

## Welcome to A-Level History!

Your teachers for the coming year will be Mr Lloyd (Option 1C – Tudors) and Mrs Sehmar (Option 20 – Nazis)

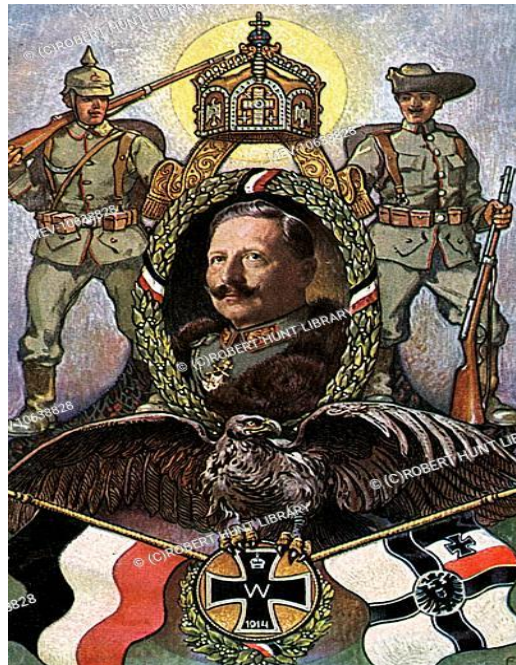
- This PowerPoint will help you to prepare for your study of A-Level History.
- It is designed to give you an overview of all the topics you will cover over the 2 years.
- There are several tasks within this PowerPoint and it will take you around 30 hours to complete all of these tasks to a good standard.
- You do not need to complete a task in one session, you can break them down into more manageable chunks if it helps.
- Please be sensible about the amount of time you spend on each task at any one time, perhaps no more than an hour, and do have breaks between tasks.
- These tasks are designed to give you a taste of what A-Level History is like, a head start on the course and they will give you something to focus on over the next few weeks to help keep you focused on your academic development.
- In September you will have assessments in History within the first 6 weeks and these tasks will help to prepare you for these initial assessments – therefore please bring all of this work into school with you in September.

# A-Level History: Y11 to Y12 Germany Transition Work

**LO1:** Identify what the Germany topic is all about.

**LO2:** Explain the different forms of ideologies that are used to govern a country.

**LO3:** Explain what Germany was like as a country pre 1914



Wednesday, 12 June 2024

**Today's enquiry question:**

What was Germany like as a country pre 1914?

**Unit of work:**

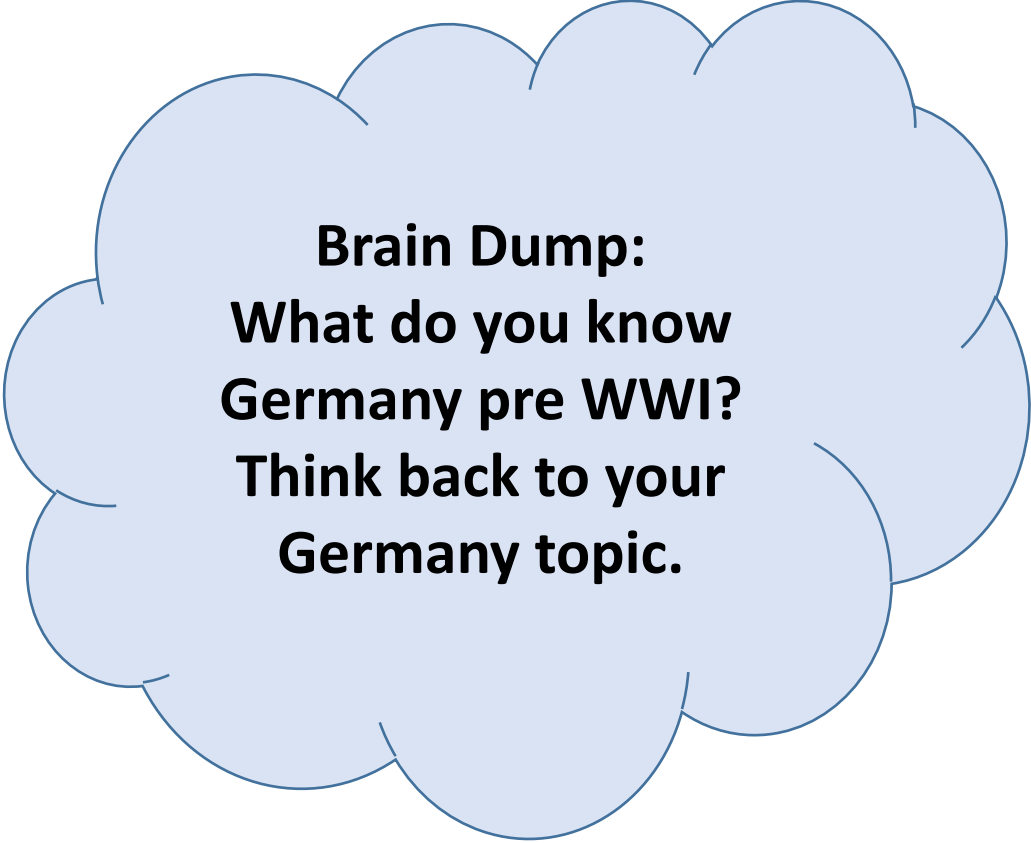
Democracy & Dictatorship in Germany

**Keywords for today:**

Dictatorship/Democracy

**Second-order skill focus:**

Change & Continuity



**Brain Dump:  
What do you know  
Germany pre WWI?  
Think back to your  
Germany topic.**

# LO1: Identify what the Germany topic are all about

## Part one: the Weimar Republic, 1918–1933- *This is what we cover in year 12*

1. *The Establishment and early years of Weimar, 1918–1924*
2. *The 'Golden Age' of the Weimar Republic, 1924–1928*
3. *The Collapse of Democracy, 1928–1933*

## Part two- Nazi Germany, 1933–1945 *This is what we cover in year 13*

4. *The Nazi Dictatorship, 1933–1939*
5. *The Racial State, 1933–1941*
6. *The impact of War, 1939–1945*

These are the 6 key issues - which is outlined on the previous slide

This topic will require you to look at sources and do mini essays on the key issues that are covered.



