
IS GERMANY UNITED NOWADAYS?

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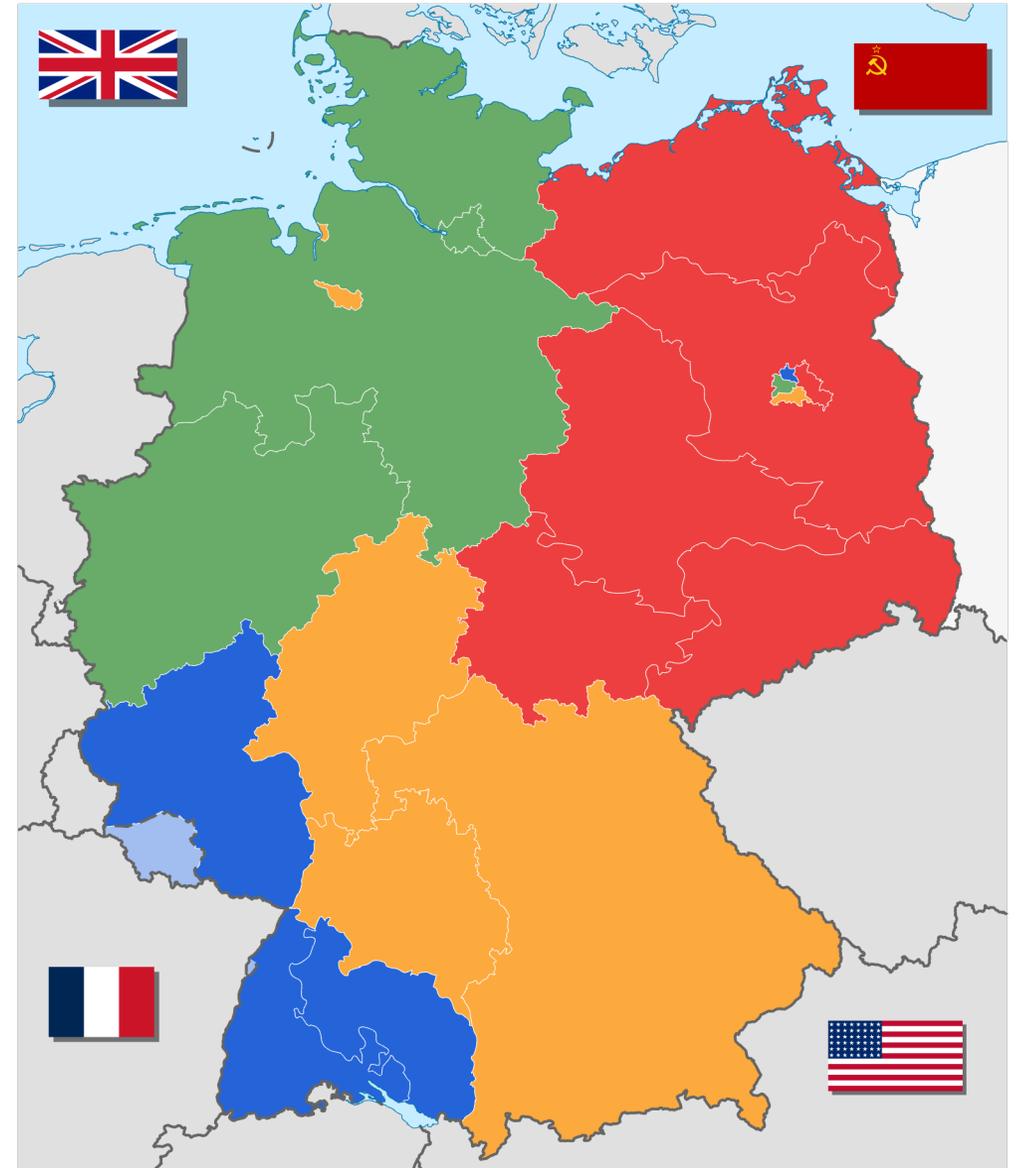
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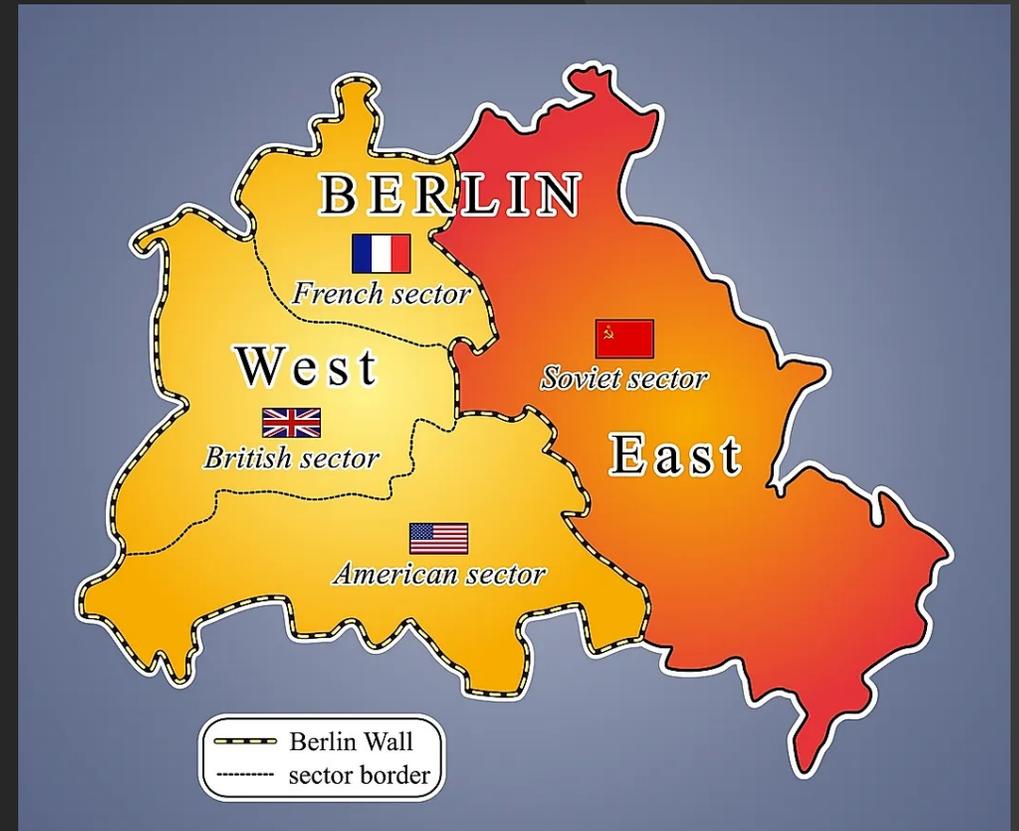
Historical Context – Separation of Germany

