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Victory in Europe Day

Victory in Europe Day (**V-E Day** or **VE Day**) was on May 8, 1945, the date when the World War II [Allies](#) formally accepted the [unconditional surrender](#) of the armed forces of [Nazi Germany](#) and the end of [Adolf Hitler's Third Reich](#). On April 30 [Hitler committed suicide](#) during the [Battle of Berlin](#), and so the surrender of Germany was authorized by his replacement, President of Germany [Karl Dönitz](#). The administration headed up by Dönitz was known as the [Flensburg government](#). The *act of military surrender* was signed on May 7 in [Reims](#), France, and May 8 in Berlin, Germany.

Celebrations

More than one million people celebrated in the streets to mark the end of the European part of the war. Many hardships remained, however, including continued [rationing](#) of food and clothing, which lasted even longer in peacetime than it had during the war. In London, crowds massed in [Trafalgar Square](#) and up The Mall to [Buckingham Palace](#), where King [George VI](#) and Queen [Elizabeth](#), accompanied by Prime Minister [Winston Churchill](#), appeared on the balcony of the Palace before cheering crowds. Princess [Elizabeth](#) (the future Queen Elizabeth II) and her sister Princess Margaret were allowed to wander anonymously among the crowds and take part in the celebrations.

In the United States, President Harry Truman, who turned 61 that day, dedicated the victory to the memory of his predecessor, Franklin D. Roosevelt, who had died of a cerebral hemorrhage less than a month earlier, on April 12. Flags remained at half-staff for the remainder of the 30-day mourning period, which ended on May 12. Massive celebrations also took place in [Chicago](#), [Los Angeles](#), [Miami](#), and especially in [New York City's Times Square](#).^[1]

Soviet Victory Day

Main article: Victory Day (May 9)

As the [Soviet Union](#) was to the east of Germany it was May 9 [Moscow Time](#) when German military surrender became effective, which is why Russia and many other [European countries](#) east of Germany commemorate Victory Day on May 9 instead of [Western European](#) May 8.

May 8th as public holiday

United Kingdom - 1995 [May Day](#) Bank Holiday was moved from 1 May to 8 May to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the ending of the Second World War.

The former [East Germany](#) as *Tag der Befreiung* (Day of liberation)

France

[Slovakia](#) as *Deň víťazstva nad fašizmom* (Victory over Fascism Day)^[2]

[Czech Republic](#) as *Den vítězství* or *Den osvobození* (Day of liberation)

Norway as "Frigjøringsdagen" (Liberation Day)

Denmark (May 5th) as "Befrielsen" (The Liberation)

The Netherlands (May 5th) as "Bevrijdingsdag" (Liberation Day)

See also

[Victory over Japan Day](#)

Time of remembrance and reconciliation

References

1. ^ [sandiego.edu article](#)
2. ^ [Public holidays in Slovakia](#)

Economist article