

History

Answers and commentaries A-level (7042)

1L The quest for political stability: Germany, 1871 — 1991

Marked answers from students for questions from the June 2022 exams. Supporting commentary is provided to help you understand how marks are awarded and how students can improve performance.

Contents

The below content table is interactive. You can click on the title of the question to go directly to that page.

Question 1	3
Question 2	13

Answers and commentaries

Please note that these responses have been reproduced exactly as they were written by the student.

This resource is to be used alongside the A-level History Component 1L The quest for political stability: Germany, 1871–1991 June 2022 Question paper and inserts.

Question 1

Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to the postwar economy of West Germany.

[30 marks]

Mark scheme

- L5:** Shows a very good understanding of the interpretations put forward in all three extracts and combines this with a strong awareness of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts. Evaluation of the arguments will be well-supported and convincing. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. **25–30**
- L4:** Shows a good understanding of the interpretations given in all three extracts and combines this with knowledge of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts. The evaluation of the arguments will be mostly well-supported, and convincing, but may have minor limitations of depth and breadth. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. **19–24**
- L3:** Provides some supported comment on the interpretations given in all three extracts and comments on the strength of these arguments in relation to their historical context. There is some analysis and evaluation but there may be an imbalance in the degree and depth of comments offered on the strength of the arguments. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. **13–18**
- L2:** Provides some accurate comment on the interpretations given in at least two of the extracts, with reference to the historical context. The answer may contain some analysis, but there is little, if any, evaluation. Some of the comments on the strength of the arguments may contain some generalisation, inaccuracy or irrelevance. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **7–12**

A-LEVEL HISTORY – 7042/1L GERMANY – ANSWERS AND COMMENTARIES

- L1:** **Either** shows an accurate understanding of the interpretation given in one extract only **or** addresses two/three extracts, but in a generalist way, showing limited accurate understanding of the arguments they contain, although there may be some general awareness of the historical context. Any comments on the strength of the arguments are likely to be generalist and contain some inaccuracy and/or irrelevance. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. **1-6**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Student responses

Response A

The overall message of Extract A is that the post-war economy's improvement was due to 'Erhard's policies' which were also backed by 'other government legislation'. This viewpoint is convincing due to the abundance of seemingly successful government policies that were implemented throughout the 1950s. Such examples include the Investment Aid Law of 1951, which helped to boost industrial production through increased investment in heavy industries. Furthermore, the co-determination Law of 1951 ensured labour relations between trade unions and industries, further encouraging increased productivity. In addition to this, a reverse of denazification in giving 160,000 former Nazis jobs again in 1949 also proved beneficial to the economy. The impact can be quantified through the following boom in industrial production, with production increasing 2.5x between 1950 and 1960. In addition to this, Schmidt's policy of public spending also proved to be beneficial in the creation of jobs, hence with 160,000 jobs created between 1977-79 after a rise in unemployment following the 1973 oil crisis. Due to this, Extract A's argument that it was government policies - particularly Erhard's - seems to be very convincing. However, it could be argued that this improvement in the economy was not due to government policy, but as a result of the external factors which benefitted the German economy. In 1949, the Marshall Aid, of which Germany received \$15 billion, was beginning to be distributed. This allowed for a huge increase in Government spending, as illustrated by the Investment Aid Law in 1951, which helped boost the economic output of the economy. Furthermore, the Korean war in 1950, drove up demand for German goods, hence allowing for

an increase in their exports.

A key argument of extract A is that it was ^{West} Germany's economic recovery was what led to their enhanced international status. This argument is convincing because it was due to Germany's production levels - in the 1960s West Germany was producing more coal than had been produced in the entirety of Germany in the 1930s - ~~the~~ as well as the re-establishment of previously strong electrical industries such as AEG and Siemens, that West German exports were on the rise, doubling between 1950 and 1960. However, it could also be argued that it was not through its economic recovery alone that international status was increased - West Germany had become a founding member of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951 and also joined NATO in 1953. By this point, from the West German economy was by no means in the strongest position and yet their international status was increased. Through this, their economy was enabled to grow - European union allowed for easier access to foreign markets for exports, for example.

To conclude, I find extract A largely convincing in its assessment of government policy being the main factor for economic recovery; however I think that it places too little emphasis on the effect that external factors played and it also overplays the role of economic recovery in its renewed international status.

