



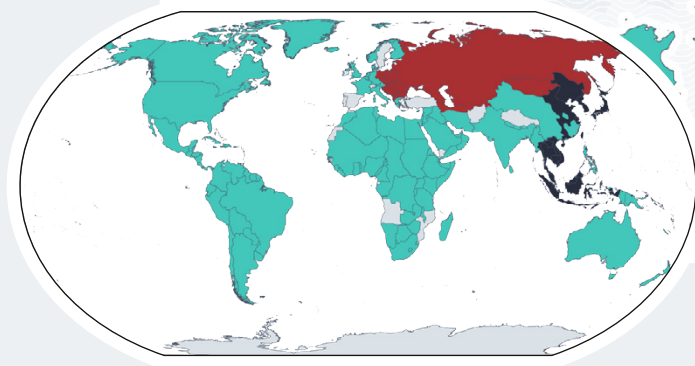
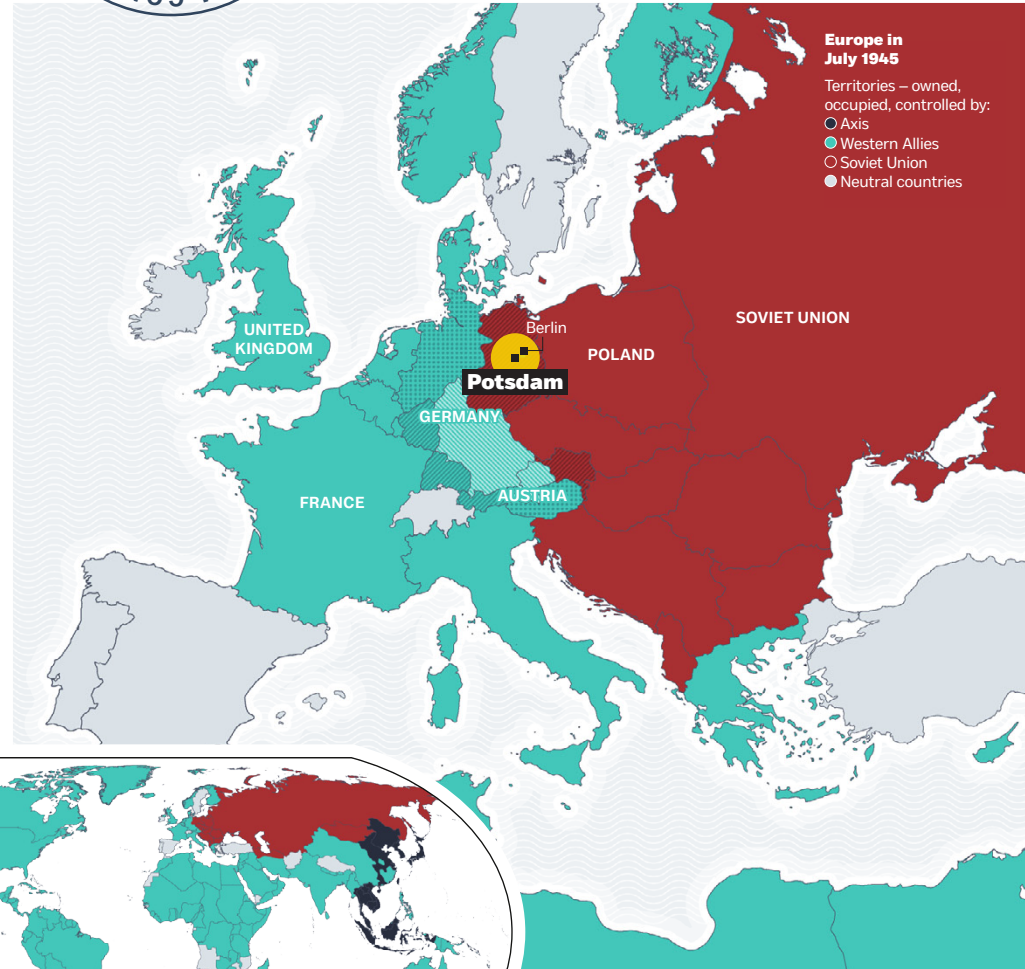
# Potsdam conference

17 July –  
2 August  
1945

The Big Three third meeting took place at Cecilienhof Palace in Potsdam, Germany.

