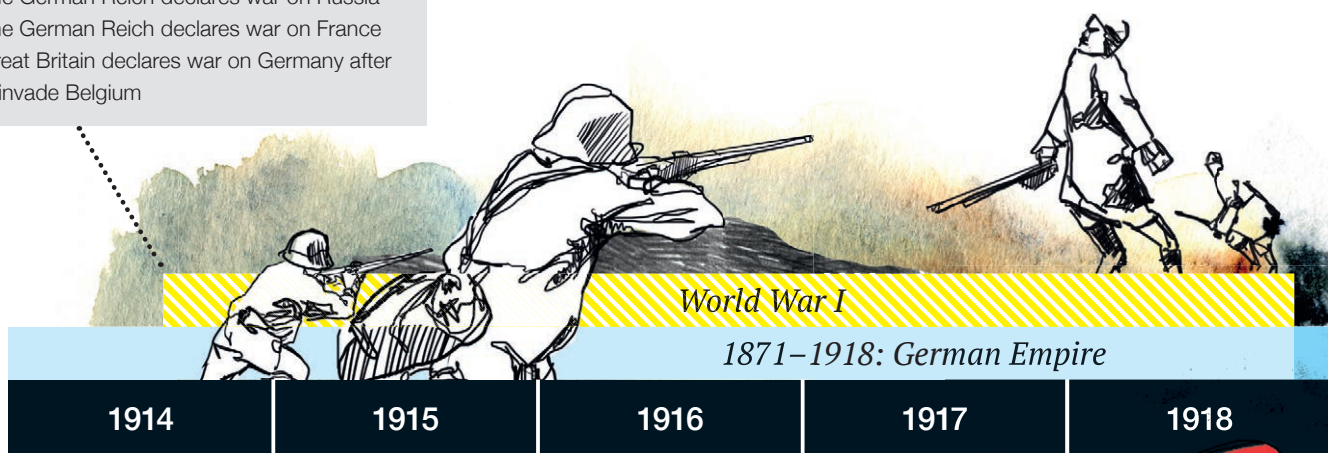


## German History: 1914 to 1990

### 28 July 1914 World War I

- triggered by the assassination in Sarajevo (28 June)
- **28 July:** Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia
- **1 August:** The German Reich declares war on Russia
- **3 August:** The German Reich declares war on France
- **5 August:** Great Britain declares war on Germany after German troops invade Belgium



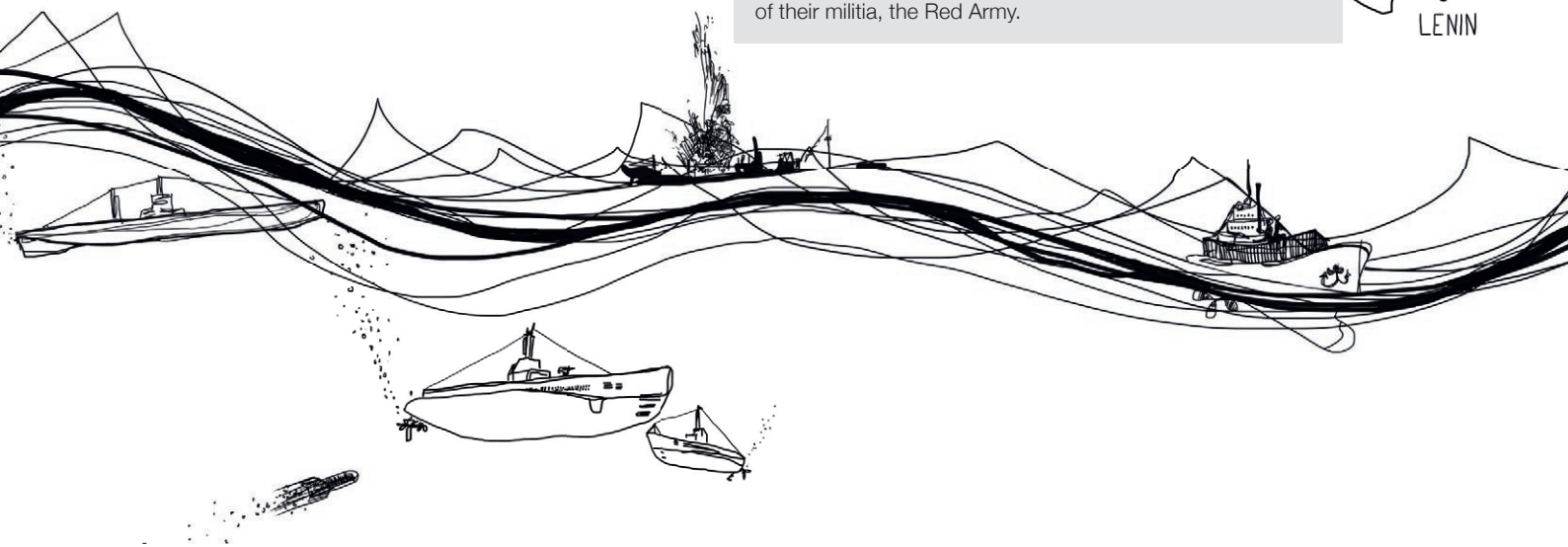
### 1 February 1917 Submarine warfare

As from **1915**, the German Reich repeatedly responds to the British blockade of the Atlantic with submarine attacks on enemy ships. The USA protest when a German submarine sinks a British passenger ship killing 139 American passengers. Following a temporary lull, the German Reich resumes unrestricted submarine warfare in **1917**, which leads to the entry of the United States into the war.

