Prussia_(1848)) dated from 1848. The [1850 Prussian Constitution](/wiki/Constitution_of_Prussia_(1850)) established a [two-chamber](/wiki/Bicameralism) parliament. The lower house, or [*Landtag*](/wiki/Prussian_Landtag) represented all taxpayers, who were [divided into three classes](/wiki/Prussian_three-class_franchise) according to the amount of taxes paid. This allowed just over 25% of the voters to choose 85% of the legislature, all but assuring dominance by the more well-to-do elements of the population. The upper house (First Chamber or *Erste Kammer*), later renamed the [Prussian House of Lords](/wiki/Prussian_House_of_Lords) (*Herrenhaus*), was appointed by the king. He retained full executive authority and ministers were responsible only to him. As a result, the grip of the landowning classes, the [Junkers](/wiki/Junker), remained unbroken, especially in the eastern provinces. The [Prussian Secret Police](/wiki/Prussian_Secret_Police), formed in response to the [Revolutions of 1848 in the German states](/wiki/Revolutions_of_1848_in_the_German_states), aided the conservative government.

Unlike its authoritarian pre-1918 predecessor, Prussia from 1918 to 1932 was a promising democracy within Germany. The abolition of the political power of the aristocracy transformed Prussia into a region strongly dominated by the left wing of the political spectrum, with "Red Berlin" and the industrial centre of the [Ruhr Area](/wiki/Ruhr_Area) exerting major influence. During this period a coalition of centre-left parties ruled, predominantly under the leadership (1920-1932) of East Prussian [Social Democrat](/wiki/Social_Democratic_Party_of_Germany) [Otto Braun](/wiki/Otto_Braun). While in office Braun implemented several reforms (together with his Minister of the Interior, [Carl Severing](/wiki/Carl_Severing)) which became models for the later [Federal Republic of Germany](/wiki/Germany). For instance, a Prussian prime minister could only be forced out of office if there was a "positive majority" for a potential successor[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed). This concept, known as the [constructive vote of no confidence](/wiki/Constructive_vote_of_no_confidence), became part of the [Basic Law](/wiki/Basic_Law_for_the_Federal_Republic_of_Germany) of the Federal Republic of Germany. Most[Template:Quantify](/wiki/Template:Quantify) historians regard the Prussian government during the 1920s as far more successful than that of Germany as a whole.

Similar to other German states both [now](/wiki/States_of_Germany) and [at the time](/wiki/Weimar_Republic#Constituent_states_of_Germany_during_the_Weimar_period), [executive power](/wiki/Executive_(government)) remained vested in a [Minister-President of Prussia](/wiki/Minister-President) and in laws established by a [Landtag](/wiki/Landtag) elected by the people.

## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

### Teutonic Order[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[Template:History of Brandenburg and Prussia](/wiki/Template:History_of_Brandenburg_and_Prussia) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

[left|thumb|Situation after the conquest in the late 13th century. Areas in purple under control of the Monastic State of the Teutonic Knights](/wiki/Image:Ordensstaat-kirchlich.jpg) [thumb|left|After the](/wiki/Image:Teutonic_state_1466.png) [Second Peace of Thorn](/wiki/Second_Peace_of_Thorn_(1466)). Teutonic Order state: orange

In 1211, [Andrew II of Hungary](/wiki/Andrew_II_of_Hungary) granted [Burzenland](/wiki/Burzenland) in Transylvania as a [fiefdom](/wiki/Fiefdom) to the [Teutonic Knights](/wiki/Teutonic_Knights). In 1225, he expelled them again, and they had to transfer to the [Baltic Sea](/wiki/Baltic_Sea). [Konrad I](/wiki/Konrad_I_of_Masovia), the Polish duke of [Masovia](/wiki/Masovia), unsuccessfully attempted to conquer [pagan Prussia](/wiki/Prussia_(region)) in crusades in 1219 and 1222.[[15]](#cite_note-15)In 1226, Duke Konrad invited the Teutonic Knights, a German [military order](/wiki/Military_order_(society)) of [crusading](/wiki/Crusades) knights, headquartered in the [Kingdom of Jerusalem](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Jerusalem) at [Acre](/wiki/Acre,_Israel), to conquer the Baltic [Prussian tribes](/wiki/Old_Prussians) on his borders.

During 60 years of [struggles against the Old Prussians](/wiki/Prussian_uprisings), the order created an independent state which came to control Prūsa. After the [Livonian Brothers of the Sword](/wiki/Livonian_Brothers_of_the_Sword) joined the Teutonic Order in 1237, they also controlled [Livonia](/wiki/Livonia) (now [Latvia](/wiki/Latvia) and [Estonia](/wiki/Estonia)). Around 1252, they finished the conquest of the northernmost Prussian tribe of the [Skalvians](/wiki/Skalvians) as well as the western Baltic [Curonians](/wiki/Curonians), and erected the [Memel Castle](/wiki/Memel_Castle), which developed into the major port city of [Memel (Klaipėda)](/wiki/Klaipėda). The final border between Prussia and the adjoining [Grand Duchy of Lithuania](/wiki/Grand_Duchy_of_Lithuania) was determined in the [Treaty of Melno](/wiki/Treaty_of_Melno) in 1422.

The [Hanseatic League](/wiki/Hanseatic_League) was officially formed in northern Europe in 1356 as a group of trading cities which came to have a monopoly on all trade leaving the interior of Europe and Scandinavia and on all sailing trade in the Baltic Sea for foreign countries.[[16]](#cite_note-16) The businessmen of the interior Sweden, Denmark and Poland came to feel oppressed by the Hanseatic League.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

In the course of the [Ostsiedlung](/wiki/Ostsiedlung) process settlers were invited, bringing changes in the ethnic composition as well as in language, culture and law. As a majority of these settlers were Germans, [Low German](/wiki/Low_German) became the dominant language.

The Knights were subordinate to the pope and the [emperor](/wiki/Holy_Roman_Emperor). Their initially close relationship with the Polish Crown deteriorated after they conquered Polish-controlled [Pomerelia](/wiki/Pomerelia) and [Danzig (Gdańsk)](/wiki/Gdańsk) in 1308. Eventually Poland and Lithuania, allied through the [Union of Krewo](/wiki/Union_of_Krewo) (1385), defeated the Knights in the [Battle of Grunwald](/wiki/Battle_of_Grunwald) (Tannenberg) in 1410.

