

- Large, peaceful demonstrations broke out in Leipzig in early October 1989 – regime reluctantly tolerated as Gorbachev would not support a hard-line policy
- Gorbachev visited Berlin on 5 October to celebrate 14th anniversary of GDR – advised Honecker to follow example of Poles and Hungarians

Berlin Wall Opens

- Demonstrator crowds continued to grow in the cities – absence of police and army as restraints
- 4 November- 500,000 congregated in East Berlin
- Wanted right to travel abroad and other reforms
- 2 days later a proposal made by Krenz's government allowed permits for 30 days travel a year
- Rejected by Volkskammer, GDR's Parliament, as insufficient
- 9 November – concession made that allowed all GDR citizens with passports the right to an exit visa valid for any bordering crossing – included access to West Berlin
- Supposed to take effect in the morning - 10 November - but announced prematurely
- Night border guards faced crowds of 20,000 at the crossing points into West Berlin

Consequences of the opening of the Berlin Wall

'Velvet Revolution': Czechoslovakia

- 1989 – Czechoslovakia still controlled by those who called for the suppression of the Prague Spring
- Opposition limited to small groups, such as Charter 77 led by Havel – attempted to monitor the government's compliance with the Helsinki Accords
- As a consequence of the changes in Poland and Hungary in 1989, opposition strengthened and PM Adamec announced economic reforms, similar to those in the Prague Spring – **but** didn't come with political reforms
- After Berlin Wall was opened, political situation changed drastically
- Demonstration called to honour the death of a student in the main occupation turned into a mass protest – trigger of the 'Velvet Revolution'
- 17 November 1989 – 12 opposition groups formed the 'Civic Forum' – demanded political change
- 7 December 1989 – Adamec resigned; new Gov were formed where Communists were a minority
- 29 December 1989 – Havel was elected president
- Havel and 'Civic Forum' persuaded USSR to withdraw its troops from the country as it agreed to remain part of the Warsaw Pact
- When it was confirmed that the 2 German states would reunite, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary pressed for the pact's dissolution
- 1992 – Czechoslovakia broke into two separate countries – Slovakia and the Czech Republic

Romania

- Opening of the Berlin Wall and the Velvet Revolution provided the Romanians with opportunity to oust the Communist leader, Ceausescu
- Economic hardship and blatant corruption - symbolised by Ceausescu's construction of 1100 room palace – caused significant opposition to emerge against his Gov
- Gorbachev been informed of plans to overthrow him as early as November 1989 and agreed – as long as Romanian Communist Party remained dominant
- First revolts against the regime broke out in Timisoara, near Hungarian border
- Revolts spread to Bucharest on 21 December 1989
- Once it was clear the army had sided with the people against the state secret police, Ceausescu fled the capital