### 7 November 1917

#### October Revolution in Russia

Mutinous troops occupy strategic locations in St. Petersburg on **25 October** (according to the Russian calendar). The government is overthrown and replaced by a Council of People's Commissars under *Lenin's* leadership. A bloody civil war rages until the Bolsheviks gain victory with the help of their militia, the Red Army.



## 10 January 1920 Treaty of Versailles

World War I is officially over, and the Treaty of Versailles enters into force. The German Reich and its allies are made solely responsible for the outbreak of the war; Germany is forced to concede territory and make reparation payments. To promote world peace, the treaty stipulates the founding of an international League of Nations.

## 14 August 1919

### Weimar Constitution

The Constitutional Convention adopts a democratic constitution. It enters into force on **14 August**. On **11 February**, *Friedrich Ebert* is elected president in Weimar. The political parties SPD, DDP and the Centre Party form the so-called "Weimar Coalition".

## 1923 Hyperinflation

The value of the Mark falls as the government continues to print money. Prices explode and supplies become scarce.

On **1 November**, one loaf of bread costs 192,000,000,000 Mark in the city of Kassel. The introduction of the "Debt Security Mark" on **15 November** breaks the cycle of inflation.



1919

1920

1921

1922

1923

1924

## 9 November 1923

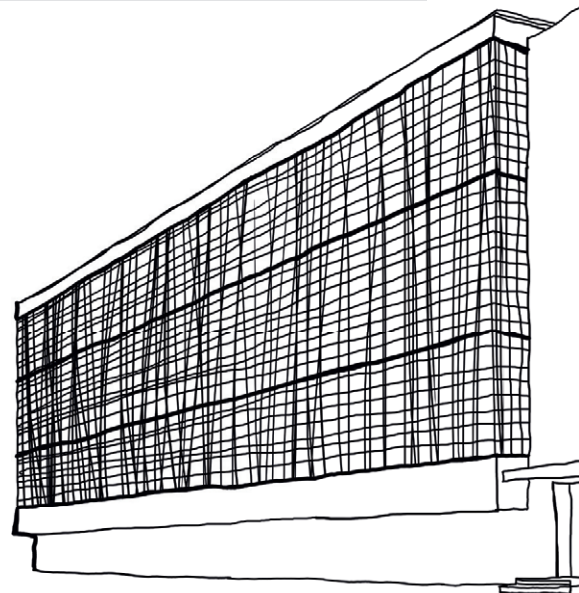
### Beer Hall Putsch

*Adolf Hitler* and *Erich Ludendorff* declare a "national revolution" in Munich and plan to organise a march on Berlin. Local police quickly subdue the uprising. *Hitler* is later arrested and sentenced to prison, but is released after nine months for "good conduct".



## 9 November 1918 Declaration of the Republic in Germany

On his own initiative, the chancellor *Max von Baden* announces the abdication of Kaiser *Wilhelm II*. At 2 p.m. *Philipp Scheidemann* (SPD) declares the "Democratic Republic" from a window of the Reichstag. Shortly afterwards, *Karl Liebknecht* (later KPD) announces the "Socialist Republic" from the Berlin City Palace. *Wilhelm II* officially abdicates on **28 November**.





**26 April 1925**

### A new president

*Paul von Hindenburg* is elected president in a run-off election after the death of *Friedrich Ebert*. In **1932**, he is re-elected against *Adolf Hitler*. *Hindenburg* is a monarchist who commanded the German forces during World War I. He believes in the "stab-in-the-back legend", which believes that lack of political support at home was responsible for the defeat of German forces.

**16 July 1927**

### Money for the unemployed

Unemployment insurance becomes the fourth pillar of the German welfare state. Chancellor *von Bismarck* introduced health insurance (**1883**), accident insurance (**1884**) and pensions (**1889**).

**30 March 1930**

### Presidential cabinet

*Heinrich Brüning* is elected chancellor and forms a presidential cabinet. It does not have a parliamentary majority but uses emergency decrees to enact policies. Two more presidential cabinets follow, under *Franz von Papen* (**1932**) and *Kurt von Schleicher* (**1932/33**).

**25 October 1929**

### Black Friday

Stock prices at the New York Stock Exchange plummet for several days, triggering a global economic crisis. Germany is hit especially hard as foreign loans are withdrawn. More than six million people lose their jobs by **1932**.



## Weimar Republic

1925

1926

1927

1928

1929

1930

DIE  
GOLDENEN  
ZWANZIGER



**1 December 1925**

### Treaty of Locarno

The Treaty of Locarno marks the first steps towards the normalisation of relations between Germany and the Allies. All parties agree to respect national borders. In **1926**, Germany is admitted to the League of Nations (which was founded in **1920**), an international organisation that aims to maintain world peace.

**10 January 1927** Metropolis

Premiere of the silent movie "Metropolis" by the German director *Fritz Lang*. This science fiction movie is now regarded as one of the most important expressionist works in film history. Critics and audiences at the time did not like it and preferred the increasingly popular movies with sound. The first cinema in Berlin opened in **1895**.

