



GALMUN 2026 CRISIS - Additional Information

The Roman Empire in the 5th century

East and West Relations

Ever since the death of Emperor Theodosius in 395 AD, the Roman Empire became administratively split in two entities, with one Emperor in the West and one in the East. The Eastern Roman Empire, governed from Constantinople, remained politically stable, economically prosperous, and militarily secure when compared to the West. Its strategic position and wealth allow it to respond more



effectively to external threats through diplomacy, tribute, and military force. The Western Roman empire was in dire straits due to the breaches made by Germanic tribes who had penetrated the frontiers and settled within the empire causing chaos and destruction. The West remained an imperial power but lacked the urban centers and luxury goods to allow it to compete in prosperity with its Eastern neighbour and to keep a flow of soldiers fighting in its legions, thus forcing it to give in more to requests and demands made by Germanic tribes and their leaders. While both empires continue to identify themselves as Roman, cooperation between East and West remains is never completely guaranteed. Eastern authorities are reluctant to commit significant resources to Western affairs unless such involvement directly benefits Eastern security or influence. However, Emperor Theodosius II who ruled in the East did politically intervene to ensure that Valentinian II held the throne as they belonged to the same imperial dynasty. East and West also cooperated during their latest joint campaigns against the Vandals in North Africa. However, due to economic limitations and outsider threats on their own border, the Eastern Roman retreated their legions back to the Balkans, now focusing on their own security. The question of Eastern intervention therefore remains a central strategic uncertainty within the crisis, one that has a high price regardless of how it is answered.

Christianity in the Roman Empire

Catholic Christianity (sometimes known as Orthodox or as Apostolic) is the officially sanctioned religion of the Roman Empire. There are five important christian religious churches, all united but with each Patriarch presiding over a designated region. In the East you have the Church of Alexandria whose parishes include all the christian churches in Egypt



and Ethiopia, the Church of Jerusalem which covers the Holy Land, the Church of Antioch which covers areas in Syria and the Church of Constantinople which covered the areas of Asia Minor, Thrace and Greece. While in the West, the most important Christian center was Rome, headed by the Pope, who was the chief religious authority in all of the Western Roman empire. These churches all belonged to one universal Catholic Apostolic Orthodox church, with each patriarch recognizing the religious authority of each over their designated area. They also held on to unified creed, sharing very similar doctrines regarding their Christian faith. However, differences and divisions were abound within this unity, with Eastern churches relying on different liturgical languages, such as Greek and Syriac, as opposed to churches in the west who mostly prayed in Latin. There was also tensions when it came to the question of which of these churches were to be given the leading role amongst the church, with the Pope staking out his claim as the successor of St Peter while other churches in the East insisted that they all had equal status. There were religious divisions even outside of officially sanctioned faith. Many barbarian groups within and outside imperial borders adhere to Arian Christianity, which has been declared heretical by Roman church authorities. In addition, remnants of pagan practices persist, particularly in rural regions. Religious differences intersect with political and social tensions, contributing to instability. Church leaders possess considerable influence over public opinion and imperial legitimacy, making religious alignment a significant factor in governance and diplomacy

The Roman Economy in the 5th century

Economically speaking, the situation in the West was very dire. The separation of the empire into two halves did not in itself affect the economy as goods flowed freely between East and West and there were no limits for Roman citizens to continue with their business endeavours and their movement throughout all corners of the empire. While the East was more prosperous due to its proximity to trade routes and due to its much larger and numerous urban centers, the West relied mainly on the extraction of raw resources and local agriculture and trade for its economy. Silver and Iron was mined in Spain, timber was cut in Gaul and Germania and olive oil was produced on the Mediterranean coast and more. Of particular importance is North Africa, whose agricultural output, especially grain, remains vital to the survival of Italian cities. However, with the arrival of Germanic tribes, the economy in the Western Roman empire started to deteriorate drastically due to prolonged instability, territorial losses, and systemic corruption. The tax base has diminished as provinces fell under Germanic control or operated semi-independently. Inflation and excessive taxation placed further strain on citizens and landowners. The Vandal presence in North Africa posed a direct threat to food supplies and imperial revenues as any disruption in African grain shipments could result in famine, unrest, and political collapse. The imperial court started overly relying on local leaders and rich donors to fund their projects and armies as local taxation and income from trade became more scarce by the day.



