

# History EdExcel Weimar

## Germany

### Rise of Hitler

- **Nazi Party/ Hitler Aims:** Treaty of Versailles scrapped, citizenship only granted to people of German blood, foreigners deported if no food for whole nation, the creation of a strong central government for the Reich, religious freedom for all, Jews not allowed to have citizenship, union of all Germans to create a greater Germany, the government to profit share in major industries, nationalize all businesses that had been formed into corporations.
- **The SA:** Created to defend and protect the Nazi party speakers from violence, also used by Hitler to march on Berlin in 1923- The Munich Putsch.
- **The Munich Putsch:** Hitler and the Nazi party marched on Munich because he felt the hyperinflation was making the lives of Germans miserable, and because Stresemann was starting to cut down on extremist groups. It failed because they had too few rifles, split his men up and did not have the support of others. As a result he was put on trial and sent to prison for 5 years but got out after 9 months. He used the trial as publicity.
- **Nazi Change between 1924 and 1929:** Increased membership, 1923 55k, 1929 100k and 1930 400k members. They won over the middle class as they saw Hitler as a strong leader, and they won over the working class by promising 'work and bread'. They used effective propaganda like planes, newspapers and radio to win support. Public meetings were massive and when the Nazi party was first re-launched 4000 people heard him speak and 1000 were turned away.
- **Presidential Elections 1932:** Germany was in turmoil and people started to vote for extremist parties, Hitler won 11 million votes in the elections, and when the election was repeated in April Hitler won 13 million votes making him a major political figure in Germany.
- **Hitler Becomes Chancellor:** On 30<sup>th</sup> January 1933 Hitler was made chancellor of Germany. This was a result of 39 business tycoons signing a letter asking Hindenburg to make Hitler chancellor and because of the NSDAP/ Nazi Party holding the majority of the seats.

### Weimar Republic

- **Treaty of Versailles:** Military forces were cut, Army to 100k, no air force and Rhineland demilitarised, reparations set at £6,600 million/ 136k million marks, lose of 11 African colonies, German land lost cost them 50% of iron, 15% of coal reserves. Lost 13% of their European territory.

- **Bankruptcy:** Germany had spent all its money in the war and because of the occupation of the Ruhr and the Treaty of Versailles there were no wealthy areas, so they could not pay back the reparations.
- **Occupation of the Ruhr:** French troops occupied key industrial territory which did the Germans little good as 80% of their coal, iron and steel work was based there.
- **Inflation:** The shortages of things meant prices went up, e.g. bread in 1919 cost 1 mark, by 1922 200 marks and by November 1923 200 thousand million marks.
- **Spartacists:** Left wing revolutionaries who wanted to run Germany through a sort of communistic way but not so much as to lose the rich elite.
- **Spartacist Uprising 5<sup>th</sup> January 1919:** Captured headquarters of the government's newspaper but was crushed by the Freikorps (ex-soldiers used to keep control). Spartacist leaders murdered, 100 soldiers lost, only 13 Freikorps
- **Kapp Putsch 1920:** Right wing supporters of Dr Wolfgang Kapp marched on Berlin and controlled it for a while. Government urged people not to co-operate and essential services stopped and city ground to a halt. Kapp fled but was captured and put in prison.
- **The Dawes Plan 1924:** Annual payments were reduced to an affordable level; American banks would invest in German industry. Germany reassured Allies they would get their money back.
- **The Currency Reform 1924:** Stresemann came into power and abolished the existing currency and set up the Rentenmark and then set up the Reichsbank.
- **The Young Plan 1924:** Reduced reparations from £6.6 billion to £2 billion, and Germany given 59 more years to pay. This lowered taxes and reduced annual payment amount. Annual payment set at £50 million a year.
- **The Locarno Pact 1925:** Treaty between Britain, Germany, France, Italy and Belgium. Germany agreed to new border and last allied troops left the Rhineland. Peace promised between France and Germany, Made Germany an equal.
- **The League of Nations 1926:** International body where powerful countries discussed ways of solving world problems. Germany given a place on the League of Nations Council where the most important decisions were made.
- **The Kellogg-Briand Pact 1928:** One of the 65 countries to sign it. Not to use war to achieve foreign policy aims. Made Germany a respectable member of international community.
- **Great Depression 1928:** Banks suffered huge losses and feared they couldn't pay out money, German and American banks needed to return the money they had lent out. Unemployment was high and so they had to reduce unemployment benefit to make payments more affordable. Between 1929-31 there was a 40% fall in industrial production.

Middle Class lost savings, companies and homes. Rise in taxes. Unemployment rose from 1.3 million in 1929 to 6 million in 1933. The coalition of parties collapsed in 1930. Brüning lost control of the Reichstag and so resigned in 1932 which left a power vacuum for a new leader to step into.

