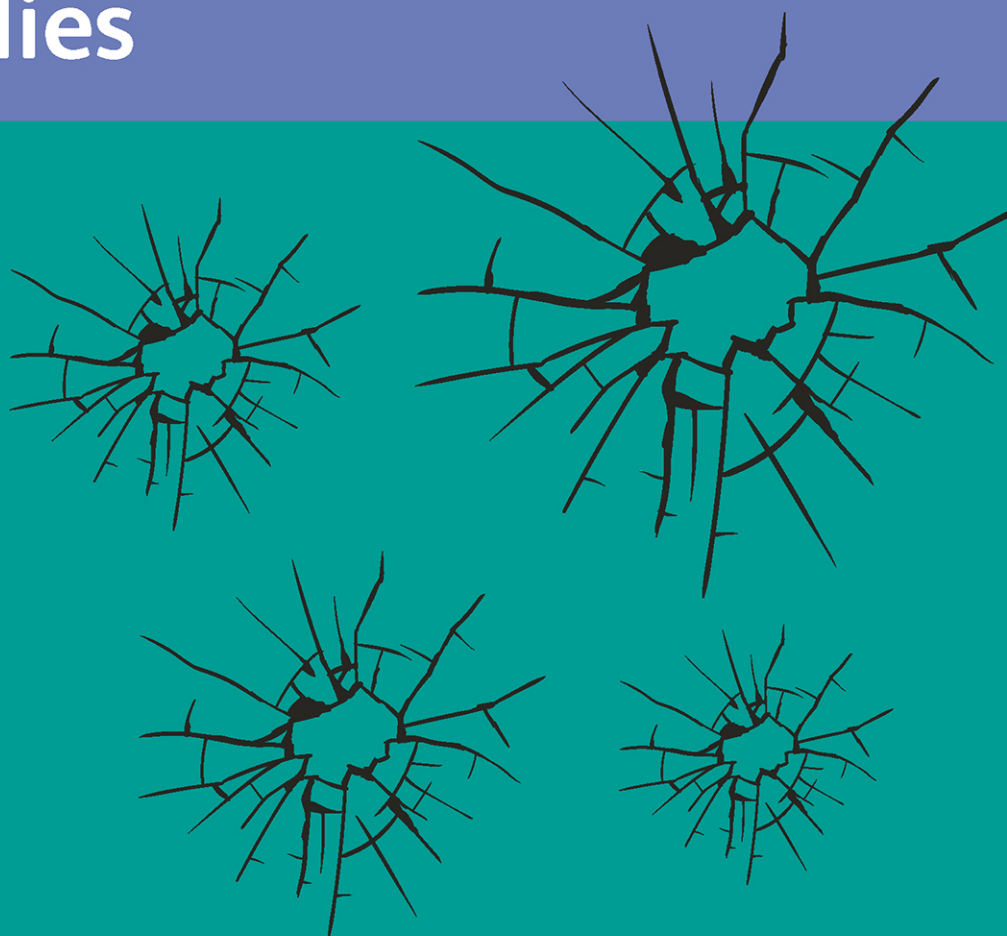


# Pearson Edexcel International GCSE (9–1) History

## Paper 1: Depth Studies

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Qualifications



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# SECTION

# 1

## Germany: development of dictatorship, 1918–45



	1920	1920s	1930
International treaties and events	<b>1918</b> Germany signs an armistice, ending the First World War	<b>1919</b> Treaty of Versailles signed	<b>1923</b> French and Belgian troops move into Ruhr  <b>1926</b> Germany joins League of Nations
Uprisings and revolts		<b>1919</b> Spartacist Uprising  <b>1920</b> Kapp Putsch	<b>1923</b> Hitler attempts to overthrow government in Munich Putsch
Social and political events	<b>1918</b> The Kaiser steps down as ruler of Germany	<b>1919</b> Ebert becomes Chancellor of the new Weimar Republic	
Economic policies and events		<b>1923</b> Hyperinflation	<b>1924</b> Dawes Plan helps to restore economic stability  <b>1929</b> Start of worldwide economic depression
Nazi racial policies			

## REVISION TASK

This timeline gives you an overview of the main events you will be studying. After you have completed each chapter:

- 1 Return to this timeline and write down the events that relate to the chapter you have studied.
- 2 For each event that relates to the chapter, create a revision card. The revision card should include:
  - a) the name of the event
  - b) the dates involved
  - c) no more than 50 words summarising key information, such as the names of people involved, causes of the event and the impact or consequences of the event.
- 3 Now get a partner to test you on each card.

## FOCUS

In this part of your course you are going to be looking at Germany in the period 1918 to 1945. This tells the story of how Germany emerged from the First World War in 1918, and became a democracy and what life was like under that democracy, then how that democracy was overthrown by Adolf Hitler's Nazi Party and what life was like under the Nazis. The timeline provides an outline of the key events.

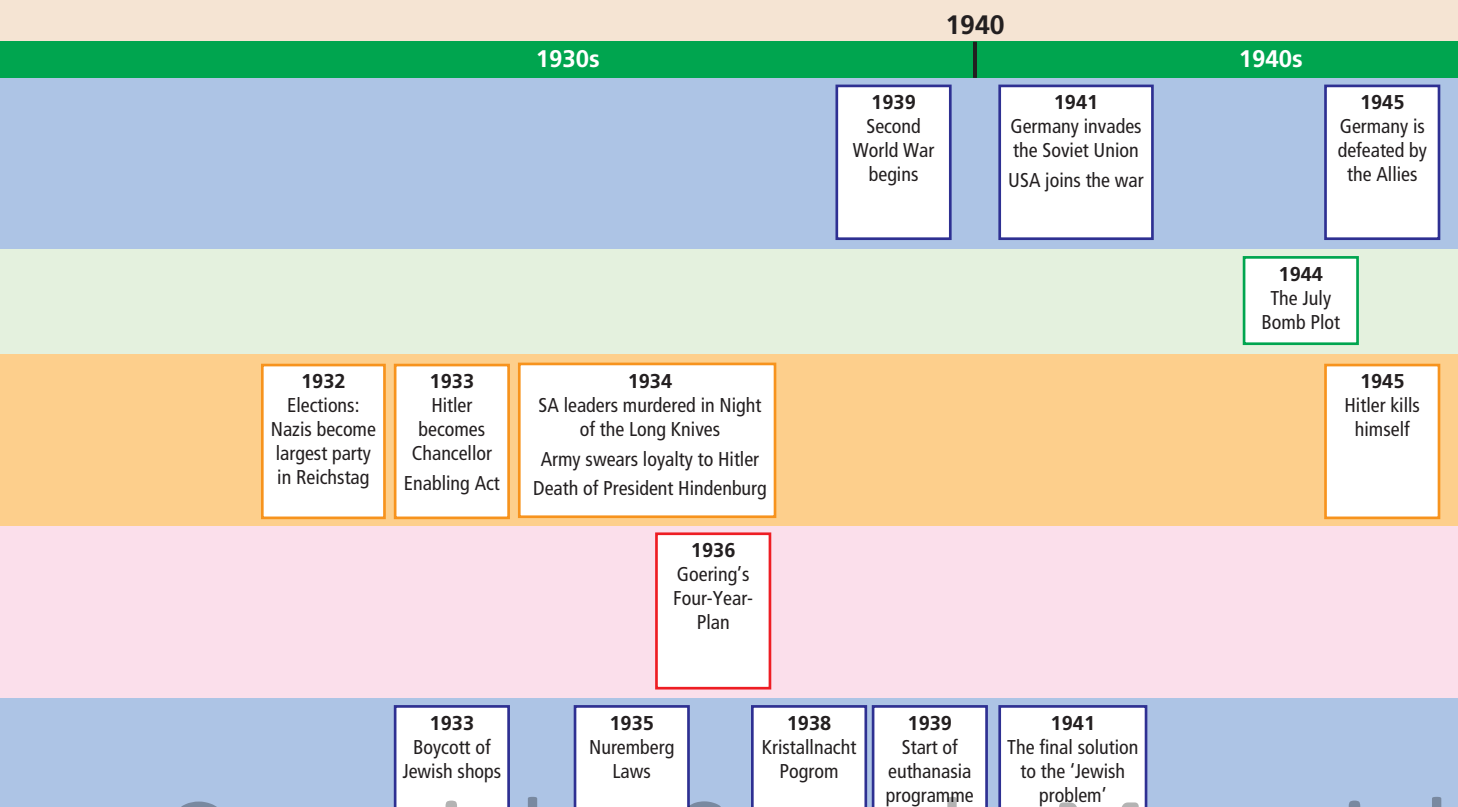
In **Chapter 1** you will examine the Weimar Republic in the period 1918–24. The Weimar Republic was the new regime established to run Germany after the First World War. You will look at its constitution, the early problems it faced and how well it handled those problems.