Political Authority and Court Dynamics

The Roman imperial courts, whether in the East or West, were made up of the royal families, leading generals and important bureaucrats and nobles. While nominal rule lay in the hand of the Emperor (and they did indeed tend to have a lot of power), power was actually shared between powerful actors who each used their position and their abilities to have more of a say on how the empire is run. Powerful generals exerted their will by expanding their military influence which was vital for the survival of the Roman state and the imperial family and was backed by the loyalty of their troops. An emperor could not merely dismiss a general as this might backfire with a mutiny whether amongst the troops or within the court. An emperor also relied heavily on the noble families for political support and rich urban figures for financial backing. Members of the royal family also had extensive power as they had wealth of their own and they were able to form connections between different parties and with the emperor himself. While church figures did not hold direct access to the Imperial court, the imperial family and the emperor was expected to be the leading example of a Christian ruler, upholding the faith across his domains and performing his full religious duties always.

Otherwise this would cause a rupture between the court and the church, leading to social and political unrest. While the description given above might make the emperor sound like nothing but a figurehead, he was indeed a vital and necessary figurehead; without his



cooperation the court would collapse into a state of infighting and chaos.

This was especially true in 435 AD, as political authority within the Western Roman Empire became highly highly fragmented. Although Emperor Valentinian III remained the official ruler of the West, his youth and limited political experience significantly restricted his ability to govern independently. Effective power rested largely with senior military and political figures operating within the imperial court at Ravenna. Foremost among these figures is Flavius Aetius, Magister Militum of the Western Roman Empire. As commander of the imperial armies, Aetius exerted substantial influence over both military strategy and diplomatic relations with barbarian groups. His extensive experience and personal connections particularly with the Huns have made him the most powerful individual in the Western Empire. As a result, imperial decision making is often shaped by rival factions within the court rather than by the emperor alone. His main competitor at court was Galla Placidia, Valentinian III's mother, who acted as regent until Valentinian III came of age within a year's time. This led to a contentious court where every actor had an angle and aimed at increasing their group's position in court at the expense of the other.



Barbarian Groups Within the Empire

Germanic tribes groups residing within Roman territory were not unified in purpose or strategy. Most sought land, protection, and long term security rather than the immediate destruction of Roman authority. However, their growing autonomy challenged the sovereignty of the Western Roman state. While there were indeed groups who had sworn loyalty to the roman state as the Feoderati tribe and their leaders had been given elevated titles, the day to day needs of the tribes might lead to switching loyalties, rebellions and military confrontations with the Romans or other tribes. These groups may act as allies, rivals, or adversaries depending on circumstances. Their actions are guided by pragmatic considerations, including survival, political recognition, and territorial stability.



A Feoderati tribe is one that accepts the rule of the Roman emperor but is able to maintain local autonomy over the area they had conquered or were given by the Imperial throne. While they still needed to support the roman state militarily and to send some taxes to the capital, the Germanic rulers held full control both over their own tribesmen and the local roman population that they had conquered. They, therefore, made full use of the resources and the technologies that are available to them in the villages and cities they control. While relationships between the newcomers and the locals were not always peaceful, most common people tried to get along with their lives and to continue living normally. However, due to political instability and the social fragmentation this created, the status of these tribes was never secure as the Romans always looked for ways to regain full control over their territories and many of the Germanic rulers always looked for opportunities to expand the livelihood of their people to expand their power and wealth on the way. This phenomenon was also seen in the Eastern Roman Empire who had Foederatii of their own. Arab tribes such as the Lakhmids, the Kinda and others who lived on the outskirts of the Eastern borders worked with Roman troops to man and hold the desert forts that extend from the Red sea up to the River Euphrates.