- After WWII, Germany was divided among the allies (Great Britain, USA, France, Soviet Union)
 - These territories were called "allied occupation zones"
- Berlin was also split among the allies
- The territories occupied by Britain, the USA and France formed the so-called **FRG** (Federal Republic of Germany) → "West Germany"
- The territory occupied by the Soviet Union formed the **GDR** (German Democratic Republic) → "East Germany"



Historical Context - The Wall of Berlin

- The wall was completed on August 13, 1961.
- Purpose(s):
 - Official purpose: keep so-called "Eastern fascists" from entering the GDR
 - Unofficial purpose: prevent the citizens of the East from fleeing to the West
- It separated West Berlin from the East Berlin and from the rest of the Soviet territory.
- Length: approx. 156.4km – Height: approx. 3.6m
- 100,000 people attempted to flee to West Berlin, 5,000 people were successful, 600 people died.
- Fall of Berlin's wall: November 9th, 1989





Advantages in the West

- Economy rose in West Germany
- Many things could not be bought in the GDR
- Citizens from the DDR were not allowed to travel abroad
- Restricted freedom of speech (GDR)
- Massive job cuts
- Different political and economic orientation



Tourism

- In West Germany cultural monuments were rebuilt after WWII
- Old towns and cultural monuments were neglected in East Germany
- Historical cores of cities like Erfurt or Quedlinburg, which now attract thousands of tourists, were in ruin
- The GDR government was not interested in renovating historical buildings
- ger.: "Plattenbauten"

"OSSI-WESSI-CONFLICT"

- Soviet Union fought to expel the Allies from Berlin
- Tried to starve people → did not work
- Creation of the Iron Curtain to prevent people from escaping to West Germany
- Conflict ends with Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of glasnost and perestroika
- Borders of formerly communist countries in Eastern Europe broke open
- Thousands of people fled through Austria to West Germany
- Causing a collapse of the infrastructure
- Berlin Wall falls in the end and both parts of Germany are reunited



- Picture says: "August 1961: No one intends to build a wall" (left) "Over 40 years later: Some do not intend to remove the wall in their heads" (right)

How went the day of Germany's reunification?



