

# Subject: History

## Year: 10—Lesson 3

### What early tensions existed between England and Europe?

The Reformation of the early 1500s created a new form of religion called the Protestant faith. This led to a divide between Catholic countries and Protestant countries. Although Elizabeth had created her 'middle way' to try and keep both sides happy in England she also had to think about the bigger picture. Catholics in England were supported by Catholics in Europe who believed in the idea of a **counter-reformation** which aimed to restore Catholicism to the whole of Europe. England was surrounded by powerful Catholic countries who posed a threat to the security of England as they could either support Catholic rebellions in England or invade the country as part of their religious crusade.



The map shows Europe with a key indicating Catholic countries in orange and Protestant countries in yellow. Catholic countries include France, Spain, Portugal, the Papal States, and parts of the Holy Roman Empire. Protestant countries include the Netherlands, Brandenburg, Saxony, and parts of the Holy Roman Empire. Arrows point from text boxes to these regions.

**France**  
France was a traditional rival to England and a Catholic country. Mary, Queen of Scots, a claimant to the English throne, had strong ties with France. A religious war broke out in France in 1562. Elizabeth was concerned about its potential to threaten her realm by encouraging religious conflict in England.

**The Netherlands**  
In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Netherlands belonged to the Spanish king, Philip II. It was Catholic, but had a growing Protestant population. The Netherlands were used to governing themselves, but since the 1550s there had been growing unhappiness about Spanish interference in Dutch affairs. Philip II reorganised the Dutch government and Church and brought the Spanish Inquisition to the Netherlands.

**Spain**  
In 1559, England was an ally of Spain. Spain and France were traditional enemies but both were Catholic. Elizabeth was concerned that they might form an alliance against her. King Philip II of Spain was a strict Roman Catholic who did not look favourably upon Protestants.

**The Papal States**  
The Pope at the start of Elizabeth's reign was Pius IV. He had great influence over European Catholic rulers and most people expected him to excommunicate Elizabeth as an illegitimate, female, Protestant monarch.

1. Look at the map above and rank the four countries/states from most threatening to Elizabeth (1) to the least (4). Explain why you ranked them this way.

### Scotland

In 1560, Scotland was ruled by Elizabeth's cousin called Mary Queen of Scots (MQS). Before she came to the throne her mother Mary of Guise ruled Scotland while she remained in France married to the French prince Francis. In 1558, the same year Elizabeth became Queen of England, a number of Scottish **Protestant** nobles rebelled against Mary's mother because they did not like her French, Catholic influence. Elizabeth secretly sent them money to help. In 1560, she sent troops too. In 1560 Mary's mother died and The **Treaty of Edinburgh** was signed. This put an end to war in Scotland and all English soldiers were removed from Scotland. A condition of this was that MQS would give up her claim to the English throne. Although she became queen of Scotland, the Protestant lords controlled the Scottish government.

2. Why would Scotland be a possible threat to Elizabeth?

3. How would Mary Queen of Scots be a possible danger for Elizabeth's position as queen?

## France

In 1562, a religious **civil war** broke out in France between Protestants and Catholics. After her success in Scotland, in 1562 Elizabeth agreed to help the Protestants with the hope of regaining Calais (a place in France) , which had been lost by Mary I.

In 1559, England and Spain were still allies, despite Elizabeth rejecting Philip's marriage proposal. France and Spain had traditionally been enemies. But Philip did not look favourably upon Elizabeth's support of the Protestant rebels in Scotland and France. In 1563, he banned the import of English cloth to the Netherlands as he believed that English merchants were encouraging the spread of Protestantism there. Elizabeth retaliated and stopped trading with the Netherlands. This trade embargo affected both countries economically and only lasted a year.

### 4. Why would an alliance between France and Spain be so dangerous?

## Netherlands

The Netherlands was owned by Spain. However, they had always governed themselves. The Netherlands did not like the Spanish interference in Dutch affairs and since the 1550s, the Dutch had grown increasingly frustrated with this happening. In the 1560s Phillip II decided to reorganise the Dutch government and church and brought the **Spanish Inquisition** to the Netherlands. This was aimed at making sure all Spanish territories were following the true Catholic faith and anyone found to be breaking this could be tortured and executed. Philip's actions in the Netherlands united both Catholics and Protestants against Spain, leading to the Dutch Revolt, which broke out in 1566. In 1567, Philip sent the Duke of Alba with an army of 10,000 men to the Netherlands to put down the revolt. By 1568, it had been defeated by the Spanish.