## **Year 12:**

# **In your first year, alongside your studies on the Tudors, you'll be studying the first three issues.**

### **1. The Establishment and early years of Weimar, 1918–1924**

- The impact of war and the political crises of October to November 1918; the context for the establishment of the Weimar Constitution; terms, strengths and weaknesses
- The Peace Settlement: expectations and reality; terms and problems; attitudes within Germany and abroad
- Economic and social issues: post-war legacy and the state of the German economy and society; reparations, inflation and hyperinflation; the invasion of the Ruhr and its economic impact; social welfare and the social impact of hyperinflation
- Political instability and extremism; risings on the left and right, including the Kapp Putsch; the political impact of the invasion of the Ruhr; the Munich Putsch; problems of coalition government and the state of the Republic by 1924

### **2. The 'Golden Age' of the Weimar Republic, 1924–1928**

- Economic developments: Stresemann; the Dawes Plan; industry, agriculture and the extent of recovery; the reparations issue and the Young Plan
- Social developments: social welfare reforms; the development of Weimar culture; art, architecture, music, theatre, literature and film; living standards and lifestyles
- Political developments and the workings of democracy: President Hindenburg; parties ; elections and attitudes to the Republic from the elites and other social groups; the position of the extremists, including the Nazis and Communists; the extent of political stability
- Germany's international position; Stresemann's foreign policy aims and achievements including: Locarno; the League of Nations; the Treaty of Berlin; the end of allied occupation and the pursuit of disarmament

### 3. The Collapse of Democracy, 1928–1933

- The economic, social and political impact of the Depression: elections; governments and policies
- The appeal of Nazism and Communism; the tactics and fortunes of the extremist parties, including the role of propaganda
- Hindenburg, Papen, Schleicher and the 'backstairs intrigue' leading to Hitler's appointment as chancellor
- Political developments: the Reichstag Fire; parties and elections; the Enabling Act and the end of democracy; the state of Germany by March 1933



## **Year 13:**

**In the second year, you finish your research project over the summer, and then study the next three issues before the exams.**

### **4. The Nazi Dictatorship, 1933–1939**

- Hitler's consolidation of power, March 1933–1934: governmental and administrative change and the establishment of the one-party state; the Night of the Long Knives and the impact of the death of President Hindenburg
- The 'Terror State': the police, including the SS and Gestapo; the courts; extent, effectiveness and limitations of opposition and non-conformity; propaganda: aims, methods and impact; extent of totalitarianism
- Economic policies and the degree of economic recovery; Schacht; Goering; the industrial elites
- Social policies: young people; women; workers; the churches; the degree of Volksgemeinschaft; benefits and drawbacks of Nazi rule

### **5. The Racial State, 1933–1941**

- The radicalisation of the state: Nazi racial ideology; policies towards the mentally ill, asocials, homosexuals, members of religious sects, the Roma and Sinti
- Anti-Semitism: policies and actions towards the Jews, including the boycott of Jewish shops and the Nuremberg Laws
- The development of anti-Semitic policies and actions; the effect of the Anschluss; Reichkristallnacht; emigration; the impact of the war against Poland
- The treatment of Jews in the early years of war: the Einsatzgruppen; ghettos and deportations



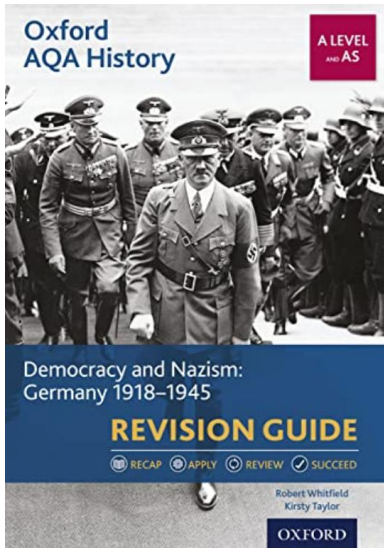
## 6. The impact of War, 1939–1945

- Rationing, indoctrination, propaganda and morale; the changing impact of war on different sections of society including the elites, workers, women and youth
- The wartime economy and the work of Speer; the impact of bombing; the mobilisation of the labour force and prisoners of war
- Policies towards the Jews and the 'untermenschen' during wartime; the Wannsee Conference and the 'Final Solution'
- Opposition and resistance in wartime including students, churchmen, the army and civilian critics; assassination attempts and the July Bomb Plot; overview of the Nazi state by 1945



Before we continue...

To help you with the coming two years, we recommend you purchase these:



[https://www.amazon.co.uk/Oxford-AQA-History-Level-Democracy/dp/0198421427/ref=sr\\_1\\_3?keywords=aqa+a+level+history+germany+revision+guide&qid=1686126983&srefix=aqa+A+level+History+germany%2Caps%2C161&sr=8-3](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Oxford-AQA-History-Level-Democracy/dp/0198421427/ref=sr_1_3?keywords=aqa+a+level+history+germany+revision+guide&qid=1686126983&srefix=aqa+A+level+History+germany%2Caps%2C161&sr=8-3)

my **revision** notes

AQA AS/A-level History

**DEMOCRACY  
AND NAZISM**  
GERMANY 1918-1945



Alan Farmer

**HODDER**  
EDUCATION  
LEARN MORE

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/Revision-Notes-level-Democracy-1918-1945/dp/1471876225/ref=sr\\_1\\_4?keywords=aqa+a+level+history+germany+revision+guide&qid=1686127034&srefix=aqa+A+level+History+germany%2Caps%2C161&sr=8-4](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Revision-Notes-level-Democracy-1918-1945/dp/1471876225/ref=sr_1_4?keywords=aqa+a+level+history+germany+revision+guide&qid=1686127034&srefix=aqa+A+level+History+germany%2Caps%2C161&sr=8-4)

LO2: Explain the different forms of ideologies that are used to govern a country.