November 9th, 1989

- The government of GDR discussed about the border's opening
- At 6:57 pm Günter Schabowski told in the news that everyone was allowed to leave the GDR
 - This message was not to be distributed until 4 am on the following day
- The border crossings were closed until 9 pm.
- At 11 pm people broke through the wall and ran happy from the East to the West
- Totally happy the people danced on the wall
- People saw Germany as reunited, but that happens a year later on October 3rd, 1990 when the contracts were signed
 - Since then October 3rd is the national day of the Germans



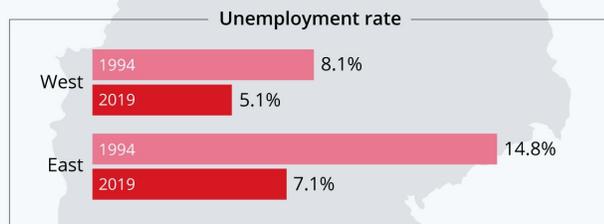
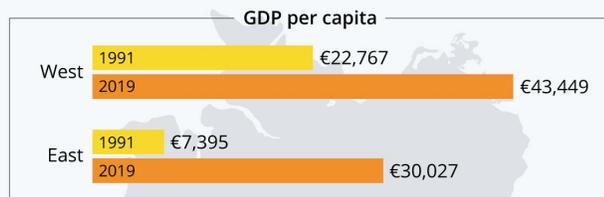
Reconstruction of the East



- Berlin becomes a capital again
- In addition, the Bundestag decided in 1991 to move the government to Berlin
- In general, the infrastructure is way worse than in West Germany because of that the solidarity contribution was invented in 1991. For example, the roads, telephone network or railroad lines were expanded
- The solidarity contribution is a 5,5% tax on the income tax, on the wage tax, on the capital gains tax, on the final withholding tax and on the corporate income tax
- The East is paid less

30 Years United, East Germany Still Trails the West

Selected economic indicators for East and West Germany in 1991 and 2019



Source: Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy



statista

Economy

- Massive change from socialism to capitalism caused changes to urban structures and cultural heritage
- Since the FRG until now the system in West is capitalism
- Unemployment is persistently higher in the former East Germany than in the former West
- East Germany trails the former West in productivity
- People in the East earn less than their counterparts in the West
- In West Germany the population in large cities as well as rural regions are growing
- Only individual regions are affected by severe population decline
- In East Germany only large cities such as Berlin, Leipzig and Dresden are growing

Economy history

- After the WWII economy in West Germany was revived by American economic aid (Marshall Plan)
- Social market economy, a combination of free market and planned economy
- After reunification former GDR had to move from a planned economy to a market economy
- Many people lost their jobs, companies went bankrupt or were dissolved
- New jobs in the service sector have been created - could not compensate for the loss of the old ones
- Today some things have already improved



Life satisfaction in Germany

Our World
in Data

Shown is the self-reported life satisfaction across German states (between 2012 to 2016) as reported on a scale from 0 to 10.



Prejudices against the East Germans



Written on the picture:
"Ossi or Wessi?"

Prejudices against the **West** Germans



Written on the picture:
"Ossi or Wessi?"

Eastern Germans' point of view today

- 84% of East Germans don't have a feeling of common society
- More skeptical than the West towards the state
- 85% of East German over 55 think they deserved more recognition for the peaceful revolution
- Moving back to East Germany, after moving to West Germany, is not appealing
 - 7% of the East Germans consider moving back
 - only 2% of them actually plan on returning back

Conclusion

West Germany and East Germany were separated by a wall for 28 years and were two different states for even longer. Officially, Germany is reunited but there are still some differences today, both in politics and in business. But a lot has happened since reunification, so it was and still is not an easy task to unite two such different countries.

Personally, we think that there should not be any differences between East and West Germany.
We all belong to one nation!

Sources

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Thank you for listening

Do you have any questions?

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