

# Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin (September 3, 1971)

## Abstract

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The Quadripartite Agreement between the former Allies illustrates the close link between *Ostpolitik* and *Deutschlandpolitik* (policies toward Eastern Europe and policies toward East Germany). The agreement was signed by the ambassadors of the former Allied Powers on September 3, 1971, but was only implemented after the ratification of other treaties with the Eastern Bloc countries. On June 3, 1972, the foreign ministers of France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States signed the final protocol of the Quadripartite Agreement, at which point it took effect. Although the agreement did not change the status of Berlin, it guaranteed improved transit to and from West Berlin and eased travel restrictions for visitors to East Germany.

## Source

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The Governments of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the French Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America,  
Represented by their Ambassadors, who held a series of meetings in the building formerly occupied by the Allied Control Council in the American Sector of Berlin,  
Acting on the basis of their quadripartite rights and responsibilities, and of the corresponding wartime and postwar agreements and decisions of the Four Powers, which are not affected,  
Taking into account the existing situation in the relevant area,  
Guided by the desire to contribute to practical improvements of the situation,  
Without prejudice to their legal positions,  
Have agreed on the following:

### Part I.

#### General Provisions

1. The four Governments will strive to promote the elimination of tension and the prevention of complications in the relevant area.
2. The four Governments, taking into account their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, agree that there should be no use or threat of force in the area and that disputes shall be settled solely by peaceful means.
3. The four Governments will mutually respect their individual and joint rights and responsibilities, which remain unchanged.
4. The four Governments agree that, irrespective of the differences in legal views, the situation which has developed in the area, and as it is defined in this Agreement as well as in the other agreements referred to in this Agreement, shall not be changed unilaterally.

### Part II:

#### Provisions Relating to the Western Sectors of Berlin

A. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics declares that transit traffic by road, rail and waterways through the territory of the German Democratic Republic of civilian persons and goods between the Western Sectors of Berlin and the Federal Republic of Germany will be unimpeded; that such traffic will be facilitated so as to take place in the most simple and expeditious manner; and that it will receive preferential treatment.

Detailed arrangements concerning this civilian traffic, as set forth in annex I, will be agreed by the

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competent German authorities.

B. The Governments of the French Republic, the United Kingdom and the United States of America declare that the ties between the Western Sectors of Berlin and the Federal Republic of Germany will be maintained and developed, taking into account that these Sectors continue not to be a constituent part of the Federal Republic of Germany and not to be governed by it.

Detailed arrangements concerning the relationship between the Western Sectors of Berlin and the Federal Republic of Germany are set forth in annex II.

C. The Governments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics declares that communications between the Western Sectors of Berlin and areas bordering on these Sectors and those areas of the German Democratic Republic which do not border on these Sectors will be improved. Permanent residents of the Western Sectors of Berlin will be able to travel to and visit such areas for compassionate, family, religious, cultural or commercial reasons, or as tourists, under conditions comparable to those applying to other persons entering these areas.

The problems of the small enclaves, including Steinstücken, and of other small areas may be solved by exchange of territory.

Detailed arrangements concerning travel, communications and the exchange of territory, as set forth in annex III, will be agreed by the competent German authorities. [...]

Source of English translation: United Nations Treaty Series, No. 12621 (1973).

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Source of original German text: Viermächteabkommen über Berlin [Berlin-Abkommen], 3.

September 1971; reprinted in Joachim Nawrocki, ed., *Die Beziehungen zwischen den beiden Staaten in Deutschland: Entwicklungen, Möglichkeiten und Grenzen*. Berlin, 1986, pp. 99 ff.

Recommended Citation: Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin (September 3, 1971), published in: German History in Documents and Images,

<<https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/two-germanies-1961-1989/ghdi:document-77>> [July 11, 2025].