

How strong were the Nazis between 1919 and 1929?

Plot the following events on your graph according to whether they improved Nazi strength or made the Nazis weaker.

Events

- **1919** – There were six members of the German Workers Party. They hate democracy and want to use violence to overthrow the Weimar Republic.
- **1922** – There were 3000 members of the Nazi Party
- **November 1923** – The Nazis launch the Munich Putsch after Stresemann calls off Passive Resistance in the Ruhr. It fails and Hitler is arrested.
- **1923** – During his trial, Hitler wins much support from people who are fed up with the Weimar Republic. He claims the Republic have betrayed the German people. He is sentenced to 5 years in prison.
- **1923** – Following the Munich Putsch, the Nazi Party is outlawed in Germany.
- **May 1924** – The Nazis change their tactics. They realise they will have to take power by being legally elected. Under another name they win 32 seats in the Reichstag election. This is because of the good performance Hitler gave at his trial.
- **1924** – Gustav Stresemann starts to rebuild the German economy. **Between 1924 and 1929**, living conditions improve for many and the Weimar Government appears to be improving. The Nazis find it hard to recruit people.

From here the Nazis struggle

- **27 February 1925**, the ban on the Nazi Party is lifted. Hitler re-launches the Party in the Munich Beer Hall.
- **March 1925** – The Nazis start to hold a lot of public meetings. They make speeches, listen to people's complaints and then use posters and more meetings to win people around. They have also been running evening classes for their members to make them better speakers.
- **1925-1928** – The Nazis work hard to recruit members from the working classes. Some unemployed German workers are jealous of successful Jewish businessmen. The Nazis use anti-Semitic (anti-Jewish) propaganda to recruit these people. These tactics begin to make a difference to the numbers supporting the Nazis.
- **1928** – The Nazis start to recruit middle class German businessmen and farmers. The farmers have struggled under the Weimar Republic and the businessmen were worried about the debts they owed to the USA. The Nazis promise to help farmers and free Germany from the Dawes Plan. The number of their supporters is still relatively small however.
- **At the end of 1928** the Nazis have 12 seats in the Reichstag (2.6% of the vote). The Social Democrats had 155 seats and the Communists 48.

How strong were the Nazis between 1929 and 1933?

Plot the following events on your graph according to whether they improved Nazi strength or made the Nazis weaker.

- Chancellor **June 1928**-March 1930 Hermann Muller Soc Dem
- **3rd October 1929** Death of Gustav Stresemann
- **28th October 1929** Wall Street Crash American Stock Exchange collapsed, and caused an *economic depression*. America called in all its foreign loans, which destroyed Weimar Germany.
- Chancellor **March 1930** – May 1932 Heinrich Brüning Centre.
- **1930** Chancellor Brüning cut government expenditure, wages and unemployment pay - the worst thing to do during a depression. He could not get the Reichstag to agree to his actions, so **President Hindenburg used Article 48 to pass the measures** by decree. (*Article 48 – if a majority of the members of the Reichstag do not approve of a law, they still have the power to veto it.*)
- **1930** Unemployment figures reach 3,076,000
- **1930** Brüning suspends the Reichstag to avoid a vote of no confidence. Sets dangerous precedent of use of Article 48 as a political expedient.
- **September 1930** Election Hitler becomes the leader of the second largest party in Germany.
(The Communists of the KPD gained 2.5 percentage points, bringing their share of the vote to 13.1%. The Nazi vote increased from 2.6% to 18.3%. These two extremist parties now had a combined total of 184 seats in the Reichstag, in other words 32% of all seats. *The heaviest losses were sustained by the SPD, whose share of only 24.5% was 5.3 percentage points lower than in 1928. The other mainstream parties also lost ground. The Centre obtained 11.8% of the vote (down by 0.3 of a percentage point), the German State Party (DDP), fell by 1.1% to 3.8%, and the DVP won only 4.7% of the vote, down by 4%.)*
- **July 1932** Unemployment reaches 5,392,000
- **31 July 1932** The Nazi party emerge as the strongest party 37.4% of the vote. The KPD increased its share of the vote, achieving its best-ever result with 14.5%. Still, over half of the German citizens do not vote for the Nazis and they still do not have enough seats in the Reichstag to be able to pass laws without getting additional votes from representatives from other political parties.
- **October 1932** Unemployment reaches nearly 6 million.
- **6 November 1932**, The last democratic elections again the Nazis were the strongest party with 33.1%. KPD gain again with 16.9%. With 319 out of 608 then 296 out of 584 seats, the Communists and National Socialists effectively had a joint power of veto in the Reichstag
- Hindenburg's term as president was ending in the spring of 1932. At age 84, he was reluctant to run again, but knew that if he didn't, Hitler would win. Hindenburg won the election, with 50% of the vote but Hitler received 37% of the vote.
- The government was in chaos. President Hindenburg dismissed Brüning. Franz von Papen (Centre/non-partisan) becomes Chancellor (**June 1932** – Nov 1932)
- **Dec 1932** – Jan 1933 Kurt von Schleicher non-partisan

