

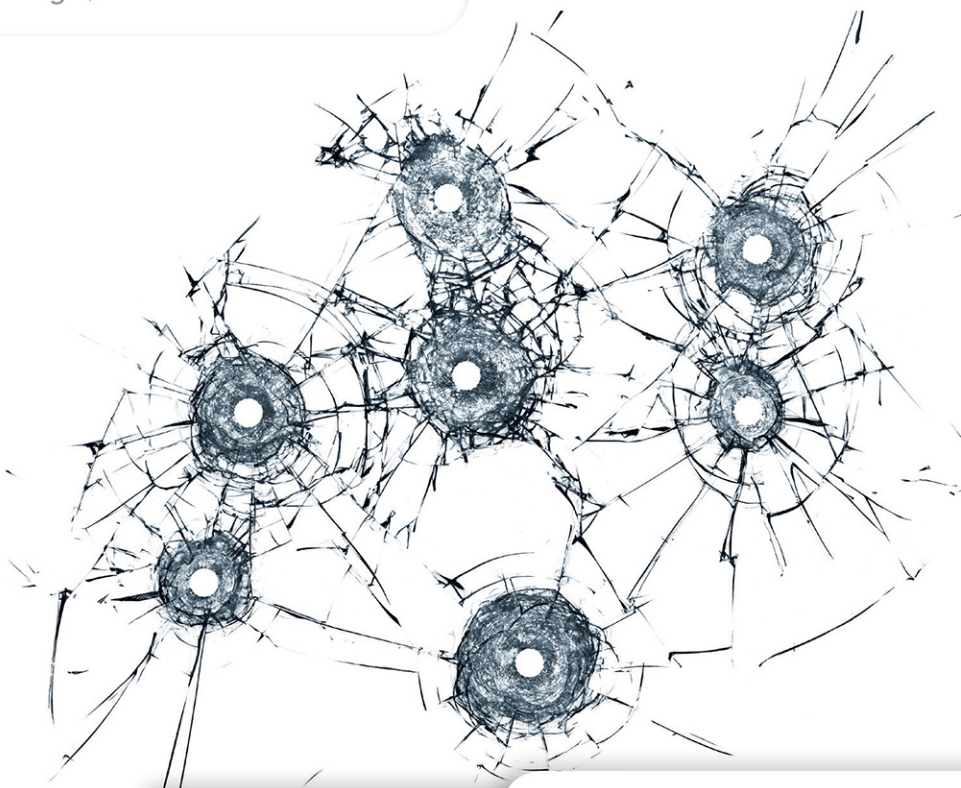
Pearson Edexcel International GCSE (9–1)

HISTORY

Studies covered:

- Germany: development of dictatorship, 1918–45
- A world divided: superpower relations, 1943–72
- A divided union: civil rights in the USA, 1945–74
- Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905–24
- The USA, 1918–41
- Changes in medicine, c1848–c1948
- China: conflict, crisis and change, 1900–89

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Section 1 Depth Studies

1 Germany: development of dictatorship, 1918–45

1.1 The establishment of the Weimar Republic and its early problems

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What you need to know

In this section you will revise the massive political, social and economic consequences for Germany after its defeat in the First World War. This will include:

- The abdication of the Kaiser and the German revolution.
- The strengths and weaknesses of the new Republic and its Constitution.
- The challenges facing the new Weimar **Republic**, including reactions to the Treaty of Versailles and political threats from the left and right.
- The French invasion and occupation of the Ruhr, and the hyperinflation crisis of 1923.

The abdication of the Kaiser and the German revolution of 1918–19

- By November 1918, the First World War had lasted for four years; 1.8 million German soldiers had died and the army had been forced to retreat.
- Low domestic production led to hunger. Moreover, a naval blockade imposed by the Allies prevented the import of food, fuel and medicines. Increasingly, Germans blamed **Kaiser Wilhelm II**.
- In October 1919, German sailors at Kiel mutinied and refused an order to attack British naval forces. Strikes and protests spread across Germany and soldiers mutinied.
- The Kaiser had lost control. In some cities, ordinary Germans set up workers' councils as an alternative to the Kaiser's authority.
- It was clear Germany could not fight on, but the Allies refused to make peace unless the Kaiser **abdicated**.
- On 9 November, the Kaiser was forced to abdicate and flee to Holland. The following day, a new republic was set up under President Ebert. On 11 November 1918, Germany signed an **armistice** with the Allies.