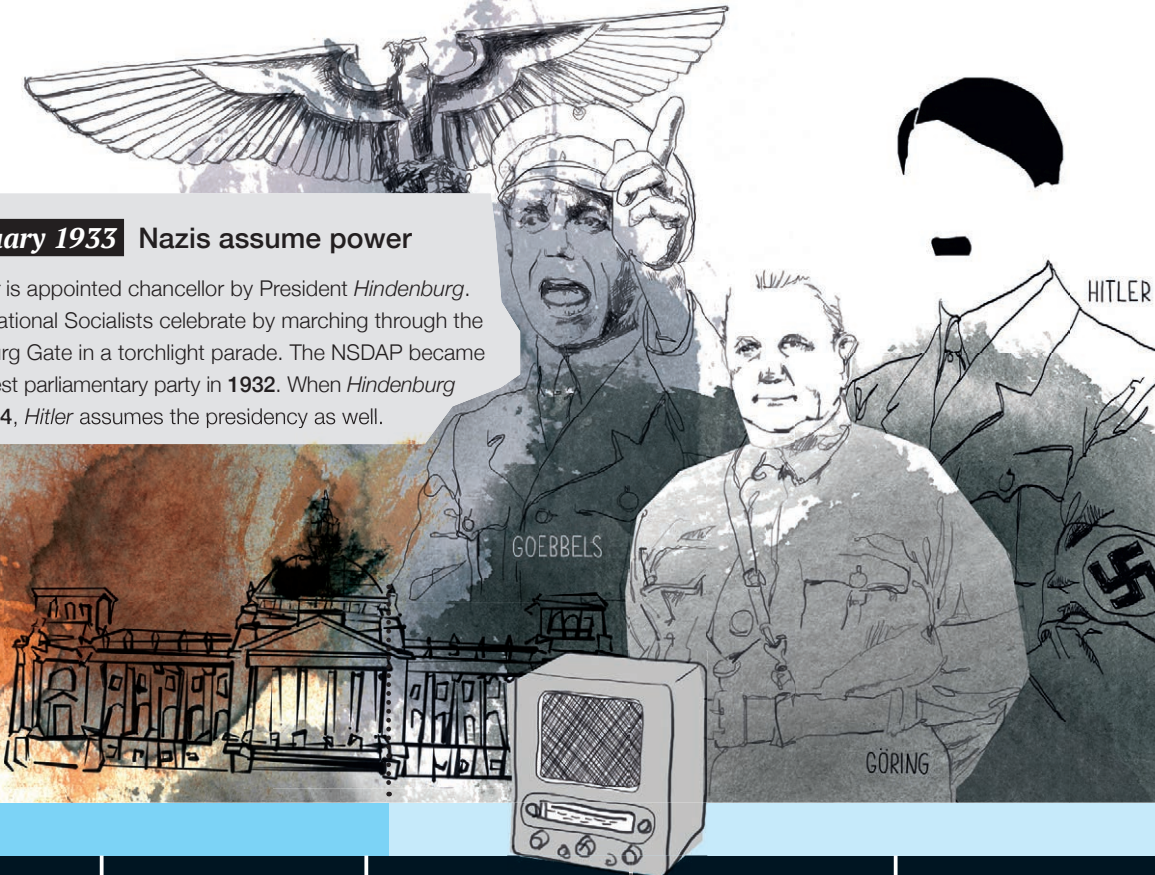


**1925** Bauhaus in Dessau

The Bauhaus is founded in **1919** by *Walter Gropius* in Weimar as an educational institution for architecture, art, and design. In **1925**, it moves to Dessau.

### 30 January 1933 Nazis assume power

Adolf Hitler is appointed chancellor by President Hindenburg. At dusk, National Socialists celebrate by marching through the Brandenburg Gate in a torchlight parade. The NSDAP became the strongest parliamentary party in 1932. When Hindenburg dies in 1934, Hitler assumes the presidency as well.



1931

1932

1933

1934

1935

### 23 March 1933 Enabling Act

The Reichstag votes for a far-reaching expansion of government powers (which only the SPD opposes). Hitler can now pass laws without consulting parliament. A month earlier, the so-called "Fire Decree" restricted civil and human rights. The German Reich ceases to be a democratic constitutional state.

### 22 March 1933 Concentration camps

The first SS concentration camp is set up at Dachau. Eventually, the concentration camp system encompasses 24 main camps and over 1,000 subsidiary camps. Prisoners (including Jews, communists, homosexuals) are interned for political or "racial" reasons.



**1 August 1936**

### Olympic Games

From **1 August** until **16 August**, Berlin plays host to the Summer Olympic Games. The Nazi regime uses the event to present itself to the world as an open and peaceful country. The African-American sprinter *Jesse Owens* becomes the most successful athlete in Berlin. Later that year, the first German Winter Olympics are held in Garmisch-Partenkirchen.



**9 November 1938**

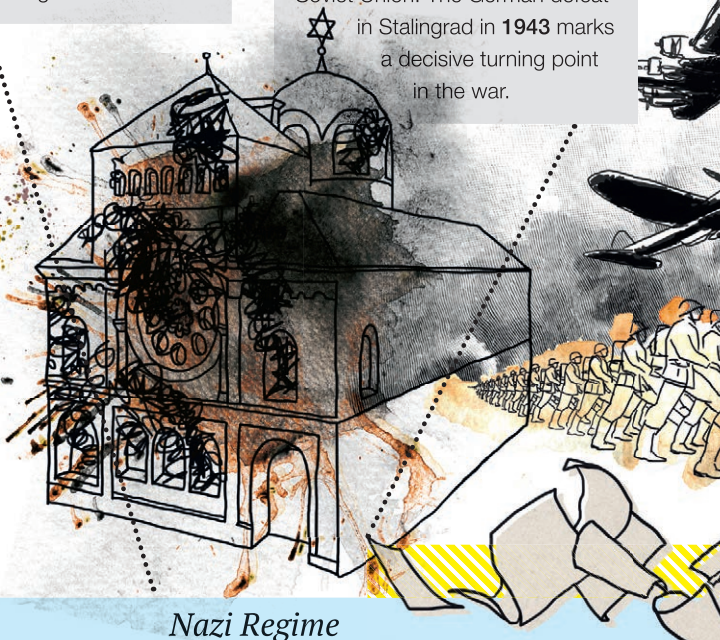
### "Night of Broken Glass"

The Nazis incite attacks on Jewish synagogues, houses and shops throughout Germany. Jewish shops were boycotted as from **1933**, and Jewish civil servants were fired from their jobs. In **1935**, the Nazis passed the "Nuremberg race laws".