Extract B

The overall argument of Extract B is that the talk of an economic 'miracle' in West Germany is as a result of the 'unlimited reserve of human resources' and its own natural resources as well. This argument is convincing because the labour supply within Germany was very large. Between 1949-1969, West Germany received

total of 2.5 million immigrants from East Germany alone. In addition to this, the development of a closer European Union, as discussed in the Hague meeting in 1969, allowed the easier flow of skilled labourers into West Germany. On top of labour resources, West Germany also possessed the Ruhr and Rhineland, which had made Germany the second strongest economy in the world by 1959. This therefore set a foundation for growth, as coal production in the 1950s soared, making West Germany the second largest producer of the raw material by 1959. However, it could be argued that this created a foundation, but was not the cause of economic growth due to the fact that effective government policies were required to making about the most efficient production of these natural resources.

A sub-argument of extract B is that 'international developments' such as the Korean War were ~~the~~ main factor for economic recovery. This can be seen to be convincing due to the fact that ~~Germany~~ West Germany became a founding member of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, which later became the EEC in 1957. In the 1969 Hague Summit, more talk of a closer integrated European Union took place, which would allow for ~~from~~ West Germany's exporting industry to flourish due to access to foreign markets and more supply of skilled labourers. This is shown to have had an effect as between 1950 and 1960, the GNP grew by $\frac{2}{3}$ and employment grew from 13.8 million in 1950 to 19.8 million in 1960. This was largely within the exporting sector that had become a priority due to this easier access to foreign markets that had been funded by the Marshall Aid. Given in 1949, the \$1.5 billion received by West Germany was the contributor to facilitate the costs of increasing production levels. However, it could be argued that the argument is not convincing because it emphasises the impact of factors completely external to

the government

To conclude, Extract B is not particularly convincing because, while natural resources and external factors contributed to economic growth, ^{there is a} the disregard for government policies (which made effective use of these natural advantages).

Extract C

~~Extract~~ The overall argument of Extract C is that the West German state was not pro free-market, but instead 'maintained active economic presence'. This can be argued to be convincing due to the number of policies implemented in order to encourage growth, ranging from the Investment Aid Law in 1951 to the Co-determination Law also in 1951, as far as the public spending schemes implemented by Schmidt. In 1973, the price of oil was put extortionately higher, and in return there was a ban on driving on Sundays and unemployment ~~fell~~ increased to 1 million in 1975. In order to reduce this, Schmidt created 160,000 jobs between ~~1975~~ 1977 and 1979 through job creation schemes. However, this only led to further government intervention being required from Kohl, as the budget deficit effectively doubled to 79.5 billion DM by between 1979 and 1981. As a result, Kohl was forced to cut federal expenditure in 1982. Evidently, there were lots of economic policies implemented by the West German ~~state~~ state. However, it could be argued this is not convincing because in 1949 West Germany implemented the social market economy, a free market economy with state intervention where necessary. While the West German Government did aid economic growth as a ~~kickstart~~ kickstart in the early 1950s and responded to the oil crisis in 1973, the economy was generally not interfered with massively as production from areas such as the Ruhr was freely done and many regulations of firms were stripped and wage controls removed during the period of Allied occupation.

resulting in reduced government intervention.

The sub-argument of extract B is that the Nazi infrastructure remained with little 'shipping out' of Nazi-era 'businessmen or banks'. This is convincing to the extent at which major industries such as electrical, with firms such as AEG and Siemens, as well as car manufacturing such as Volkswagen were able to restore their industrial imperialism and through the use of cartels could set market prices. However, this is not convincing because it fails to account for the Allied destruction of almost a quarter of Nazi-owned industries and banks. Furthermore, the German economy was also ~~for~~ seeing improvements as a result of external factors which had no relevance to Nazi economy, such as Marshall Aid, by which they gained \$1.5 billion and their commitment to the EEC in 1957.

To conclude, Extract C is largely unconvincing because it overstates the extent to which the West German government was involved in the daily life of the economy; however, ~~it~~ there is truth in that many successful industries in the FRG economy were simply based upon the ~~past~~ successes of previous German economies.

This is a Level 5 response

The response initially identifies the main argument of each extract and provides some well-selected contextual knowledge in support. On all three extracts, balance is achieved in relation to the main argument identified, although this could have been further developed on Extract B. The response uses the approach of assessing a sub-argument in each extract, which is effective in developing the analysis. Assessment of these sub-arguments is also balanced and supported with relevant contextual knowledge. The conclusion on each extract is brief but does provide some judgement in relation to the question building on the preceding evaluation.

