• PRESIDENT- elected by a vote every 7 years, chooses the chancellor, can use Article 48 to pass emergency decrees and takes control of army and can dismiss Reichstag
• CHANCELLOR- chooses ministers that run the country, puts laws to Reichstag, needs a majority in Reichstag to pass these laws
• CABINET- chosen by chancellor, formulates laws to the Reichstag
• REICHSTAG- elected by secret ballot every 4 years, each party gets one seat for every 60,000 votes, proportional representation, passes laws of the country
• REICHSRAT- members sent by 18 Lander, one for every 70,000 in the land, could veto a law passed by the Reichstag unless Reichstag had 2/3rds majority or more
• LANDER LOCAL GOVT- 18 local regions each with a local parliament to decide issues in the region, run own education, police and judiciary, federal laws always override law of the land, Prussia no longer special status among states.

Overcoming challenges to the constitution 1918-29:
• Many resented the government for the TOV as they thought the war could have been won- So from the start the government had to battle its own unpopularity as well as opposition through voting, debates and violence in the 1920s and 30s
• A significant factor of the Weimar government staying in power was that the only alternative to its rule was a left-wing government, so right-wingers who wanted the return of an imperial government supported the Republic.
• Very democratic, but it didn't realise that the more parties there were, the harder it was for the Reichstag to be effective (29 parties in the Reichstag during 1920s)
• Members also moved between parties or split (e.g. in 1920 the USPD split and half the party joined the KPD)
• Proportional representation made many feel as if there were a lot of politicians but none specifically interested in them.
• It was almost impossible for any party to have a majority in the Reichstag (between 1919-23 there were 9 short-lived coalitions). When coalitions broke down the chancellor asked the president to use Article 48, making it look as if the government was in constant crisis as this was only meant for emergency decree.
• Between 1924-29 the german economy recovered and reached agreements with other countries thus starting to restore its position abroad.
• Stresemann believed in economic recovery and peace relations with other countries were important for the stability of Germany's political system- one of the main reasons he was foreign minister for most of his time in government.
• Stresemann was chancellor during 1923 then foreign minister until 1929 and managed to hold a coalition of the DVP, Centre Party, SPD and DDP for much of that time.
• As the economy improved, social conditions stabilised and political violence died down. (1924-29 no political figures assassinated)

Collapse of democracy 1930-33:
• President Hindenburg was the first to voice the ‘stab in the back’ theory about the TOV (that Germany could have won the war but were ‘stabbed in the back’ by the November Criminals)- contributing to the unpopularity of the Weimar government.
• Hindenburg's commitment to the government was questionable and he was likely to favour government by decree, sidelining the Reichstag.
• The Wall Street Crash meant the USA stopped lending money and called for its loans back, meaning prices and unemployment rose rapidly while wages fell. Support for extremist parties rose.
• Hindenburg was not inclined to keep chancellors who could not get an agreement on policy, but changing chancellors made the government even weaker. Parties found it hard to work together and SPD refused to be in a coalition.
• Between 1945-47 Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland all became communist states.
• West urged USA to set up Marshall Plan (policy of containment) to stop spread of communism
• Tensions showed the most in Germany as it had obvious points of conflict
• April 1946 KPD and SPD formed a single party- the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), becoming the most significant part in the Soviet zone.

Steps to separation:
• The allies saw Germany as a country to be dismantled to make it politically powerless and a buffer zone between the communist East and the capitalist West
• The most evident steps to separation were taken by the allies in the West, although they claimed the soviets were moving too slowly or being obstructive, forcing them to act.
• October 1946 elections were held across Berlin, the communists won in the Soviet Zone, but they did badly in all of the other zones.

The FRG:
• The Parliamentary Council that was set up on 1 september 1948 to draw a temporary constitution for the FRG announced this constitution, the Basic Law, on 23 May 1949.
• It was ratified in the week of 16-22 May 1949 by 2/3rds of the Lander.
• It outlined a very free and liberal democracy, while allowing for the fact that it was a constitution that would be rewritten when Germany united.
• These groups no longer had significant power bases from which to oppose a government.