In **Chapter 2** you will see how the Weimar Republic worked to help Germany recover after the First World War in the period 1924–29. Germany's economy recovered from the crisis years of the early 1920s, and Germany also recovered some of its international status, which had suffered due to Germany's actions in the First World War.

In **Chapter 3** you will see how the Weimar Republic was unable to deal with the massive problems caused by the worldwide economic depression which began in 1929, and how Hitler and the Nazis exploited the situation to take power in January 1933.

In **Chapter 4** you will investigate how Hitler and the Nazis tried to establish a totalitarian state completely under their control. You will examine what it was like to live in Nazi Germany and the experience of different groups such as women, workers, young people and also the groups who were persecuted by the Nazis.

In **Chapter 5** you will study Nazi rule in Germany and the territories it occupied in the Second World War, including Nazi policies towards Jewish people, the way Nazi attitudes towards women at work changed in the war, the effects of the war on the Home Front and the growth of opposition to Hitler, ending in the death of Hitler and the end of the Third Reich.



# 1.1

## The establishment of the Weimar Republic and its early problems

### FOCUS

The Weimar Republic emerged from Germany's defeat in the First World War. Its constitution was one of the most democratic in the world, but the foundations were shaky. It was formed in the wake of the Treaty of Versailles and had strong opponents from both the left and right of the political spectrum. Further weakened by the hyperinflation of 1923, the Republic's future did not look bright.

In your focus tasks for this chapter you will consider how successful it was in its first year and which was the most dangerous threat to the Republic and why.

### The legacy of the First World War for Germany

In 1914, Germany was one of the great powers in the world. It was ruled by the **Kaiser**, Wilhelm II, and his **Chancellor** and other chief ministers. The army was also extremely important and powerful. In fact, the army was often called a state within the state. Germany had a parliament called the **Reichstag**. In theory the Kaiser and Chancellor were supposed to consult and take advice from the Reichstag but this did not really happen in practice as the Kaiser often ruled Germany like a dictator. This led to bitter criticism in the Reichstag, particularly from the political parties who represented ordinary workers – the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the more radical Communists (KPD).

When the First World War broke out in 1914 the German population united. But the war had a devastating impact on Germany and its people. By 1918, the proud German army was clearly facing defeat in the trenches. At home, the British Royal Navy was blocking all supplies from getting into Germany. The German people were surviving on turnips and bread, and even the flour for the bread was mixed with sawdust to make it go further. Around 300,000 Germans died from malnutrition in 1918, and a flu epidemic was sweeping the country, killing thousands of people already weakened by lack of food. Germany's economy was in ruins as well. Industrial production was about two-thirds of what it had been in 1913. The Kaiser and his government had intended to pay for the war by forcing the countries they defeated to pay for it. But now it was they who were defeated. And now they were **bankrupt** as well.

As the situation got worse, the Kaiser and the army commanders began to change the way they ruled. They started to involve members of the Reichstag in government. They knew defeat was coming and they were trying to shift the blame onto the elected politicians.

### The abdication of the Kaiser, armistice and revolution 1918–19

In November 1918, Germany's enemies (the British Empire, France and the USA) offered Germany peace, but under strict conditions. One condition was that Germany should become more democratic and that the Kaiser should **abdicate**.

The Kaiser refused at first. When the Kaiser refused, sailors in northern Germany mutinied and took over the town of Kiel. This triggered other revolts. Socialists and communists led uprisings of workers and soldiers in other German towns including Hamburg and Hanover. They started



## SOURCE 1

A German government propaganda poster published in 1918. The caption says 'Farmers, do your duty! The cities are starving'.

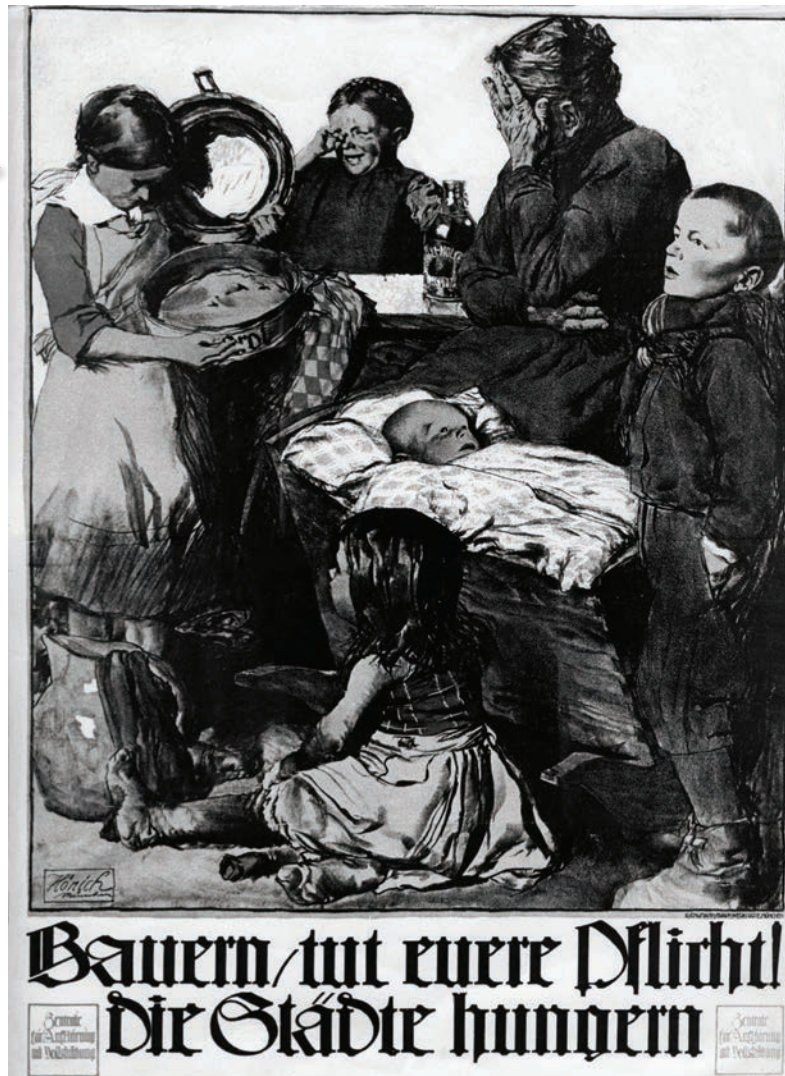
## SOURCE ANALYSIS

What is the message of Source 1?

## Profile

## Friedrich Ebert (1871–1925)

- Ebert was committed to improving the lives of working people in Germany.
- He became leader of the Social Democratic Party in 1913.
- Ebert was briefly Chancellor after the abdication of the Kaiser in November 1918.
- Ebert was elected as the first President of the Weimar Republic in February 1919.
- While Ebert was President there were eight Chancellors in six years as a result of unstable coalitions as no one party dominated the Reichstag.
- Ebert regularly used his powers under Article 48 to deal with several uprisings and the hyperinflation crisis.



to form workers' and soldiers' councils to replace the existing authorities. Soon, other German cities followed. In Bavaria an independent Socialist Republic was declared. In Berlin, communists started to arm and organise themselves, intending to take over the capital.