Lets like at these three ideologies first:

1. Capitalism
2. Communism
3. Fascism

Watch the video clips that go with each ideology and make brief notes on each one within the slide or on separate note paper.

# 1. Capitalism

<https://youtu.be/ql6ndutTVKU>

Make your notes here:

## 2. Communism

<https://youtu.be/kyKbAF6DhE4>

Make your notes here:

# 3. Fascism

<https://youtu.be/4ejvegGwXYs>

Make your notes here:

**LO2:** Explain the different forms of ideologies that are used to govern a country.  
 On the next three slides is a breakdown of the different forms of ideologies that we cover in this topic you need to use this info to complete the table on slide 14 &15

<p><b>Autocracy</b></p>	<p>Government in which one person has uncontrolled or unlimited authority over others          The government or power of an absolute monarch. In an autocracy, the autocrat really is the "one ruler", relying fairly little upon others, and being the driving force behind ALL political decisions.          All means of production is owned by the ruler/people in charge.          Media is controlled by the person in charge.          Power is often handed down through the blood line</p>
<p><b>Socialism</b></p>	<p>A political and economic theory of social organization which advocates that the means of production, distribution, and exchange should be owned or regulated by the community as a whole.          Socialism is the collective ownership by all the people of the factories, mills, mines, railroads, land and all other instruments of production.          Socialism means production to satisfy human needs, not as under capitalism, for sale and profit.          Socialism means direct control and management of the industries and social services by the workers through a democratic government based on their nationwide economic organization.          Socialism does not mean government or state ownership. It does not mean a closed party-run system without democratic rights. Those things are the very opposite of socialism.          A government governs the country and often decided through elections.          Socialism will be a society in which the things we need to live, work and control our own lives—the industries, services and natural resources—are collectively owned by all the people, and in which the democratic organization of the people within the industries and services is the government. Socialism means that government of the people, for the people and by the people will become a reality for the first time.</p>

<p><b>Dictatorship</b></p>	<p>Government run by a dictator/one party/one leader          Absolute authority is given to this leader.          It is also often implied that whilst in a dictatorship the dictator has advisers upon who he relies and is mainly the ideological and personality-based side of the leadership. The difference between a dictator and autocratic ruler is that an autocratic ruler can make all decisions without having to consult to other e.g. members of their party, advisers.          The means of production is controlled by the dictator and the state          There are no free elections within a dictatorship.</p>
<p><b>Totalitarianism</b></p>	<p>Totalitarianism is a political system where the state recognizes no limits to its authority and strives to regulate every aspect of public and private life. Totalitarian regimes stay in political power through an all-encompassing propaganda disseminated through the state-controlled mass media, a single party that is often marked by control over the economy, regulation and restriction of speech, mass surveillance, and widespread use of terror. The means of production is controlled by the dictator and the state.          Totalitarianism does not apply to one ruler but extends to a party or a class of elite who recognise no limit to their authority.          It is very similar to a dictatorship.</p>
<p><b>Democracy</b></p>	<p>Democracy works by the people voting and the government includes the people's rights. Democracy is when people have the right to choose what they want for their country. Some will be wealthier than others will. They will spread their influences to other countries to trade and encourage investment.          There is very little censorship of the media.          Most industries and businesses are privately owned.          There are several political parties-voters may choose and change their government.</p>



## **Communism**

A political theory derived from Karl Marx, advocating class war and leading to a society in which all property is publicly owned and each person works and is paid according to their abilities and needs.

There is only one political party- the communist party- there is no choice and people are unable to change their government.

There is no private industry and no private profit.

All industry and businesses are owned by the state for the benefit of everyone.

The belief is that everyone is equal. They believe in world revolution where they encourage communism in other countries.

There is censorship of the media

Ideology/form of government	Who governs the country	Who owns the means of production	Who controls the media?	How is the government decided?	What is your evaluation of this form of government
<b>Autocratic</b>					
<b>Socialist</b>					
<b>Dictatorship</b>					

<b>Ideology/form of government</b>	<b>Who governs the country</b>	<b>Who owns the means of production</b>	<b>Who controls the media?</b>	<b>How is the government decided?</b>	<b>What is your evaluation of this form of government</b>
<b>Totalitarianism</b>					
<b>Democratic</b>					
<b>Communism</b>					

## LO3: Explain what Germany was like as a country pre 1914

1. You now need to do some research on key aspects of what Germany was like at the start of our study (pre 1914).
2. Follow the guidelines that I have given below and use the key reading in this PowerPoint to help you make your notes.
3. You can also use the internet to help you.
4. This can be done as a PowerPoint or booklet.

What needs to be included:

1. Who was Kaiser Wilhelm? What was he like as a person and as a ruler?
2. What was the government structure like?
3. What was society like?
4. What was Nationalism?
5. Did Anti-Semitism exist?
6. What was the belief about race? Was there a race struggle?

# Kaiser Wilhelm

## Political trends: the Wilhelmine political system

### Who ruled in Wilhelmine Germany?

At the height of the diplomatic crisis in July 1914 which culminated in the First World War, the Austrian Foreign Minister asked in frustration: 'Who actually rules in Berlin?' This was a pertinent question, not just in 1914, but throughout Wilhelm's rule.