Kaiser Wilhelm II (1859–1941)

- Wilhelm was Kaiser from 1888 to 1918.
- He was the grandson of Queen Victoria.
- He was determined to increase German naval power and build an empire like Britain's.
- He supported Austria in 1914 and invaded France.
- He died in exile in the Netherlands, in 1941.

Key terms

Republic: a state without a monarch.

Abdicate: to give up the throne.

Armistice: formal agreement of opposing forces to stop fighting.

The strengths and weaknesses of the new Republic and its constitution

In January 1919, a new democratic **constitution** was drawn up for Germany. Democracy was new to Germany and therefore was not immediately welcomed. The unpopularity of the new government grew as it became closely linked to the numerous difficulties facing Germany following the First World War, therefore undermining the Republic from the start. Moreover, the Weimar constitution, despite its democratic credentials, included weaknesses that would also help create later instability.

Key term

Constitution: a list of rules on how a country is governed.

Coalition: a government formed of more than one political party working together.

Strengths of the Weimar constitution	Weaknesses of the Weimar constitution
Men and women aged over 20 could vote. (In Britain the age was 21 for men and 30 for women.)	Article 48 – in an emergency, the President could take action without consulting the Reichstag. This gave the President too much power, making it possible he might act undemocratically (see page 25).
The President was elected every seven years and had the power to appoint the Chancellor (head of the government).	Proportional representation made it difficult for any single party to get an overall majority. Therefore, there were coalition governments and these tended to be weak, unstable and short lived.
Proportional representation in elections meant the percentage of votes won by a party directly determined the percentage of seats they won in the Reichstag (parliament). This was fairer and more democratic than other electoral systems.	Proportional representation allowed small extremist parties to win seats in the Reichstag. These parties were often anti-democratic.
The Reichstag was elected every four years and served a fixed term. It passed or rejected changes in the law.	
All Germans enjoyed freedom of speech and freedom of religious beliefs. Their civil rights were protected.	

Revision tasks

TESTED

1 Here are some key terms, events and people. Imagine that these are answers and it is your job to come up with a suitable question for each one. Try to make each question as detailed as possible so that you are using specific knowledge to phrase it.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Kaiser | f) Constitution |
| b) Kiel | g) Naval blockade |
| c) Proportional representation | h) Allies |
| d) Article 48 | i) Reichstag |
| e) President | j) Coalition governments |

2 When was it clear that the Kaiser would have to abdicate?

3 How did the Weimar constitution make later instability more likely?

Exam practice

Study Extract A.

What impression does the author give about the impact of proportional representation on Weimar Germany?

You **must** use Extract A to explain your answer. (6 marks)

Extract A

The Weimar constitution was based on proportional representation: any political party winning more than 60,000 votes was entitled to a member in the Reichstag. One result of this was the growth of several parties. All the governments of the Weimar period were coalitions of two or more parties. Coalitions meant that party politicians had to make compromises with each other in order to govern. Many Germans despised the frequent changes of government and the wheeling and dealing that was involved.

Adapted from *Nazi Germany 1933–1945* by Christopher Culpin and Steve Mastin, 2013, Hodder.

Exam tip

Remember that the examiner wants you to explain the impression the author gives. You can support your ideas using short quotations that focus on key phrases or even key words.

German reactions to the Treaty of Versailles, June 1919

Following the armistice of November 1918, the Allies (Britain, France and the United States) began to draw up a peace treaty. The German people hoped for a fair treaty as the Kaiser had been replaced by a democratic republic. However, the Germans were not even invited to the Paris Peace Conference and had no say in the negotiations.

The key terms of the Treaty of Versailles and German reaction

The resulting Treaty of Versailles punished Germany harshly. However, President Ebert had no choice but to sign the Treaty in June 1919. Opponents angrily described it as a ‘diktat’ (dictated peace).