The Kaiser's ministers told him that all was lost and he had to abdicate. On 9 November 1918, the Kaiser abdicated his throne and left Germany for the Netherlands. The following day, the Socialist Party leader Friedrich Ebert became the new leader of the Republic of Germany. He agreed a deal with General Groener, the head of the army. Groener promised that the armed forces would remain loyal to the new government. In return, Ebert promised he would not let any communists into the government and the army would keep its special position in Germany. Ebert then signed an **armistice** with the Allies on 11 November. The war was over. He also announced to the German people that Germany had a new government – a **republic**. He appointed a Council of People's Representatives to run Germany until a new **constitution** was written and elections could be held.

## KNOWLEDGE CHECK

- 1 Who ruled Germany in 1914?
- 2 Describe two ways the First World War affected people in Germany by 1918.
- 3 What happened on 9 November 1918?
- 4 Who became the new leader of Germany?
- 5 What actions did he take on 11 November 1918?

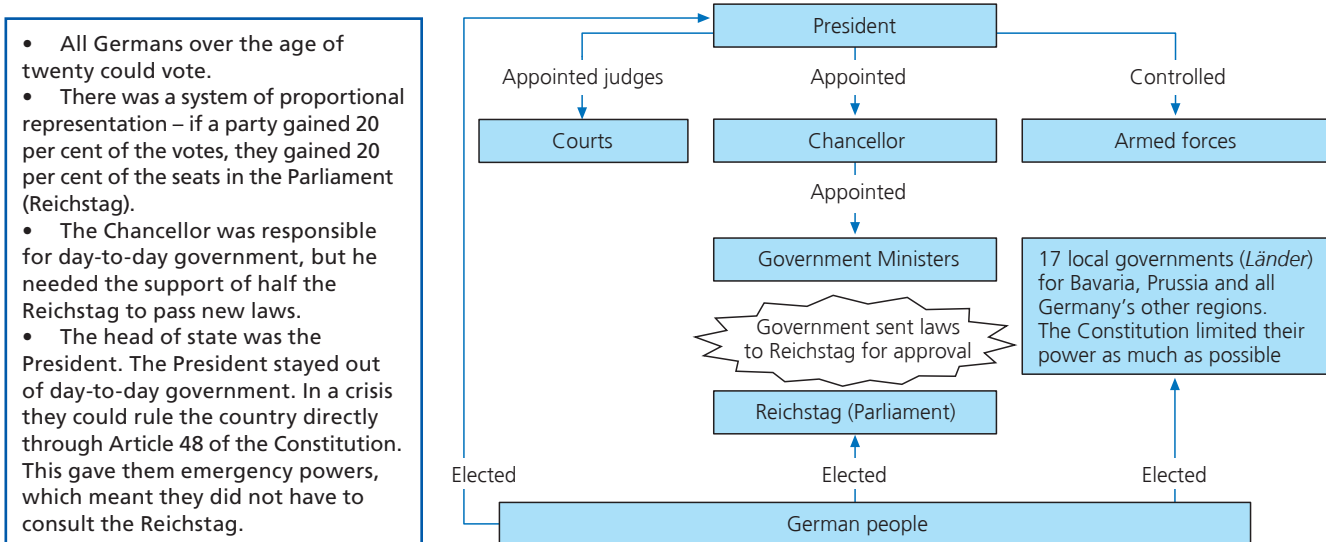
## The setting up of the Weimar Republic: the Weimar Constitution

The new Republic needed a constitution (see Figure 2). This was approved by the Reichstag in July 1919. The constitution had its strengths and its weaknesses. However, it should be remembered that Germany was changing from being almost a **dictatorship** to being one of the most democratic countries in the world.

Strengths of the constitution	Weaknesses of the constitution
It was very democratic – PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION meant that most views had some representation in the Reichstag.	Proportional representation led to many parties. Even parties opposed to DEMOCRACY (like the KPD) could gain seats.
It had a system of checks and balances. The most important was that the Reichstag had to approve laws: the Chancellor could not just push them through.	It was hard for one party to gain a majority. This meant most governments were COALITIONS and these coalitions could be unstable.
It had Article 48 as a last resort in case there was a crisis. This was a sensible precaution given the state of Germany at this time.	There was no tradition of democracy in Germany and many Germans were not convinced it was the right system for their country.

**FIGURE 2**

The Weimar Constitution.



### Factfile

#### Some of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles

- **War Guilt** [Article 231] – Germany was forced to accept complete responsibility for the war.
- **Reparations** – Germany had to pay the Allies £6600 million for the damage caused by the war.
- **Loss of land** – Germany lost 10 per cent of its population and 13 per cent of its territory, as well as all of its overseas empire.
- **Military terms** – the army was reduced to 100,000 men, naval ships were reduced and Germany was not allowed an air force.

## The Treaty of Versailles

Within days of taking over, the new government had to sign an armistice ending the First World War. A few months earlier, fighting had been going well and victory had seemed possible. The Kaiser had not announced the army's difficulties to the German people. News of an armistice therefore came as a shock. However, a greater shock was felt when the terms of the treaty ending the war – the Treaty of Versailles – were announced in May 1919 (see Factfile).

### Reactions to the treaty

Germans were astonished by the treaty. They felt humiliated by the terms that forced some Germans to live in newly created countries like Czechoslovakia, the loss of Germany's overseas empire, the War Guilt clause in Article 231 and the extortionate reparations. To make it worse the creation of Poland meant that Germany was now to be separated from East Prussia.



## EXTRACT A

From historian Margaret Macmillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*, published in 2003.

The shock was echoed in Germany. Why should Germany lose 13 per cent of its territory and 10 per cent of its population? After all, had Germany lost the war? Since the armistice, the military and its sympathizers had been busily laying the foundations of the stab-in-the-back theory: that Germany had been defeated not on the battlefield but by treachery at home. Why should Germany alone be made to disarm? Why, and this was the question that became the focus of German hatred of the treaty, should Germany be the only country to take responsibility for the Great War? Most Germans still viewed the outbreak of hostilities in 1914 as a necessary defense against the threat from the barbaric Slavs to the east. The treaty was completely unacceptable, said Philipp Scheidemann, the Chancellor.

### EXTRACT ANALYSIS

- 1 What is the effect of lots of questions in the extract?
- 2 What is the main point about the German reaction to the treaty that is being made?

## The 'stab in the back' and 'November Criminals'

The new Weimar coalition government signed the treaty. This led to the right-wing nationalist belief that Germany had been betrayed and deliberately 'stabbed in the back' by the politicians who had accepted this Diktat – this peace that had unjustly been dictated to them by the Allies. Among many German people the Weimar politicians became as unpopular as the treaty itself. There were protests against the treaty in towns and cities across Germany.

What few German people knew is that the army commanders had made it clear that Germany could not continue fighting the war if the government refused to sign the treaty. But because it was the politicians who had signed the treaty, it was the politicians who got the blame. This led to the myth of the 'November Criminals' – that the politicians had betrayed Germany as the war could have continued in Germany's favour had it not been stopped by them.

Anger and resentment was directed at the German politicians who had signed the treaty, rather than the Allies, who had written it.

### SOURCE 3

A German cartoon from 1919, called 'The Treaty of Versailles delights Greed, Revenge and other Devils'.



### FOCUS TASK

How successful was the Weimar Republic in its first year?

In your answer you should consider the following:

- What the government of Germany was like before 1918.
- The impact of the war on Germany.
- The events of 1918.
- The strengths and weaknesses of the Weimar Constitution.
- The reaction of the German people to the Treaty of Versailles.