### The Kaiser

According to historian Michael Balfour, Wilhelm was 'the copybook condemnation of the hereditary system'. This view may be over-harsh. Wilhelm did have some talents: a quick mind, an excellent memory and a charming manner. Unfortunately, his understanding of issues was often superficial and distorted by his own prejudices. He lacked powers of steady application and his moods and behaviour were liable to wild fluctuations. 'The Kaiser is like a balloon', said Bismarck, 'if you do not hold fast to the string, you never know where he will be off to'. The British King Edward VII, Wilhelm's uncle, was even more scathing. He described Wilhelm as 'the most brilliant failure in history'.

Arguably, Wilhelm's influence should not be exaggerated. His life was an endless whirl of state occasions, military manoeuvres, cruises and hunting trips. In the first decade of his reign he averaged 200 days per year travelling on official business or private recreation. His social and ceremonial duties meant that he was absent from Berlin for long periods and so he did not have command of the detail of the government's work. Accordingly, it is possible to claim that he did not determine the course of German policy.

However, the German constitution did grant the *Kaiser* extensive powers. He alone had the right to appoint and dismiss the Chancellor and his State Secretaries – completely independent of the *Reichstag*'s wishes. He regarded the *Reichstag* as the 'imperial monkey house'. Wilhelm claimed that 'there is only one Ruler in the *Reich* and I am he'. He believed that his accountability was to God alone. Given his constitutional powers, no major decision could be taken without his agreement. When he spoke, people, in and out of Germany, listened.

### The German Chancellors

There were four Chancellors between 1890 and 1914:

- General Leo Caprivi (1890–94)
- Prince Chlodwig Hohenloe (1894–1900)
- Bernhard Bülow (1900–09)
- Theobald Bethmann-Hollweg (1909–17)

These men were essentially civil servants, not seasoned statesmen like Bismarck. They did not dominate the German political scene as decisively as Bismarck had done. They probably lacked Bismarck's talent. They certainly lacked his prestige and independence. William I had usually deferred to Bismarck, but Wilhelm II was determined to participate in the affairs of state. Political survival for the Chancellors was dependent on showing loyalty to Wilhelm and doing his will. This was far from easy when his personal involvement often amounted to little more than whimsical flights of fancy.

### Kaiser Wilhelm II (1859–1941)

Wilhelm II was the eldest child of Crown Prince Frederick and Victoria, eldest daughter of British Queen Victoria. He became *Kaiser* in 1888, following the deaths of his grandfather William I (in March) and his father Frederick I (in June). Most historians are of the view that Wilhelm was arrogant and overtly theatrical – a neurotic braggart, a romantic dreamer, a man who frequently changed his mind. One Austrian wit remarked that Wilhelm wanted to be the bride at every wedding, the stag at every hunt and the corpse at every funeral. Historian John Rohl, who has devoted his life to studying Wilhelm, calls him a 'boastful autocrat, militarist and racist'. Many scholars, convinced that Wilhelm was, at the very least, deeply disturbed, have spent a great deal of time trying to explain his personality.

- Wilhelm's breech birth delivery resulted in the partial paralysis of his left arm and damage to the balance mechanism in his ear. These physical problems, and the dreadful way in which they were treated, have prompted speculation about the possible psychological consequences for the young prince.



- Close attention has been paid to the strained relationship with his parents. During his adolescent years, he grew apart from them, opposing their liberal sympathies and preferring the company of his grandfather. He particularly enjoyed the regimental life of the military garrison at Potsdam. (His love of military ceremonial verged on the pathological.)
- Some have suggested that Wilhelm's self-assertive and erratic behaviour should be seen as symptoms of insanity, megalomania or sadism.
- More recently, he has been depicted as a repressed homosexual or (more likely) a sufferer from attention deficit disorder – a mental condition which reveals itself in volatile and irrational behaviour.

What is indisputable is that Wilhelm proved to be a disaster not only for Germany but also for the rest of Europe. Given his indecision and limited ability, it is perhaps not surprising that, according to historian John Rohl, he surrounded himself with 'a deplorable bunch of advisers'. The result was a lack of progress in domestic affairs combined with an ill-considered and aggressive foreign policy, culminating in the tragedy of the First World War.

**Source A** Count Eulenburg, a close and influential friend of Wilhelm II, gave this note to Bernhard von Bülow in July 1897. Bülow, a protégé of Eulenburg, was about to become Foreign Secretary.

.....  
 Wilhelm II takes everything personally. Only personal arguments make any impression on him. He likes to give advice to others but is unwilling to take it himself. He cannot stand boredom; ponderous, stiff, excessively thorough people get on his nerves and cannot get anywhere with him. Wilhelm II wants to shine and to do and to decide everything himself. What he wants to do himself unfortunately often goes wrong. He loves glory, he is ambitious and jealous. To get him to accept an idea one has to pretend that the idea came from him ... never forget that H. M. [His Majesty] needs praise from time to time. He is the sort of person who becomes sullen unless he is given recognition from time to time by someone of importance. You will always accomplish whatever you wish so long as you do not omit to express your appreciation when H. M. deserves it. He is grateful for it like a good, clever child. If one remains silent when he deserves recognition, he eventually sees malevolence in it. We two will always carefully observe the boundaries of flattery.

# Government structure

## The *Bundesrat*

The upper house of the national parliament, comprising men chosen by the various states, was essentially a conservative body. It had been at the centre of Bismarck's system. After 1890 it declined in influence. An increasing number of bills were first discussed by the main political parties and then introduced in the *Reichstag* rather than in the *Bundesrat*.