The Basic Law promised:
• equal rights to German citizens, regardless of race, political views or religion
• free speech, the freedom to form unions or other groups, free assembly and no censorship
• a state education for all, although private schooling was allowed
• It also had clauses that suggested it could be used to be more repressive- banning political parties if they seemed to undermine the FRG or its democratic principles.

Elections:
• The first elections to the Bundestag took place on 14 August 1949, and it first met on 7 September 1949.
• Small parties still took up enough of the vote to ensure that there was not a majority party.
• The first FGR chancellor Adenauer, leader of the CDU
• The USSR responded to the creation if the FRG by setting up the German Democratic Republic (GDR) announcing its constitution on 7 october 1949.
• SED was the majority party

Consolidation under Adenauer and Erhard 1949-65:
• From 1949 into the 1950s both the FRG and GDR still negotiated in relation to unifying the country
• However, as time passed they developed an increasing number of economic and political bonds that tied the, to the West and the USSR respectively, as the Cold War hardened.
• Adenauer became the ‘father of modern Germany’ because he was chancellor when West Germany emerged from Western control. (he was chancellor of West Germany from 1949-1963)
• Changes in the 1960s
- By the 1960s the FRG found its political feet in Europe and by the economic miracle had an astonishingly strong economy.
- People were more confident and a younger generation was getting caught up in the feeling of youth protest though the West.
- Young people who objected to ‘year zero’ that had helped Adenauer rebuild the civil service and the army wanted to confront Germany’s Nazi past. They adopted the slogan: “what did you do in the war, Daddy” to taunt the older generation.
- There were protests against the FRG’s military and its involvement with the West through NATO and the possibility that it may start to build atomic weapons.
- Young people joined the rising discontent with the way the USA was conducting the war in Vietnam. For many young people the USA became the face of money-grabbing, repressive capitalism.

• The APO
- The APO came about partly because of the distrust of young intellectuals for the established conservative govt. and partly because there were no left wing parties to absorb them after the KPD was banned and the SPD revised its policies to be less radical in 1959.
- While the revised policies got the SPD more power, it left the left wing unrepresented
- The APO had a strong university membership, many of whom supported radical theories about how to oppose the government and saw student protest as key.

• The SDS
- The German Socialist Student Union (SDS) were part of the SPD but broke away as it felt the party was becoming less radical and didn’t represent their feelings.
- The SDS protested about the Vietnam War and nuclear weapons, and about former Nazis holding office in the govt. and the USA’s involvement in NATO.
- In 1967 during demonstrations against the human rights record of Iran, a student was shot by the police, leading to an increase in SDS membership but also to a split regarding how violent demonstrations should be.
- 11 May 1968 SDS took part in a major demonstration against the Emergency Law, 80,000 people protested against what they saw as a violation of the Basic Law’s human rights principles- the law passed anyway.

• Challenges in the 1970s
- Govt. pressure on protest and dissent via the emergency law and police control reduced protests by many groups, however it made some groups feel marginalised so they resorted to terrorism.
- Eventually the police developed hardline policies to deal with the terrorists: posters of wanted terrorists
- There were regular gun battles the police as terrorists would try to avoid arrest, e.g. in 1971 a leader of the West Berlin Tupamaros was shot by the police so the members disbanded and moved to other groups.
- One of the most long lived terrorist groups was the Baader-Meinhof Gang set up in 1970 and called itself the Red Army Faction (RAF)- by the end of 1970 most of its members were in prison and they called for hunger strikes.
- In November one of the hunger strikers died in prison, causing bombings of the homes of the lawyers and judges involved in the trials that sent the members to prison

Attempts to control extremism 1918-32:
- The Weimar governments problems controlling extremist groups stemmed from conditions at the time and setting up a liberal democracy when people wanted a revolutionary government.
• However, as inflation returned unemployment rose (especially long term), many families lived in cramped housing with shared toilet facilities.
• Skilled workers and low level clerical workers also experienced rising unemployment and many ended up spending all of their savings and claiming benefit.