### KNOWLEDGE CHECK

- 6 Who was the head of state under the new constitution?
- 7 What was the Chancellor's role?
- 8 What was Article 48?
- 9 What terms of the Treaty of Versailles angered the German people?



## Factfile

### Political parties in the Weimar Republic

- **Z** – the Centre Party, represented the interests of Catholics and the Catholic Church.
- **DDP** – the German Democratic Party, supported by many middle-class voters and was in favour of Weimar democracy.
- **SPD** – the Social Democratic Party, represented the interests of working-class voters.
- **DVP** – the German People's Party, represented the interests of the most powerful businesses in Germany.
- **KPD** – the German Communist Party, wanted to replace Weimar democracy with a communist dictatorship.
- **NSDAP** – the National Socialist German Worker's Party, shortened to Nazi, which wanted to replace the Weimar Republic with a dictatorship.
- **DNVP** – the German National People's Party, wanted to return to the old system of having a monarch like the Kaiser.

### SOURCE ANALYSIS

What does Source 4 suggest about the methods used by the Spartacists?

## Challenges from Right and Left

The terms Left and Right refer to different types of politics – left-wing politics emphasise that everyone should be equal while right-wing politics is about the inevitability of a social hierarchy where some people will naturally do better than others. In this period, the Weimar Republic faced challenges from both.

### The challenge from the Left

Moderate left-wing parties like Ebert's SPD favoured things like better wages, shorter working hours and strong **trade unions**. They also believed in Weimar's democracy. More extreme left-wing groups like the KPD believed in ideas like state ownership of industry and felt this could only be achieved by revolution.

### SOURCE 4

A Spartacist poster from 1919. It shows politicians inside the Reichstag. The heading reads, 'Vote Spartacist'.



### The Spartacist Rising, 1919

One left-wing group was the **Spartacists**. They were communists led by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. Like Lenin's **Bolsheviks**, which had just taken power in Russia they wanted a Germany ruled by workers' councils. Early in 1919, the Spartacists, joined by rebel soldiers and sailors, set up **soviets** in many towns to try to win power.

Not all soldiers were on the side of the Spartacists, however. Some anti-communist former soldiers had formed vigilante groups called **Freikorps**. Ebert made an agreement with the army commanders and the Freikorps to put down the rebellion. Bitter street fighting and heavy casualties followed. Eventually the Freikorps won and Liebknecht and Luxemburg were murdered.

Ebert's ruthless measures against the communists created lasting bitterness between them and his Socialist Party. However, it gained approval from many in Germany. Ebert shared the fears of many Germans that Germany might go the same way as Russia (at that time rocked by bloody civil war). Despite these defeats, the communists remained a powerful anti-government force in Germany throughout the 1920s.

## The challenge from the Right

The political Right is hard to define exactly. Those on the Right could be from any class. They were usually traditionalists favouring old-fashioned values about family and community. They generally supported capitalist ideas of property and free enterprise. They were usually nationalists proud of their country and on the whole supported traditional institutions like the **Junkers** (the landowning aristocracy), the Church and especially the army. In fact, many on the Right were former soldiers, including the Freikorps who fought the Spartacists in 1919. Above all they deeply resented the Treaty of Versailles. They opposed the new democracy and looked back fondly to the rule of the Kaiser. Even though he crushed the Left, the Right showed no gratitude to Ebert and the Weimar Republic.

### The Kapp Putsch, 1920

In March 1920, Dr Wolfgang Kapp led 5000 Freikorps into Berlin in a rebellion known as the Kapp Putsch ('**putsch**' means rebellion). Kapp planned to overthrow the Weimar Republic and return Germany to a more **authoritarian** system, similar to the time of the Kaiser.

The army refused to fire on the Freikorps. They even arranged for Adolf Hitler, an ex-soldier and prominent figure in the new and very anti-Weimar Nazi Party, to fly to Berlin to meet with Kapp. It looked as if Ebert's government was doomed.

However, the government was saved by the German people, especially the industrial workers of Berlin. They declared a **general strike** which brought the capital to a halt with no transport, power or water. All of the big trade unions, which mostly supported Ebert's SPD, came out on strike – this was around 12 million workers. Hitler was forced to disguise himself when he arrived in Berlin and by the time he met Kapp, the Putsch was almost over. At the same time all the civil servants and government officials refused to co-operate with Kapp. After a few days, Kapp realised he could not succeed and fled the country. He was hunted down and died while awaiting trial. It seemed that Weimar had support and power after all.

#### KNOWLEDGE CHECK

- 10 What did the Spartacists do early in 1919?
- 11 How did Ebert respond?
- 12 What were the main views of the Right?
- 13 What did Kapp do in March 1920?
- 14 How did the army respond?

## French occupation of the Ruhr

The Treaty of Versailles forced Germany to pay **reparations** to the Allies. The reparations bill was announced in April 1921, and was set at £6600 million. The Germans protested that this would put an intolerable strain on the economy, which they were struggling to rebuild after the war, but their protests were ignored.

The first instalment of £50 million was paid in 1921, but in 1922 nothing was paid. So in January 1923, French and Belgian troops entered the Ruhr valley, Germany's most important industrial region. They began to take what was owed to them in the form of raw materials and goods. This was legal under the Treaty of Versailles.

The German government ordered the workers in the Ruhr to go on strike and refuse to co-operate with the French. That way, there would be nothing for them to take. The workers obeyed the government's call. The French reacted harshly, killing over 100 workers and expelling over 100,000 protesters from the region. The sudden halt in industrial production in Germany's most important economic region caused the collapse of the German currency.

**SOURCE 5**

The rising cost of a loaf of bread in Berlin in 1923.

1918:	0.63 marks
1922:	163 marks
January 1923:	250 marks
July 1923:	3465 marks
September 1923:	1,512,000 marks
November 1923:	201,000,000,000 marks

**EXTRACT ANALYSIS**

How does this extract help us to understand the impact of hyperinflation on the people of Germany?

**Causes and effects of hyperinflation**

Because it had no goods to trade, the government simply printed more money. This was a controversial decision and some historians have seen it as a ruthless and cynical decision as well because the Weimar government benefited. It was able to pay off its huge debts in worthless marks (though not reparations, which had to be paid in foreign currency). This included £2200 million owed to ordinary Germans who had loaned the government money during the war. The great industrialists were able to pay off all their debts as well.

This set off a chain reaction. With so much money in circulation, but not enough goods to buy with it, prices and wages rocketed. This is known as **hyperinflation**. People soon realised that this money was worthless. Workers needed wheelbarrows to carry home their wages. Wages began to be paid daily instead of weekly. The price of goods could rise between joining the back of a queue in a shop and reaching the front!

Poor people suffered, but in some ways those who lost most were middle-class Germans. A prosperous middle-class family would find that their savings, which might have bought a house in 1921, by 1923 would not even buy a loaf of bread. Pensioners found that their monthly pension would not even buy one cup of coffee. The government had lost the support of the middle classes who felt that Weimar Germany favoured workers, industrialists and politicians – and not them.

**EXTRACT B**

The Italian economic historian Bresciani Turrone, in his article 'The Economics of Inflation', in 1931. The author was also a political activist and very opposed to authoritarian government, protesting against the dictatorship in his native Italy.

The hyperinflation encouraged a harsh political reaction against democracy. It poisoned the German people causing them to lose faith in values like hard work and they also lost faith in the idea that their government cared for them. Moreover, it reinforced the economic power of groups such as landowners and industrialists and bankers who tended to support the parties of the Right.

**SOURCE 6**

A photograph from a German newspaper showing children playing with banknotes.





In August 1923, a new government under Gustav Stresemann took over. We will look at his actions in Chapter 1.2. Once Stresemann took charge, the economic crisis was solved very quickly. Some historians suggest that this is evidence that Germany's problems were not as severe as its politicians at the time had made out – they were trying to get out of paying reparations, or at least get the bill reduced.