## The *Reichstag*

While the *Reichstag* could discuss, amend, pass or reject government legislation, its power to initiate new laws was negligible. No party or coalition of parties ever formed the government of the day. Even a vote of no confidence in the Chancellor had minimal effect. Thus, although Germany had universal male suffrage, the Kaiser's authority in many areas was impervious to popular control.

## Right-wing parties

On most issues Wilhelm and his governments could rely on the backing of the right-wing parties: the Conservatives, the Free Conservatives and the National Liberals. However, after 1890 the voting strength of these parties was in decline. In 1887 they won over 50 per cent of the popular vote; by 1912 their share of the vote was down to 26 per cent. Consequently, the imperial government had to find support from other parties if legislation was to be ratified.

## The Centre Party

The Centre Party, which consistently won between 90 and 110 seats, was the largest party in the *Reichstag*, until 1912. Representing Catholics, it had a wide spectrum of socio-political views ranging from conservatism to progressive social reform. By 1900 it was the pivotal party, allying with either right or left as the occasion demanded.

## The Social Democrat Party (SPD)

The Wilhelmine era saw the meteoric rise of the Social Democrat Party (SPD). Liberated by the lapse of the Anti-Socialist Law in 1890, the SPD appealed to Germany's growing industrial working class. In 1893 it won 11 per cent of the popular vote. Extremely well organised, the Party won 28 per cent of the vote in 1912, becoming the largest party in the *Reichstag*.

The SPD was far from united. In 1891 it adopted an uncompromising **Marxist programme** to overthrow the Wilhelmine class system. However, many SPD members, who were committed to democratic socialism, favoured the Party's so-called **minimum programme**. Given that most SPD deputies talked in favour of revolution, the other political parties regarded the SPD as a force for evil.

**Marxist programme** – Those who supported such a plan supported the ideas of Karl Marx. Marx believed that leaders of the proletariat must work to overthrow the capitalist system by [violent] revolution.

**Minimum programme** – The name given to the plans of moderate socialists who were opposed to violent revolution. They wanted to bring about government ownership of banks, coal mines and industry, and called for social equality.

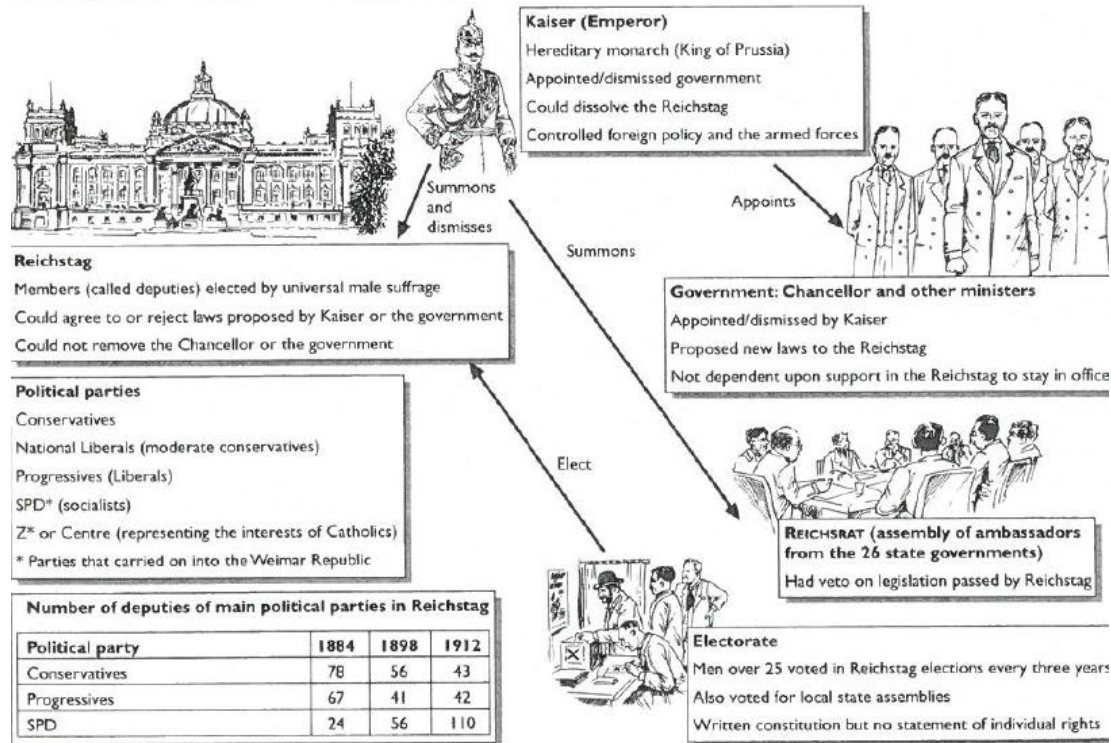
Party	1890	1893	1898	1903	1907	1912
German Conservatives	73	72	56	54	60	43
Free Conservatives	20	28	23	21	24	14
National Liberals	42	53	46	51	54	45
Centre	106	96	102	100	105	91
Left Liberals	76	48	49	36	49	42
Social Democrats	35	44	56	81	43	110
Minorities	38	35	34	32	29	33
Right-wing splinter parties	7	21	31	22	33	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>397</b>

▲ Figure 1 *Reichstag* election results 1890–1912. The numbers signify the number of seats won.

## The political structure of the Second Reich

Germany was a young nation at the turn of the century. Less than 50 years had passed since, between 1864 and 1871, Bismarck had used the economic and military might of Prussia to reorganise the map of central Europe through a series of wars. He expelled Austria, the other main German state, from the German Confederation, and set up a North German Confederation which was dominated by Prussia. Finally, in 1871, Prussia defeated France, and brought the south German states into a united Germany. Amidst the glory of this victory, Bismarck proclaimed the Second German Reich in the Hall of Mirrors at the Palace of Versailles, just outside Paris. This Second German Empire (which was to last until 1918) was thus a product of brilliant military success. It included all the German states, except Austria, in a new federal state. It had a written constitution and an assembly, the Reichstag, elected by universal male suffrage.