**1 September 1939**

### Attack on Poland

The guarantor states France and Britain respond to the German invasion of Poland with a declaration of war, which marks the beginning of World War II. On **22 June 1941**, *Hitler* attacks the Soviet Union. The German defeat in Stalingrad in **1943** marks a decisive turning point in the war.



*Nazi Regime*

1936

1937

1938

1939

1940

**19 July 1937**

### "Degenerate art"

An art exhibition in Munich displays 650 artworks that are classified as "degenerate art" by Nazi propagandists. They include many expressionist, impressionist and surrealist paintings that do not conform to the aesthetic taste of the Nazis.

**1940** Fanta is invented

The ingredients for the Coca Cola recipe are scarce during wartime. A German chemist develops Fanta, an orange-flavoured whey drink. Since the **1950s**, Fanta has been produced in other countries as well, albeit with a different recipe.



**7 December 1941** Pearl Harbor

The Japanese attack on the US base Pearl Harbor in Hawaii precipitates the entry of the United States into World War II. More than 2,600 Americans die during the attack. Germany declares war on the United States on **11 December 1941**. The situation for the Allies improves significantly after the American entry into the war.



**20 January 1942**

### Wannsee Conference

SS commander *Heydrich* meets senior government and party officials in a villa on the Wannsee in Berlin to present a plan, already in implementation, for the extermination of all European Jews in German-held territory. By 1945 around six million people had perished in the Holocaust.

**19 April 1943** Ghetto uprising

As from **mid-1940**, 500,000 Jews from Germany and Poland were forced into a 4 km<sup>2</sup> section of Warsaw. The ghetto serves as a collection point for Jews due to be deported into the death camps. In **April 1943**, ghetto inmates stage an uprising (despite being insufficiently armed). It takes the SS until **16 May** to subdue the revolt.

**8 May 1945** German surrender

The German Wehrmacht unconditionally surrenders to the allied forces. World War II in Europe is over. Japan surrenders on **2 September**, after the explosions of two atomic bombs in Hiroshima (**6 August**) and Nagasaki (**9 August**). World War II resulted in an estimated death toll of 50 to 70 million worldwide.

World War II

1941

1942

1943

1944

1945

1946

**18 February 1943** White Rose

*Sophie and Hans Scholl*, both members of the Munich-based resistance group "White Rose", are arrested while handing out leaflets and are later executed. On **8 November 1939**, *Georg Elser* tried to assassinate *Hitler*. On **20 July 1944**, *Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg* orchestrates another assassination attempt.

**October 1946**

### Flight and displacement

The Allied Control Council estimates that the number of displaced persons has reached 9.6 million. According to present research up to 14 million Germans were forced to leave their homes in the East.

**2 August 1945** Potsdam Agreement

The "Big Three", the USA, Soviet Union and Britain, agree to transfer 25 % of German sovereign territory to Poland and the Soviet Union and to divide the remainder into 4 zones of occupation, which are to be demilitarized, denazified, democratized and decentralized. In addition some factories are to be dismantled.

**6 June 1944** D-Day

Allied forces land in Normandy and open a second front against Nazi Germany. Around 150,000 soldiers break through the German defences along the French Atlantic coast. By the end of June, the Allies have more than one million soldiers on French soil.

SOPHIE AND HANS SCHOLL



**20 June 1948**

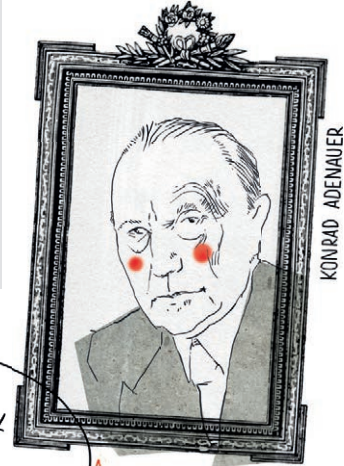
### Currency reform

The Deutschmark is introduced in West Germany. It is replaced by the Euro in 2002. Every citizen receives forty Mark "bounty". The currency reform in the Western zones results in the Soviet blockade of Berlin, which the Western Allies counter with the Berlin airlift.

*Die* WÜRDE *des*  
MENSCHEN  
*ist* UNANTASTBAR  
HUMAN DIGNITY  
IS INVIOABLE  
ART.1 PARA.1 OF THE GERMAN CONSTITUTION

### 23 May 1949 German Constitution

The "Grundgesetz", the West German constitution, comes into force. It was drafted by the Parliamentary Council (65 electoral members, including four women) with the backing of the three Western allies. *Theodor Heuss* is sworn into office as German president on **12 September**. Three days later, *Konrad Adenauer* becomes the first German chancellor.



