

Topic Page: [Frankfurt Parliament](#)

Summary Article: **Frankfurt Parliament**

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

1848–49, national assembly convened at Frankfurt on May 18, 1848, as a result of the liberal revolution that swept the German states early in 1848. The parliament was called by a preliminary assembly of German liberals in Mar., 1848, and its members were elected by direct manhood suffrage. They represented the entire political spectrum and included the foremost German figures of the time. The president of the parliament was Heinrich von Gagern. Its purpose was to plan the unification of Germany. Having suspended (June, 1848) the diet of the German Confederation, the assembly appointed Archduke John of Austria regent of Germany and head of the provisional (and virtually nonexistent) executive power. While the parliament was lengthily debating various schemes of union, it was diverted from its purpose by the war with Denmark over the Schleswig-Holstein question; the parliament commissioned Prussia to send troops to aid the duchies, but finally accepted (Sept., 1848) an armistice. It resumed deliberations on unification, but conflict among the traditionally separate German states, notably Austria and Prussia, made progress difficult. In the meantime the revolutionary movement was suppressed, and the very basis of the Frankfurt assembly destroyed. At last, in Mar., 1849, the parliament adopted a federal constitution of the German states, excluding Austria, with a parliamentary government and a hereditary emperor. Frederick William IV of Prussia was chosen emperor but refused to accept the crown from a popularly elected assembly and the entire scheme foundered. Most of the representatives withdrew and the remainder were dispersed. Frederick William attempted to substitute a union scheme of his own, but his efforts were smothered by Austria through the Treaty of Olmütz (1850), which restored the German Confederation. The constitution drafted by the Frankfurt Parliament influenced that of the North German Confederation in 1866, particularly in providing direct suffrage.

APA

Chicago

Harvard

MLA

Frankfurt Parliament. (2018). In P. Lagasse, & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia* (8th ed.). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. Retrieved from https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/frankfurt_parliament



The Columbia Encyclopedia, © Columbia University Press 2018



The Columbia Encyclopedia, © Columbia University Press 2018

APA

Frankfurt Parliament. (2018). In P. Lagasse, & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia* (8th ed.). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. Retrieved from https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/frankfurt_parliament

Chicago

"Frankfurt Parliament." In *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, by Paul Lagasse, and Columbia University. 8th ed. Columbia University Press, 2018. https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/frankfurt_parliament

Harvard

Frankfurt Parliament. (2018). In P. Lagasse & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia*. (8th ed.). [Online]. New York: Columbia University Press. Available from: https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/frankfurt_parliament [Accessed 15 November 2019].

MLA

"Frankfurt Parliament." *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, Paul Lagasse, and Columbia University, Columbia University Press, 8th edition, 2018. *Credo Reference*, https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/frankfurt_parliament. Accessed 15 Nov. 2019.