Response B

Extract A's overall argument is particularly convincing as it states that Erhard was the primary reason, and enforcer, behind ~~from~~ Germany's economic recovery post-war due to his many policies. The historian's argument is strengthened by ~~price~~ ~~to~~ their insistence that the 'German-miracle' was made possible strictly ~~to~~ due to Erhard's policies. This can be seen ~~it~~ in the fact that the GDP rate was above 7% and inflation was incredibly low, ~~later~~ between 1-2% during ~~the~~ the 1950s boom, ~~this fact~~ which were made possible due to his policies, thus creating a more convincing argument. However, the argument may be weakened by the over reaction that social peace could have hardly been ~~in~~ maintained without the Equalisation of Burdens Law. Although it would have been more difficult without it, social peace would have been maintained by the fact that unemployment was incredibly low, at 0.5%, during the years of the economic miracle and the social market economy allowed businesses to flourish. ~~Nevertheless~~ Nevertheless, the historian's argument is made ~~more~~ slightly more convincing in the fact it mentions a thriving industrial state. Due to the damage from the war, Erhard implemented public works schemes which boosted the amount of people working within industries such as infrastructure. This meant that Germany could be rebuilt but also German goods could be sold to the West, as they were making weaponry that wasn't needed. Overall, Extract A's argument is particularly convincing as it provides great context as to how Erhard perpetrated the economic miracle. Although featuring exaggeration at times, the historian is still convincing in how he states Erhard's significant role in Germany's postwar recovery.

Extract B's overall argument is fairly convincing as the historian states that ~~Germany's~~ West Germany's economy was able to thrive post-war more due to the opportunities it was provided than anything else. This argument is made convincing by the mention of ~~it~~ Germany's unlimited reserves of guest workers. The

availability of the 'Gastarbeiter' made rebuilding much easier, as by the ~~1960s~~^{70s}, they made up one-third of the West German workforce. Without the availability of these guest workers, West Germany may not have recovered from the war as quickly, thus making the historian's argument more convincing as it shows that they merely seized the opportunity of the Gastarbeiter rather than created it. The historian's argument is made further convincing by mentioning the international developments that provided opportunities for export industries, ~~such as the Marshall~~ Foreign exports were boosted during the 1951-53 Korean War, as more countries turned to Western Germany. Additionally, by joining the EEC in 1957, West Germany was the main exporter of goods for their allies, which helped boost the economic miracle further. These make the argument more convincing as it further shows how West Germany was able to benefit from foreign developments, even some being out of their control. However, the argument could possibly be made slightly less convincing by its overexaggeration of West Germany being able to rival the United States. Although they had the third biggest economy behind the USA and the USSR, West Germany was not yet established enough to rival the two superpowers, regardless of the economic miracle. Regardless of this slight ~~time~~ limitation, the historian's argument in Extract B is quite convincing as it provides many points that Germany was provided many opportunities and was able to seize them. Without these chance opportunities, West Germany would have struggled to build the strong economy it did.

Extract C's overall argument is that Erhard went against the American system of economics which is why Germany was able to boom, ~~instead of~~ which is ~~partly~~^{partially} convincing. This argument is made convincing by the mention of 'active economic presence' - there was great government interference during Erhard's time as President which allowed for the creation of the

social market economy, or the free market. Businesses and private profit boomed, all while Erhard was able to introduce social laws such as the Equalisation of Burdens Law, which transferred 90 billion Deutschmarks, to anyone affected by the war, over a 20 year period. This makes the argument convincing because if Erhard had followed the American way, it is unlikely that either of these policies would have been introduced, as American presidents don't often intervene with the public. The mention of 'cooperation between large corporations in price-setting and market-sharing' also references the benefits of the social market economy, making the argument somewhat more convincing. However, the argument may be made less convincing by the 'familiar to the cartels of earlier decades' as the free market was established in an attempt to rid of the monopolies. Nevertheless, the overall argument is partially convincing in Extract C as it establishes that Erhard and West Germany benefitted from dismissing the ~~foreign~~ American overseers, as the different style of economy allowed the country to experience economic boom.

This is a Level 3 response

The response identifies the main arguments of extracts A and B effectively, although is less secure on C. There is an attempt to deploy some contextual knowledge in support but this lacks depth and precision on Extracts A and C. The evidence provided to support the evaluation of Extract B is better. There is an attempt at balance on all three extracts but this is not very convincing. Overall, therefore, there is some supported comment on all three extracts, with an understanding of the historical context. There is also some analysis and evaluation, but this is not wholly convincing.

Question 2

'Opposition in the Reichstag had little impact on Bismarck's policies in the years 1871 to 1890.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

Mark scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16–20**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information, which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way, although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6–10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Student responses

Response A

* Between 1871 and 1890, Bismarck ^{in theory} was forced ^{by the constitution} to negotiate with and gain approval from the Reichstag in order to push through his desired policies. While initially the National Liberals were largely incapable of influencing Bismarck, the eventual expansion of socialism and pragmatism of Conservative policies meant that he was eventually coerced into placating the Reichstag. Therefore, the view stated is only partially valid.

* An 'impact' on Bismarck's policies can be considered to be any pressure which eventually caused legislation to be passed which was favourable to those applying it.