Afterwards Alba established a Council of Troubles in the Netherlands (nicknamed the Council of Blood) to enforce both Catholicism and obedience to the Spanish Crown. It was made up of loyal Dutch nobles and Spanish officials. It ignored local law and legal processes, condemning thousands to death (mainly Protestants who had been protesting violently against Catholicism). Alba's actions also led to thousands of Dutch protestants fleeing into exile, many to England. Some of those who fled became 'sea beggars' - pirates who attacked Spanish ships carrying men and supplies to the Spanish army in the Netherlands. They were allowed to use English ports for this purpose. In 1568 Elizabeth stole money that was loaned to Spain by Italy. The money was meant to pay for Spain's army but the ships carrying it were forced to hide in England's ports to avoid attack. While there, Elizabeth confiscated the money and refused to give it back arguing this money didn't actually belong to Spain in the first place.

### 5. Why did the Dutch rebel against Spanish rule?

### 6. What was the Spanish Inquisition?

### 7. What were two consequences of the Council of Troubles?

### 8. How did Elizabeth's actions in the Netherlands cause further tension between Spain and England? Give at least two examples.

## Why was the Netherlands a concern for Elizabeth?

**Distance** - Alba's large army, with its mission against Protestantism, was within easy striking distance of England.

**Reputation** - Elizabeth did not want to become seen as Europe's leading Protestant monarch. She wanted to avoid war and openly condemned the Dutch rebels. Nevertheless, Protestant rebels still came to England.

**Fear** - Many Protestants, including those on *Elizabeth's Privy Council*, saw events overseas as part of a struggle between Protestantism and Catholicism. They believed Spain wanted to destroy Protestantism everywhere, including England.

**War** - Elizabeth was under increasing pressure to deal with the threat posed by Alba's presence in the Netherlands, but she **wanted to avoid a war**.

**Resources** - England did not have the resources to take on Spain – or worse, France and Spain together.

**Civil War** - if she got involved in a religious war abroad it could start a **civil war in England between Catholics and Protestants**.

**9) Which of the above reasons do you think was the most concerning for Elizabeth? Explain your answer.**

## The Papal States (Pope)

As Head of the Roman Catholic Church, the Papacy had huge influence on the actions of European Catholic rulers, as well as Catholics in England.

The Pope in 1558 was Pius IV – most people expected him to excommunicate Elizabeth as an illegitimate, female, Protestant monarch. This would allow Catholic countries the freedom to attack England and Elizabeth safe in the knowledge that they were doing God's work and not going to be punished in the afterlife. However, he took no action against Elizabeth instead he had hoped that Elizabeth could be persuaded to change her mind about the religious settlement.

As the Pope did not try to interfere with the new religious settlement, the new Church had time to establish itself in England, leaving the Catholics in England without any support or leadership. However, in 1570 Pope Pius IV, finally excommunicated Queen Elizabeth, but eleven years had passed and it was too late to be effective.

**10) Why was the Pope's lack of action against Elizabeth important in helping England against its enemies?**

A) The Pope issued instructions to English Catholic's not attend church. Many followed this lead and Elizabeth did not carry out harsh punishments	B) The Northern Revolt led to most of the North being controlled by Catholics Nobles and the takeover of Durham Castle. It was eventually put down and thousands were executed	C) Most of Europe was controlled by Catholics. In particular, the powerful Hasburg Empire which included Spain, the Netherlands and the Holy Roman Empire (Germany). France was also Catholic
D) Elizabeth's intervention in France to help the Protestants failed and annoyed Phillip of Spain	E) Spain and England enacted a trade embargo against each other for a year and England constantly upset Spain by giving the Sea Beggars (Dutch Rebels)	F) The Genoese Loan incident was a risky move by Elizabeth which greatly angered the Spanish.
G) The Dutch Revolt led to a Catholic Army of 10,000 being positioned just next to England's Coast. This could easily have launched an invasion into England	H) Mary Queen of Scotland, a Catholic with a strong claim to the throne of England, fled to England from Scotland and could provide a leader for English Catholics. She was imprisoned by Elizabeth.	I) The Northern Revolt encouraged the Spanish to support future rebellions, as if the troops under the Duke of Alba had landed to support the Northern Earls, Elizabeth may have lost her crown

**11) Draw a line and a scale from 1-10. 1 being no threat at all and 10 being a major threat. Rank each idea on this scale the colour code into internal threats, external (outside England) or both. Once complete write a paragraph describing the key threats Elizabeth faced in the 1560s.**