How did the Nazis attempt economic recovery 1933-36?
• They came to power promising economic recovery as soon as possible
• Creating employment
  - Work was one of the major economic issues.
  - Jews were no longer allowed to work- taking them out of workforce statistics. Women also discouraged from working so not counted in statistics. (Nazis manipulated stats)
  - They created work and encouraged businesses to do the same, especially temp work for the long-term unemployed.
  - Road building schemes tied to increased car and manufacture created work and improved communications which helped to move goods and raw materials efficiently
• Managing agriculture
  - Agriculture was important to the Nazi desire for autarky, so agricultural reforms were part of the first Four-Year Plan
  - Alfred Hugenburg increased import tariffs on agricultural produce, making German produce cheaper; he banned banks repossessing farms from farmers in debt
  - Work creation schemes sent people, especially young women, to work on farms as well as on building projects.
  - Govt. control of food and prices was not welcomed by everyone- not all farmers wanted to be told what to produce and what price to sell it for. - in 1928 German farmers provided 68% of all farm produce in the country; by 1934 it was 80%.
• Managing business and the workers
  - Some big businesses such as the iron and steel industry and I.G. Farben supported the Nazis, but others were less happy and some suffered due to measures to help small businesses.
  - Some department stores made 80% less in 1934 than in 1929 due to the 1933 Law for the Protection of Retail Trade stopping the building of new stores and banned expansion of existing ones.
  - Nazi propaganda discouraged using department stores because small businesses had supported Hitler, most big business owners did not.
  - May 1933 they announced there was only one union- DAF. Joining was ‘voluntary’ but it became increasingly hard for non-members to get work.
  - The DAF and its organisation of working conditions allowed big businesses to exploit workers more- they could set their own working conditions.
• The crisis of 1935-36
  - Schacht’s shift of trade to south east Europe and exchanging goods meant trade initially improved. By 1935 however many countries were demanding cash for their goods.
  - Germany was still not completely self-sufficient, and rearming and work creation meant that it still needed to import raw materials and food- shortages of fats and meats.
  - The basis of the new 4 year plan of 1936 was to cut consumption without introducing unpopular rationing and press for higher production.

Creating a command economy 1936-39:
• A command economy is one where the state decides what and how much to produce. The Nazis worked towards this from the start, setting up state control over industry and agriculture as they rebuilt the economy.
• The first 4 year plan ran for just 3 years until 1936, in 1936 the state had high foreign debts because of the raw-material imports for rearmament and work creation.
In the early 1960s there was concern that the university system was failing to serve Germany’s needs. Student numbers had risen and facilities such as leisure theatres and student accommodation were inadequate.

Critics said the curriculum was too old fashioned, teaching neuter technology or economics. There were also calls to make uni education more ‘democratic’.

More students went to university from 239,000 students in 1960 to 749,000 in 1980. In 1971 the Federal Education Promotion Act provided state funding and loans to encourage WC students to go to university.

Cultural and generational tensions in the FRG:

- Cultural tensions
  - Germans had traditionally seen their country as a leader of European culture and after the war many wanted to find a way to regain that position.
  - It was hard to retain culture such as the music of Wagner that the Nazis had approved of; many people found it easier to adopt the cultural offerings that the Allies flooded their zones with such as Hollywood movies in the USA zone and Shakespeare in GB zone.
  - Not all aspects of culture divided the generations- from the 1950s a growing number of social movements drew people in of all ages e.g. the anti-nuclear movement.
  - They shared a rejection of consumerism and a desire for a peaceful, more equal society and a desire to change established society- some simply to create a better society and other felt this change was the only way to save society from destruction.

- Generational tensions
  - During the 1960s there were increasing generational tensions, with many of the older generation wanting to see 1945 as ‘year zero’ and many of the younger generation wanting to confront the past.
  - Older people wanted a familiar traditional German culture with a comfortable consumerist lifestyle after the shortages and upheavals of the 1940s, while younger people (especially students) pressed for a less consumerist lifestyle and a culture that faced both the present and immediate past.