The [Thirteen Years' War](/wiki/Thirteen_Years'_War_(1454–66)) (1454–1466) began when the [Prussian Confederation](/wiki/Prussian_Confederation), a coalition of [Hanseatic](/wiki/Hanseatic_League) cities of western Prussia, rebelled against the Order and requested help from the Polish king. The Teutonic Knights were forced to acknowledge the sovereignty of and to pay tribute to King [Casimir IV Jagiellon](/wiki/Casimir_IV_Jagiellon) of Poland in the [Second Peace of Thorn](/wiki/Second_Peace_of_Thorn_(1466)), losing western Prussia ([Royal Prussia](/wiki/Royal_Prussia)) to Poland in the process. Pursuant to the Second Peace of Thorn, two Prussian states were established[[17]](#cite_note-17)

### Duchy of Prussia[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|](/wiki/Image:Prussian_Homage.jpg)[*Prussian Homage*](/wiki/Prussian_Homage_(painting)), [Jan Matejko](/wiki/Jan_Matejko). After admitting the dependence of Prussia to the Polish crown, [Albert of Prussia](/wiki/Albert_of_Prussia) receives [Ducal Prussia](/wiki/Ducal_Prussia) as a [fief](/wiki/Fief) from King [Sigismund I the Old](/wiki/Sigismund_I_the_Old) of [Poland](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Poland_(1385–1569)) in 1525.

In 1525, Grand Master [Albert of Brandenburg-Ansbach](/wiki/Albert_I,_Duke_of_Prussia), a member of a cadet branch of the [House of Hohenzollern](/wiki/House_of_Hohenzollern), became a [Lutheran](/wiki/Lutheranism) Protestant and secularised the Order's remaining Prussian territories into the [Duchy of Prussia](/wiki/Duchy_of_Prussia).[[18]](#cite_note-18) This was the area east of the mouth of the [Vistula](/wiki/Vistula) River, later sometimes called "Prussia proper". For the first time, these lands came into the hands of a branch of the Hohenzollern family. (The Hohenzollern dynasty had ruled the [Margraviate of Brandenburg](/wiki/Margraviate_of_Brandenburg) to the west, a German state centred on [Berlin](/wiki/Berlin), since the 15th century.) Furthermore, with his renunciation of the Order, Albert could now marry and produce legitimate heirs.

### Brandenburg-Prussia[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

Brandenburg and Prussia were unified two generations later. Anna, granddaughter of Albert I and daughter of Duke [Albert Frederick](/wiki/Albert_Frederick,_Duke_of_Prussia) (reigned 1568–1618), married her cousin [Elector](/wiki/Prince-Elector) [John Sigismund](/wiki/John_Sigismund,_Margrave_of_Brandenburg) of [Brandenburg](/wiki/Margraviate_of_Brandenburg). Upon the death of Albert Frederick in 1618, who died without male heirs, John Sigismund was granted the right of succession to the Duchy of Prussia, which was still a Polish fief. From this time the Duchy of Prussia was in [personal union](/wiki/Personal_union) with the Margraviate of Brandenburg. The resulting state, known as [Brandenburg-Prussia](/wiki/Brandenburg-Prussia), consisted of geographically disconnected territories in Prussia, Brandenburg, and the [Rhineland](/wiki/Rhineland) lands of [Cleves](/wiki/Duchy_of_Cleves) and [Mark](/wiki/County_of_Mark).

[thumb|The "](/wiki/File:Keurvorst_Frederik_Willem_I_en_Louise_Henriëtte_van_Oranje.jpg)[Great Elector](/wiki/Frederick_William_I,_Elector_of_Brandenburg)" and [his wife](/wiki/Luise_Henriette_of_Nassau)

During the [Thirty Years' War](/wiki/Thirty_Years'_War), the disconnected Hohenzollern lands were repeatedly marched across by various armies, especially the occupying [Swedes](/wiki/Swedish_Empire). The ineffective and militarily weak Margrave [George William](/wiki/George_William,_Elector_of_Brandenburg) (1619–1640) fled from Berlin to [Königsberg](/wiki/Königsberg), the historic capital of the [Duchy of Prussia](/wiki/Duchy_of_Prussia), in 1637. His successor, [Frederick William I](/wiki/Frederick_William,_Elector_of_Brandenburg) (1640–1688), reformed the [army](/wiki/Prussian_Army) to defend the lands.

Frederick William I went to [Warsaw](/wiki/Warsaw) in 1641 to render [homage](/wiki/Homage_(feudal)) to King [Władysław IV Vasa](/wiki/Władysław_IV_Vasa) of Poland for the Duchy of Prussia, which was still held in [fief](/wiki/Fief) from the Polish crown. In the first phase of the [Second Northern War](/wiki/Second_Northern_War) (1654–1660), he took the duchy [as a fief from the Swedish king](/wiki/Treaty_of_Königsberg_(1656)) who later granted him full sovereignty in the [Treaty of Labiau](/wiki/Treaty_of_Labiau). In 1657, this grant was renewed by the Polish king in the treaties of [Wehlau](/wiki/Treaty_of_Wehlau) and [Bromberg](/wiki/Treaty_of_Bromberg). With Prussia, the Brandenburg [Hohenzollern dynasty](/wiki/House_of_Hohenzollern) now held a territory free of any feudal obligations, which constituted the basis for their later elevation to kings.

Frederick William I became known as the "Great Elector" for his achievements in organizing the electorate, which he accomplished by establishing an absolute monarchy (see [absolutism](/wiki/Absolutism_(European_history))) in Brandenburg-Prussia. Above all, he emphasised the importance of a [powerful military](/wiki/Prussian_Army) to protect the state's disconnected territories, while the [Edict of Potsdam](/wiki/Edict_of_Potsdam) opened Brandenburg-Prussia for immigration of [Protestant](/wiki/Protestant) refugees, and he established a bureaucracy to carry out state business efficiently.

### Kingdom of Prussia[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[thumb|upright|](/wiki/Image:Friedrich_I_of_Prussia.jpg)[Frederick I](/wiki/Frederick_I_of_Prussia), [King in Prussia](/wiki/King_in_Prussia) [thumb|upright|The](/wiki/Image:Preussische-Kroninsignien.JPG) [Prussian Crown Jewels](/wiki/Prussian_Crown_Jewels), [Charlottenburg Palace](/wiki/Charlottenburg_Palace), [Berlin](/wiki/Berlin) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) On 18 January 1701, Frederick William's son, Elector Frederick III, upgraded Prussia from a duchy to a kingdom and crowned himself King [Frederick I](/wiki/Frederick_I_of_Prussia). To avoid offending [Poland](/wiki/Poland), where a part of the old Prussia lay, [Leopold I](/wiki/Leopold_I,_Holy_Roman_Emperor), emperor of the Holy Roman Empire where most of the lands of Prussia lay, allowed Frederick only to title himself "[King in Prussia](/wiki/King_in_Prussia)", not "[King of Prussia](/wiki/King_of_Prussia)".