The conference was codenamed *Terminal*.

After the conference, the Big Three issued the “Potsdam Agreement”. During deliberations on 26 July, Churchill, Truman and Chiang Kai-shek (via radio) issued “The Potsdam Declaration” that called on Japan’s surrender and outlined its post-war future.



World map in July 1945

# Circumstances

# 1945

4–11 February  
Yalta conference.



12 April  
President Roosevelt dies and is replaced by Vice President Harry S. Truman.



16 April – 2 May  
**Soviet victory in the Battle of Berlin.** Red Army in control of all territories east of Berlin (Baltic States, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania).



8 May  
**Germany's unconditional surrender.** The war ends in Europe.

26 June  
The San Francisco conference concludes with the United Nations Charter being signed by all countries that fought the Axis.



17 July – 2 August  
**Potsdam conference.**



16 July  
First "Trinity" nuclear test in the New Mexico desert. US. President Truman was notified of its success shortly before the Potsdam conference.



26 July  
Results of 5 July elections in the United Kingdom. Having replaced Churchill as Prime Minister, Clement Attlee attends Potsdam on 28 July.

# Key figures

**Winston Churchill**  
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom replaced by

The leaders were accompanied by their delegations, including:

## 1 Clement Attlee

Prime Minister of the United Kingdom

**Anthony Eden**  
British Foreign Secretary replaced by

**Ernest Bevin**  
British Foreign Secretary

## 2 Harry S. Truman

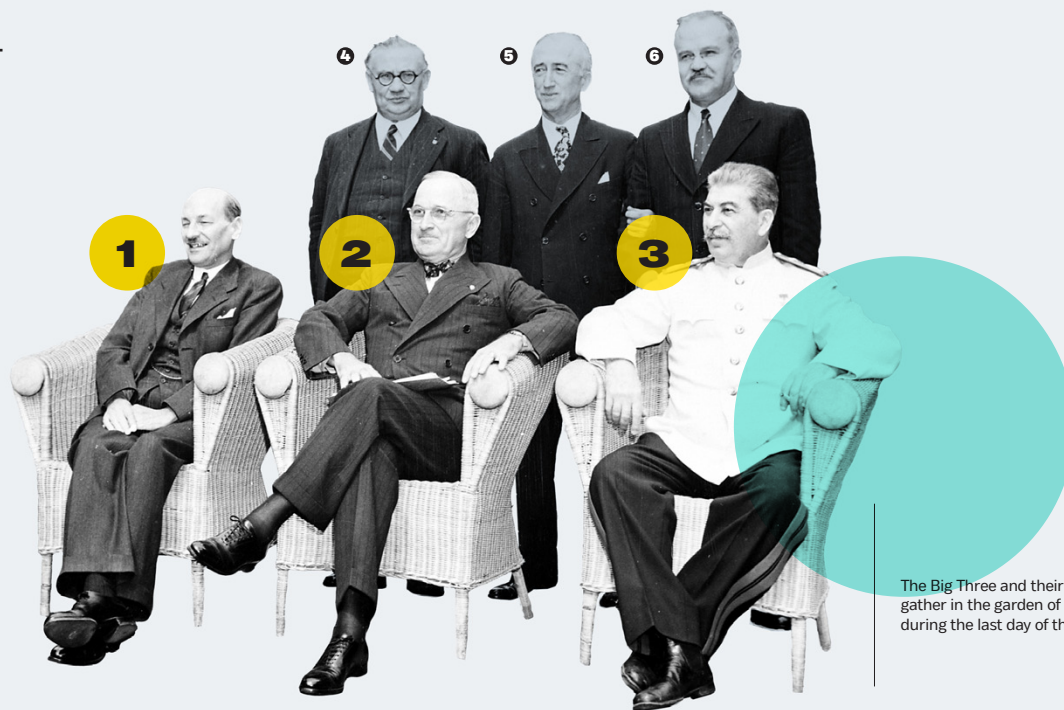
President of the United States

**James F. Byrnes**  
US Secretary of State