Outside of the Empire, East of the Rhine and North of the Danube, Germanic tribes found themselves under the control of the Huns. The Huns might have allowed some of them some autonomy but they demanded extravagant tributes and required the support of their armies during their wars against other tribes or during their campaigns against stronger foes. Some Germanic tribes, who have relatives across the border, have aspirations to be liberated from the Hunnic yoke but this seems to be a very complicated matter as the Huns, while brutal, also brought opportunities for glory and loot.



GALMUN 2026 CRISIS Online Map

Like in previous Crisis committees in GALMUN, the simulation will have a live map that updates after major events and directives affect the world of the simulation. It will include the following elements:

- Regions and cities: The map is divided into regions and areas, each area has a main city. The faction that controls the main city controls its region. Each faction is signified by a different color.
- Armies and navies: All armies and navies are signified on the map with the color of their faction.
- Roads: The map will represent the main roads that connect the different cities and regions together. The roads are colored grey.

The link to the GALMUN 2026 Crisis Map will be published on the GALMUN website before the conference begins.

Roads and Geography

In the classical period, the known world was interconnected by large webs of main roads and regional pathways. These roads allowed for the flow of trade and for the moving of armies and legions from the mountains of Asturias in the West to the borders with India in the East. In our simulation, you will find a map of the main roads. It is on these roads that armies can travel and move fastest and most securely. Though it is possible to move your armies off the main roads but then they would be slower and less secure.



Another thing to consider is the geography and terrain. Our map includes a whole variety of geographic terrain, with deserts in North Africa, Syria and Mesopotamia, with Mountain ranges in Anatolia, the Caucasus, the Alps, and Hispania, with fertile rivers and farmlands in Egypt, Mesopotamia, North Italy and Carthage, with large forests in Gaul and Germania and steppes in Ukraine and beyond as far as the eye could see. Geographic and climate conditions will affect the security of your army and their ability to move around the map and win battles. It is therefore useful to always consider the effects that the geographic terrain and the climate will have on your plans when making directives.



Armies and Legions

By the 4th century, Roman Military, in both West and East, were no longer the professional and centralized force they once were. Though the East fared better in this regard, financial shortages due to crises and social instability led to the reduction of the size and quality of Roman legions, forcing increased reliance on Foederati troops and foreign mercenaries, including the Huns. However, one can also understand the changes in



Roman military organisation to have come about due to a change in Roman Military aims. The Roman expanded to natural frontiers which led them to switch from an offensive to a defensive strategy. The goal was no longer to expand the size and the regions of the Empire, but to maintain it from external forces by building up forts and maintaining them with a mobile force.

The forces manning the frontiers were called the Limitanei legions which were made up of local soldiers who knew the area and were extremely mobile. They also required less upkeep from the central authority as the salaries of the soldiers and the supplies were resourced from the local area they were stationed in. However, the Roman still maintained traditional professional legions, known as the Comitatus legions, which functioned as a regular standing army and who were funded by the central treasury and the general leading them. While they were less mobile and needed more logistical planning (compared with the Limitanei legions), they were made up of a more balanced army with heavy infantry and artillery. In our simulation, a Limitanei legion (referred to as a *frontier legion*) held 4500 troops while a Comitatus legion (referred to as a *standing legion*) held 5500 troops.





Germanic and Hunnic armies were organised in a different manner. It is true that some of these cultures have had long exposure to Roman civilizations and have adopted a number of their habits and have been influenced by their war strategies and technologies, with many of them even serving in Roman legions. However, for the most part, Germanic and Hunnic soldiers rallied behind their leader due to tribal loyalties and the promise of loot and conquest rather than duty to an empire or the promise of salaries. The organisation of Germanic armies was lacking, but they more than made up for it in numbers and bravery. Hunnic armies, however, were known for being highly organised and made extensive use of their steppe horses to move with mobility and to strike with force against enemy forces. A Germanic or Hunnic army in our simulation is made up of 6000 troops.