[thumb|left|300px|Growth of](/wiki/Image:Acprussiamap2.gif) [Brandenburg-Prussia](/wiki/Brandenburg-Prussia), 1600–1795 The state of [Brandenburg-Prussia](/wiki/Brandenburg-Prussia) became commonly known as "Prussia", although most of its territory, in Brandenburg, Pomerania, and western Germany, lay outside of Prussia proper. The Prussian state grew in splendour during the reign of Frederick I, who sponsored the arts at the expense of the treasury.[[19]](#cite_note-19) Frederick I was succeeded by his son, [Frederick William I](/wiki/Frederick_William_I_of_Prussia) (1713–1740) the austere "Soldier King", who did not care for the arts but was thrifty and practical.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) He is considered the creator of the vaunted Prussian bureaucracy and the professionalised standing army, which he developed into one of the most powerful in Europe, although his troops [only briefly saw action](/wiki/Siege_of_Stralsund_(1711–1715)) during the [Great Northern War](/wiki/Great_Northern_War). In view of the size of the army in relation to the total population, [Mirabeau](/wiki/André_Boniface_Louis_Riqueti_de_Mirabeau) said later: *Prussia, is not a state with an army, but an army with a state.* Also, Frederick William settled more than 20,000 Protestant refugees from [Salzburg](/wiki/Salzburg) in thinly populated eastern Prussia, which was eventually extended to the west bank of the [River Memel](/wiki/Neman_River), and other regions. In the [treaty of Stockholm](/wiki/Treaty_of_Stockholm_(Great_Northern_War)) (1720), he acquired half of [Swedish Pomerania](/wiki/Swedish_Pomerania).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

[thumb|upright|left|King](/wiki/Image:Frederick_William_I_the_Soldier-King.jpg) [Frederick William I](/wiki/Frederick_William_I_of_Prussia), "the Soldier-King"

The king died in 1740 and was succeeded by his son, [Frederick II](/wiki/Frederick_II_of_Prussia), whose accomplishments led to his reputation as "Frederick the Great".[[20]](#cite_note-20) As crown prince, Frederick had focused, primarily, on philosophy and the arts.[[21]](#cite_note-21) He was an accomplished flute player. In 1740, Prussian troops crossed over the undefended border of Silesia and occupied Schweidnitz. [Silesia](/wiki/Silesia) was the richest province of Habsburg Austria.[[22]](#cite_note-22) It signalled the beginning of three [Silesian Wars](/wiki/Silesian_Wars) (1740–1763).[[23]](#cite_note-23) The [First Silesian War](/wiki/First_Silesian_War) (1740–1742) and the [Second Silesian War](/wiki/Second_Silesian_War) (1744–1745) have, historically, been grouped together with the general European war called the War of Austrian Succession (1740–1748). [Holy Roman Emperor](/wiki/Holy_Roman_Emperor) [Charles VI](/wiki/Charles_VI,_Holy_Roman_Emperor) had died on 20 October 1740. He was succeeded to the throne by his daughter, [Maria Theresa](/wiki/Maria_Theresa).

By defeating the Austrian Army at the [Battle of Mollwitz](/wiki/Battle_of_Mollwitz) on 10 April 1741, Frederick succeeded in conquering [Lower Silesia](/wiki/Lower_Silesia) (the northwestern half of Silesia).[[24]](#cite_note-24) In the next year, 1742, he conquered [Upper Silesia](/wiki/Upper_Silesia) (the southeastern half). Furthermore, in the third Silesian War (usually grouped with the [Seven Years' War](/wiki/Seven_Years'_War)) Frederick won a victory over Austria at the [Battle of Lobositz](/wiki/Battle_of_Lobositz) on 1 October 1756. In spite of some impressive victories afterward, his situation became far less comfortable the following years, as he failed in his attempts to knock Austria out of the war and was gradually reduced to a desperate defensive war. However, he never gave up and on 3 November 1760 the Prussian king won another battle, the hard-fought [Battle of Torgau](/wiki/Battle_of_Torgau). Despite being several times on the verge of defeat Frederick, [allied with](/wiki/Anglo-Prussian_alliance_(1756)) [Great Britain](/wiki/UK), [Hanover](/wiki/Hanover) and [Hesse-Kassel](/wiki/Landgraviate_of_Hesse-Kassel), was finally able to hold the whole of Silesia against a coalition of [Saxony](/wiki/Saxony), [Austria](/wiki/Austria), France and Russia.[[25]](#cite_note-25) [Voltaire](/wiki/Voltaire), a close friend of the king, once described Frederick the Great's Prussia by saying "...it was [Sparta](/wiki/Sparta) in the morning, [Athens](/wiki/Athens) in the afternoon." From these wars onwards the [Austria–Prussia rivalry](/wiki/Austria–Prussia_rivalry) dominated German politics until 1866.

Silesia, full of rich soils and prosperous manufacturing towns, became a vital region to Prussia, greatly increasing the nation's area, population, and wealth.[[26]](#cite_note-26) Success on the battleground against Austria and other powers proved Prussia's status as one of the [great powers](/wiki/Great_power) of Europe. The Silesian Wars began more than a century of rivalry and conflict between Prussia and Austria as the two most powerful states operating within the Holy Roman Empire (although, ironically, both had extensive territory outside the empire).[[27]](#cite_note-27) In 1744 the County of [East Frisia](/wiki/East_Frisia) fell to Prussia following the extinction of its ruling Cirksena dynasty. [thumb|upright|King](/wiki/Image:Frederick_II_of_Prussia_Coloured_drawing.png) [Frederick II](/wiki/Frederick_the_Great), "the Great" In the last 23 years of his reign until 1786, Frederick II, who understood himself as the "first servant of the state", promoted the development of Prussian areas such as the [Oderbruch](/wiki/Oderbruch). At the same time he built up Prussia's military power and participated in the [First Partition of Poland](/wiki/Partition_of_Poland) with Austria and Russia (1772), an act that geographically connected the Brandenburg territories with those of Prussia proper. During this period, he also opened Prussia's borders to immigrants fleeing from religious persecution in other parts of Europe, such as the [Huguenots](/wiki/Huguenots). Prussia became a safe haven in much the same way that the United States welcomed immigrants seeking freedom in the 19th century.[[28]](#cite_note-28) Frederick the Great, the first "King *of* Prussia", practised [enlightened absolutism](/wiki/Enlightened_absolutism). He introduced a general civil code, abolished torture and established the principle that the Crown would not interfere in matters of justice. He also promoted an advanced secondary education, the forerunner of today's German [gymnasium](/wiki/Gymnasium_(school)) (grammar school) system, which prepares the brightest pupils for university studies.[[29]](#cite_note-29) The [Prussian education system](/wiki/Prussian_education_system) was emulated in various countries, including the United States.[[28]](#cite_note-28)