It was also increasingly clear, however, that the hyperinflation had done great political damage to the Weimar government. Their right-wing opponents had yet another problem to blame them for, and many linked it to the hated Treaty of Versailles which the government had signed. They blamed reparations and the Weimar politicians who had agreed to pay them. Many Germans never forgave them.

### KNOWLEDGE CHECK

- 15 What were reparations and how much did Germany have to pay?
- 16 What action did the French take in 1923?
- 17 How did the German government respond?
- 18 What happened to Germany's currency in 1923?
- 19 Which group was hit particularly hard by hyperinflation and how did it affect their attitudes?

### FOCUS TASK

#### An unpopular Republic, 1919–23

'What was the most serious threat to the Republic between 1919 and 1923?'

- 1 Make your own copy of table below and use the information from this chapter to fill it in.

Threats to the Weimar Republic, 1919–23	Details of the threat	Impact of the threat
The Spartacist Uprising, 1919		
The Kapp Putsch, 1920		
The French occupation of the Ruhr, 1923		
Hyperinflation, 1923		

- 2 Which of the threats in your table do you think was the most serious threat to the Weimar Republic? Explain your choice.

### Chapter summary

- The abdication of the Kaiser led to a peaceful revolution in Germany.
- The Weimar Republic was one of the most democratic political systems in the world.
- Weimar governments were coalitions which did not always work together well.
- Many German people felt humiliated and betrayed by the Treaty of Versailles.
- Left-wing groups tried to overthrow the Republic to establish a communist government.
- Right-wing groups tried to overthrow the Republic to restore the monarchy.
- France occupied the Ruhr to get its reparations' payments directly from German industry.
- German workers refused to work for the French which resulted in hyperinflation.
- Hyperinflation destroyed the value of German currency and led to economic hardship.

### Key words

Make sure you know what these terms mean and are able to define them.

- abdicate
- armistice
- authoritarian
- bankrupt
- Bolsheviks
- Chancellor
- coalition
- constitution
- democracy
- dictatorship
- Freikorps
- general strike
- hyperinflation
- Junkers
- Kaiser
- putsch
- proportional representation
- Reichstag
- reparations
- republic
- soviets
- Spartacists
- trade unions



# 1.2

## The recovery of Germany, 1924–29

### FOCUS

After the desperate crises of 1919–23 the Weimar Republic was able to achieve a degree of stability from 1924 to 1929. Stresemann, firstly as Chancellor and then as Foreign Minister, worked to regain Germany's economic strength and international reputation. By 1929 there was much optimism surrounding the Weimar Republic. However, the extent of this recovery is questionable, and your focus task for this chapter will ask you to assess how strong the Republic was by 1929.

### Stresemann and the economy

In October 1923, Ebert appointed Gustav Stresemann as Chancellor of Germany. Stresemann served as Chancellor and then as Foreign Minister until his death in 1929. Stresemann was a stabilising force, convincing Germany's more moderate and democratic parties to work together, and at the same time working hard to re-establish Germany's position on the world stage.

Stresemann's first priority in **domestic** (home) politics was to tackle the desperate state of Germany's economy.

### Rentenmark to Reichsmark

Stresemann persuaded Ebert to use his emergency powers under Article 48 of the constitution. In October 1923, Stresemann introduced a new temporary currency called the Rentenmark. The new currency was based on the value of agricultural land and other property. This gave people confidence that the Rentenmark was actually worth something. As the economy stabilised, the Rentenmark was replaced by the Reichsmark in October 1924. The currency was also put under the control of the Reichsbank, not the government. This increased people's confidence in the economy.

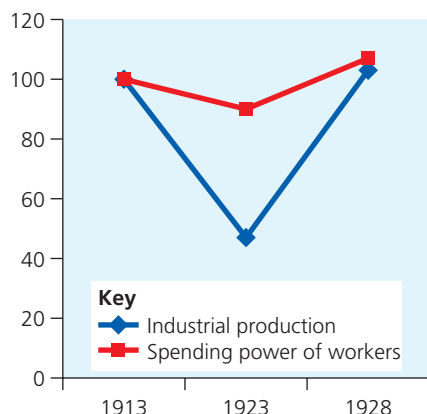
### Profile

#### Gustav Stresemann (1878–1929)

- Stresemann studied economics at universities in Berlin and Leipzig between 1897 and 1900.
- He went into politics in 1906 as a town councillor in Dresden, and was first elected to the Reichstag in 1907.
- Stresemann was a supporter of nationalists and **monarchists** during the First World War.
- He founded the nationalist DVP, the German People's Party, in 1919 as he opposed both the Weimar Constitution and the Treaty of Versailles.
- Had his 100 days as Chancellor in 1923, in which he had to deal with the French occupation of the Ruhr, hyperinflation and the Munich Putsch.
- Negotiated the Dawes and Young Plans with the USA to help relieve Germany's reparations' payments.
- Served as Foreign Minister from 1923 to 1929.
- Was responsible for Germany's joining the League of Nations in 1926, as well as the signing of the Locarno treaties in 1925 and the Kellogg–Briand Pact in 1928.
- Won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1926 for his work on international co-operation.
- Died in October 1929 not long after warning that Germany's economic recovery from 1924 was very precarious.

**FIGURE 1**

Comparison of aspects of the German economy in 1913, 1923 and 1928.



## The Dawes Plan

At the same time as he was introducing the Rentenmark, Stresemann was addressing the underlying problem of reparations and war debt. In 1924, Stresemann agreed to a series of measures known as the Dawes Plan as they were proposed by a committee chaired by US banker and politician Charles Dawes:

- The French agreed to leave the Ruhr.
- Reparations' payments were reduced to 1 billion marks for one year and would then rise as Germany's economy improved. This was a much more manageable way to pay the reparations.
- There would be a further review of reparations (see the Young Plan).

## US loans and investment

As part of the Dawes Plan, the USA agreed to loan Germany 800 million marks. The government also encouraged US banks and businesses to invest in Germany, which led to further investment of around \$3 billion. Some of the money went into German businesses, replacing old equipment with the latest technology. Some of it went into public works such as the high-speed rail line from Berlin to Hamburg. It also helped to boost Germany's trade with other countries. By 1928, Germany finally achieved the same levels of production as before the First World War (Figure 1) and regained its status as the world's second greatest industrial power (behind the USA). Alongside this economic prosperity, there was a sense of German pride being restored.

## SOURCE 2

Otto Bauer, a German Social Democrat, commenting on the impact of American investment.

Since the whole of German industry was being renovated technologically, since new manufacturing plants were being installed and the old reorganised, and new machines were being put to work, the demand for building materials, machines, tools, and steel was very high ... Since they employed more workers at better wages, the market for industries producing consumer goods also expanded. Thus the economic crisis following the collapse of the mark was overcome by 1926. The years 1926 to 1928 were the great boom ...

### SOURCE ANALYSIS

According to Source 2, how did German industry benefit from the money from the Dawes Plan?

### KNOWLEDGE CHECK

- 1 What offices did Stresemann hold?
- 2 What did Stresemann do with the German currency?
- 3 Describe the Dawes Plan.
- 4 What was the value of the US loans and investment that went into Germany due to the Dawes Plan and what was it spent on?
- 5 Describe the Young Plan.

## The Young Plan

Stresemann continued to use his position as foreign minister to argue for a reduction in reparations. In 1929, he achieved this with the Young Plan. This reduced the total reparations bill from £6.6 billion to £1.85 billion and gave Germany longer (59 years) to pay. This was a huge achievement and took considerable skill in diplomacy and negotiation. And it seemed that Germans recognised this when 85 per cent voted to accept the Young Plan in a **referendum**.

## Factfile

### The League of Nations

The League was set up after the First World War after being suggested by US President Woodrow Wilson. Its main aim was to provide a mechanism for countries to solve their disputes without resorting to violence and to maintain future peace by organising international disarmament. Germany had not been allowed to join.

