

1989/90: The process of German Unification

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content

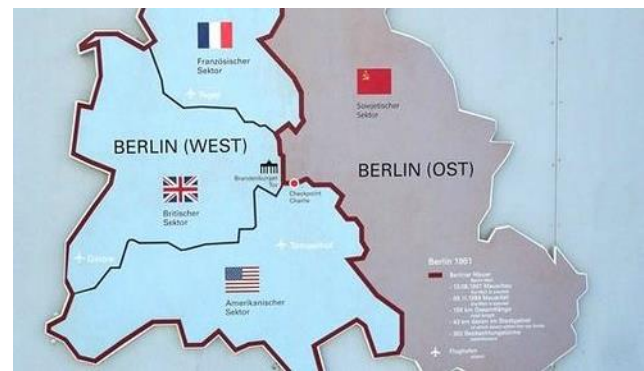
- mood before 1989
- longer-term developments
- dealing with the change in 1989/90



mood

before 1989

- division of Germany was widely accepted as a matter of course
- general belief: division could be overcome only in the medium or long term
- politics made an effort mainly to deal with the status quo, not to change it
- no detailed plan or concept for a sudden unification



longer-term

developments



Soviet Union: Glasnost and Perestroika

- Ronald Reagan (1987):
„Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this Wall“
- Mikhail Gorbachev (1989):
“Every country decides on its own which road to take.“
- allowed the rise of popular upheavals throughout 1989



„change through rapprochement“

- concentration on common interests
- West Germany renounced the use of force and recognized the current European borders
- the two German states eased encounters between their citizens, fostered trade and established formal relations



Helsinki Accord, 1975

- Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
- civil rights
- gradually became a manifesto of dissident movements in Eastern Europe



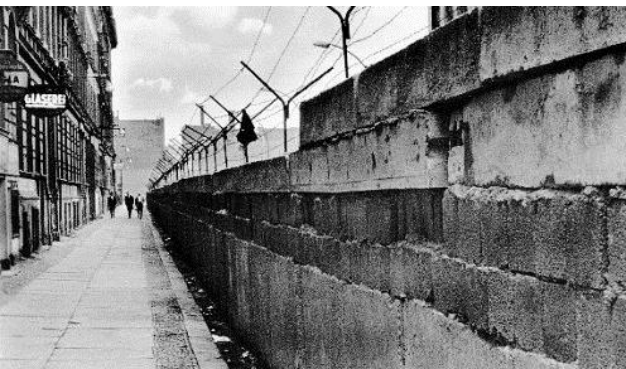


dealing with

the change in 1989/90

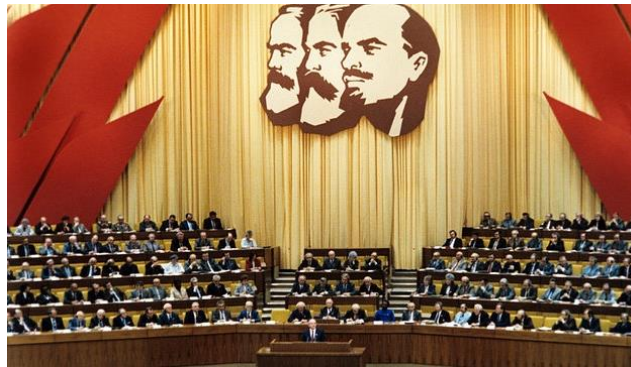
holes in the Iron Curtain

- East Germans escape through West German Embassies
- June 1989: foreign ministers Alois Mock (Austria) and Gyula Horn (Hungary) dismantle the „Iron Curtain“ on their border



late 1980s: rising pressure on GDR leadership

- mass emigration
- conflicts within party (SED)
- new peace and environment groups



peace and environment groups

- June 1989: around 160 groups (esp. within protestant church), 2.500 persons
- experience of restricted freedom (movement, travel, consumption), criticism of destruction of environment and armament
- May 1989: fraud in the local elections: 98% for the single list of candidates



fall of Berlin Wall

- 1989, November 9
- politbureau member Günter Schabowski announces permission to travel („effective immediately“)

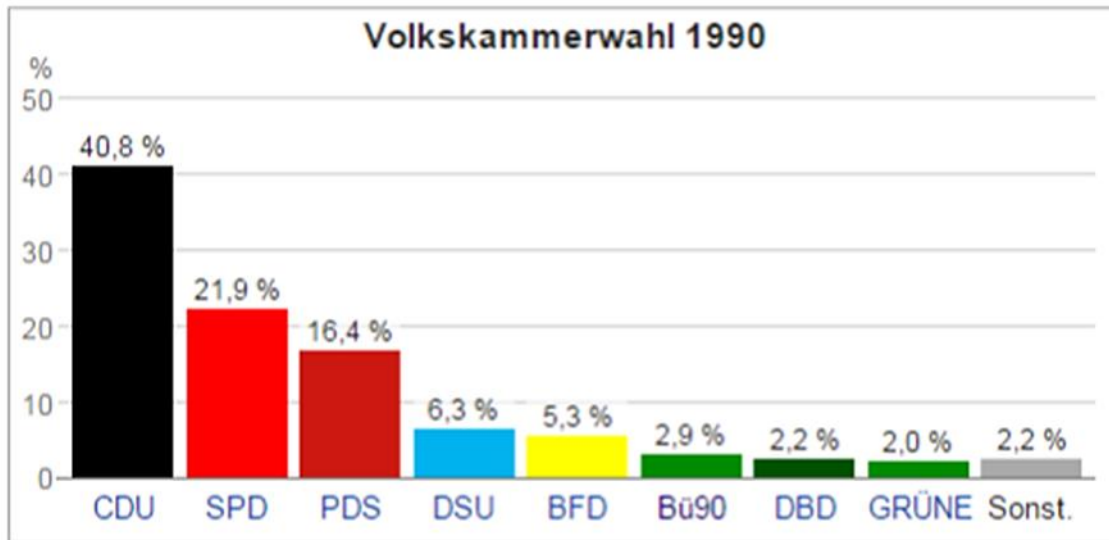


government Kohl/Genscher

- Nov. 28, 1989: Chancellor Kohl presented his 10 Point Plan
- Dec. 1989: opening of the Brandenburg Gate
- Feb. 1990: Gorbachev, Kohl, Genscher: agreement



free general elections in March 1990



→ winner:
“Alliance for
Germany“
(CDU, DSU, DA)
with about 48%



Monetary, Economic and Social Union

- Monetary: Deutsche Mark (exchange rate 1:1)
- Economic: from central planned economy to social market economy, privatization
- Social: Western German health, social insurance and pension system, no job guarantee



October 3, 1990:
joining the

Federal Republic of Germany



October 3, 1990:

Conclusion of the long

way to German unification

- **trust policy/„Ostpolitik“: important precondition**
- **communist economy collapsed while western world was regarded as an attractive alternative**
- **FRG's government of H. Kohl and H.-D. Genscher pursued consistently the goal to unify Germany**
- **very positive economic situation of the FRG**
- **international support thanks to international integration (EG and NATO)**

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