#### Napoleonic Wars[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

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During the reign of King [Frederick William II](/wiki/Frederick_William_II_of_Prussia) (1786–1797), Prussia annexed additional Polish territory through further [Partitions of Poland](/wiki/Partitions_of_Poland). His successor, [Frederick William III](/wiki/Frederick_William_III_of_Prussia) (1797–1840), announced the union of the Prussian [Lutheran](/wiki/Lutheranism) and [Reformed churches](/wiki/Reformed_churches) into [one church](/wiki/Prussian_Union_(Evangelical_Christian_Church)).[[30]](#cite_note-30) Prussia took a leading part in the [French Revolutionary Wars](/wiki/French_Revolutionary_Wars), but remained quiet for more than a decade due to the [Peace of Basel](/wiki/Peace_of_Basel) of 1795, only to go once more to war with France in 1806 as negotiations with that country over the allocation of the spheres of influence in Germany failed. Prussia suffered a devastating defeat against [Napoleon Bonaparte's](/wiki/Napoleon_I_of_France) troops in the [Battle of Jena-Auerstedt](/wiki/Battle_of_Jena-Auerstedt), leading Frederick William III and his family to flee temporarily to [Memel](/wiki/Klaipėda). Under the [Treaties of Tilsit](/wiki/Treaties_of_Tilsit) in 1807, the state lost about one third of its area, including the areas gained from the second and third [Partitions of Poland](/wiki/Partitions_of_Poland), which now fell to the [Duchy of Warsaw](/wiki/Duchy_of_Warsaw). Beyond that, the king was obliged to pay a large indemnity, to cap his army at 42,000 men, and to allow French troops to be garrisoned throughout Prussia, effectively making the Kingdom a French satellite.[[31]](#cite_note-31) In response to this defeat, reformers such as [Stein](/wiki/Heinrich_Friedrich_Karl_Reichsfreiherr_vom_und_zum_Stein) and [Hardenberg](/wiki/Karl_August_von_Hardenberg) set about modernising the Prussian state. Among their reforms were the liberation of peasants from [serfdom](/wiki/Serfdom), the [Emancipation of Jews](/wiki/Jewish_Emancipation) and making full citizens of them. The school system was rearranged, and in 1818 free trade was introduced. The process of army reform ended in 1813 with the introduction of compulsory military service.[[32]](#cite_note-32) By 1813, Prussia could mobilize almost 300,000 more than half of which were conscripts of the *Landwehr* of variable quality. The rest consisted of regular soldiers that were deemed excellent by most observers, and very determined to repair the humiliation of 1806.

After the [defeat of Napoleon in Russia](/wiki/Napoleon's_invasion_of_Russia), Prussia quit its alliance with France and took part in the [Sixth Coalition](/wiki/Sixth_Coalition) during the "Wars of Liberation" (*Befreiungskriege*) against the French occupation. Prussian troops under Marshal [Gebhard Leberecht von Blücher](/wiki/Gebhard_Leberecht_von_Blücher) contributed crucially (with the British) in the [Battle of Waterloo](/wiki/Battle_of_Waterloo) of June 1815 to the final victory over Napoleon. Prussia's reward in 1815 at the [Congress of Vienna](/wiki/Congress_of_Vienna) was the recovery of her lost territories, as well as the whole of the [Rhineland](/wiki/Rhineland), [Westphalia](/wiki/Westphalia), 40% of Saxony and some other territories. These western lands were to be of vital importance because they included the [Ruhr Area](/wiki/Ruhr_Area), the centre of Germany's fledgling industrialisation, especially in the arms industry. These territorial gains also meant the doubling of Prussia's population. In exchange, Prussia withdrew from areas of central Poland to allow the creation of [Congress Poland](/wiki/Congress_Poland) under Russian sovereignty.[[31]](#cite_note-31) In 1815 Prussia became part of the [German Confederation](/wiki/German_Confederation).

#### Wars of liberation[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [upright|thumb|King](/wiki/Image:FriedrichWilhelmIV.jpg) [Frederick William IV](/wiki/Frederick_William_IV_of_Prussia) The first half of the 19th century saw a prolonged struggle in Germany between liberals, who wanted a united, federal Germany under a democratic constitution, and [conservatives](/wiki/Conservatism), who wanted to maintain Germany as a patchwork of independent, monarchical states with Prussia and Austria competing for influence. One small movement that signaled a desire for German unification in this period was the [Burschenschaft](/wiki/Burschenschaft) student movement, by students who encouraged the use of the black-red-gold flag, discussions of a unified German nation, and a progressive, liberal political system. Because of Prussia's size and economic importance, smaller states began to join its free trade area in the 1820s. Prussia benefited greatly from the creation in 1834 of the German Customs Union ([Zollverein](/wiki/Zollverein)), which included most German states but excluded Austria.[[30]](#cite_note-30) In 1848 the liberals saw an opportunity when [revolutions broke out across Europe](/wiki/Revolutions_of_1848). Alarmed, King [Frederick William IV](/wiki/Frederick_William_IV_of_Prussia) agreed to convene a National Assembly and grant a constitution. When the [Frankfurt Parliament](/wiki/Frankfurt_Parliament) offered Frederick William the crown of a united Germany, he refused on the grounds that he would not accept a crown from a revolutionary assembly without the sanction of Germany's other monarchs.[[33]](#cite_note-33) The Frankfurt Parliament was forced to dissolve in 1849, and Frederick William issued [Prussia's first constitution](/wiki/Constitution_of_Prussia_(1848)) by his own authority in 1850. This conservative document provided for a two-house parliament. The lower house, or [*Landtag*](/wiki/Landtag) was elected by all taxpayers, who were divided into [three classes](/wiki/Prussian_three-class_franchise) whose votes were weighted according to the amount of taxes paid. Women and those who paid no taxes had no vote. This allowed just over one-third of the voters to choose 85% of the legislature, all but assuring dominance by the more well-to-do men of the population. The upper house, which was later renamed the [*Herrenhaus*](/wiki/Prussian_House_of_Lords) ("House of Lords"), was appointed by the king. He retained full executive authority and ministers were responsible only to him. As a result, the grip of the landowning classes, the [Junkers](/wiki/Junker), remained unbroken, especially in the eastern provinces.[[34]](#cite_note-34)