## Stresemann and foreign relations

Germany's status as a great world power had been eroded following the Treaty of Versailles and its exclusion from the **League of Nations**. This was bitterly resented by the German population. For most of his time in government Stresemann was Germany's Foreign Minister, and he used this position to try to restore German prestige.

### The Locarno Treaties, 1925

Following the First World War, Stresemann knew that France was still suspicious and worried about another German invasion. To reassure France he signed the Locarno Treaties – seven agreements that were negotiated at Locarno in Switzerland and were intended to bring about world peace. Germany promised to accept the western borders it had with France and Belgium. Italy and Britain also signed the treaties to guarantee that Germany would observe the agreements. In addition, France and Germany agreed to settle any future disputes through the League of Nations.

It was a very clever move by Stresemann because it reassured France, but Stresemann was careful not to say that Germany accepted its eastern borders with Poland and Czechoslovakia. He had hopes to recover some of the territory Germany had lost to Poland in the Treaty of Versailles and to Czechoslovakia in other post-war treaties.

### The League of Nations, 1926

The Locarno Treaties led to Germany being invited to join the League of Nations. Germany was even offered a seat on the League Council, which meant it was once again being seen as a great power. Membership of the League of Nations also helped Stresemann to negotiate the Young Plan (see page 15). The following year the French troops occupying the Rhineland area of Germany left, six years earlier than they were meant to under the Treaty of Versailles.

### SOURCE 3

A photograph from a German newspaper showing Stresemann making a speech to the League of Nations Assembly in 1926.



## SOURCE 4

From Gustav Stresemann's speech accepting the Nobel Prize for Peace in Oslo in June 1927. The speech was called 'A New Germany'.

In September, Germany was admitted to the League of Nations. On that occasion Mr. Briand [the French Prime Minister] said in a speech, which was heard in all parts of the world, that the era of cannons and machine guns must end. He uttered words which should endure for the rest of this century, declaring that the two great nations, the German and the French, had won so many laurels from each other on the battlefields of war that the future should see them contending only for the great idealistic goals of mankind. No one who witnessed these events in Geneva is ever likely to forget them.

### SOURCE ANALYSIS

What does Source 4 tell us about France's motives for letting Germany into the League of Nations?

## The Kellogg-Briand Pact, 1928

The Kellogg-Briand Pact was an international agreement signed by over 60 countries in which they agreed not to use war as a means of solving international disputes. The pact emphasised Germany's status as one of the great powers again, playing a full role in international relations and helping to shape the politics of the world.

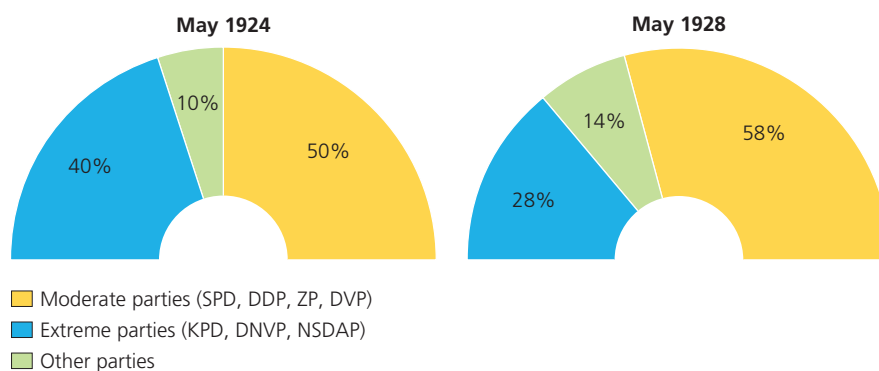
## Support for the Republic

The economic recovery and Stresemann's achievements in foreign policy almost certainly helped to maintain political stability in the period 1924–29. Another factor which helped Stresemann was the election of Paul von Hindenburg as President after Ebert died in 1925. Von Hindenburg came from an aristocratic family and had been a senior army commander in the First World War. He was widely regarded as a war hero. For many right-wingers who were suspicious of the Weimar Republic, the presence of von Hindenburg as President was reassuring.

Politics became more stable. To begin with, there were no more attempted revolutions after 1923. One politician who had been a leading opponent of Ebert in 1923 said that 'the Republic is beginning to settle and the German people are becoming reconciled to the way things are.' Figure 5 shows that the parties that supported Weimar democracy did well in these years. By 1928, the moderate parties had 136 more seats in the Reichstag than the radical parties. Hitler's Nazis gained less than 3 per cent of the vote in the 1928 election.

**FIGURE 5**

The proportion of seats won by different parties in the 1924 and 1928 elections.





## Factfile

### A Weimar 'Golden Age'?

- The 1927 Unemployment Insurance Law raised welfare benefits paid for by contributions from workers and their employers to cover payments to the unemployed, the sick, the disabled, the elderly, veterans and war widows – this covered 17 million workers, although middle-class professionals were not covered.
- By 1928, Germany had the best paid workers in Europe after an increase in wages of more than 10 per cent for industrial workers.
- By 1929, income for German farmers was 44 per cent below the national average.
- Unemployment never fell below 1 million in the 1920s.
- Unemployment remained high amongst middle-class professionals throughout the 1920s – 184,000 in 1928.
- Between 1924 and 1931 Germany built 2 million new homes and renovated 200,000 more.
- By 1928, homelessness in Germany had been reduced by 60 per cent since 1919.
- Women enjoyed a lot more freedom in the 1920s which saw them move away from jobs on farms and as servants into the civil service, teaching and social work.

### EXTRACT ANALYSIS

How does the author of this extract use language to show the electoral weakness of the Nazis between 1924 and 1928?

## How stable was the Weimar Republic, 1924–29?

The last few pages might suggest that all was well in Germany, but there were some worrying signs. Most Germans had come to accept and support democracy, but it was fragile in a number of ways:

- Proportional representation had meant that there were four different Chancellors between 1924 and 1929 as they struggled to get support in the Reichstag. Only the influence of Stresemann and other party leaders held these coalitions together.
- There was much greater trust in other authority figures – the **elite** groups in German society such as army commanders, senior judges, landowners and industrialists. But most of these elite groups disliked democracy. Von Hindenburg was no great enthusiast for democracy; he even wrote to the Kaiser in exile for approval before he took up the post of President.
- As Extract A shows, support for extremist political parties had reduced, but they were still working on how to increase their support. Moreover, 30 per cent of the votes cast in elections still went to parties opposed to the Republic.
- The economic boom in Weimar Germany was also precarious. The US loans could be called in at short notice, which would be devastating for Germany. The main economic winners were big industries and landowners. Industrial workers gained as well, as most Weimar governments were sympathetic to the trade unions. But not everyone had gained from the Weimar economic recovery – farmers struggled to make money as prices for their produce fell and many middle-class families had never recovered the value of their savings that were wiped out by hyperinflation.

### EXTRACT A

From *A History of Germany 1815–1990*, by William Carr, published in 1998.

