

# Hitler's Rise to Power

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**“Hitler’s rise to Chancellorship of Germany by 1933 was due to favourable circumstances.” How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer.**

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In the statement “Hitler’s rise to Chancellorship of Germany by 1933 was due to favourable circumstances”, “favourable circumstances” refer to the situations in Germany that were beneficial to Hitler’s rise to power. These circumstances include the weakness of the Weimar government and the Great Depression. Hitler’s rise to power has often been attributed to the favourable conditions in Germany, as well as his personal qualities. The given perspective suggests that the favourable conditions played a bigger role in Hitler’s rise to power than his personal abilities. Though Hitler’s personal abilities, such as his excellent oratorical skills, indeed played a crucial role in reaching out to the hearts and minds of the public, influencing them to vote for the Nazis, and eventually in his rise to power, it was the existence of the incumbent problems in Germany that provided Hitler with the opportunity to exploit them to his benefit. Therefore, I agree with the statement “Hitler’s rise to Chancellorship of Germany by 1933 was due to favourable circumstances” to a large extent.

An argument to support the alternative perspective, which is that Hitler’s rise to Chancellorship was due to his personal abilities, would be that [Hitler had excellent oratorical skills](#) and was able to sway the masses into believing that he could solve their problems,

influencing them to vote for him. Hitler was a charismatic politician, one that spent days practising and preparing his speeches for the people. He was a passionate and confident speaker who spoke from his heart and always appeared sincere to the people. In most of his speeches, he was seen talking animatedly, with exaggerated hand gestures to further express his beliefs more clearly and passionately to people. Moreover, the locations at which he conducted his speeches were carefully chosen – beer halls. Being a master at gauging the mood of the audience, he started his speeches calmly and as the audience got drunk, he began to rant and rave animatedly to an audience that was easy to sway. This impression left on listeners was one of passion and dedication to the fight, and to make Germany great again. Furthermore, the [content of his speeches was well thought out](#). He was aware of what the people wanted and would hence tell them exactly what they wanted to hear in his speeches, assuring them that he would solve all the incumbent problems that the Weimar government did not resolve. This brought about an increase in popularity, as he painted the image of himself as the “people’s politician”. For example, during his speeches, he made promises such as the overturn of the Treaty of Versailles, one of the aspects that the people were extremely dissatisfied with and to deliver a strong government. His beliefs, which were reflected in the Nazi ideologies, appeared to offer something for everyone and resonated with them. Hence, Hitler swayed the masses by capitalising on their feelings and personal emotions, touching the hearts of the people and making them feel more inclined to vote for him, being crucial to his rise to power.

Despite the fact that his abilities were indeed essential to his rise to power, reaching out to the hearts of the people to support his campaign, it does not fully explain why his promises and beliefs were so well received and the people would so fully and readily support the Nazis, seeing that they were politically insignificant in the early years. Hence, it is vital to recognise the conditions that were favourable to Hitler’s rise to power, namely the weakness of the Weimar government and the Great Depression.

The [weaknesses of the Weimar government](#) created foundations of a fragile democracy, thus ‘favourable circumstances’, that paved the way for extremist parties such as the

Nazis to seize political power. The Weimar government adopted the system of proportional representation, in hopes of giving as many political parties as possible the opportunity to be in the Reichstag. Despite the fact that proportional representation was a democratic and fair system, it resulted in a high degree of fragmentation in parliament. There were too many small, competing parties, without any party gaining a majority, resulting in the formation of the coalition government. However, it was difficult to get different parties to work together, in a coalition government, as a number of parties had extreme ideas and were not willing to compromise. Thus, the coalition government kept breaking up, leading to frequent changes of government; there were 20 different coalition governments from 1919 to 1933. Many of the German people disliked the way that the governments kept changing. Moreover, it was difficult to pass laws and the coalition government was seen as weak by the people. The Germans wanted order and certainty in their lives, but the democratic system under the Weimar government was fragile and did not give them a sense of security. The weakness of the Weimar government hence spurred the people's dissatisfaction towards the government, and therefore turned to extremist parties like Nazis, with the rise in populist ideas, paving the way for such extremist parties to seize political power.

Additionally, [the Great Depression](#) set the ideal conditions for the rapid rise of populist ideas and paved the way for extremist parties such as the Nazis to seize political power. The Great Depression hit Germany particularly badly, as Germany was dependent on loans and investments from the USA. When the USA suddenly recalled the loans and deposits from German banks, Germany suffered an economic crisis, which in turn caused a social crisis. This resulted in the closing of factories and the loss of jobs. Poverty, homelessness and starvation were commonplace. The economic crisis developed into a political crisis, as the coalition government in power at that time could decide what course of action to take. From 1930 onwards, no government had enough support in the Reichstag to pass laws and the only way action could be taken was if President Hindenburg used his emergency powers. However, Hindenburg was a right-wing nationalist who did not care much for democracy. This explicitly showed the public the incompetence, inability and

lack of interest of the incumbent government in resolving crises. The people were hence agitated and angered, due to the lack of decisive action from the government. This set the stage for the rise of extremist parties such as the Nazis. Populist ideas began to spread, support for parties with moderate opinions declined drastically and people increasingly turned to extremist parties like the Nazis, due to growing disenfranchisement with the government.

In conclusion, Hitler's rise to Chancellorship could largely be attributed to the favourable circumstances that provided him with the opportunity to exploit to his benefit. Though Hitler's stirring speeches may have piqued the interest of the people and garnered support from the people for him, what truly influenced or imprinted his message into the people was their emotional state at that time. Due to the dire situation in Germany – the weakness of the Weimar government, the Great Depression and the lack of action of the government in resolving the crisis, the people became increasingly discontented and agitated with the incumbent government, and were desperate for someone to lead them out of the chaos, hence turning to extremist parties like the Nazis. These provided Hitler with the opportunity to not only exploit the weakness of the Weimar Government, but also the easily swayed masses. The circumstances hence laid the building blocks for Hitler's rise to power and arguably, it was only with the appearance of such circumstances that his speeches managed to achieve such a massive effect, convincing the public that he could resolve the existing problems and influencing them to vote for him. Therefore, I agree with the statement that "Hitler's rise to chancellorship of Germany by 1933 was due to favourable circumstances" to a large extent.