#### Wars of unification[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[|thumb|](/wiki/Image:BismarckArbeitszimmer1886rest.jpg)[Otto von Bismarck](/wiki/Otto_von_Bismarck)

In 1862 King [Wilhelm I](/wiki/Wilhelm_I,_German_Emperor) appointed [Otto von Bismarck](/wiki/Otto_von_Bismarck) as [Prime Minister of Prussia](/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_Prussia). Bismarck was determined to defeat both the liberals and conservatives and increase Prussian supremacy and influence among the German states. There has been much debate as to whether Bismarck actually planned to create a united Germany when he set out on this journey, or whether he simply took advantage of the circumstances that fell into place. Certainly his memoirs paint a rosy picture of an idealist [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed), but these were written with the benefit of hindsight and certain crucial events could not have been predicted. What is clear is that Bismarck curried support from large sections of the people by promising to lead the fight for greater German unification. He eventually guided Prussia through three wars which together brought William the position of [German Emperor](/wiki/German_Emperor).

##### Schleswig Wars[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

The Kingdom of [Denmark](/wiki/Denmark) was at the time in personal union with the Duchies of [Schleswig](/wiki/Schleswig) and [Holstein](/wiki/Holstein), both of which had close ties with each other, although only Holstein was part of the [German Confederation](/wiki/German_Confederation). When the Danish government tried to integrate Schleswig, but not Holstein, into the Danish state, Prussia led the German Confederation against Denmark in the [First War of Schleswig](/wiki/First_War_of_Schleswig) (1848–1851). Because [Russia](/wiki/Russian_Empire) supported Austria, Prussia also conceded predominance in the German Confederation to Austria in the [Punctation of Olmütz](/wiki/Punctation_of_Olmütz) in 1850.

In 1863, Denmark introduced a shared constitution for Denmark and Schleswig. This led to conflict with the German Confederation, which authorised the occupation of Holstein by the Confederation, from which Danish forces withdrew. In 1864, Prussian and Austrian forces crossed the border between Holstein and Schleswig initiating the [Second War of Schleswig](/wiki/Second_War_of_Schleswig). The Austro-Prussian forces defeated the Danes, who surrendered both territories. In the resulting [Gastein Convention](/wiki/Gastein_Convention) of 1865 Prussia took over the administration of Schleswig while Austria assumed that of Holstein.

##### Austro-Prussian War[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|Expansion of Prussia 1807–1871](/wiki/Image:Ac.prussiamap3.png)

Bismarck realised that the dual administration of Schleswig and Holstein was only a temporary solution, and tensions rose between Prussia and Austria. The struggle for supremacy in Germany then led to the [Austro-Prussian War](/wiki/Austro-Prussian_War) (1866), triggered by the dispute over Schleswig and Holstein.

On the Austrian side stood the south German states (including [Bavaria](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Bavaria) and [Württemberg](/wiki/Württemberg)), some central German states (including [Saxony](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Saxony)), and [Hanover](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Hanover) in the north. On the side of Prussia were Italy, most north German states, and some smaller central German states. Eventually, the better-armed Prussian troops won the crucial victory at the [Battle of Königgrätz](/wiki/Battle_of_Königgrätz) under [Helmuth von Moltke the Elder](/wiki/Helmuth_von_Moltke_the_Elder). The century-long struggle between Berlin and Vienna for dominance of Germany was now over. As a side show in this war, Prussia defeated Hanover in the [Battle of Langensalza](/wiki/Battle_of_Langensalza_(1866)) (1866). While Hanover hoped in vain for help from Britain (as they had previously been in personal union), Britain stayed out of a confrontation with a continental superpower and Prussia satisfied its desire for merging the once separate territories and gaining strong economic and strategic power, particularly from the full access to the resources of the Ruhr.

Bismarck desired Austria as an ally in the future, and so he declined to annex any Austrian territory. But in the [Peace of Prague](/wiki/Peace_of_Prague_(1866)) in 1866, Prussia annexed four of Austria's allies in northern and central Germany—Hanover, [Hesse-Kassel](/wiki/Landgraviate_of_Hesse-Kassel) (or Hesse-Cassel), [Nassau](/wiki/Duchy_of_Nassau) and [Frankfurt](/wiki/Frankfurt). Prussia also won full control of [Schleswig-Holstein](/wiki/Schleswig-Holstein). As a result of these territorial gains, Prussia now stretched uninterrupted across the northern two-thirds of Germany and contained two-thirds of Germany's population. The German Confederation was dissolved, and Prussia impelled the 21 states north of the [Main](/wiki/Main_(river)) River into forming the [North German Confederation](/wiki/North_German_Confederation).

Prussia was the dominant state in the new confederation, as the kingdom comprised almost four-fifths of the new state's territory and population. Prussia's near-total control over the confederation was secured in the constitution drafted for it by Bismarck in 1867. Executive power was held by a president, assisted by a chancellor responsible only to him. The presidency was a hereditary office of the [Hohenzollern](/wiki/House_of_Hohenzollern) rulers of Prussia. There was also a two-house parliament. The lower house, or [*Reichstag*](/wiki/Reichstag_(German_Empire)) (Diet), was elected by universal male [suffrage](/wiki/Suffrage). The upper house, or *Bundesrat* (Federal Council) was appointed by the state governments. The Bundesrat was, in practice, the stronger chamber. Prussia had 17 of 43 votes, and could easily control proceedings through alliances with the other states.

As a result of the peace negotiations, the states south of the Main remained theoretically independent, but received the (compulsory) protection of Prussia. Additionally, mutual defence treaties were concluded. However, the existence of these treaties was kept secret until Bismarck made them public in 1867, when France tried to [acquire Luxembourg](/wiki/Luxembourg_Crisis).