*Stark wie*  
**DIE MARK**

*Das kostet  
'nen Groschen.*

### Post-war era

1947

1948

1949

1950

1951

1952

### 1948 First Mustang jeans

The L. Hermann clothing factory in Künzelsau, Germany, (later renamed "Mustang Jeans") produces the first pair of European jeans. They were allegedly invented by the German emigree *Löb Strauß* (later *Levi Strauss*), who manufactured the first American pair of jeans in **1873**. In the **1950s**, jeans turn from a working-class item into a youth symbol for freedom and rebellion.



### 10 December 1948

#### Human rights

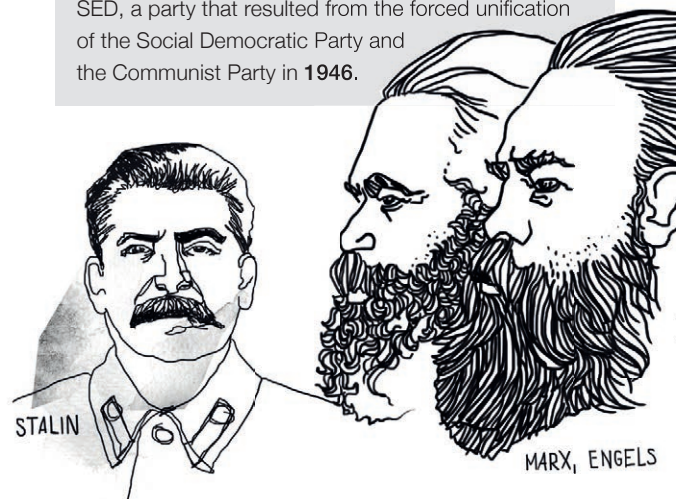
The members of the United Nations (UN) announce the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The UN had been founded in **1945** and today includes 193 members states. East and West Germany were accepted into the UN in **1973**.

The main tasks of the UN are the protection of global peace and human rights.

### 7 October 1949

#### The GDR is founded

The Soviet Occupation Zone (SBZ) evolves into the German Democratic Republic (GDR). *Wilhelm Pieck* becomes the first president and *Otto Grotewohl* becomes prime minister. Political power lies with the SED, a party that resulted from the forced unification of the Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party in **1946**.



**6 May 1955**

### NATO membership

The Federal Republic of Germany becomes a member of NATO. The military and defence alliance was founded in **1949** and today includes 30 members in North America and Europe. The Eastern counterpart was the Warsaw Alliance \*\*\*, which was established in **1955** and included the GDR.

**25 March 1957** Treaty of Rome

France, Italy, the Benelux countries and West Germany form the European Economic Community (EEC) with the goal of expanding economic cooperation. The EEC is the predecessor of the European Union, which includes 27 member-states with 446 million inhabitants.

**4 July 1954** The Miracle of Bern

The West German football team wins the world championships after beating the favourites, Hungary, 3:2 in the final in Switzerland. Further World Cup victories follow in **1974** (in Germany, and after losing 0:1 to the GDR in the opening round), **1990** (in Italy) and **2014** (in Brazil).



