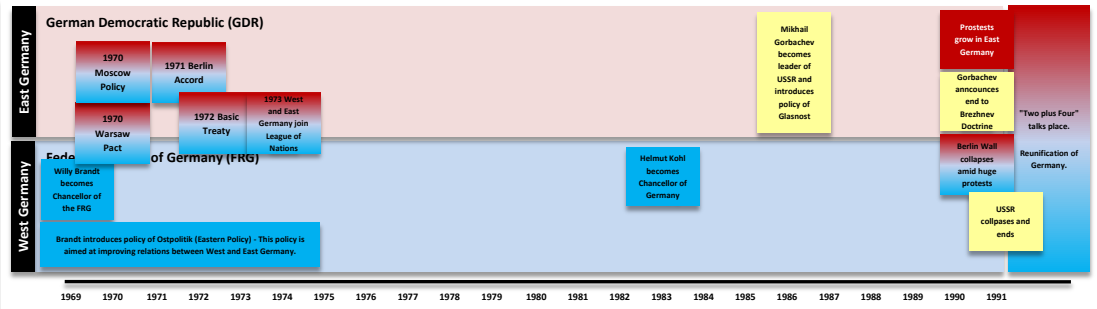


Knowledge Map: Germany 1969 - 1991 (Reunification of Germany)

Summary:

This part of the topic looks at how such a divided country, and such diametrically opposed countries politically and economically, came to become united again. The reunification of Germany takes two stages: 1969 to 1974 called Ostpolitik, and then during the 1980s to the eventual collapse of the wall in 1989. Following this there would be talks that would eventually lead to unification in 1990. This last part would take place, and could only have happened, against the backdrop of the collapse of the USSR.



Ostpolitik (1969 - 1974)

Summary

This period is one of key significance. It is the first attempt following the division of Germany to improve relations between the countries. The policy was called Ostpolitik and was introduced by the new Chancellor of West Germany, Willy Brandt. Having seen the Berlin Wall erected in 1961 by the East Germans and the rise in tensions, he felt a new policy of improved relations should be introduced. Ostpolitik translates as Eastern Policy.

Key Knowledge

1	Ostpolitik	Ostpolitik translates as "Eastern Policy" and, in reality, this was series of treaties and pacts signed between West Germany and East Germany, the USSR or other communist countries that allowed for better relations with each other.
2	1970 Moscow Treaty	No progress could be made with Ostpolitik without the agreement of the USSR. The 1970 Moscow Pact signed with the USSR, as well as being a non-aggression pact, increased technological and economic links with the USSR. In another part of the treaty, the FRG committed itself to opening up diplomatic relations with other communist countries such as Poland.
3	1970 Warsaw Pact	This was an agreement with Poland that recognised Poland's acquisition of territory that had once belonged to Germany and allowed Germans remaining in Poland to return to West Germany.
4	1970 Brandt pays homage to murdered Jews of Poland	During his visit to Poland, Brandt famously knelt in homage at the memorial to the Polish Jews killed by the Nazis in the Warsaw ghetto during the Second World War. This represented a huge moment in West and East relations.
5	1971 Berlin Accord	Another treaty signed with the USSR that accepted the division of Berlin as permanent.
6	1972 Basic Treaty	This Treaty was signed by West and East Germany and is a significant moment in the thawing of their relationship. They agree to exchange diplomatic missions, increase cross-border contacts and trade, as well as respecting each other's independence.
7	Evaluation of Ostpolitik	Ostpolitik was hugely successful and saw relations between West Germany improve enormously with the USSR, other communist countries, and most importantly, with East Germany. Both countries entered into the United Nations in 1973.

Key Individuals in Reunification of Germany

Summary

There are several key individuals involved in the reunification of Germany and not just from West and East Germany.