##### Franco-Prussian War[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|upright|Emperor](/wiki/Image:Wilhelm1.jpg) [Wilhelm I](/wiki/Wilhelm_I,_German_Emperor) The controversy with the [Second French Empire](/wiki/Second_French_Empire) over the candidacy of a [Hohenzollern](/wiki/House_of_Hohenzollern) to the Spanish throne was escalated both by France and Bismarck. With his [Ems Dispatch](/wiki/Ems_Dispatch), Bismarck took advantage of an incident in which the French ambassador had approached William. The government of [Napoleon III](/wiki/Napoleon_III_of_France), expecting another civil war among the German states, declared war against Prussia, continuing [Franco-German enmity](/wiki/Franco-German_enmity). Honouring their treaties, however, the German states joined forces and quickly defeated France in the [Franco-Prussian War](/wiki/Franco-Prussian_War) in 1870. Following victory under Bismarck's and Prussia's leadership, [Baden](/wiki/Baden), [Württemberg](/wiki/Württemberg) and [Bavaria](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Bavaria) – which had remained outside the North German Confederation – accepted incorporation into a united [German Empire](/wiki/German_Empire).

The empire was a "Lesser German" solution (in German, "[kleindeutsche Lösung](/wiki/Kleindeutsche_Lösung)") to the question of uniting all German-speaking peoples into one state, because it excluded Austria, which remained connected to [Hungary](/wiki/Hungary) and whose territories included non-German populations. On 18 January 1871 (the 170th anniversary of the coronation of King [Frederick I](/wiki/Frederick_I_of_Prussia)), William was proclaimed "German [Emperor](/wiki/Kaiser)" (not "Emperor of Germany") in the [Hall of Mirrors](/wiki/Palace_of_Versailles) at [Versailles](/wiki/Palace_of_Versailles) outside Paris, while [the French capital was still under siege](/wiki/Siege_of_Paris_(1870–1871)).

#### German Empire[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|upright=1.5|Prussia in the German Empire 1871–1918](/wiki/Image:prussiamap.gif) The two decades after the [unification of Germany](/wiki/Unification_of_Germany) were the peak of Prussia's fortunes, but the seeds for potential strife were built into the Prusso-German political system.

The constitution of the German Empire was a slightly amended version of the North German Confederation's constitution. Officially, the German Empire was a federal state. In practice, Prussia's relationship with the rest of the empire was somewhat confusing. The Hohenzollern kingdom included three-fifths of the German territory and two-thirds of its population. The [Imperial German Army](/wiki/German_Army_(German_Empire)) was, in practice, an enlarged Prussian army, although the other kingdoms ([Bavaria](/wiki/Bavaria), Saxony and [Württemberg](/wiki/Württemberg)) retained their own armies. The imperial crown was a hereditary office of the [House of Hohenzollern](/wiki/House_of_Hohenzollern), the royal house of Prussia. The prime minister of Prussia was, except for two brief periods (January–November 1873 and 1892–94), also imperial chancellor.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) But the empire itself had no right to collect taxes directly from its subjects; the only incomes fully under federal control were the customs duties, common excise duties, and the revenue from postal and telegraph services. While all men above age 25 were eligible to vote in imperial elections, Prussia retained its restrictive three-class voting system. This effectively required the king/emperor and prime minister/chancellor to seek majorities from legislatures elected by two different franchises. In both the kingdom and the empire, the original constituencies were never redrawn to reflect changes in population, meaning that rural areas were grossly overrepresented by the turn of the 20th century. [Emperor Frederick III](/wiki/Frederick_III,_German_Emperor)|thumb|left|upright As a result, Prussia and the German Empire were something of a paradox. Bismarck knew that his new [German Reich](/wiki/German_Reich) was now a colossus out of all proportion to the rest of the continent. With this in mind, he declared Germany a satisfied power, using his talents to preserve peace, for example at the [Congress of Berlin](/wiki/Congress_of_Berlin). Bismarck had barely any success in some of his domestic policies, such as the anti-Catholic [*Kulturkampf*](/wiki/Kulturkampf), but he also had mixed success on ones like [Germanisation](/wiki/Germanisation_of_Poles_during_Partitions) or [expulsion](/wiki/Expulsion_of_Poles_by_Germany) of Poles of foreign nationality (Russian or Austro-Hungarian).

[Frederick III](/wiki/Frederick_III,_German_Emperor) was emperor for just 99 days in 1888 upon the death of his father, dying from cancer. [|thumb|upright|Emperor](/wiki/Image:Wilhelm_II_of_Germany.jpg) [Wilhelm II](/wiki/Wilhelm_II,_German_Emperor) At age 29, William became [Emperor William II](/wiki/William_II,_German_Emperor) after a difficult youth and conflicts with his British mother [Victoria, Princess Royal](/wiki/Victoria,_Princess_Royal). He turned out to be a man of limited experience, narrow and reactionary views, poor judgment, and occasional bad temper, which alienated former friends and allies.

### Railways[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Prussia nationalised its railways in the 1880s in an effort both to lower rates on freight service and to equalise those rates among shippers. Instead of lowering rates as far as possible, the government ran the railways as a profitmaking endeavour, and the railway profits became a major source of revenue for the state. The nationalisation of the railways slowed the economic development of Prussia because the state favoured the relatively backward agricultural areas in its railway building. Moreover, the railway surpluses substituted for the development of an adequate tax system.[[35]](#cite_note-35)

### The Free State of Prussia in the Weimar Republic[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|Federal States of the Weimar Republic. Prussia is light blue. After](/wiki/Image:Deutsches_Reich_1925_b.png) [World War I](/wiki/World_War_I) the Provinces of [Posen](/wiki/Province_of_Posen) and [West Prussia](/wiki/West_Prussia_Province) came largely to the [2nd Polish Republic](/wiki/Second_Polish_Republic); [Posen-West Prussia](/wiki/Posen-West_Prussia) and the [West Prussia district](/wiki/Regierungsbezirk_Westpreußen) were formed from the remaining parts. Because of the [German Revolution](/wiki/German_Revolution) of 1918, Wilhelm II abdicated as German Emperor and King of Prussia. Prussia was proclaimed a "Free State" (i.e. a republic, German: *Freistaat*) within the new [Weimar Republic](/wiki/Weimar_Republic) and in 1920 received a democratic constitution.