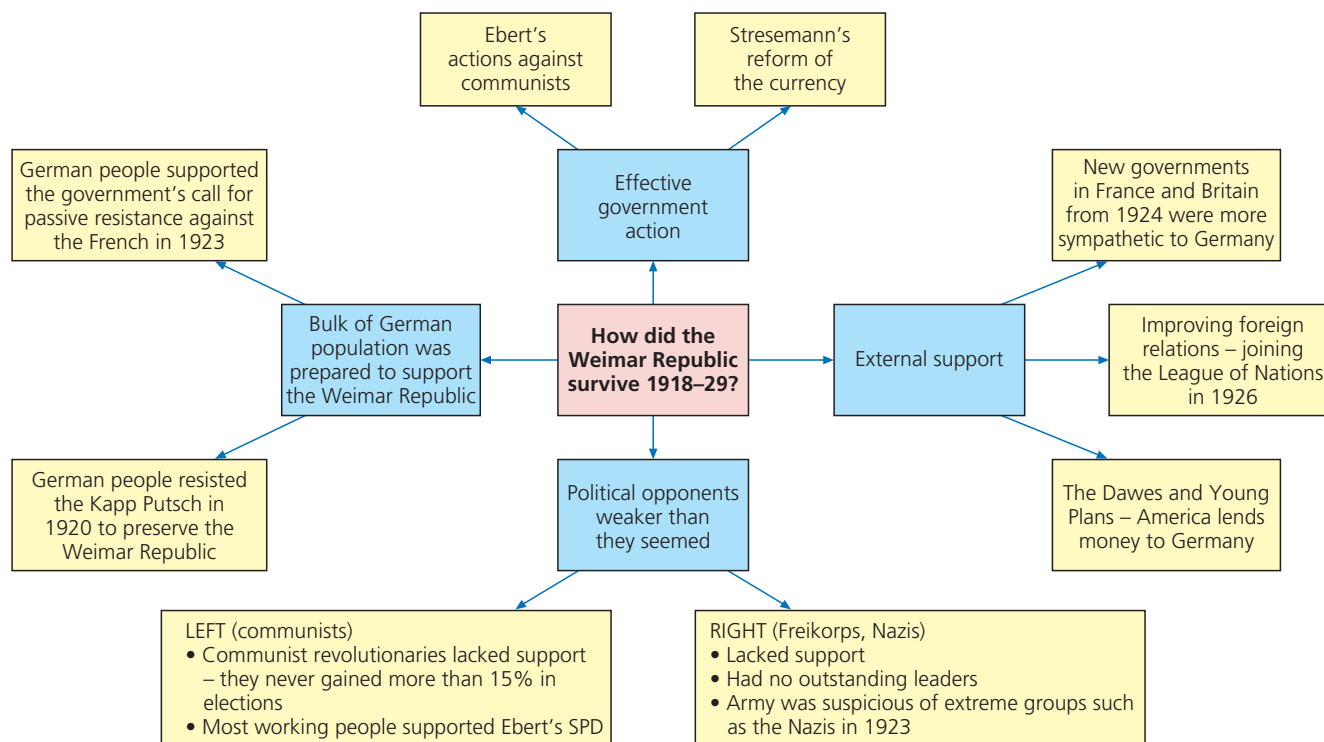
The relative affluence of these years was reflected politically in a sharp decline of support for parties on the extreme right and left. The National Socialists won 32 seats in May 1924 but only held 14 of them in December and lost two more in 1928, when they polled only 810,000 votes. The Communists had 62 seats in May 1924 but only 45 by December, though they had admittedly regained much of the lost ground in 1928. Middle-of-the-road parties were making steady progress. The Centre and the Social Democrats roughly held their own.

## Opposition to the Republic

Although Stresemann's foreign policies were popular, they did upset some Germans on either side of the **political spectrum**:

- German communists attacked the Locarno Treaties, claiming they were part of a plot against the communist government in the **USSR**.
- German nationalists attacked Stresemann for joining the League of Nations and for not completely refusing to pay reparations.

Stresemann died in 1929. In one of his last conversations he said that Germany was 'dancing on a volcano'. Germany was still a troubled country.



### KNOWLEDGE CHECK

- 6 What were the main terms of the Locarno Treaties?
- 7 Why was Germany joining the League of Nations important?
- 8 What were the terms of the Kellogg-Briand Pact?
- 9 How strong was people's support for the Weimar Republic?
- 10 What was worrying about the economy?
- 11 Who disliked Stresemann's foreign policy achievements and why?

### FOCUS TASK

How strong was the Weimar Republic by 1929?

- 1 Use the mind map to complete the following table assessing the strength of the Republic by 1929.

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Economy		
Foreign relations		
Support for the Republic		

- 2 Now write a paragraph about how strong you think the Republic was by 1929.

### Key words

Make sure you know what these terms mean and are able to define them.

- domestic
- elite
- League of Nations
- monarchists
- political spectrum
- referendum
- USSR

### Chapter summary

- Stresemann replaced the devalued German money with a new currency – the Rentenmark – which gave more confidence to the German economy.
- In the Dawes Plan the USA lent money to Germany to pay war reparations to France and Britain.
- Further US loans to be paid back over decades were made as part of the Young Plan.
- Germany reassured France it would stick to its new borders in the Locarno Treaties.
- Germany was recognised as being one of the most important countries in the world by being allowed into the League of Nations in 1926.
- Along with other countries, Germany agreed to avoid war to settle disputes in the Kellogg-Briand Pact.
- Stresemann's economic and foreign policies increased support for the Weimar Republic.
- Nationalist groups rejected Stresemann's solutions to Germany's problems.
- There was still some support for extremist groups during this period.

# 1.3

## The rise of Hitler and the Nazis to January 1933

### FOCUS

At the end of the First World War, Hitler and the German Workers' Party were a noisy but relatively small party with little support. In this chapter you will see how Adolf Hitler became the leader of what became the Nazi Party, what the Party stood for and how the Party's tactics changed after the failure of the Munich Putsch (1923). The Great Depression in 1929 saw a rapid increase in support for extreme parties, and especially the Nazi Party, and meant that by 1932 and 1933, Hitler was made Chancellor by Weimar politicians who thought they could control him.

In the focus tasks in this chapter you will examine the threat of the Nazis in 1923 and evaluate factors that increased support for the Nazi Party and reasons why Hitler became Chancellor.

### Profile

#### Adolf Hitler (1889–1945)

- Hitler was born in 1889 in Braunau-am-Inn, Austria.
- He served in the German Army in France between 1914 and 1918, winning the Iron Cross for bravery.
- In 1919 Hitler joined the DAP, the German Worker's Party.
- In 1921 he became leader of the renamed National Socialist German Worker's Party.
- He was imprisoned in Landsberg Prison after the failed Munich Putsch. During his imprisonment he wrote *Mein Kampf*.
- In 1933 Hitler was appointed Chancellor by President von Hindenburg. Following von Hindenburg's death Hitler became Führer, combining the roles of President and Chancellor.
- In 1939 he ordered the invasion of Poland which began the Second World War in Europe.
- There was an assassination attempt made against Hitler in 1944 – the July Bomb Plot.
- Hitler committed suicide in his bunker in Berlin in 1945.

### Hitler's early career in politics

When the First World War ended, Adolf Hitler was a soldier recovering in hospital in Munich from a poison gas attack. Once he recovered he worked for the army intelligence service, keeping an eye on radical groups in the region. As part of this job Hitler went to a meeting of the German Workers Party (DAP) which had been founded by Anton Drexler early in 1919.

The DAP had very few members and even less money. But the army was concerned about the DAP's socialist ideas which included workers' rights and heavily taxing big corporations. Hitler was not keen on these ideas either, but he discovered that the DAP also had other ideas which he did agree with. The DAP was very **nationalist**. It was also traditionally minded and believed in **Volksisch** ideas of the Germans being a special race. Hitler joined the Party in September 1919.

### Setting up the Nazi Party

Hitler soon impressed Drexler with his passion and dynamism. He emerged as an excellent public speaker. Drexler put him in charge of recruitment and **propaganda**. In February 1920, realising that the nationalist elements of the Party had more appeal than the socialist elements, Hitler and Drexler changed the name of the DAP to the National Socialist German Workers Party (NSDAP), usually known as the Nazi Party. As its symbol Hitler designed the distinctive Nazi banner with the **swastika**. At the same time, Drexler and Hitler wrote and published the Nazis' main beliefs in the Twenty-Five Point Programme (see Factfile). It was similar to the beliefs of most right-wing opponents of the Weimar Republic.