Key Knowledge

8	Willy Brandt	Chancellor of West Germany (1969 to 1974). Architect of the successful "Ostpolitik" policy.	
9	Helmut Kohl	Chancellor of West Germany (1982 to 1998). Was Chancellor of West Germany during the reconciliation process of 1990. He would become Chancellor of the new unified Germany.	
10	Mikhail Gorbachev	Leader of the Soviet Union (USSR) during the reconciliation process. His policy of Glasnost was instrumental in breaking down Soviet control of Eastern Europe.	
11	Ronald Reagan	President of the United States of America during the reconciliation process.	

Collapse of the USSR

Summary

Despite continually improving relations between West and East Germany, any plans for reunification would need the support of the USSR. Fortunately, throughout the 1980s the USSR experienced a decline and could no longer support its Communist satellite countries. The collapse of the USSR's power would pave a way for the reunification of Germany.

Key Knowledge

12	The collapse of the USSR	Despite the work of Willy Brandt in improving relations between East and West Germany, the division of Germany looked permanent following the signing of the Berlin Accord in 1971. Yet, by the 1980s, the USSR's status as a superpower was coming under strain. Its economy was facing ruin due to an expensive arms race with the US, a failed war in Afghanistan and industry that was not advanced enough.
13	Mikhail Gorbachev	Gorbachev became leader of the USSR in 1985 and realised that if the USSR was to survive it would need to reform economically and politically. He realised it could not afford to keep its stranglehold on Eastern Europe. He set about reforming the USSR immediately and one key aim was to end the Cold War which it could no longer sustain.
14	Policies	Gorbachev introduced two key policies: Perestroika (Political Reform) and Glasnost (Economic Reform). Both policies were controversial as they gave much more freedom to European countries under the USSR's control.
15	Impact of policies on Europe	The impact of Perestroika and Glasnost on Eastern Europe was profound and hurried in the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe. Quite simply, the policies gave much more power to countries and allowed previously banned political parties to now be able to campaign in elections. Effectively, Gorbachev had given these communist countries freedom to explore other ways of running the country.
16	Impact on Cold War	The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe would act as a catalyst for the end of the Cold War. A nuclear disarmament agreement was signed between the USA and the USSR in 1987 which effectively ended hostilities.

Reunification of Germany

Summary

The process of reunification happened as a result of spontaneous actions of the people of East Germany. The collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 meant that Germany was 'reunified' in Berlin despite there being no official agreements or talks. These talks would effectively happen after the event and despite some difficult issues to resolve, Germany was united again in 1990.

Key Knowledge

17	Growth of Opposition Groups in East Germany	Towards the end of the 1980s there was a growing number of protest groups emerging in East Germany. Whilst not officially recognised they were gaining popularity. "The New Forum" and the "East German Social Democratic Party" are two such examples and wanted reform and change.
18	Growing Protest Movement in East Germany	Alongside the new political groups, there was more open protests in 1989 against communist rule. These demonstrations took place in Dresden, Leipzig and Berlin, with the Berlin protest attended by more than 1 million people. The Stasi did nothing to stop these protests due to a lack of support from the USSR.
19	Collapse of the Berlin Wall	On the 9th November 1989, the East German government fearing a violent uprising, opened its border between East and West Germany. As a consequence, Berliners were able to move freely across the border without fear of reprisal, for the first time in 40 years. On this night, the Berlin Wall would be physically dismantled by East and West Berliners. Unofficially, Berlin had become reunified.
20	Problems facing reunification	As a consequence of the collapse of the wall, talks proceeded quickly to reunify Germany. However, it was not a simple process due to the following reasons: the USSR and USA would have to agree to it, the economy of East Germany was very poor and the two countries were very different politically (one capitalist, one communist).
21	Overcoming the problems of reunification	These problems were overcome by: huge loans were given to East Germany by West Germany, the USSR would not oppose reunification if West Germany gave it money to stabilise its own economy (see point 12), and the USA, Britain, France and the USSR would give up all claim to Germany.
22	Reunification Talks	The "Two Plus Four" talks took place on the 2nd October 1990 and the USSR, USA, Britain and France gave up all claim to Germany, and as a consequence, East and West Germany were reunified.