Key terms of Treaty	Reactions in Germany
Germany was forced to accept full blame for starting the war (Article 231: the War Guilt clause).	This was a national humiliation for Germany. The public resented it and felt responsibility was shared by all the nations involved.
Because Germany had to accept full blame for the war, the Allies could make Germany pay reparations (compensation for war damages), mostly to France and Belgium. A total amount of £6.6 billion was set in 1921, to be paid in annual instalments.	Many Germans felt reparations were too high. They felt that the payments would further weaken the economy which was already damaged by war.
Germany was not allowed tanks, submarines or aircraft. The army was limited to 100,000 soldiers and the navy to six battleships and 15,000 men. The Rhineland was demilitarised. Conscription was banned.	This made many Germans feel insecure. Germany had been a strong and proud nation. Now it seemed that the Allies were deliberately trying to weaken them.
Germany lost 10 per cent of its land, including all of its overseas colonies. The land lost contained 13 per cent of the population, as well as important raw materials and industry.	These terms robbed Germany of its key industrial areas including Alsace-Lorraine (iron) and the Saar (coal). Critics argued that this undermined the economy even further.

The ‘stab in the back’ myth and the ‘November Criminals’

Some returning soldiers and senior commanders believed, wrongly, that Germany could have fought on in the war and that the front-line troops had been ‘stabbed in the back’ by weak politicians, communists and Jews.

- They regarded the government as traitors for agreeing the armistice and signing the Treaty of Versailles, labelling them the ‘November Criminals’.
- This ‘stab in the back’ myth soon became popular with those who opposed the new democratic republic.

Challenges to the Weimar Republic from the left and right

Although most Germans supported the new constitution and Republic, there were still powerful opponents who rejected democratic ideals. This came from both the **communist** left-and **nationalist** right-wing of German politics.

Challenge from the left: the Spartacist Rising, January 1919

- The Spartacist League (later the KPDD – the German Communist Party) was a communist group led by Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. They believed that President Ebert would not improve the lives of working people. They wanted a full-scale revolution like the one in Russia in 1917.
- In January 1919, an uprising began in Berlin. Spartacists took over government telegraph and newspaper offices. They hoped protesters would seize other buildings, but this failed to happen.
- The uprising was badly planned and did not attract support from other left-wing groups. The government ordered the army, helped by the **Freikorps**, to restore order. Liebknecht and Luxemburg were killed and the rising was crushed.

Challenge from the right: the Kapp Putsch, March 1920

- The **Freikorps** were furious about the Treaty of Versailles and government plans to reduce the size of the army.
- **Freikorps** units refused to disband or hand back their weapons after defeating the Spartacists and a similar communist rising in the Ruhr. In 1920, they attempted a takeover of Berlin. The plan was to form a new right-wing government, led by Wolfgang Kapp.
- 12,000 **Freikorps** marched on Berlin. The army refused to fire on former soldiers and so the government was forced to flee Berlin for the sleepy town of Weimar.
- The government appealed for a general strike. Workers and civil servants stopped working and refused to cooperate with Kapp. The country was paralysed. Kapp was unable to govern and the putsch collapsed in just four days. Kapp fled the city and the government returned (now forever known as the ‘Weimar’ government).

Key terms

Communists: believed that as the workers created the wealth in society, they should have a more equal share in it. The communists had little faith that democracy would improve the lives of German workers and so wanted a full-scale revolution.

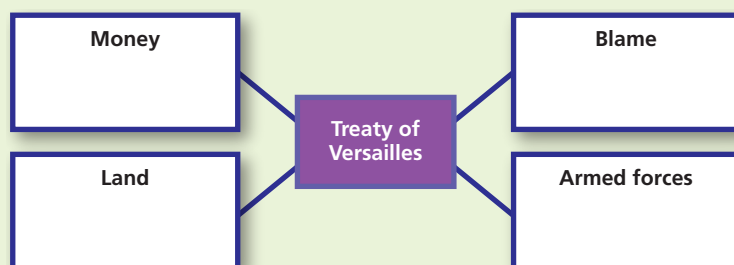
Nationalists: believed in a strong Germany with a powerful leader; often anti-democratic.