Our simulation will also have navies. Navies are fleets of warships. In the classical period, warships had rowers who rowed the ship forward, allowing the ship to ram into other ships and thus drown them. Each ship would also have marine soldiers and archers on board who would shoot arrows at opposing ships and would then board other ships and fight in hand-to-hand combat. Navies can also be used to transport armies and legions across the seas. However, fleets are not needed to transport legions if the travel distance is very short. Each culture has a different level of sea-fighting technologies depending on their level of ship building capabilities. Germanic and Hunnic tribes do not possess the technology to build maritime ships capable of sailing the open sea but are able to either make use of the technological abilities of their Roman subjects or to capture navy vessels and man them with their warriors. In our simulation, a standard navy is made up of 70 ships with 3000 marine soldiers and are able to hold one legion or army at a time.

For all the armies in our simulation, their loyalty is conditional and often dependent on land grants, payments, or political concessions. Military power within the empire and outside of it was therefore unstable and subject to rapid shifts in allegiance. Generals are advised to work hard on maintaining the loyalty of their troops, who might prefer to mutiny or to backstab their leaders should the opportune moment present itself. They might even be convinced to switch factions or to crown a different character as faction leader.

The legions and armies that are available at the start of the simulation:

Faction: **Western Roman Empire**

- 1st Roman Legion (Standing) commanded by Valentinian III
- 2nd Roman Legion (Standing) commanded by Valentinian III
- 3rd Roman Legion (Standing) commanded by Aetius Flavius
- 4th Roman Legion (Standing) commanded by Aetius Flavius
- 5th Roman Legion (Standing) commanded by Majorian
- 6th Roman Legion (Frontier) commanded by Aetius Flavius
- 7th Roman Legion (Frontier) commanded by Litorius
- 8th Roman Legion (Frontier) commanded by Litorius
- 16th Roman Legion (Frontier) commanded by Majorian
- 3rd Roman Navy commanded by Majorian



Faction: **Eastern Roman Empire**

9th Roman Legion (Standing) commanded by Theodosius II
10th Roman Legion (Standing) commanded by Theodosius II
11th Roman Legion (Standing) commanded by Aspar
12th Roman Legion (Standing) commanded by Aspar
13th Roman Legion (Frontier) commanded by Aspar
14th Roman Legion (Frontier) commanded by Marcian
15th Roman Legion (Frontier) commanded by Marcian
1st Roman Navy commanded by Aspar
2nd Roman Navy commanded by Marcian

Faction: **The Huns**

1st Hunnic Army commanded by Atilla the Hun
2nd Hunnic Army commanded by Atilla the Hun
3rd Hunnic Army commanded by Atilla the Hun
4th Hunnic Army commanded by Bleda the Hun
5th Hunnic Army commanded by Bleda the Hun
6th Hunnic Army commanded by Bleda the Hun

Faction: **The Visigoths**

1st Visigothic Army commanded by Theodoric I
2nd Visigothic Army commanded by Theodoric I
3rd Visigothic Army commanded by Thorismund

Faction: **The Burgundians**

1st Burgundian Army commanded by Gundahar
2nd Burgundian Army commanded by Gundahar
3rd Burgundian Army commanded by Gundahar

Faction: **The Vandals**

1st Vandal Army commanded by Gaiseric
2nd Vandal Army commanded by Gaiseric
3rd Vandal Army commanded by Hunneric

Faction: **The Franks**

1st Frankish Army commanded by Chlodio
2nd Frankish Army commanded by Chlodio

Faction: **The Suebi**

1st Suebi Army commanded by Hermeric
2nd Suebi Army commanded by Hermeric