### ■ IA The political structure of the Second Reich 1871–1918





# Society

## Social trends

### What were the main social trends in Wilhelmine Germany?

The German population rose to 68 million by 1914 – 60 per cent higher than in 1871. By 1911 there were more Germans in their late teens than there would be ever again in the twentieth century, and 80 per cent of the population were 45 or younger. This youthfulness perhaps helps explain the mobile and dynamic nature of Wilhelmine society. This dynamism, however, created new divisions as well as reinforcing old ones.

### Longer lives

Germans were living longer. Infant mortality fell from around 25 per cent in the 1870s to 15 per cent in 1912, mainly due to improvements in hygiene and medical care. Compulsory immunisation against smallpox had been introduced in 1874. A diphtheria serum, available in the early 1890s, cut the number who died of the disease from one in two to one in six. The impact of medical research and the sharp increase in the number of hospitals, doctors and nurses, as well as improvements in living standards, also ensured that those who survived childhood lived longer. A German man born in the 1870s could expect to live to 36, a woman to 38. Those born in the first decade of the twentieth century could expect to live to 45 and 48 respectively.

### An urban society

The movement to the towns that began after 1850 continued at an even faster pace after 1880. By 1910 nearly two-thirds of Germans lived in towns. More than a fifth lived in the 48 big cities with populations exceeding 100,000. By 1907 Berlin had more than 2 million people, of whom 60 per cent had been born outside the city. Even these figures understate the real growth, for many lived in suburbs that would eventually be incorporated in the formal city limits. By 1914 Hamburg had a million people while several other cities – Cologne, Dresden, Leipzig, Munich and Breslau – had more than half a million. Germans moved to towns largely because they expected a better standard of life. Not only Germans moved to the growing towns. In the late nineteenth century, Germany changed from being a net exporter to a net importer of people. Poles made up the largest single group of immigrants but there were also significant numbers of Italians, Dutch and non-Polish Slavs.

Urban tram and train networks, special trains and the coming of the bicycle made getting to work easier. This was also the age of department and chain stores, mail order catalogues and delivery vans, as well as advertising. By the early twentieth century the age of mass consumption had arrived in Germany as in the USA, Britain and other parts of Europe.

### Rural society

Urban life seemed attractive to many Germans who lived and worked on the land. Agricultural workers, employed by estate and large farm owners, toiled long hours (a hundred-hour week was the norm) for low wages. Mechanisation came slowly to many areas and farm work was physically hard, especially during haymaking and harvesting. The 'flight' from the land to the city resulted in labour shortages in some areas. This led to high levels of family self-exploitation, including extensive child labour. Despite the harsh conditions, there were still more than 7 million agricultural workers, many on short-term contracts, in 1907.

Rural dwellers were isolated from the rest of society. Around a third of Germany's population had no access to the railways. They were also disadvantaged with regard to education provision and medical care. By the early twentieth century, a rural child was more likely to die before the age of one than an urban child. Compared with the modernity of urban life, the countryside seemed more backward. The constant flow of people from the countryside to the towns was also a source of rural pessimism. Many farmers and agricultural workers felt as though they were outcasts, exploited by the growing cities.

Nevertheless, agricultural prices did pick up at the end of the nineteenth century. By the early twentieth century there is evidence that many rural inhabitants were becoming better dressed and housed. All-in farm houses, where people and animals lived together, became less common. Many peasants who owned between 100 and 300 acres of land became successful commercial farmers.

### The standard of living

Between 1885 and 1913 real wages in Germany rose by over 30 per cent. (In Britain, by contrast, real wages sagged in the decade before 1914.) Between 1896 and 1912 the proportion of Prussian taxpayers assessed on incomes of under 900 marks a year (including those with no earnings) fell from 75 to 52 per cent of the total. Those with incomes between 900 and 3,000 marks doubled from 22 to 43 per cent.

As well as having more money, workers also had more leisure time. Working hours in mining and industry were almost a third lower in 1914 than they had been in 1880. The typical working day in the non-agricultural sector was nine and a half hours.

However, by 1914 the mass of the German population remained agricultural and industrial workers. While industrial employment seemed an attractive option to many rural workers, urban living and working conditions remained distastefully poor. A third of Germany's population lived at or below the poverty line. Lack of urban housing produced a rising problem of homelessness. The Berlin Homeless Shelter Association accommodated more than 200,000 men a year in the period between 1900 and 1914.

### The working class

The working class was far from united.

- There was a gender divide. Men and women rarely did the same work. Even in industries where they worked side by side, such as textiles, women were usually relegated to subordinate 'unskilled' tasks.
- Ethnicity divided workers. Polish and Italian migrants often created their own subculture.
- Catholic and Protestant divisions remained important.
- Skilled workers considered themselves superior to unskilled workers.

Nevertheless, many men and women were bound together by common experiences, problems and attitudes. Workers were ill more often than the better-off, died younger and were smaller in physique. They lived in overcrowded housing and spent much of their income on food. Most working-class families were dependent on the earnings of women and children. Insecurity, particularly with regard to employment, was endemic. Perhaps a third of the workforce experienced some unemployment in a given year. One form of work-loss was rising sharply: the employer's lockout (when employers

prevent their employees from working, for example, by shutting their factories). In 1910 nearly 250,000 workers were the victims of almost a thousand separate lockouts. Strikes also became more common. On average 200,000 workers went on strike in each of the years between 1905 and 1913.