- **January 1933** — German President Paul von Hindenburg understands that he will need the support of the Nazi Party to get any laws passed. Hindenburg and von Papen came up with a plan to get the Nazis on their side by offering to make Hitler vice chancellor. He refused and demanded to be made chancellor. They agreed, thinking they could control him. Hitler becomes chancellor of a coalition government, where the Nazis have a third of the seats in the Reichstag but only 3 out of 12 cabinet members are Nazi.
- **February 27, 1933** — The Reichstag (parliament) building is set on fire. Hitler quickly blames the communists.
- **February 28, 1933** — Hitler uses the emergency power (Article 48) of the president to issue the Decree for the Protection of People and State. This allows the government to search and confiscate private property and arrest anyone belonging to rival political parties, especially communists.
- **5th March 1933 – Election.** Nazis get 44% of the vote. Nazis gained 288 seats in the Reichstag but failed to gain a majority. Even with support from the DNVP (nationalists) they were unable to achieve 2/3 majority needed to change the constitution.
- **13th March 1933** — Hitler creates a new government department, the Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda.
- **March 1933** — First Concentration camps are opened for political opponents
- **March 23, 1933** — Hitler announces the Enabling Act, which is then approved by the Reichstag. The Enabling Act gives Hitler dictatorial powers for four years. It allows (or “enables”) Hitler to punish anyone he considers an enemy of the state. This law also says that Hitler can pass laws that are against the ideas in the constitution. Some members of parliament do not agree with this law. While some opponents of the Enabling Act vote against it, many opponents of the law are in jail or in hiding. So there are not enough votes in parliament to veto the Enabling Act.
- **7th April 1933** - Law for Restoration of Professional Civil Service. The civil service administration, courts and schools were purged of “alien elements”, i.e. Jews and the opponents of the Nazis.
- **April 26, 1933** — Hitler organizes a secret state police called the Gestapo to “protect public safety and order.” Gestapo police can arrest people and place them in jail without any oversight by a court or judge.
- **2nd May 1933** - Trade Unions banned. All unions were incorporated into a new German Labour Front (DAF)
- **May 6, 1933** — Nazis begin holding public book burnings. Germans are asked to burn any books considered offensive to Germany, including books by Jewish authors.
- **14th July 1933** - Law against the formation of New Parties. No new parties were allowed, so Germany becomes a SINGLE-PARTY STATE.
- **20th July 1933** - Concordat between the state and the Catholic Church
- **30th June 1934** – Night of the Long Knives
- **August 2, 1934** — President Hindenburg dies. Hitler proposes a new law that would combine the role of president and chancellor in a new position called the Führer. He calls for a vote of the German people in which he wins approval for his new position.
- **19th August 1934** - Hitler declares himself Führer – Head of State, President, Chancellor and Commander of the Army. The army swears an oath of loyalty to Hitler instead of to the state.