Freikorps: a force of irregular military volunteers. They were anti-democratic, anti-communist and strongly nationalist in their beliefs. Following the war, many former soldiers joined. They were armed by the Weimar government and used to crush the communist uprising.

Revision tasks

TESTED

1 Make your own copy and complete the concept map below.



2 Use the look, cover, write and check method to help you learn the terms.

3 Write a simple definition of the 'stab in the back' myth.

4 Explain which was more of a threat to the Weimar government: the Spartacist Rising or the Kapp Putsch.

The French occupation of the Ruhr, January 1923

The First World War had brought Germany close to bankruptcy and the Treaty of Versailles made things even worse. In 1922, the Weimar government announced it could not afford to pay reparations. France did not believe this and was determined to make Germany pay.

- In January 1923, 60,000 French and Belgian troops marched into the Ruhr, an important industrial area of Germany. Troops occupied the area for ten months, taking industrial products and raw materials to meet the value of the reparations owed.
- The Weimar government ordered workers to begin passive resistance. This meant going on strike and refusing to cooperate with the French. Some workers even flooded mines or set fire to factories.
- French occupation of the Ruhr meant Germany lost income from one of its main industrial areas. Moreover, the striking workers still needed to be paid. This added to the Weimar government's economic problems.

Causes and effects of hyperinflation, 1923

Causes

- The German government had printed more banknotes to help pay for the cost of the war and the reparations payments. However, the more notes in circulation, the more their value dropped.
- In 1923, the government was forced to print even more money to pay the striking workers in the Ruhr. This caused hyperinflation, when prices rose at an incredible rate as the value of the currency collapsed.

Effects

Short-term effects of hyperinflation	Long-term effects of hyperinflation
<p>Many workers' wages did not keep up with rising prices as these were increasing so quickly. They could no longer afford daily necessities. In 1918, a loaf of bread in Berlin cost 0.63 marks. By July 1923, this had risen to 3,465 marks and by November it was 201,000,000,000 marks!</p> <p>Those on fixed incomes, such as pensioners, were hit hardest. Soon their monthly incomes became worthless.</p> <p>People with savings found that the value of their money was wiped out almost overnight. Millions of middle-class Germans were plunged into poverty.</p>	<p>The Weimar Republic was severely weakened by hyperinflation. Millions of Germans had lost savings and there was widespread poverty.</p> <p>Many Germans blamed the government for the crisis. Those who lost their savings were never compensated.</p> <p>In future years, few people would forget the damage caused by hyperinflation. Their faith in democracy was never fully restored.</p>

While the great majority of Germans suffered during the period of hyperinflation, some did benefit:

- People with loans and mortgages could pay back the money owed more quickly. This especially helped some business owners.
- People who owned possessions such as land or buildings were protected as these rose in value in line with inflation.
- Some businesses benefited from high profits as prices tended to increase more than wages.

Revision tasks

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- 1 How did the occupation of the Ruhr further damage the German economy?
- 2 Explain why the following would have been winners or losers during the hyperinflation of 1923:
 - a farmer
 - a factory worker
 - a business owner who took out a loan to buy a factory in 1914.

Exam practice

Explain **two** effects of hyperinflation in 1923 on Germany. (8 marks)

Exam tip

Eight-mark questions on Paper 1 require you to explain **two** effects of something. This goes beyond simply describing an effect. To reach the highest level, you must explain the consequences of each effect on the situation at the time.

1.2 The recovery of Germany, 1924–29

REVISED

What you need to know

In this section you will revise the period from 1924 to 1929. This is seen as a period of recovery for Germany, largely due to the efforts of **Gustav Stresemann**, but serious problems persisted. This section will include:

- The strengths and weaknesses of Stresemann's domestic policy.
- The strengths and weaknesses of Stresemann's foreign policy.

Gustav Stresemann (1878–1929)

- Stresemann was a hugely influential German politician who served as Chancellor in 1923 (for a brief period of 102 days) and Foreign Minister from 1923 to 1929.
- He ended the hyperinflation crisis and the French occupation of the Ruhr.
- He restored some of Germany's reputation on the international stage.
- In 1926, he won the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to improve German relations with France.