### Labour movements

Bad conditions encouraged the rise of an organised labour movement. By 1914 there were some 3 million trade union members. The SPD had almost a million members, making it the largest socialist party in the world. The language the party used – exploitation, inequality – made sense to those who heard it. The labour movements, which insisted on the dignity and worth of their members, helped provide workers with a sense of self-respect and fostered a sense of common identity. As well as offering hope for a better world in the future, they sustained workers in the present through a host of worker organisations: not just unions and co-operatives but choral societies, drama groups, lending libraries, educational courses, cycling and gymnastic clubs. They also provided an opportunity for working men to exercise responsibility.

### Social mobility

There were material and mental barriers to upward mobility. Even a skilled craftsman's family was hard-pressed to find the money needed to keep children in school – and forego their income. Many working-class families preferred their children to go into skilled jobs rather than pay for an expensive education. There was also widespread scorn for the 'soft' life of the white-collar workers. Strength and manual dexterity continued to be a source of pride for workers – even if most of them hated their jobs!

The likely destination of the upwardly mobile worker was the lower middle class of foremen, clerks and petty officials. Movement straight from the proletariat to the professions was rare but it was often achieved over two generations: a move from the working to the lower middle class and then to the bourgeoisie.

### The lower middle class

The number of white-collar workers – minor civil servants, men who held supervisory roles, clerks, small shopkeepers – was growing at a fast rate. Such men were generally better paid than manual workers (though often not by much). This lower middle class often had greater aspirations for their children than working-class families and made use of the educational system to place their children in better positions. The expansion of German universities – enrolments rose from 23,000 in 1875 to 72,000 in 1912 – brought an invasion of students from lower middle class backgrounds. They accounted for nearly a half of all Prussian enrolments by 1914.

### The bourgeoisie

The Wilhelmine period was something of a golden age for the so-called bourgeoisie – doctors, high civil servants, professors, merchants, lawyers and businessmen. Such men were increasingly wealthy and this allowed them very comfortable levels of consumption. They could afford fine houses, holidays and servants.

But members of the bourgeoisie often had little in common. There were major differences between industrialists and professionals, between Protestants, Catholics and Jews. While a few great industrialists had far greater wealth than many *Junker* families, most middle-class families did not possess such wealth. Some bourgeoisie families tried to ape the manners of the aristocracy or even

inter-marry with *Junker* landowners. But where intermingling occurred, this did not necessarily entail the casting off of bourgeois identity. It was rare for the wealthiest German businessmen to be ennobled – unlike in Britain. Major Ruhr industrialists did not seek and in some cases (for example, the Krupps) declined ennoblement. The bourgeois values remained seriousness, respect, rectitude – perceived to be 'manly' virtues.

The aristocracy and the bourgeoisie tended to share one outlook. Most feared organised labour which they regarded as a threat to domestic stability. Most saw little good in the godless, uncivilised proletariat.

### The position of women

While German women were not expected to work after they were married, many working-class married women had no option but to do so in order to provide basic provision for their families. Germany still had 1.25 million female domestic servants in 1907 – about the same as in 1882. But this was a declining share of the labour force. More women were working in better paid industrial or clerical jobs.

There were growing opportunities for unmarried middle-class women.

- Female teacher training expanded from the 1890s.
- Women were prominent in the expanding welfare professions, such as nursing and social work.
- In 1899 German women were finally permitted to acquire medical qualifications after long male resistance.

Male hostility to female emancipation remained deep-rooted. Few women went to university. Women remained formally inferior in law. The husband was the legal guardian of his wife. Abortion was illegal and a double standard persisted in sexual morality. Men could have mistresses. Women were ostracised for committing adultery.

Nevertheless, by 1914 women were becoming more publicly active, at work, in charities, even in politics. This was most obviously true of middle-class women who had by far the greatest opportunities.

### Order and discipline

Imperial Germany liked to see itself as an orderly, peaceable society. There was some truth in this view. Germans were not innately docile but they lived increasingly in a world of institutions that sought to discipline them. These institutions might encounter resistance, particularly from the lower classes, but their capacity to shape society was considerable.

### Crime

Crime statistics, swollen by the growth of the police and by the addition of many new offences, are hard to unravel. Murder and property crimes seem to have remained constant. Recorded crime rose in urban areas; it declined in rural areas. Working-class districts could be violent places, full of young men with few attachments, who were not averse to carrying clubs, knives and even guns. But by the standards of the time, Germany was not a lawless or violent society. The murder rate stood at around a twentieth of the Italian or Spanish: only the Netherlands in Europe boasted a lower rate. There was far less unrest or 'collective protest' in towns and countryside than elsewhere in Europe. American Ray Stannard Baker observed in 1901 that German cities enjoyed a reputation for being 'safer, perhaps, than any other in the world'. This may have been due to improvements in living standards. But it may also have resulted from a German respect for authority – perhaps, some suggested, too great a respect.

# Ideas & beliefs

## Ideas and ideology

### Why did anti-Semitism develop in Wilhelmine Germany?

While Marxist ideas were enthusiastically supported by the left, right-wing politicians increasingly espoused nationalism and **anti-Semitism**. Wilhelm II, like many Germans, was both nationalistic and anti-Semitic.

### Nationalism

In the mid-nineteenth century, nationalism in Germany had been a progressive force that aimed to promote parliamentary government. By the end of the century this had changed. Most nationalists were now conservative, bent on maintaining the *status quo* in a militarised Germany. Many late nineteenth-century European writers, by no means all German, extolled the virtues of the Germanic race. Militant German nationalists were invariably hostile to – and contemptuous of – other races, especially Slavs. This had some impact on the substantial number of non-Germans – Poles, French and Danes – who lived within the *Reich*. Nationalists wanted to create an ethnically and linguistically homogeneous nation-state. They had little respect for minority languages and culture. There was some discrimination against national minorities – particularly the Poles, who comprised five per cent of Germany's population. Prussia's language legislation in Poland, which decreed that all lessons should be taught in the German language, gave rise to a political crisis of national proportions, including a mass strike by 40,000 Polish schoolchildren in 1906. Repression fuelled rather than dampened Polish nationalism.

