

## Life in Nazi Germany, 1933 – 1939: key / overview information

### **Women**

**Appearance** – traditional Aryan, no make-up, did not smoke, not too thin.

**Law for the Encouragement of Marriage**, 1933 – aimed to increase population, gave loans to young couples who could keep ¼ of the loan for each child they had.

**Medals** – awarded for women with larger families. Medals given out on the Hitler's mother's birthday.

**Divorce law** – changed in 1938 to say that men could divorce women if they could not have children.

**Lebensborn** – scheme where unmarried women could become pregnant by a 'racially pure' SS officer to 'donate a baby to the Fuhrer'.

**3 Ks** – Kinder, Küche, Kirche (children, church and kitchen).

**Work** – women had to leave their jobs – invisible unemployment.

**'Duty Year'** – from 1937. Germany was re-arming and needed women to work. Marriage loans abolished. Scheme was unsuccessful.

### **Children**

**Schools** – teachers had to swear an oath of loyalty to Hitler and join the Nazi Teachers' League. Textbooks were re-written to fit Nazi views. Curriculum changed to focus on Nazi ideas and boys / girls were prepared for later lives either in the army or as mothers. New subject of Eugenics introduced (racial profiling) to promote the Nazi idea of the Aryan race being superior, especially compared to Jews.

**Hitler Youth** – compulsory from 1939. By 1939 it had 7 million members. Different groups for boys and girls / younger and older children. Activities supported later roles in life. Aimed at ensuring loyalty from younger generation and therefore limiting any potential for future opposition.

**Reducing opposition** – young people part of a wider / informal network of surveillance: encouraged to tell teachers / Hitler Youth leaders if they heard their parents criticising or telling jokes about Hitler.

### **Workers**

**National Labour Service (RAD)** – compulsory scheme from 1935 for men aged 18 – 25 to serve in the RAD. Superficially reduced unemployment.

**Job Creation Schemes** – spent over 37 billion marks on building projects, e.g. autobahns.

**Rearmament / conscription** – rebuilding military and preparing for war, but creating jobs in the meantime.

**Strength through Joy (KdF)** – tries to promote loyalty and production through improving leisure time and working environment of workers.

**German Labour Front (DAF)** – Nazi equivalent of Trade Unions. In theory it was voluntary, but would be VERY difficult to get a job without membership.

### **Jews**

**Isolation** – anti-Semitism in schools, Jewish children expelled from schools in 1938. 1933 boycott of Jewish shops. 1934 banned from public spaces.

**Persecution** – 1935 Nuremberg Laws (Reich Law on Citizenship and the Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honour).

**Olympic Affect** – 1936 Berlin Olympics meant a lull in anti-Jewish campaigns.

**Persecution and Murder** – 1938 Jews had to register possessions and carry identity cards. Jews had red letter 'J' on passport.

**Kristallnacht**, November. 1939 Reich Office for Jewish Emigration established. Ghettos established. Jews have to surrender radios so they cannot listen to foreign news.

**Genocide and Holocaust come under the 'Germany in WW2' part of the course.**

### Police State

**SS** – formed as a bodyguard unit for Hitler. Wore black shirts, led by Himmler. Showed total obedience to Hitler. 50,000+ members by 1939. After Night of Long Knives they were responsible for removing all opposition to the Nazis and for maintaining security.

**Gestapo** – secret state police, set up in 1933 and from 1936 was part of the SS. Supervised by Heydrich (Himmler’s deputy). Became the most important police section of the Nazi state. Would arrest and imprison those suspected of opposing the Nazis.

**Concentration Camps** – prison camps. First one opened in 1933 in Dachau. Ran by the SS. Prisoners were initially those who had opposed the Nazi regime. They were classified into different categories and were questioned / tortured and used for hard / slave labour.

**Legal system** – all judges needed to be part of the National Socialist League for the Maintenance of Law so that only Nazi ideals were represented in courts. 1934 Peoples’ Court established to deal with cases of treason. Hitler would intervene if he thought the sentences were too lenient.

### Propaganda / censorship

Nazi control over the messages / ideas that the German population heard, either through promotion of specific ideas supportive of the Nazis (propaganda) or through editing and removing non-Nazi ideas (censorship).

**Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda**, set up in 1934 by Goebbels.

**Propaganda** – Cinema / films, radio broadcasts, newspapers, rallies, posters.

**Censorship** – non-Nazi newspapers and magazines shut down (link to Enabling Act 1933), radio stations placed under Nazi control, books censored and controlled (20,000 books written by Jews, communists and anti – Nazi professors were burned in May 1933), Law Against Malicious Gossip 1934 forbade telling anti-Nazi jokes. Punishment would be fines or prison sentences.

### Religion – Catholics and Protestants

**Catholic Church** – 1933 Concordat. Hitler broke the Concordat within a few months. 1937 Pope Pius XI made his famous statement ‘With Burning Anxiety’. Hitler responded with sending 400 Catholic priests to Dachau concentration camp.

**Protestant Churches** – 1933, Pastors Emergency League, led by Niemoller, for those who opposed Hitler. They set up their own Confessional Church in 1934. In 1937 Niemoller was sent to a concentration camp and the Church banned.

**National Reich Church** - group of 28 Protestant Church groups who agreed to unite together in 1933. Led by Reich Bishop Ludwig Muller, was a deliberate attempt to Nazify the Churches – Mein Kampf, sword, Hitler’s image and swastika all key features of the National Reich Church.

### Economy

**Economic Minister** – from 1934: Hjalmar Schacht

**Deficit spending** – strategy to boost the economy. Mefo Bills used to finance public works. These were credit notes given to building companies that would be paid out after 5 years (with interest). This was intended to encourage spending without causing hyperinflation.

**Autarky** – self sufficiency. Aimed to reduce German dependency on imported raw materials.