**Vyacheslav Molotov**  
Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs

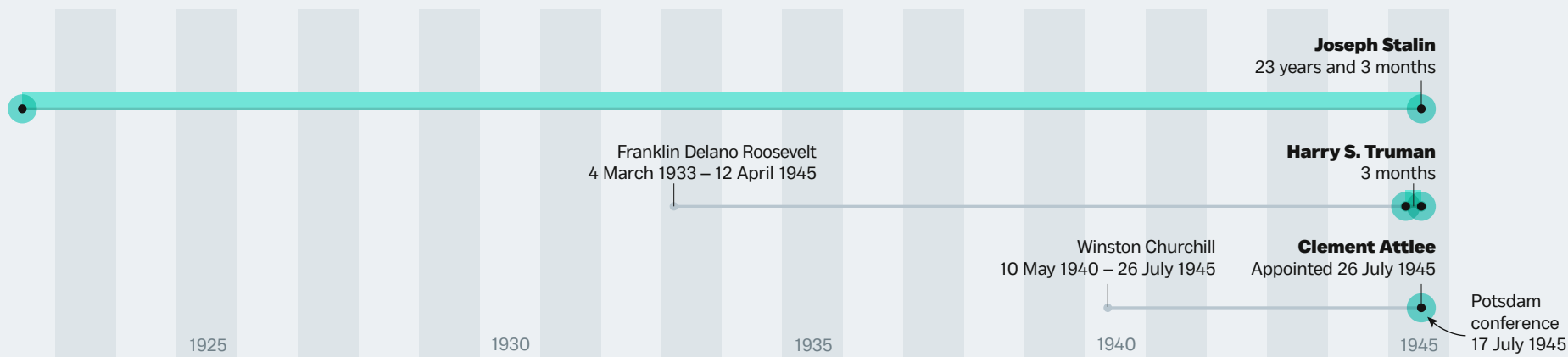
## 3 Joseph Stalin

Premier of the USSR



The Big Three and their foreign ministers gather in the garden of Cecilienhof Palace during the last day of the conference.

### How long did the leaders hold office before the conference?



# General decisions



**Japan** was called upon to unconditionally surrender or face "utter destruction."



**Council of Foreign Ministers** – members from the UK, USA, USSR, France and China to prepare peace treaties with former German allies (e.g. Italy, Bulgaria and, Romania).

**German war criminals** are to be brought to justice. Trials should start as soon as possible.

**Reparations** – the Allies will receive reparations from their occupation zones in Germany. Poland will receive reparations through the Soviets.



It was agreed that a **transfer of Germans** from Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary would have to be undertaken in an "orderly and humane manner."



Last meeting of the Potsdam Conference. Seated around the conference table, President Harry S. Truman is on right side. Prime Minister Josef Stalin is at top. British Prime Minister Clement Attlee is at the bottom left side.



# Decisions



## Military

The Soviet Union would be ready to **attack Japan** in the second half of August.



## Countries and borders



**1 Germany** – Germany to be governed by the Allied Control Commission and undergo the following changes (subsequently referred to as the four “D”):

**Demilitarization** – destruction of all military formations, weapons to be seized by the Allies, military industry to be destroyed