## Nazi Dictatorship and Policies

- **Removal of Opposition 1933-34:**
  - **Parliament:** Hitler did not have control of the 18 Lander parliaments which he wanted to strengthen Germany and so he abolished it.
  - **Trade Unions:** Trade unions were potential sources of opposition and so he made them illegal in May 1933.
  - **Political Parties:** Because of all the other parties still in place they could try and take him over and they provided opposition, so with the exception of the NSDAP he made all other parties illegal.
  - **The SA:** The SA's activities were contained by the police and the leader Rohm had over 3 million members and was in a position to challenge Hitler, so Hitler had Rohm and the six other leaders of the SA killed.
  - **The Presidency:** President Hindenburg could still rule over Hitler and so when he died Hitler declared himself Führer of Germany which would grant him all the president's powers.
- **Women:** Women over 20 were given the vote during Weimar's republic, they were more likely to go out and work, and were paid on equal basis to men. However, Nazi views towards women were that there should be a dominant male figure and women concerned with children and housework. Some professional women were forced to leave jobs and women were encouraged to leave work and concentrate on children and the house.
- **Marriage and Childbirth:** The law for the Encouragement of Marriage was introduced, loans of 1000 marks worth 9 months wages were given to young couples to marry. The mothers cross encouraged childbirth which was awarded for the amount of children they had- 4 or 5 for bronze, 6 or 7 for silver and 8+ for gold.
- **Reasons for Economic policies:**
  - **Military Reasons:** Hitler created the 4 year plan which was to prepare Germany for war within 4 years. In 1933 3.5 billion marks was spent on rearmament and in 1939 it rose to more than 26 billion marks. Iron and steel produced tripled from 1933-39. Plastic, oil and rubber production increased 460% in the 1930s. Army grew from 100,000 in 1933 to 900,000 in 1939. The RAD were prepared and trained to become soldiers.
  - **Political Reasons:** Since he banned trade unions, Hitler set up the German Labour Front (also known as the DAF) in 1933. Its role was to ensure workers served to the best interest of the Nazi regime. The DAF controlled the power

of employers, regulated working hours and rate of pay. They wanted to solve unemployment as they were potential communist supporters.

- **Social Reasons:** The DAF helped to improve working conditions and employment rights. The DAF also prevented exploitation of labour by employers and established the minimum working standards. This made the wages increase: 6% in 1934, 13% in 1936 and 20% in 1938.
- **National Reasons:** The RAD (National Labour Service) was set up in 1933 and provided manual work for the unemployed. It was a compulsory for all young men to serve 6 months in the RAD. They were used to build roads and work in fields, the rate of pay was low and some complained of poor food. This project worked well for the country as by 1939 it had given the country 7000 miles of road.

#### Standard of Living:

- **For:** Percentage rise in wages compared to 1933: 6% in 1934, 13% in 1936 and 20% in 1938 and percentage increase in sales compared to 1933: 14% in 1934, 25% in 1936 and 45% in 1938. The SdA- Beauty of labour tried to ensure good standards at work. The KdF- Strength through joy gave leisure activities for workers.
- **Against:** The working hours had increased from 43 to 49 hours per week. Food prices rose by 20% in Germany between 1933 and 1939 which cancelled the rise in wages. Many jobs were in the military rather than productive jobs. Germany couldn't sustain Hitler's economic problems for long and in 1936 the imports and exports were balanced, this meant that after 1936 Germany was spending more than its income.

**Sanctions on Jews:** Jews excluded from government jobs- May 1933. Jews lost their citizenship right to vote and hold government office after Nuremberg laws were passed in September 1935. Thousands of Jewish lawyers, civil servants and teachers were sacked and later in April 1936 professional activities were restricted or banned, this included vets, dentists, nurses and teachers. The SA ordered a boycott of Jewish shops in April 1933. They were banned from inheriting land in September 1933. Councils banned Jews from public places like parks and playing fields in 1934.

#### Kristallnacht:

- **Reason Behind it:** Because of a 17 year old Jew shooting a German ambassador on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 1938, Gobbels said that if Germans wanted to take revenge the government would do nothing to stop them. On the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> November German gangs attacked Jewish properties.
- **Damage done:** 814 shops, 191 synagogues, 171 homes were destroyed and 100 Jews were killed while another 26,000 were sent to camps. Gobbels blamed Jews for this and so banned them from running shops or businesses, banned from German schools or universities and fined 1 billion marks to pay for the damage.

· **Persecution of Minorities:** Nazis believed that several other groups were sub-human like Gypsies. After 1933 Gypsies were often arrested and sent to concentration camps. In April 1939 orders were given to collect all Gypsies and put them in ghettos along with all the Jews. Nazis also persecuted anyone they believed undermined moral standards like homosexuals, alcoholics, beggars and pacifists, and in 1935 laws against homosexuality were strengthened and many were sent to concentration camps where 60% died. In 1933 a law was passed saying doctors could force people to be sterilised which was used on people with learning difficulties, physical or mental disabilities and alcoholics. From 1934 to 1945 700,000 Germans were sterilised.