Almost all of Germany's territorial losses, specified in the [Treaty of Versailles](/wiki/Treaty_of_Versailles), were areas that had been part of Prussia: [Eupen](/wiki/Eupen) and [Malmedy](/wiki/Malmedy) to [Belgium](/wiki/Belgium); [North Schleswig](/wiki/South_Jutland_County) to Denmark; the [Memel Territory](/wiki/Klaipėda_Region) to Lithuania; the [Hultschin area](/wiki/Hlučínsko) to [Czechoslovakia](/wiki/Czechoslovakia). Many of the areas which Prussia had annexed in the [partitions of Poland](/wiki/Partitions_of_Poland), such as the Provinces of [Posen](/wiki/Province_of_Posen) and [West Prussia](/wiki/West_Prussia), as well as eastern [Upper Silesia](/wiki/Upper_Silesia), went to the [Second Polish Republic](/wiki/Second_Polish_Republic). [Danzig](/wiki/Gdańsk) became the [Free City of Danzig](/wiki/Free_City_of_Danzig) under the administration of the [League of Nations](/wiki/League_of_Nations). Also, the [Saargebiet](/wiki/Saargebiet) was created mainly from formerly Prussian territories. [East Prussia](/wiki/East_Prussia) became an exclave, only reachable by ship (the [Sea Service East Prussia](/wiki/Seedienst_Ostpreußen)) or by a railway through the [Polish corridor](/wiki/Polish_corridor).

The German government seriously considered breaking up Prussia into smaller states, but eventually traditionalist sentiment prevailed and Prussia became by far the largest state of the [Weimar Republic](/wiki/Weimar_Republic), comprising 60% of its territory. With the abolition of the older Prussian franchise, it became a stronghold of the left. Its incorporation of "Red Berlin" and the industrialised Ruhr Area – both with working class majorities – ensured left-wing dominance.[[36]](#cite_note-36) From 1919 to 1932, Prussia was governed by a coalition of the [Social Democrats](/wiki/Social_Democratic_Party_of_Germany), [Catholic Centre](/wiki/Centre_Party_(Germany)) and [German Democrats](/wiki/German_Democratic_Party); from 1921 to 1925, coalition governments included the [German People's Party](/wiki/German_People's_Party). Unlike in other states of the German Reich, majority rule by democratic parties in Prussia was never endangered. Nevertheless, in [East Prussia](/wiki/East_Prussia) and some industrial areas, the [Nazi Party](/wiki/National_Socialist_German_Workers_Party) of [Adolf Hitler](/wiki/Adolf_Hitler) gained more and more influence and popular support, especially from the lower middle class starting in 1930. Except for Catholic [Upper Silesia](/wiki/Upper_Silesia), the Nazi Party in 1932 became the largest party in most parts of the Free State of Prussia. However, the democratic parties in coalition remained a majority, while Communists and Nazis were in the opposition.[[37]](#cite_note-37) The East Prussian [Otto Braun](/wiki/Otto_Braun), who was Prussian minister-president almost continuously from 1920 to 1932, is considered one of the most capable Social Democrats in history. He implemented several trend-setting reforms together with his minister of the interior, [Carl Severing](/wiki/Carl_Severing), which were also models for the later [Federal Republic of Germany](/wiki/Germany) (FRG). For instance, a Prussian minister-president could be forced out of office only if there was a "positive majority" for a potential successor. This concept, known as the [constructive vote of no confidence](/wiki/Constructive_vote_of_no_confidence), was carried over into the [Basic Law](/wiki/Basic_Law_for_the_Federal_Republic_of_Germany) of the FRG. Most historians regard the Prussian government during this time as far more successful than that of Germany as a whole.[[38]](#cite_note-38) In contrast to its pre-war authoritarianism, Prussia was a pillar of democracy in the Weimar Republic. This system was destroyed by the [*Preußenschlag*](/wiki/Preußenschlag) ("Prussian coup") of [Reich Chancellor](/wiki/Reich_Chancellor) [Franz von Papen](/wiki/Franz_von_Papen). In this [coup d'état](/wiki/Coup_d'état), the government of the Reich deposed the Prussian government on 20 July 1932, under the pretext that the latter had lost control of public order in Prussia (during the [Bloody Sunday](/wiki/Altona_Bloody_Sunday) of [Altona, Hamburg](/wiki/Altona,_Hamburg), which was still part of Prussia at that time) and by using fabricated evidence that the Social Democrats and the Communists were planning a joint *putsch*. The Defence Minister General [Kurt von Schleicher](/wiki/Kurt_von_Schleicher), who was the prime mover behind the coup manufactured evidence that the Prussian police under Braun's orders were favouring the Communist [*Rotfrontkämpferbund*](/wiki/Rotfrontkämpferbund) in street clashes with the SA as part of an alleged plan to foment a Marxist revolution, which he used to get an emergency decree from President [Paul von Hindenburg](/wiki/Paul_von_Hindenburg) imposing *Reich* control on Prussia.[[39]](#cite_note-39) Papen appointed himself Reich commissioner for Prussia and took control of the government. The *Preußenschlag* made it easier, only half a year later, for Hitler to take power decisively in Germany, since he had the whole apparatus of the Prussian government, including the police, at his disposal.[[40]](#cite_note-40)

### End of Prussia[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

After the appointment of Hitler as the new chancellor, the Nazis used the absence of [Franz von Papen](/wiki/Franz_von_Papen) as an opportunity to appoint [Hermann Göring](/wiki/Hermann_Göring) federal commissioner for the Prussian ministry of the interior. The [Reichstag election](/wiki/German_election,_1933) of 5 March 1933 strengthened the position of the [Nazi Party](/wiki/Nazi_Party), although they did not achieve an absolute majority.[[41]](#cite_note-41)[200px|right|thumb|German territories lost in both World Wars are shown in black, present-day Germany is marked dark grey on this 1914 map.](/wiki/File:Former_German_territories.svg) [200px|right|thumb|Map of current](/wiki/Image:Germany_former_prussian_lander.png) [states of Germany](/wiki/States_of_Germany) that are completely or mostly situated inside the old borders of [Imperial Germany's](/wiki/Imperial_Germany) [Kingdom of Prussia](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Prussia) [|thumb|upright|left|](/wiki/Image:Paul_von_Hindenburg.jpeg)[Paul von Hindenburg](/wiki/Paul_von_Hindenburg)

The [Reichstag building](/wiki/Reichstag_(building)) having been [set on fire](/wiki/Reichstag_fire) a few weeks earlier on 27 February, a new [Reichstag](/wiki/Reichstag_(Weimar_Republic)) was opened in the [Garrison Church](/wiki/Garrison_Church_(Potsdam)) of [Potsdam](/wiki/Potsdam) on 21 March 1933 in the presence of President [Paul von Hindenburg](/wiki/Paul_von_Hindenburg). In a propaganda-filled meeting between Hitler and the Nazi Party, the "marriage of old Prussia with young Germany" was celebrated, to win over the Prussian monarchists, conservatives and nationalists and induce them to vote for the [Enabling Act of 1933](/wiki/Enabling_Act_of_1933).