**Decartelization** – restructuring of the economy from large monopoly groups (cartels) to a free market

**Denazification** – destruction of the Nazi party (NSDAP) and all affiliated institutions in order to eradicate Nazism

**Democratization** – return of Germany as a democratic country.

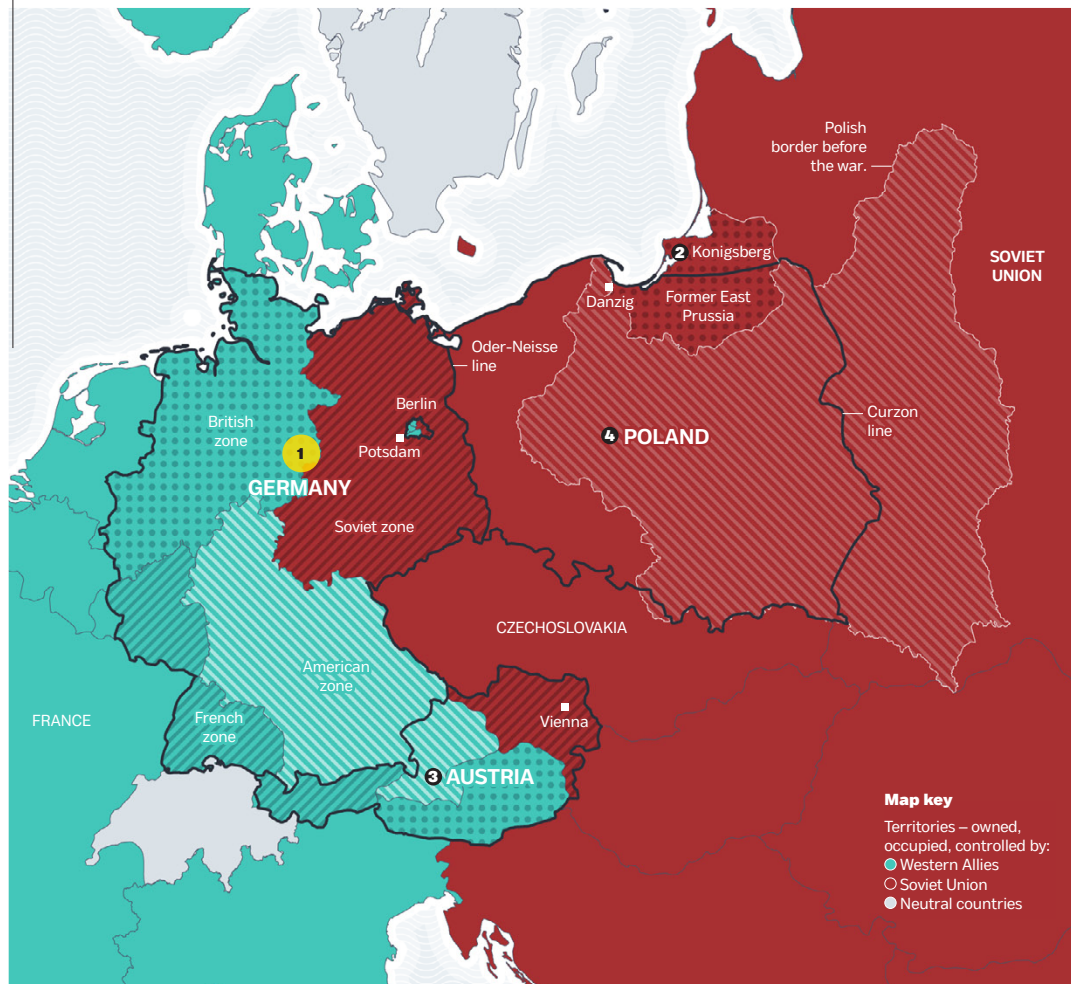
The Allies are to divide Germany into four occupation zones: American, British, French and Soviet. The city of Berlin in the Soviet occupation zone would also be divided into four zones.

The city of Königsberg **2** and its area is to be transferred to the Soviet Union.

**3 Austria** – to be divided into four occupation zones, as well as the capital city of Vienna.

**4 Poland** – most of its eastern border was confirmed along the Curzon Line. Former German territories up to the Oder and Neisse Rivers, most of East Prussia, as well as the former free city of Danzig would be under Polish administration until a peace settlement.

**Japan** to be completely disarmed and stripped of conquered territories. Japanese war criminals would be charged and the country would become a democratic state.



# Aftermath



## Population resettlement

Resettlement of millions of people in eastern Europe from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary to Germany, as well as from the USSR (former Polish borderlands) to Poland.