### Divided Germany

1953

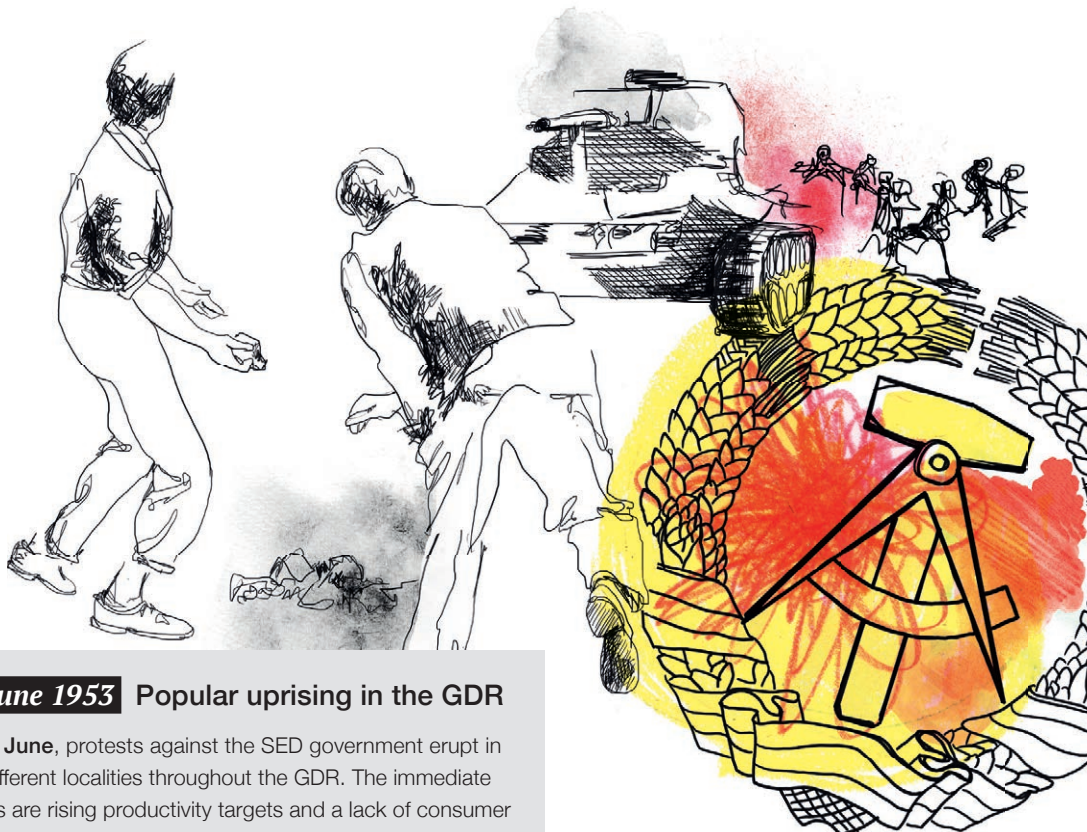
1954

1955

1956

1957

1949 – 1963: Konrad Adenauer (CDU/CSU + FDP, DP and GB/BHE)\*



**17 June 1953** Popular uprising in the GDR

On **17 June**, protests against the SED government erupt in 440 different localities throughout the GDR. The immediate causes are rising productivity targets and a lack of consumer goods. Protesters later demand free elections, German reunification and the dismissal of *Walter Ulbricht*. The uprising is suppressed with help from Soviet troops.

Klebefläche

Klebefläche





### 12 April 1961 First man in space

Yuri Gagarin from the Soviet Union becomes the first man in space. His capsule orbits earth for 106 minutes. The first satellite (Sputnik) had been successfully launched in **1957**. In **1969**, American *Neil Armstrong* becomes the first man to set foot on the moon during the Apollo 11 mission.



1958

1959

1960

1961

1962



1950–1971: Walter Ulbricht (Secretary-General / First Secretary)\*\*

### 13 August 1961

#### Construction of the Berlin Wall

The GDR regime closes the border between East and West Berlin to prevent emigration to the West. Much of the border between East and West Germany had already been closed and heavily fortified since **1952**. Around 3.5 million people still manage to leave the GDR between **1945** and **1961**. At least 140 people die while trying to cross the Berlin Wall between **1961** and **1989**.



### 22 October 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis

The United States unequivocally demand the dismantling of Soviet medium-range missiles, which were set up secretly, and impose a naval blockade. The world stands on the brink of an atomic war between the two superpowers. The Russians back down on **28 October**.



**2 June 1967**

### Death of a student and APO

The student *Benno Ohnesorg* is shot dead by a policeman during a demonstration against the Persian Shah's visit to Berlin. Protests erupt throughout the country. Since the **mid-1960s**, students had formed the Extra-Parliamentary Opposition (APO) to call for far-reaching societal changes.



1963

1964

1965

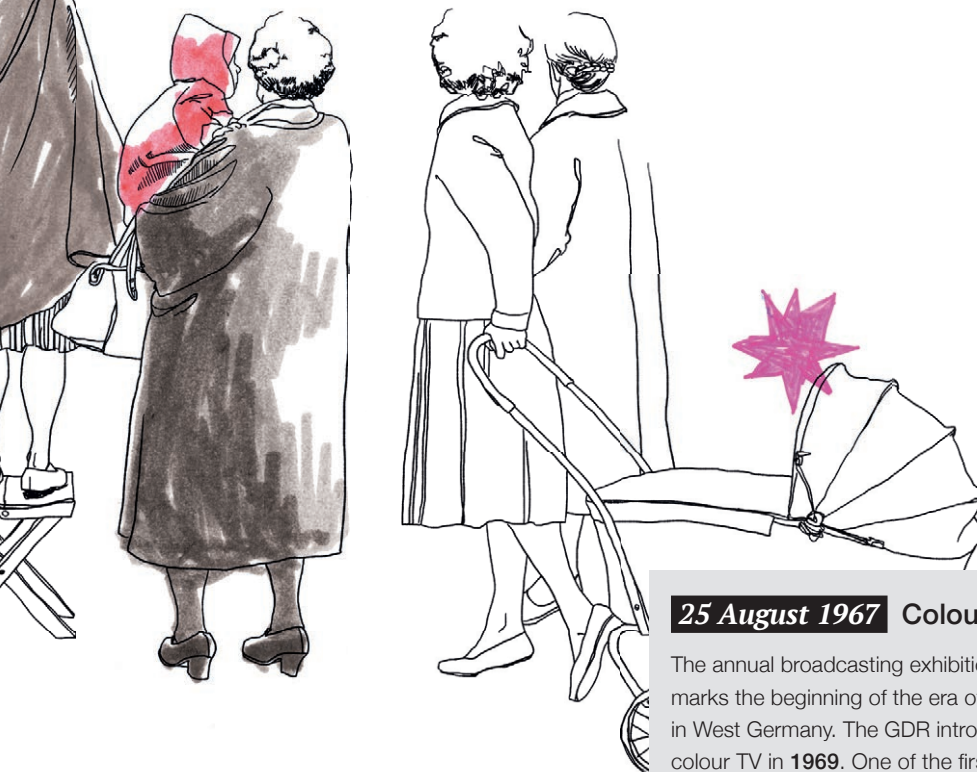
1966

1967

1968

1963–1966: Ludwig Erhard (CDU/CSU + FDP)

1966–1969: Kurt G. Kiesinger (CDU/CSU)



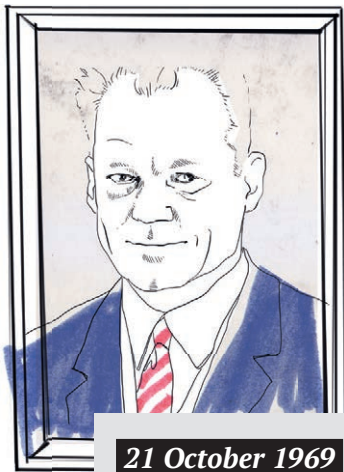
"FREEDOM IS JUST ANOTHER  
FOR NOTHING LEFT TO

### 25 August 1967 Colour TV

The annual broadcasting exhibition in Berlin marks the beginning of the era of colour TV in West Germany. The GDR introduces colour TV in **1969**. One of the first major events broadcast in colour are the **1972** Olympic Games. One of the first German movies filmed in colour is "*Münchhausen*" with *Hans Albers*, produced in **1943**.