In the centralised state created by the Nazis in the "Law on the Reconstruction of the Reich" ("Gesetz über den Neuaufbau des Reiches", 30 January 1934) and the "Law on Reich Governors" ("Reichsstatthaltergesetz", 30 January 1935) the states were dissolved, in fact if not in law. The federal state governments were now controlled by governors for the Reich who were appointed by the chancellor. Parallel to that, the organisation of the party into districts ([*Gaue*](/wiki/Gau_(German))) gained increasing importance, as the official in charge of a *Gau* (the head of which was called a [*Gauleiter*](/wiki/Gauleiter)) was again appointed by the chancellor who was at the same time chief of the Nazi Party.

In Prussia, this centralistic policy went even further. From 1934 almost all ministries were merged and only a few departments were able to maintain their independence. Hitler himself became formally the governor of Prussia. His functions were exercised, however, by Hermann Göring as Prussian prime minister.

As provided for in the "Greater Hamburg Law" ("Groß-Hamburg-Gesetz"), certain exchanges of territory took place. Prussia was extended on 1 April 1937, for instance, by the incorporation of the Free and Hanseatic City of [Lübeck](/wiki/Lübeck).

The Prussian lands transferred to Poland after the Treaty of Versailles were re-annexed during [World War II](/wiki/World_War_II). However, most of this territory was not reintegrated back into Prussia but assigned to separate *Gaue* of [Danzig-West Prussia](/wiki/Danzig-West_Prussia) and [Wartheland](/wiki/Wartheland).

As part of their war aims the Western allies sought the abolition of Prussia. [Stalin](/wiki/Joseph_Stalin) was initially content to retain the name, Russia having a different historical view of its neighbour and sometime former ally. In Law No. 46 of 25 February 1947 the [Allied Control Council](/wiki/Allied_Control_Council) formally proclaimed the dissolution of Prussia.[[42]](#cite_note-42) In the Soviet Zone of Occupation, which became [East Germany](/wiki/East_Germany) in 1949, the former Prussian territories were reorganised into the states of [Brandenburg](/wiki/Brandenburg) and [Saxony-Anhalt](/wiki/Saxony-Anhalt), with the remaining parts of the [Province of Pomerania](/wiki/Province_of_Pomerania_(1815–1945)) going to [Mecklenburg-Vorpommern](/wiki/Mecklenburg-Vorpommern). These states were *de facto* abolished in 1952 in favour of [*Bezirke*](/wiki/Administrative_divisions_of_East_Germany#Division_into_Bezirke) (districts), but were [recreated](/wiki/Administrative_divisions_of_East_Germany#Restoration_of_the_Länder) after the fall of the Eastern Bloc in 1990.

The areas east of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, mainly Eastern Prussia, Western Prussia, and Silesia were handed over to Poland due to the 1945 [Treaty of Potsdam](/wiki/Treaty_of_Potsdam) between three of the Allies, the U.S., the UK, and the USSR. This included Danzig, Königsberg, Breslau, and Stettin. [The population fled](/wiki/Flight_and_expulsion_of_Germans_(1944–50)), mostly to the Western zones, or was driven out. The number of casualties is estimated 2 to 4 million, including those who fled the Soviet army during the last months of the war before the 1945 Treaty.

In the Western Zones of occupation, which became [West Germany](/wiki/West_Germany) (officially, the Federal Republic of Germany) in 1949, the former Prussian territories were divided up among [North Rhine-Westphalia](/wiki/North_Rhine-Westphalia), Lower Saxony, [Hesse](/wiki/Hesse), Rhineland-Palatinate and [Schleswig-Holstein](/wiki/Schleswig-Holstein). [Württemberg-Baden](/wiki/Württemberg-Baden) and [Württemberg-Hohenzollern](/wiki/Württemberg-Hohenzollern) were later merged with [Baden](/wiki/Baden) to create the state of [Baden-Württemberg](/wiki/Baden-Württemberg). The Saar region, which had been administered by the French as [a protectorate](/wiki/Saar_Protectorate) separate from the rest of Western Germany, was admitted to the Federal Republic of Germany as [a separate state](/wiki/Saarland) in 1956 following a plebiscite.

## Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

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* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
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## Further reading[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

* [Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal)
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book), covers medieval period
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book) [online review](https://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=35762)
* Friedrich, Karin. *Brandenburg-Prussia, 1466-1806: The Rise of a Composite State* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); 157pp. Emphasis on historiography.
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
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* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book), stress on cultural topics
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* [Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal)

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

[Template:Commons](/wiki/Template:Commons)

* [Preussen.de](http://www.preussen.de/en/heute.html) (website of the [House of Hohenzollern](/wiki/House_of_Hohenzollern)).
* [Template:De icon](/wiki/Template:De_icon) [Preußen-Chronik.de](http://www.preussen-chronik.de/_/episoden/002020_jsp.html)
* [Administrators of Prussian provinces](http://www.rulers.org/prusprov.html)
* [Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation website](http://www.hv.spk-berlin.de/english/index.php)
* [Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz](http://bpkgate.picturemaxx.com/index.php?LANGUAGE=english) (picture archive).
* [Foundation for Prussian Palaces and Gardens Berlin-Brandenburg](http://www.spsg.de)
* [Template:De icon](/wiki/Template:De_icon) [Constitutional deed for the Prussian state ("Imposed Constitution" – December 5, 1848)](http://www.lwl.org/westfaelische-geschichte/portal/Internet/ku.php?tab=que&ID=830) (full text).
* [Template:De icon](/wiki/Template:De_icon) [Constitutional deed for the Prussian state ("Revised Constitution" – January 31, 1850)](http://www.lwl.org/westfaelische-geschichte/portal/Internet/ku.php?tab=que&ID=831) (full text).
* [Map of Prussia in 1690](https://www.raremaps.com/cgi-bin/gallery.pl/enlarge/18319)
* [Administrative Subdivision of the Kingdom of Prussia, 1900/10](http://www.gemeindeverzeichnis.de/gem1900//gem1900.htm?preussen1900.htm)

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[Category:Prussia](/wiki/Category:Prussia) [Category:States and territories disestablished in 1947](/wiki/Category:States_and_territories_disestablished_in_1947) [Category:Former countries in Europe](/wiki/Category:Former_countries_in_Europe) [Category:History of Brandenburg](/wiki/Category:History_of_Brandenburg) [Category:1525 establishments in Prussia](/wiki/Category:1525_establishments_in_Prussia) [Category:1947 disestablishments in Prussia](/wiki/Category:1947_disestablishments_in_Prussia)