

HL option 4: History of Europe

Three sections must be selected for study. Only people and events named in the guide will be named in examination questions.



13: Europe and the First World War (1871–1918)

This section deals with the shorter- and longer-term origins of the First World War. It covers the breakdown of European diplomacy pre-1914 and the crises that occurred in international relations. It covers how the practice of war affected the military and home fronts. The section also investigates reasons for the Allied victory/Central Powers' defeat.

- European diplomacy and the changing balance of power after 1871; imperial expansion in Africa and Asia, and its impact on European diplomacy; the Congress of Berlin and European Alliance system
- Foreign policy of Kaiser Wilhelm II: domestic conditions that impacted on German foreign policy; its impact/influence on other countries, including Britain, France, Russia and Austria-Hungary
- Causes of the First World War: short- and long-term causes; relative importance of causes; the Alliance system; the decline of the Ottoman Empire; German foreign policy; Austria-Hungary, Russia and Balkan nationalism; the arms race and diplomatic crises; the July Crisis of 1914
- Impact of the First World War on civilian populations of **two** countries from the region between 1914 and 1918
- Factors leading to the defeat of Germany and the other Central Powers, and to the victory of the Entente Powers: strategic errors; economic factors; entry and role of the US; domestic instability in the Central Powers

14: European states in the inter-war years (1918–1939)

This section deals with **domestic** developments in certain key European states in the period between the two world wars. It requires the study of **four** European countries: Germany, Italy, Spain and any one

other country. The section considers the impact of the end of the First World War, then examines the economic, social and cultural changes in each country during the 1920s and 1930s.

- Weimar Germany: constitutional, political, economic/financial and social issues (1918–1933); initial challenges (1918–1923); “Golden Era” under Stresemann (1924–1929); the crisis years and the rise of Hitler (1929–1933)
- Hitler’s Germany (1933–1939): consolidation of power; Hitler’s pre-war domestic policies, including economic, social and political policies; nature of the Nazi state; the extent of resistance to the Nazis
- Italy (1918–1939): rise of Mussolini; consolidation of power; Mussolini’s pre-war domestic policies, including economic, social and political policies; nature of the fascist state
- Spain (1918–1939): political, social and economic conditions in Spain; the Primo de Rivera regime; polarization and political parties under the Second Republic; Azaña and Gil Robles; causes of the Civil War; foreign involvement; reasons for nationalist victory under Franco
- Case study of domestic political, economic and social developments in **one** European country (other than Germany, Italy or Spain) in the inter-war years.

15: Versailles to Berlin: Diplomacy in Europe (1919–1945)

This section addresses international relations in Europe from 1919 to 1945 with initial emphasis on the Paris Peace Settlement: its goals, impact and the problems relating to its enforcement. The section covers attempts to promote collective security and international cooperation through the League of Nations and multilateral agreements (outside the League mechanism), arms reduction and the pursuit of foreign policy goals without resort to violence. This section also addresses the individual foreign policies of Italy, Germany, France, Britain and Russia/Soviet Union, looking at the aims, issues and success of each one. It concludes with a study of the Second World War, looking particularly at the impact of the war and the reasons for German defeat and Allied victory.

- Peace settlements (1919–1923): Versailles; Neuilly; Trianon; St Germain; and Sèvres/Lausanne—aims, issues and responses
- The League of Nations and Europe: successes and failures; the search for collective security; developments in the successor states of central and eastern Europe
- Italian and German foreign policies (1919–1941): aims, issues and extent of success
- Collective security and appeasement (1919–1941): aims, issues and extent of success; role of British, French and Russian/Soviet foreign policies (1919–1941); Chamberlain and the Munich Crisis
- Causes of the Second World War and the development of European conflict (1939–1941); the wartime alliance (1941–1945); reasons for Axis defeat in 1945 and for Allied victory; role of economic, strategic and other factors
- Impact of the Second World War on civilian populations in any **two** countries between 1939–1945