

## • The Versailles Settlement, 1919

The Treaty of Versailles involved compromises on the part of the Big Three. But it also was a 'DIKTAT' – Germany had no say in the negotiations. If the German representatives had not signed the treaty, the Allies promised to re-start the war.

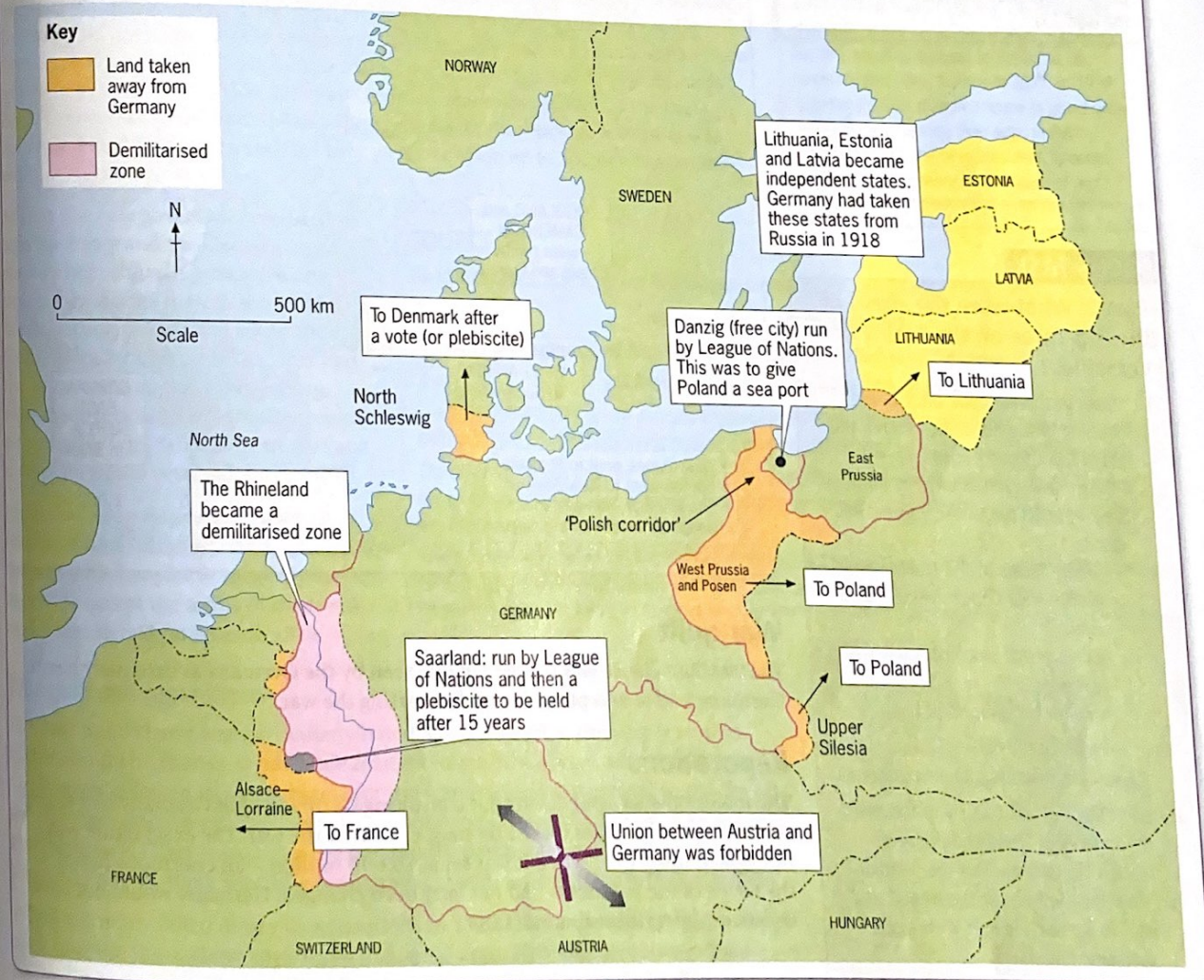
### Territorial changes

As a result of the treaty, Germany's overseas empire was taken away (see Figure 9, page 246). This had been one of the causes of bad relations between Britain and Germany before the war. As a result of the treaty, former German colonies became MANDATES controlled by the League of Nations. This meant that the League was given power to rule them. In practice, the League delegated responsibility to its leading members, which effectively meant that France and Britain controlled them.

