

	Key information	Key information	Key events
<p>Russia Topic 2: The Bolsheviks in power 1917-24</p>	<p>Key information</p> <p>Early consolidation of power, 1917–18 The Bolsheviks began to change Russia through a series of revolutionary decrees.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Decree on Peace Decree on Land Decree on Workers' Rights Decree on Nationalities <p>The Bolsheviks allowed a general election where 41.7 million people voted. They failed to get sufficient votes in a general election and so shut down the Constituent Assembly in Jan 1918 which ended any hopes of democracy.</p> <p>The Bolsheviks pulled Russia out of the First World War, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was negotiated by Trotsky and German commanders – The Bolsheviks had delivered peace, however, this came at a high price:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 74% of Russia's coalmines were lost 62 million people – 26% of its population Had to pay 300 million gold roubles <p>To stop any chance of Nicholas II leading a counter-revolution, The tsar and his entire family were murdered in July 1918.</p> <p>The Civil War, 1918–21 Civil War broke out in Russia in opposition to the way the Bolsheviks were running the country, the Red Army, led by Trotsky fought off the Whites, Greens and foreign intervention from countries such as Britain and France. The effects of the Civil War on the Bolshevik party was profound, it meant an increase in terror tactics by the Cheka during the Red Terror, discipline in the Red Army was used to ensure obedience, propaganda was used to consolidate the Bolshevik beliefs onto people and it led to political centralisation.</p>	<p>Opposition forces were divided – both politically and geographically. This really weakened The White Army:</p>  <p>Key events of the Civil War</p> <p>The Reds had a number of advantages – and were skilful at making the most of them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Red Army conscripted over 5 million soldiers. Trotsky was a great leader of the Red Army Control over most of Russia's industries and railways Control over central Russia, shorter distances to supply their armies War Communism: economic policy fed the Red Army <p>The Whites faced a number of disadvantages – and never overcame them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fewer number in the White army: 250,000 soldiers max No single leader led to disagreements and friction Geographically very spread out Foreign intervention made the White Army an easy propaganda target for the Bolsheviks <p>The Reds had won the Civil War – but it was not at all clear what kind of Russia would develop in the 1920s</p>	<p>Key events</p> <p>November 1917 – General election to the Constituent Assembly</p> <p>November–December 1917 – Bolshevik decrees, early reforms on land, workers' rights and conditions.</p> <p>January 1918 – Meeting of Constituent Assembly broken up by Bolsheviks and closed.</p> <p>March 3rd 1918 – Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Russia pulled out of WWI, lost a lot of land and resources to Germany – led to the start of the Russian Civil War and the economic policy, War Communism.</p> <p>July 17th 1918 – Murder of the tsar and his family.</p> <p>August 1918 – SR Fanya Kaplan attempted to assassinate Lenin.</p> <p>September 1918 – Feb 1919 – Red Terror begins, Cheka arrest and execute thousands of suspected opponents mainly SRs, 50,000 – 140,000 executed.</p> <p>1919 – Most foreign interventionists who were supporting the White Army leave Russia e.g. USA, Britain, France and Japan.</p> <p>1919 – Zhenotdel set to increase freedom, equality and influence of women. Led by Alexandra Kollantai.</p> <p>March 1921 – Kronstadt Mutiny, sailors of Kronstadt opposed Bolshevik policies, such as War Communism. Trotsky sent in the 50,000 Red Army soldiers to destroy the mutiny. 500 sailors executed by the Cheka</p> <p>March 1921 – At the Tenth Party Congress the NEP is introduced, Lenin bans factions – leading to a one-party state.</p> <p>1922 – Show trial of SR leaders, other SRs are deported.</p> <p>Mid 1923 – The “Scissor Crisis” meant that while food prices were falling, the prices of manufactured goods from factories was rising too fast.</p> <p>Jan 1924 – Lenin dies, a power struggle begins.</p> <p>1924 – The lands of the old Russian empire are renamed the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics – often shortened to USSR or Soviet Union.</p>



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<p><u>Economic and social change, 1918–24</u> War Communism was introduced to try to control the Russian economy. The government controlled all parts of the economy, this meant that peasants' crops were requisitioned by the Cheka.</p> <p>War Communism helped the Bolsheviks to win the Civil War, however it was an economic disaster:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food production had fallen to 37% of 1913 levels. • Food shortages led to famine (6 million died) • Production in factories fell by 50% • Peasants were angry with the Bolsheviks <p>When War Communism failed, it was replaced by the New Economic Policy in 1921. Lenin allowed peasants to sell their crops on a free market.</p> <p>It had a fairly positive effect on the economy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food production began to increase – 19 million tonnes extra grain between 1921-23 • Industrial production slowly increased. <p>However:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As food prices decreased, prices for industrial goods increased, this was known as the “scissor crisis”. • NEP-men and NEP-women were making a lot of profit from selling goods, this went against socialism. <p>Many Bolsheviks were against the NEP as it was too close to capitalism, however it had meant the recovery of the Russian economy after the disaster of War Communism.</p>	<p>The communists introduced many changes that affected all aspects of Russian society and culture. Such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women declared equal in 1917, “post-card” divorces made divorce easier for women • Zhenotdel a women’s organisation was set up in the government. • By 1926, 58% of the population were now literate. • Agitprop as set up to control propaganda in art, literature, film and music to promote communism. • Glavlit was set up to censor art and culture • Many religions were persecuted and land was seized from the Russian Orthodox Church <p><u>Moves towards totalitarianism</u> Russia – under Lenin – soon turned into a dictatorship. Lenin and the Politburo made all the key decisions, they made it look like there was democracy but in reality it was a one-party state with Lenin as the leader.</p> <p>The Cheka was used to destroy any opposition, during the Red Terror thousands were executed, imprisoned or sent to labour camps. Any opposition seen as a threat was a target this included SRs, Mensheviks even the middle-classes.</p> <p>Opposition to dictatorship was revealed in the Kronstadt Mutiny of 1921. The sailors of Kronstadt were loyal supporters throughout 1917, however, during War Communism the sailors began to oppose the Bolsheviks. This opposition was crushed by Lenin in 1921. Lenin then banned factions in the government to make sure his beliefs were the only ones that were discussed.</p> <p>Despite the official power of the soviets – power really lay with the Communist Party and mainly in the Politburo. Lenin had begun to become a totalitarian, within a one-party state.</p>	<p>Decrees – laws set by governments Constituent Assembly – group of people democratically elected to discuss policies. Cheka – Lenin’s secret police. Red Terror – Event where the Cheka arrested, imprisoned and executed thousands of opposition. Propaganda – biased information used to promote political views or agendas. Political centralisation – Making sure political decisions are made by a small number of people to keep the power centralised. Conscripted – forced to fight in a war. War Communism – Economic policy which forced peasants to hand over crops to feed the Red Army. Foreign intervention – During the Civil War, Britain, USA, France and Japan supported the White Army with troops and supplies. Requisitioned – taken by force. New Economic Policy (NEP) – An economic policy which tried to recover the economy by introducing some capitalism, such as a selling crops for profit. Politburo – part of the Communist Party that makes all the main decisions. Factions – being part of a group that stands out against what others think. Totalitarian – someone in total control of the political, economic and social aspects of a country or state.</p> <div data-bbox="1541 1109 2161 1401"> <p>The Communist Party</p> <p>Only Communist Party members can stand in elections</p> <p>The Soviet government</p> </div>