WORLD WAR I | PART 5 OF 9 · AGES 11–16

WORLD WAR I BY THE NUMBERS

The scale of the war in eight figures. Most are estimates, so each one names its source.

65 million+

men were mobilised to fight in the war

Volunteers and conscripts in mass citizen armies (IWM).

30+

nations declared war between 1914 and 1918

Most joined the Allies; four formed the Central Powers (IWM).

1,567

days from the first declaration of war to the Armistice

From 28 July 1914 to 11 November 1918: just over four years and three months.

~700 km

was the length of the Western Front

Sources give 400 to 475 miles (about 640–765 km), from the Channel coast to Switzerland.

9 million+

soldiers, sailors and airmen died

National WWI Museum figure. Exact totals are unknown, and sources differ.

~16 million

soldiers and civilians died in all

IWM estimate. Civilian deaths from hunger, disease and violence are the hardest to count.

1.5 million

men served in the Indian Army

They fought in France, Egypt, Mesopotamia and Palestine (IWM).

2 million+

Africans were drawn into the war

As soldiers, porters and labourers (National WWI Museum).

Why the numbers disagree

Records were lost, borders changed and many deaths came from disease. Even two IWM pages on Verdun give different totals, because they count different things. Always say 'about' and name your source.

NEXT IN THE SERIES

6. Life in the Trenches in World War I

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