WILLY BRANDT

**21 October 1969****Willy Brandt**

Willy Brandt becomes the first Social Democratic chancellor (in a SPD/FDP coalition government). In **1974**, Helmut Schmidt (SPD) succeeds him. Brandt chooses the motto "Take a chance on democracy" for his years in office. In **1971**, he receives the Nobel Peace Prize for his "New Eastern Policy".

ERICH HONECKER

**3 May 1971****Erich Honecker**

Erich Honecker becomes First Secretary (and later Secretary-General) of the Central Committee of the SED. In **1976**, he also assumes the chairmanship of the State Council in the GDR. He remains in office until **October 1989** and is succeeded by Egon Krenz. Honecker falls ill and is never held responsible for the crimes and failures in the GDR. He dies in Chile in **1994**.

BENZIN

**25 November 1973****Car-free Sundays**

The West German government responds to the **1973** oil crisis by prohibiting the use of private cars on four Sundays in **November** and **December 1973**. A speed limit of 100 km/h is instituted for public highways. The goal is to curb oil consumption after shortages had driven oil prices up in the aftermath of the Yom-Kippur war.

**Divided Germany**

1969

1970

1971

1972

1973

1974

U + SPD 1969 – 1974: Willy Brandt (SPD + FDP)

HER WORD  
LOSE"**15 August 1969 Woodstock**

History's most famous music festival lasts until the early hours of **18 August**. 32 bands and artists perform blues, folk, soul, and rock music in front of several hundred thousand fans. Woodstock is regarded as a highlight of the hippie movement and as an iconic representation of youth culture in the **1960s**.

**26 August 1972****Olympic Games**

The XX. Olympic Games begin in Munich. They last until **11 September**. 122 teams with more than 7,000 athletes set a new participation record. The celebratory mood is dampened when Palestinian terrorists attack the Israeli team and take hostages. Seventeen people ultimately die.

**21 December 1972****Basic Treaty**

The Federal Republic and the GDR sign the "Basic Treaty", which emphasises mutual recognition, the renunciation of armed attacks, and the exchange of diplomatic representatives. Further treaties with states from the Eastern Bloc follow and improve relations with West Germany.

**4 December 1971 First McDonald's**

Germany's first McDonald's franchise opens in Munich. Today, almost 1,500 McDonald's exist in Germany, and other fast food chains have opened restaurants as well. Fast food is criticised for being unhealthy, and harmful to the environment.





**1 August 1975**

### The Helsinki Accords

In Helsinki, the "Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe" (CSCE) produces its final declaration. It emphasises economic cooperation and the protection of human rights. The Helsinki Accords later become a reference point for many dissidents from Eastern Europe. In 1995, the CSCE evolves into the "Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe" (OSCE).

**26 August 1978** A German in space

Sigmund Jähn from the GDR becomes the first German to fly into space on the Soviet "Soyuz 31" mission. In 1983, Ulf Mehrbold becomes the first non-American to fly aboard the Space Shuttle, and the first West German in Space. Mehrbold serves on additional space-flights in 1992 and 1994.

Klebefläche

1975

1976

1977

1978

1979

1974–1982: Helmut Schmidt (SPD + FDP)

1971–1989: Erich Honecker (First Secretary / Secretary-General)\*\*



**12 December 1979**

### NATO double-track decision

NATO decides on a double-track strategy: Warsaw Alliance nations are offered disarmament negotiations while NATO pursues rearmament and modernisation in Western Europe. Thousands of protesters march against NATO's strategy.



**5 September 1977** "German Autumn" and the RAF

The "Red Army Faction" (RAF) abducts Hanns Martin Schleyer, president of the German Employers' Federation. On 13 October, the RAF highjacks the Lufthansa airliner "Landshut" in order to bargain the release of imprisoned RAF members. Elite forces of the GSG-9 police unit storm the plane. Several RAF members commit suicide, and Schleyer is killed.



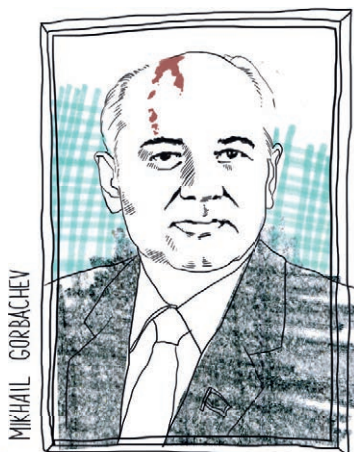
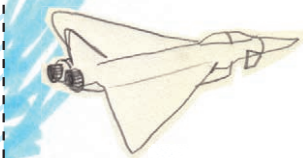
SEIT 31 TAGEN  
GEFANGENER

Klebefläche



Fläche abschneiden

# "MR. GORBACHEV,



## 11 March 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev

*Mikhail Gorbachev becomes General Secretary of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union and launches the Glasnost (transparency) and Perestroika (remodelling) reforms. He remains president until 1991 but cannot prevent the implosion of the Eastern Bloc. Gorbachev conducts disarmament negotiations with US President Ronald Reagan.*