## Nuremberg trials

1945–1949

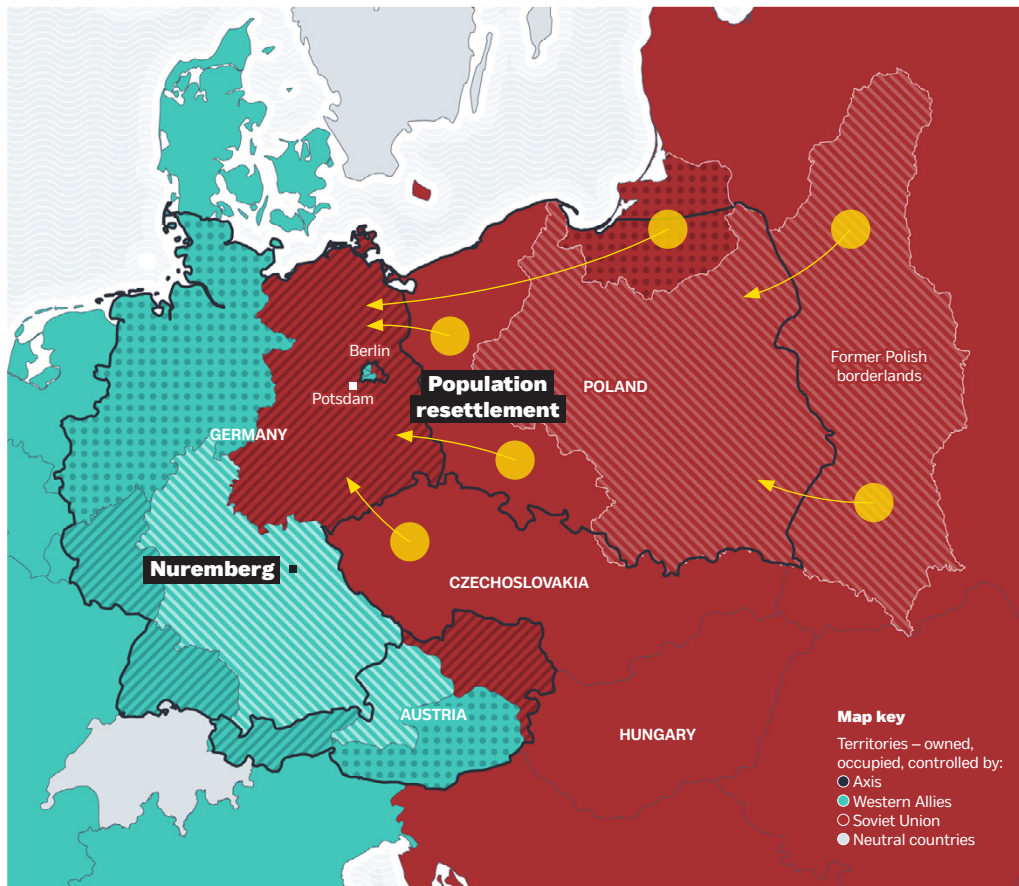
185 of the highest-ranking Nazi war criminals were tried before the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg and subsequently at other tribunals. Main charges included crimes against humanity and world peace, as well as war crimes.



## Atomic bombings

6 and 9 August 1945

Two atomic bombs were dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These attacks led to Japan's surrender on 2 September, which signified the end of the war in the Pacific theatre.



# International conferences during the Second World War



The Tehran, Yalta and Potsdam conferences were the key diplomatic meetings during the Second World War, and world leaders would meet several more times at events such as:

## **Atlantic Charter**

14 August 1941

Roosevelt and Churchill signed the document which stated that every nation has the right to self-determination.

## **The Casablanca Conference**

14–24 January 1943

Churchill, Roosevelt and Charles de Gaulle resolved to continue fighting until the unconditional surrender of Germany, Italy and Japan; they also agreed to attack Italy.

## **The first Cairo Conference**

22–26 November 1943

Chiang Kai-shek (Chinese leader), Churchill and Roosevelt discussed the fight against Japan until the country's unconditional surrender and reclaiming of seized territories; during the Second Cairo Conference (2–7 December 1943) Churchill and Roosevelt met Turkish President İsmet İnönü to encourage his country's participation in the war against the Axis, but Turkey did not join the war until 1945.

## **The Moscow Conference**

18 October –  
11 November 1943

The foreign ministers of the UK, USA and USSR discussed issues subsequently broached in Tehran; they also set up the European Advisory Committee and issued the Moscow Declaration stating that Nazi German war criminals would be tried for their war crimes.

## **The San Francisco Conference**

25 April – 26 June 1945

The United Nations was founded and the United Nations Charter signed on 26 June; in October 1945, the UN opened its headquarters in New York.



President Franklin D. Roosevelt speaks to British Prime Minister Winston Churchill on the lawn of the President's villa, Casablanca, Morocco, 17 January 1943.



European Network  
Remembrance  
and Solidarity

GEORG ECKERT  
INSTITUTE

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Infographics prepared for the project *Hi-story lessons. Teaching & learning about 20th-century European history*

The mission of the *Hi-story lessons*' project is to show European history of the 20th-century from different perspectives. Underlining the need to teach history with an awareness that neighbouring countries may possibly have a different viewpoint on the same historical fact is the project's main aim. With *Hi-story lessons* we strive to challenge how teachers and their students see the history of Europe – its diversity and complexity at times even with contrary opinions.

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