

The Definition of East German Identity in the Final GDR Constitution (October 7, 1974)

Abstract

While the initial GDR constitution aimed at unification under communist auspices, and the 1968 revision called the GDR “a socialist state of the German nation,” the final East German constitution of 1974 suppressed any national reference and defined the GDR ideologically as “a socialist state of workers and farmers.”

Source

Continuing the revolutionary tradition of the German working class and supported by the liberation from fascism, the people of the German Democratic Republic, in accordance with the processes of historical development of our epoch, have realized their right to socioeconomic, governmental, and national self-determination, and have created a developed socialist society.

Imbued by the will to determine their own fate freely, to continue resolutely along the path of socialism and Communism, peace, democracy, and peace among nations, the people of the German Democratic Republic have given themselves this socialist constitution.

Article 1

The German Democratic Republic is a socialist state of workers and farmers. It is the political organization of the working population in town and country under the leadership of the working class and its Marxist-Leninist party.

The capital of the German Democratic Republic is Berlin.

The state flag of the German Democratic Republic consists of the colors black, red, and gold, and shows the state emblem of the German Democratic Republic in the center of both sides.

The state emblem of the German Democratic Republic is a hammer and compass surrounded by a wreath of grain whose base is entwined by a black, red, and gold ribbon. [...]

Article 8

(1) The generally recognized rules of international law serving peace and peaceful cooperation among nations are binding on the state authority and on every citizen.

(2) The German Democratic Republic will never undertake a war of aggression or use its armed forces against the freedom of another people.

Source: Constitution of the GDR (1974); reprinted in Dietrich Müller-Römer, ed., *Die neue Verfassung der DDR*. Cologne, 1974, p. 78 ff.

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