

Germany in Transition, 1919-39

The recovery of Weimar

Recovery from hyperinflation

Task: Match the following agreements to the correct description.

The Dawes Plan	Agreed the reparations figure should be reduced from £6.6 billion to £1.85 and that the length of time Germany had to pay would be extended to 59 years.
The Young Plan	Agreed that Germany and 64 other nations would keep their armies for self-defence only and solve all international disputes through peaceful means.
The Locarno Pact	Named after the US vice-president, Charles Dawes. Agreed that payments would be made at 1 billion marks for the first year and would increase slowly, US would provide Germany with loans and French troops would evacuate the Ruhr by 1925.
The Kellogg-Briand Pact	Agreement between Germany, France, Belgium and Italy to keep existing borders. This started a period of cooperation between Germany, France and Britain.
League of Nations	An international organisation set up in 1920 to try and maintain peace. Germany was initially left out of this organisation, but was allowed a seat in 1926. This showed Germany's return as an leading power.

Political and social developments

	May 1924	December 1924	May 1928
Social Democrats (SPD)	100	131	153
National Party (DNVP)	95	103	73
Communist Party (KPD)	62	45	54
Nazi Party	32	14	12

Table 1. Election results 1924-8

Task: Use Table 1 to answer the questions below.

1. What was the most popular party between 1924-8?

2. Which party gained the most seats from 1924-8?

3. Compare the election results of the two extreme parties (KPD and Nazi Party).

Stability between 1924-8 was down to the popularity of two leaders, S_____ and H_____. Hindenburg had been one of Germany's war leaders during 1914-8 and he was elected President in 1925, which showed that even the conservative had begun to accept the Weimar Republic.

The period of 1924-9 is described as a 'golden age' in the Weimar Republic because of changes in the standard of living, the position of women and culture.

Task: Use three colours to categorise the following social changes.

- By 1928 there had been an increase in real wages of over 10%- Germany had some of the best paid workers in Europe
- By 1928, homelessness had been reduced by 60%
- The government introduced tax breaks, land grants and low-interest loans to encourage the building of new houses and apartments
- The middle classes didn't benefit much, they tended to be the ones who lost their savings during the hyperinflation crisis
- Introduced reforms to help war veterans, wives and dependents of the war dead, single mothers and the disabled
- Weimar employed architects and planners to come up with ways to deal with the housing shortages
- Unemployment remained high in professions such as teachers, lawyers and civil servants
- Between 1924-8, more than 2 million new homes were built
- Weimar Republic introduced the Unemployment Insurance Law in 1927, which made workers and employees to make contributions to a national scheme for unemployment welfare
- In April 1928 almost 184,000 middle class workers were unemployed, but almost half of them did not qualify for unemployment benefits from the government
- By 1929, the state was spending 33 times more on housing than it had been in 1913

KEY

Wages

Housing

Unemployment
insurance

Task: Complete the gap fill to find out about the change in the position of women during Weimar Germany.

In 1919 women over the age of _____ were given the vote. The Weimar constitution also introduced equality in education, allowed women to become _____ and gave them equal _____ in many professions. German women had some of the most _____ legal rights of any country in Europe.

There were also changes in employment. The most obvious change was the number of women in new areas of employment e.g. _____, social work, shops, factories and civil service. By 1933, there were _____ women teachers and 3,000 doctors.

Women also enjoyed much more freedom socially. They went out unescorted, drank and smoked in public. They became very fashion conscious, wearing short _____ and _____.

pay

advanced

100,000

politicians

teachers

20 years

skirts

makeup

ART

- Weimar artists tried to show everyday life
- They wanted ordinary people to understand the art, so reflected their lives
- This new art was given the name 'new objectivity' because the artists wanted to portray society in an objective way
- A famous Weimar artist was George Grosz

ARCHITECTURE

- Bauhaus was the 'School of Building' for architects
- They designed lots of things e.g. chairs, houses and cigarette kiosks
- Their approach was very different to pre-war designs- less elaborate and less decorative

CINEMA

- Golden age for cinema e.g. Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (thought to be the best film of the decade)
- Futuristic science-fiction film that shows a city where a beautiful and cultured utopia exists above a bleak underworld of mistreated workers

LITERATURE

- Right-wing writers were critical of German democracy and glorified their experiences in WWI e.g. Arthur Möller and Oswald Spengler
- Other writers were anti-war e.g. Erich Remarque and Ludwig Renn, they described the horrors of war

Task: To what extent was the period between 1924-9 the 'golden age'? *You need at least two pieces of evidence for each side.*

Was a 'golden age'	Was NOT a 'golden age'

What's your overall opinion? *Explain your answer*

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