### Anti-Semitism

By the late nineteenth century many German nationalists were anti-Semitic. Before this time European anti-Semitism was based to a large extent on religious hostility: Jews were blamed for the death of Christ and for not accepting Christianity. While anti-Semitism did not disappear, hostility towards Jews in Germany was politically insignificant by the mid-nineteenth century. In 1871 the German constitution extended total civil equality to Jews.

Throughout the nineteenth century, thousands of Russian Jews, fleeing from persecution, settled in Germany. Many prospered, becoming doctors, bankers, lawyers and academics. Thus, by 1900 Jews played an active and visible part in the cultural, economic and financial life of Germany. Most saw themselves as loyal Germans. Many no longer identified with a separate Jewish community, some inter-married with Germans and converted to Christianity. In 1910 the 600,000 practising Jews who lived in the *Reich* constituted about one per cent of the population.

### Belief in race struggle

During the late nineteenth century, anti-Semitism became increasingly racial rather than religious. As early as the 1850s French Count Joseph Arthur de Gobineau argued that races were physically and psychologically different. History, in Gobineau's view, was essentially a racial struggle and the rise and fall of civilisations was racially determined. He claimed that all the high cultures in the world were the work of the **Aryan** (or Germanic) race and that cultures declined when Aryans interbred with racially 'lower stock'.

**Social Darwinist** – At its simplest, Social Darwinism is a political philosophy which argues that the strong survive at the expense of the weak; it is an idea derived from Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, and used by the Nazis as the cornerstone of their ideological belief in racial hierarchies.

**Pacifism** – Pacifists are people who are opposed to war. Many socialists were pacifists in 1914.

**Absolute monarch** – A king or emperor who has virtually absolute or total power and his will and decisions alone make the law.

Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, published in 1859, provided further ammunition for the race cause. Although Darwin said nothing about race, his theory of natural selection as a means of evolution was adopted – and adapted – by many scholars. **Social Darwinists** soon claimed that races and nations needed to be fit to survive and rule. A number of writers claimed that the Germans had been selected to dominate the earth. They therefore needed more land. This would have to be won from other inferior races, most likely the Slavs. Such visions of international politics as an arena of struggle between different races for supremacy were commonplace by 1914.

### The growth of anti-Semitism

Militant German nationalists, who believed that the Germans were indeed the master race, were invariably hostile to – and contemptuous of – other races, especially the Jews. Jews came to stand for all that nationalists loathed: liberalism, socialism and **pacifism**. Pamphleteers, newspaper editors and politicians presented anti-Semitic views to the German public. So did artists and musicians (like Richard Wagner, the famous composer). Among the most prominent anti-Semitic writers was Wagner's son-in-law Houston Stewart Chamberlain. Son of a British admiral and a German mother, Chamberlain published his most influential work – *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* – in 1900. He claimed that the Jews were a degenerate race, conspiring to attain world domination and threatening German greatness. His book became a bestseller in Germany, even drawing praise from Wilhelm II.

Economic factors may have encouraged anti-Semitism. Those groups hit by economic and social change (especially peasant farmers and skilled workers) were easily persuaded that Jewish financiers were to blame for their suffering. Anti-Semitic prejudice was also strong in the higher reaches of society: the court, the civil service, the army and the universities. Thus, anti-Jewish feeling permeated broad sections of German society. In the late nineteenth century anti-Semitic politicians contested elections. Right-wing parties, which espoused anti-Semitism, gained a majority in the *Reichstag* in 1893.

However, the strength of political anti-Semitism in Germany should not be exaggerated. The success of the nationalist parties in 1893 had little to do with anti-Semitism. Indeed, no major German political party pre-1914 was dominated by anti-Semites and after 1900 the anti-Semitic parties were in steep decline, running out of voters and money. Respectable opinion in Germany remained opposed to anti-Semitism. In 1914 German Jews seemed in less danger than Jews in France or Russia.

# Now you need to prepare yourself for the first key issues.

Watch these key video and make notes on them.

Do this on the following slides.

You will need to look at:

1. What problems the Weimar Republic faced.
2. What the constitution was.
3. What political opposition the new government faced.
4. What economic problems the new government faced.

# 1. What key issues did the Weimar Republic face when they came to power?

<https://youtu.be/KzY0fKz6dXc>

Make your notes here:

## 2. What was the Weimar constitution? What strengths/weaknesses did it have?

[https://youtu.be/\\_W6JAqg6TPk](https://youtu.be/_W6JAqg6TPk)

Make your notes here:

### 3. Who were the Spartacists and what problems did they pose for the Weimar government?

[https://youtu.be/FxeWA\\_AV3bo](https://youtu.be/FxeWA_AV3bo)

Make your notes here:

## 4. Who were the freikorps? What was the Kapp Putsch? Why did this pose a problem for the government?

[https://youtu.be/Nk\\_AZtB5yKc](https://youtu.be/Nk_AZtB5yKc)

Make your notes here:



## 5. What was hyperinflation? How did this happen? Why did this pose a problem for the government?

<https://youtu.be/O2CleNANQMM>

Make your notes here:

# Review: true or false

1. The Kaiser allowed a fully democratic government.
2. Democracy allows for free elections and for everyone to vote.
3. The constitution is a breakdown of a how a country is run
4. Dictatorships often have a democratic election.
5. Communism is when property is publicly owned and each person works and is paid according to their abilities and needs.
6. The freikorps were left wing soldiers.
7. Hyperinflation is when money becomes worthless.
8. Government in which one person has uncontrolled or unlimited authority over others is an autocracy.