

WORLD WAR HISTORY: EUROPEAN OVERVIEW

Major Conflict Timeline & Strategic Turning Points

Year	Key Event	Strategic Significance
1914	Assassination at Sarajevo	Triggered the alliance system; transition from regional crisis to continental war.
1916	Battle of Verdun	One of the costliest battles in history; symbolized the war of attrition on the Western Front.
1918	Armistice Day	Cessation of hostilities; led to the collapse of the German, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman empires.

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1939	Invasion of Poland	Marked the failure of appeasement; formal declarations of war by UK and France.

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1942	Battle of Stalingrad	The definitive turning point in Eastern Europe; halted the German advance into the USSR.
1944	Operation Overlord (D-Day)	Opened the Second Front in Western Europe; initiated the liberation of German-occupied territories.
1945	VE Day	Unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany; beginning of the post-war reconstruction and Cold War era.