Germany's European borders were very extensive, and the section dealing with former German territories was a complicated part of the treaty (see Figure 7). In addition to these changes, the treaty also forbade Germany to join together with its former ally Austria.

FIGURE 7

The impact of the Treaty of Versailles on the borders of Europe.





**SOURCE 8**

The 'War Guilt' clause from the Treaty of Versailles, 1919.

*The Allied governments affirm, and Germany accepts, the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied governments and their peoples have been subjected as a result of the war.*

**FOCUS TASK**

**Part 2: What were the views of the Big Three on the Treaty of Versailles?**

- 1 Work in threes. Look back at the profiles of Clemenceau, Wilson and Lloyd George on pages 241–43. Choose one each. Study the terms of the treaty on pages 245–46. Think about:

- which terms of the treaty would please your chosen person and why
- which terms would displease him and why
- how far he seemed to have achieved his aims.

Report your findings to your partners.

- 2 Look back at the chart you compiled on page 243. There should be a blank fifth column. Put the heading 'How they felt about the treaty' and fill it in for each leader with a one-sentence summary.

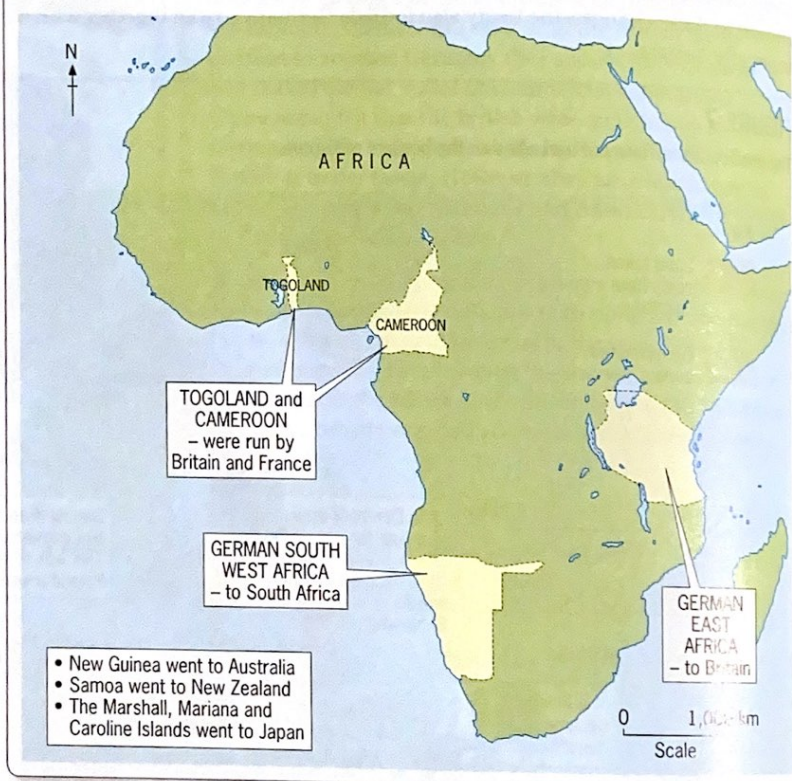
**Military restrictions**

The size and power of the German army was a major concern of all the powers, especially France. The treaty therefore restricted German armed forces to a level well below what they had been before the war.

- The army was limited to 100,000 men.
- CONSCRIPTION was banned – soldiers had to be volunteers.
- Germany was not allowed armoured vehicles, submarines or aircraft.
- The navy could build only six battleships.
- The Rhineland became a DEMILITARISED ZONE. This meant that no German troops were allowed into that area. The Rhineland was important because it was the border area between Germany and France (see Figure 7).

**FIGURE 9**

What happened to Germany's overseas empire as a result of the Treaty of Versailles.

**War guilt**

The WAR GUILT clause was simple but was seen by the Germans as extremely harsh. Germany had to accept the blame for starting the war.

**Reparations**

The major powers agreed, without consulting Germany, that Germany had to pay REPARATIONS to the Allies for the damage caused by the war. The exact figure was not agreed until 1921 when it was set at £6,600 million – an enormous figure. If the terms of the payments had not later been changed, Germany would not have finished paying this bill until 1984.