The strengths and weaknesses of Stresemann's domestic policy

Stresemann tried to find solutions to the difficult economic and political problems facing the Weimar Republic.

A new currency

Hyperinflation had made the German mark worthless. Stresemann introduced a temporary currency called the Rentenmark. One Rentenmark replaced 1,000 billion marks. The old notes were recalled and destroyed. In 1924, the temporary currency was replaced by the permanent Reichsmark.

Positives and negatives

- + The new currency was quickly accepted by Germans and other countries that traded with Germany. Inflation was brought under control.
- Those who had lost their savings were never compensated by the government. They felt cheated and disillusioned with the Weimar Republic.

The Dawes Plan, 1924

Stresemann organised loans from the USA as part of the Dawes Plan. These loans gave a massive boost that helped kick-start the German economy.

Positives and negatives

- + US loans made to the Weimar Republic were invested in German industry. By 1928, German industrial production had reached pre-war levels. Wages and pensions rose. The cost of living went down and confidence in the economy was restored.
- + The German government also improved housing, hospitals, schools and roads.
- + Reparations were linked to Germany's economic performance and Germany was given longer to pay.
- + Stresemann ended passive resistance and could now promise to keep up reparation payments to France. The French agreed to remove their troops from the Ruhr.
- Food prices were low and so farmers remained poor. Many supported extremist groups such as the Nazis, who promised to help them.
- Some Germans criticised the Dawes Plan and felt the government was accepting blame for the war by continuing reparations payments. Right-wing nationalists regarded this, and Stresemann's decision to call off passive resistance, as a betrayal. This was one of the causes of the Munich Putsch (see pages 21–23).
- The loans made the German economic recovery dependant on the USA. If there were economic problems in the USA, this would have severe knock-on effects for Germany (see page 23).

The Young Plan, 1929

The Young Plan reduced the amount of reparations Germany had to pay and supported further economic recovery.

Positives and negatives

- + The amount Germany had to pay in reparations was reduced from a total of £6.6 billion to under £2 billion.
- + The Young Plan led to the final removal of British, French and Belgian troops from the Ruhr.
- + Lower reparations payments saved the government money which it used to cut taxes and invest to create more jobs.
- Nationalist groups were once again angry that the German government had agreed to continue paying reparations, even at a reduced rate. However, only 14 per cent of Germans voted against the Young Plan in a referendum.

- Under the Young Plan, Germany would still be paying reparations in 1988. Some argued that this would endanger Germany's progress as a nation.

The strengths and weaknesses of Stresemann's foreign policy

Stresemann realised that Germany was in no military position to challenge the Treaty of Versailles. Instead he relied on diplomacy to improve Germany's position and relationships with other countries.

Foreign policy	Outcome
Locarno Pact, 1925	Britain, France, Italy and Belgium agreed to respect the existing borders between Germany, Belgium and France. + This began a period of improved relations and cooperation between Britain, France and Germany – the 'Locarno honeymoon'.
League of Nations, 1926	The League of Nations was an international organisation set up in 1920 to ensure peace. + Initially, Germany was forbidden from joining, but this changed in 1926 when Germany was given a permanent seat on the Security Council. This marked Germany's return to 'great power' status and the improved trust it had on the international scene.
Kellogg–Briand Pact, 1928	Germany signed the Pact with 64 other nations who all agreed to solve international disputes 'by peaceful means'. Armies would be kept, but only for self-defence rather than for aggression. + The Pact further improved international trust in Germany, especially with the USA and the leading European nations, while confirming Germany's status as a great power.

Many Germans felt let down by Stresemann's foreign policies. They still regarded the Treaty of Versailles as a 'diktat' and felt that diplomacy only confirmed the worst aspects of the Treaty.

Revision tasks

TESTED

- 1 Fill in your own copy of the table below using the information on pages 18 to 20 to help you. Tick to show how successfully Stresemann dealt with the big problems facing Germany and then give reasons to support your judgement.

Problem	Failure	Mixed	Success	Reasons
Reparations				
Hyperinflation				
Weakened economy				
Lack of trust from foreign countries				

- 2 Next, write a paragraph that makes an overall judgement on *how far* Stresemann solved Germany's problems between 1924 and 1929. Support your judgement.

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