## Factfile

### The main points of the Nazis' Twenty-Five Point Programme, February 1920

- Abolition of the Treaty of Versailles
- Union of Germany and Austria
- Only 'true' Germans to be allowed to live in Germany. Jewish people in particular would be excluded
- Large industries and businesses to be nationalised
- Generous provision for old age pensioners
- A strong central German government

## Changes to the Nazi Party, 1920–23

In January 1920, the Nazis set up official Party offices in Munich. In March 1920, Hitler was discharged by the army and he started working full time for the Nazi Party. He was also developing into an effective speaker and propagandist and began to build up a personal following. His first speech in October 1919, had been to an audience of 111 people. In February 1920, he spoke to an audience of 2000. Hitler had a clear and simple appeal. He stirred nationalist passions in his audiences. He gave them **scapegoats** to blame for Germany's problems: the Allies, the Versailles Treaty, the 'November Criminals' (see page 9), communists and Jewish people.

### SOURCE 1

#### SOURCE ANALYSIS

What does Source 1 suggest about Hitler's early role in the Nazi Party?

American intelligence report on political activities in Germany, 1922.

The most active political force in Bavaria at the present time is the National Socialist Party ... It has recently acquired a political influence quite disproportionate to its actual numerical strength ... Adolf Hitler from the very first has been the dominating force in the movement and the personality of this man has undoubtedly been one of the most important factors contributing to its success ... His ability to influence a popular assembly is uncanny.

Hitler was rapidly emerging as the rising star of the Party. As you saw on page 11, the army flew Hitler to Berlin to meet Wolfgang Kapp in March 1920, although nothing came of this. In February 1921, he spoke to an audience of 6000. That meeting was publicised by Nazi activists driving through Munich in trucks with banners and handing out leaflets.

Membership increased steadily. By the end of 1920, the Nazis had 3000 members. They bought up a newspaper – the *Völkischer Beobachter* (People's Observer) and turned it into their mouthpiece. In theory, Hitler was one of seven members of the NSDAP executive committee, but in reality he was the star of the Nazi Party. In July 1921, he effectively overthrew Drexler as leader of the Nazis. He abolished the committee and made himself **Führer** (leader) for life. The Party was to be run under his absolute power (the **Führerprinzip**). Hitler then consolidated his control over the Party by expelling rivals and giving important roles to his closest allies. These included the wealthy academic, Rudolf Hess, who took charge of fundraising and administration, and the famous First World War fighter pilot, Hermann Goering, who was given command of the Nazi Stormtroopers, the **sa**.

#### KNOWLEDGE CHECK

- 1 Who founded the DAP?  
What ideas did it have?
- 2 What role was Hitler given initially in the DAP?
- 3 Name at least two ideas contained in the Twenty-Five Point Programme.
- 4 What was the main content of Hitler's speeches?
- 5 What did Hitler do in July 1921?



## The role of the Sturmabteilung (SA)

Hitler's meetings were often rowdy and violent. Left-wing opponents sometimes tried to heckle and disrupt them. Many of Hitler's supporters were ex-soldiers and Freikorps who were quite prepared to throw hecklers out and fight off any opponents who tried to disrupt the meetings with violence. They gradually formed into an unofficial bodyguard for Hitler and by the autumn of 1921 they became known as the Sturmabteilung (Stormtroopers) or SA.

Hitler quickly saw their potential and through 1922 he began to organise them more formally using a military-style command structure and uniform of brown shirts, jackboots and swastika armbands. In 1923, he appointed his close friend Goering to lead the SA. Their discipline and military style uniforms were admired by many. The SA was also useful in keeping Hitler's iron control of the Nazi Party, intimidating any potential opponents inside the Party and matching any street violence from the socialist SPD or communist KPD activists.

### SOURCE 2

A photograph of SA stormtroopers after a particularly violent rally in Coburg.



By the 1930s the SA had become an essential part of Nazi election campaigns, intimidating and attacking supporters of rival parties and giving the appearance that law and order in the Weimar Republic was breaking down, that people were not safe. Hitler would then make speeches promising to deal with the violence on the streets to make people feel safer again.

### SOURCE 3

The British ambassador to Germany describing SA violence in 1932.

#### SOURCE ANALYSIS

What does this source tell us about the targets of SA violence?

Prominent Socialists and Communists were surprised at night and murdered in their own beds or shot down at the door of their houses. The windows of shops owned by Jews were smashed and the contents looted. There were attacks with high explosives on the offices of democratically owned newspapers. The assailants [attackers] used firearms, hand grenades and acid.

**KNOWLEDGE CHECK**

- 6 Describe how the SA was formed.
- 7 What did Hitler do with the SA in 1922?
- 8 Who became the leader of the SA in 1923?
- 9 Describe Hitler's personality.
- 10 Why was the Weimar government unpopular?

## Hitler's next steps

Hitler's prominence increased. So did the membership of the Nazi Party – by November 1923, it was around 50,000. Hitler and his close associates pondered what to do next. He was still a fairly marginal figure, leading a small party with support only in Munich and Bavaria. But Hitler had big plans. He had no intention of trying to win power through the Reichstag. Hitler intended to overthrow the government.

### FOCUS TASK

#### The growth in the Nazi Party, 1920–23

You are going to write a report about the Nazi Party in early 1923 for the Weimar government. You need to explain how much of a threat you think they have become to the Republic since 1920.

Include the following factors, and any of your own:

- Changes from the DAP
- Hitler's increasing influence
- Improvements in Party organisation
- The impact of the SA
- The rising membership of the Party

## The Munich Putsch, 1923

The Nazi Party had been growing in the early 1920s. As a result of this, the Nazis felt ready to take the next step. And it proved to be a very big and radical step – a putsch (revolution) to try to overthrow the government! Why did they think this would work?

### Causes of the Munich Putsch

#### Hitler's personality

Hitler's personality is likely to have played a part. He was passionate and committed to Nazi ideals. He was also impatient (see Source 4). He felt he was the man of the moment.

#### SOURCE 4

Leading Nazi Otto Strasser recalls a conversation with Hitler in the early 1920s.

'Power!' screamed Adolf. 'We must have power!' 'Before we gain it,' I replied firmly, 'let us decide what we propose to do with it.' Hitler, who even then could hardly bear contradiction, thumped the table and barked: 'Power first'.

#### The unpopularity of the Weimar Republic

The Weimar Republic was unpopular for several reasons:

- It was associated with defeat in the First World War and the damaging terms of the Treaty of Versailles.
- The hyperinflation that had followed the French invasion of the Ruhr had left many of the middle classes bankrupt, while big business had benefited.
- Many Germans were suspicious of democracy and instead wanted strong government.

#### Support from the political Right

In Munich and Bavaria, the heartland of the Nazis, the local state government was being run by the right-wing, anti-Weimar politician Gustav Kahr, along with army commander Otto von Lossow and police chief Hans Seisser. Hitler hoped that these leaders would support him, especially as he had gained the support of the former army commander and war hero, Erich Ludendorff. Hitler also hoped the police and troops in Bavaria would support him since so many of his followers were former soldiers.

#### Mussolini's March on Rome

Finally, Hitler was inspired by events in Italy. In 1922, the leader of the Fascist movement, Benito Mussolini, led a mass demonstration which became known as the March on Rome. The King of Italy then appointed Mussolini Prime Minister against the wishes of his democratically-elected government. Hitler was impressed and hoped for similar results.

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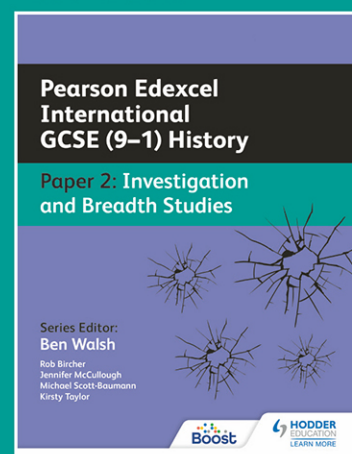
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