1980

1981

1982

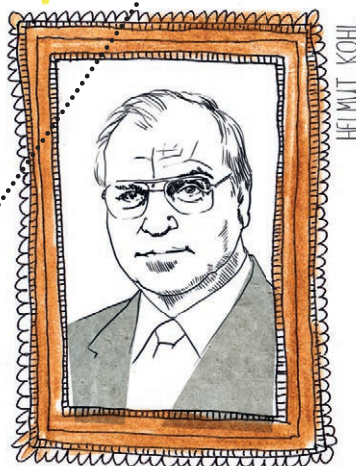
1983

1984

## 1 October 1982

### Helmut Kohl

*Helmut Kohl (CDU) is elected chancellor in a CDU/CSU/FDP coalition government. His predecessor Helmut Schmidt (SPD) had been removed from office through a constructive vote of no confidence. Kohl is the longest-serving chancellor in German history; he remains in office until 1998. His achievements during the time of reunification have earned Kohl the nickname "Chancellor of Unification".*



## 3 August 1984 First email

The University of Karlsruhe receives the first email in Germany. It was sent from the United States as part of a project aimed at improving scientific communication and exchange. Today, it is hard to imagine a world without email and other new communication technologies as more than 66 million Germans use the internet.

Fläche abschneiden

# TEAR DOWN THIS WALL!"

US PRESIDENT, RONALD REAGAN,  
AT THE BRANDENBURG GATE ON 12 JUNE 1987



Divided Germany

1985

1986

1987

1988

1989

1990

1982 – 1998: Helmut Kohl (CDU/CSU + FDP)

1989: Egon Krenz (Secretary-General)\*\*

Wir fordern freie Wahlen!  
Frei!  
WIR SIND DAS VOLK  
SIND DAS VOLK  
SIND DAS



**3 October 1990**

## German Unification

The accession of five new states to the German constitution finalises the process of formal reunification of Germany. The first national election in unified Germany is held on **2 December**. The allied powers consent to unification in the "Two Plus Four Agreement". The post-war era is officially over.

**9 November 1989** Fall of the Berlin Wall

The GDR regime opens the border to West Berlin "without further delay". In the following days, the remaining border to West Germany is successively opened. As from **May 1989**, many East German citizens had fled to West Germany via Hungary and Austria. In the West German embassy in Prague, thousands of people from the GDR seek refuge before being allowed to travel to the West.



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## — Legende

### Abbreviations:

APO = Extra-Parliamentary Opposition  
BHE = Association of Displaced and Disenfranchised Germans  
CDU = Christian Democratic Union  
CSU = Christian-Social Union  
DDP = German Democratic Party  
DP = German Party  
EEC = European Economic Community  
FDP = Free Democratic Party  
GDR = German Democratic Republic  
KPD = German Communist Party  
NATO = North Atlantic Treaty Organisation  
NSDAP = National Socialist German Workers' Party  
RAF = Red Army Faction  
SBZ = Soviet Occupation Zone  
SED = German Socialist Unity Party  
SPD = German Social Democratic Party  
SS = Schutzstaffel (paramilitary units of the NSDAP)  
UN(O) = United Nations (Organisation)  
US/USA = United States of America

### Comments:

The senior party within a coalition government is underlined in the text.

\* CDU/CSU held power from 1949 until 1963 under Chancellor Adenauer, either as a union government (1960/1961) or with junior partners (FDP, DP, GB/BHE) in a coalition government.

\*\* Although the German Democratic Republic was founded in October 1949, the post of General Secretary of the SED Central Committee was only created at the 3rd SED Party Conference in July 1950. From 1953 to 1976 the position was renamed “First Secretary of the SED Central Committee”. Further information about power politics in the GDR is available at: [www.hdg.de/lemo/kapitel/geteiltes-deutschland.html](http://www.hdg.de/lemo/kapitel/geteiltes-deutschland.html), including material (relating to events) post-October 1989.

\*\*\* The Warsaw Alliance had been referred to as “Warsaw Pact” by the West but was formally named “Warsaw Treaty Organisation of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance”.

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## – Zur Ergänzung liegen vor



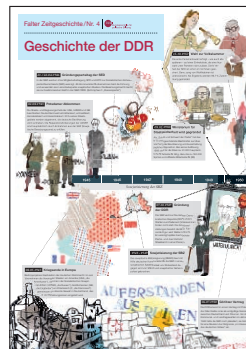
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– **früher oder später**  
Schön illustriertes, sehr anregendes Kartenspiel zur deutsch-deutschen Zeitgeschichte.

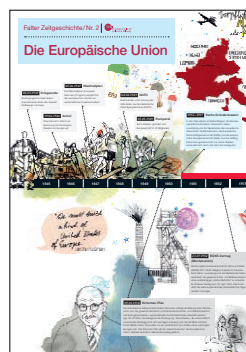
– Bestell-Nr. 1921  
(1,50 Euro pro Exemplar)



– **Zeitleiste 1945 – 1990: Geschichte der DDR**

Der Zeitstrahl im DIN A0-Format zeigt die wichtigsten Entwicklungsschritte der DDR, mit spannenden Zusatzinfos und aufwendig illustriert.

– Bestell-Nr. 5438  
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– **Zeitleiste 1945 – 2019: Die Europäische Union**

*englisch und deutsch*

Geschichte der Europäischen Union von 1945 bis 2019 mit verständlichen Erklärungen und aufwendigen Illustrationen. Der chronologische Überblick zeigt die EU als lebendige Gemeinschaft statt kompliziertes Institutionengeflecht.

– Bestell-Nr. 5433  
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