The status of and attitudes towards ethnic minorities 1918-32:

- Under the Weimar Republic, life for ethnic minorities varied widely, depending on where they lived and who they were. Ethnic minorities were mostly accepted, although there was low-level discrimination like receiving lower wages.
- Elite conservative groups (landowners and the army) were less welcoming, and city-based liberals were more welcoming.
- Article 113 said that groups that spoke a different language could not legally be stopped from using this language or preserving their national identity- not always implemented.
- Attitudes to Jews
  - The Jewish population was about 1% of the German population in 1918, and the falling birth rate meant that it was only 0.76% in 1933 (about 500,000 people).
  - About 1/3rd of them lived in Berlin which many called ‘Jew Berlin’- Jews had a huge influence on culture and some became politicians (5 jews held cabinet posts in Weimar).
  - Some conservative judges were anti-Semitic and made racist remarks with their judgements, they were also anti-communist.
  - When the depression hit people became desperate to have someone to blame for their misfortune- the govt, jews and communists were given blame.
- Attitudes towards Gypsies and other minorities
  - Gypsies were discriminated against, despite Article 113, largely because they moved around and so did not contribute to the country by working, paying taxes or becoming involved in life outside their own community.
How did the attitudes of individual countries influence the move towards war?

- Britain
  - Britain’s attitude to Germany until 1939 was to avoid an alliance, but to pursue appeasement in the hope of keeping the peace.
  - Britain prepared for war, while still hoping for peace, however the invasion of Poland was the line in the sand.
  - Britain’s appeasement policy contributed to war because it encouraged Germany, Italy and Japan to seize more territory.

- France
  - France’s attitude to Germany until 1939 was one of resentment and anger because of their failure to meet the terms of the TOV.
  - The one French attempt at imposing will on Germany by force, the invasion of the Ruhr in, ended in failure so they turned to appeasement- a real fear of German invasion.
  - As with Britain, its appeasement policy increased Hitler’s confidence in his Eastern European aggression.

- Italy
  - Italy and Germany were both dissatisfied with the TOV and they shared an anti-communist outlook and a belief in autarky, strong govt. and military force.
  - Italy and Germany both helped Franco’s fascists in the Spanish Civil War which led to the Rome-Berlin Axis agreement. However, Hitler and Mussolini found it hard to trust each other and their foreign policy was not always compatible.
  - Even when united in the Pact of Steel, an agreement to provide instant military support, they kept some war plans secret such as Italy’s invasion of Abyssinia and Hitler’s invasion of the rest of Czechoslovakia then Poland in 1939.
  - When war began in 1939, Mussolini told Hitler that he expected a war in 1942 and so could not join the war yet. While Hitler never fully trusted Mussolini, the Pact of Steel was an encouragement to him to go to war.

- The USSR
  - The USSR was isolated from Europe due to its communist ideology
  - Stalin wanted to build up the country to be self-sufficient, so in this respect his aim was very similar to Hitler’s.
  - He reacted to the Nazi-Polish non-aggression pact by joining the LoN and supported the existing Spanish govt.

- The USA
  - They were neutral over the Abyssinian crisis and the Spanish Civil War however it still exported arms to Italy and Germany who were supplying Franco.
  - They also said openly that they would not go to war with Europe and produced a permanent Neutrality Act in 1937, encouraged Hitler to go to war.

- Japan
  - When the LoN finally ruled against Japan in 1933, it left the League and formed alliances with Italy and Germany- Germany encouraged by the alliance as Japan was an enemy of the USSR -useful to have an ally on the other side of the USSR.

What other influences affected the move towards war?

- The world economy- the depression created problems that govt.’s found hard to deal with, the discontent led to growing support for extreme movements (helped the Nazis).
- Hitler’s actions were influenced by more than his foreign policy and other aims- the Third Reich expansion was vital to him and he tied his domestic policy to it. However some historians like Richard Overy argue that his foreign policy was affected by his domestic circumstances like meeting the needs of the people.
- His foreign policy was certainly a significant factor in the outbreak of WW2. His invasion of Poland set the war going in 1939.