

Program of the German Reform Association (1862)

Abstract

The pro-Austrian German Reform Association was founded in October 1862 in Frankfurt. In contrast to the [National Association](#), it aimed at uniting the German population of the Habsburg Empire and reaching a “greater German” solution to the German question. The association's founding declaration follows.

Source

- 1) The reform of the constitution of the German Confederation is an urgent and indispensable necessity, in order to promote more vigorously than heretofore both its position of power abroad and the welfare and civil liberty at home.
- 2) This reform must make it possible for all German states to remain fully united.
- 3) It will find completion only in the creation of a powerful federal executive authority with national representation.
- 4) Under current conditions, the only possible form of a federal executive authority is a concentrated collegial executive with a properly measured balance of votes.
- 5) The Assembly of Delegates proposed by eight governments is to be recognized as a first step towards the creation of a national representation. It is assumed that the governments will lose no time in making this assembly a periodically recurring representation at the Confederation with expanded authority.
- 6) A larger number of members is necessary to give it the necessary moral force. The manner of election is to be left to the legislation of the individual states, but electoral eligibility is not to be restricted to the members of the representative bodies in the individual states.
- 7) The reform must be brought about by agreement and only on the basis of the current Federal Constitution.
- 8) Even if a federal court whose independence is guaranteed proves to be an essentially useful institution, the most recent proposal made in this respect is not appropriate.

Source: *Verhandlungen der großdeutschen Versammlung zu Frankfurt a.M.*, 1862, p. 11; reprinted in Ernst Rudolf Huber, ed., *Deutsche Verfassungsdokumente, 1851–1900*, vol. 2, *Dokumente zur deutschen Verfassungsgeschichte*, 3rd ed., rev. and enl. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1986, pp. 109–10.

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