The 1871 German constitution required Reichstag approval for ~~all~~ any laws to be passed. Therefore, Bismarck instantly had to side with the largest party (or parties) in order to rule as he desired. Initially, this was the NL, a right-wing liberal party who, despite their efforts, were largely unable to impact Bismarck's major policies. A primary goal of Bismarck's was to eradicate the socialist threat. When in 1878 the NL refused to pass his Anti-Socialist bill, Bismarck utilised a ~~propaganda~~ leftist (anarchist) assassination attempt to dissolve the Reichstag and launch a smear campaign against the NL and the SPD. This was thoroughly effective as both parties' vote shares fell dramatically and the new, more favourable Reichstag composition soon passed the bill. This demonstrates that Reichstag opposition was perhaps irrelevant to Bismarck who was able to achieve his goals through his and the Kaiser's constitutional power and close relationship, as well as his genius in diplomacy and manipulation. Furthermore, when the NL rejected the 'eternal law' for the army budget at the beginning of the Kaiserreich, Bismarck simply threatened to dissolve the Reichstag in order to force them into negotiating the Septennates. Again, this indicates that Bismarck's power and skill made the Reichstag more of a nuisance than a genuine threat to his

pursuit of the desired course of action. However, the Reich did follow the theory of free, liberal economics during the NL era of 1871-79. While Bismarck was not necessarily vehemently opposed to this course of action, pragmatism and 'Realpolitik' meant that the NL essentially forced him into following it. This perhaps indicates a degree of Reichstag control over the policies of Bismarck.

The SPD was perhaps the most impactful opposition group in the Reichstag in terms of shaping Bismarck's policies. Despite their relatively small initial representation of just 12 seats, the SPD gained 500,000 votes and represented an ideology which both terrified and disgusted Bismarck, socialism. In addition to his initial attempts to crush socialism and the SPD through the 'May laws', Bismarck was eventually forced to pursue the policy of 'state socialism' due to the increasing popularity of (former) SPD deputies and socialism as a whole. Through their popularity and natural adversity to elites like the Chancellor, the SPD was essentially able to indirectly pressure Bismarck into policies like the 'sickness insurance act' of 1883 ~~and~~, the provision of pensions for those over 70 and increased insurance for those who were left injured or permanently disabled from accidents in the workplace. Although socialists in the Reichstag rarely had any successful cases of direct action, their image and popularity had a great impact on government policy. However, this argument could be countered. As a conservative and devout Christian, Bismarck genuinely believed in the moral obligation of the wealthy elites to the poor. Therefore, it is possible that state socialism was pursued for more altruistic than cynical reasons and thus that the SPD's impact was not as great as believed.

Another group in the Reichstag who impacted Bismarck's policies were the conservatives. Following the downfall of relations with and the popularity of the NL in 1878, Bismarck was forced to find new allies to push through his anti-socialist policies: the Conservatives, Free Conservatives and Zentrum. To win over their support, Bismarck had to abandon liberal, laissez-faire economics and instead pursue the interests of Conservative deputies and voters; usually wealthy landed elites or rural farmers. These groups had suffered from free trade as cheap US and Russian imports drove down the price of wheat and slashed the profits of German producers. Therefore, Bismarck had to pass the 1879 Tariff Act to secure the future support of the conservatives. While this quick U-turn in policy highlights Bismarck's pragmatism, it also shows a clear example of Reichstag groups influencing his policies in their favour, weakening the view stated in the question. However, as a wealthy Prussian Junker himself it is entirely possible that this would've been his natural economic choice anyway, perhaps questioning the conservatives' impact.

Overall, Bismarck was often able to bend Reichstag opposition to his will, by simply threatening dissolution, particularly during the Liberal Era of 1871-9. However, as the prominence of socialists and conservatives grew they began to influence policy, be it through fear or friendship. As a result, the stated view is, at best, only somewhat valid.

This is a Level 5 response

The response demonstrates a very good understanding of the full demands of the question from the outset. It is very well-organised in a clear and analytical structure. In each of the main paragraphs, the supporting information is well-selected and precise. Balance is achieved in each of the main paragraphs and this contributes to the development of the overall argument being constructed. Although the conclusion is brief, overall judgement has been developed throughout the answer, from the introduction onwards, and is therefore well-substantiated.

Response B

The opposition in the ~~Prussian~~ Reichstag ^{having little} ~~did not have~~ ^{soon} impact on Bismarck's policies in the years of 1871 to 1890. ^{is not valid.} This is seen through the switching of support from political parties in the Reichstag to be able to pass his legislations ~~through~~ and policies through. If he couldn't get any support he would ~~annul~~ ~~the~~ ~~Reichstag~~ dissolve the Reichstag.

The Reichstag did have impact on Bismarck's policies which is seen through protectionism. ~~These~~ Protectionism is when Bismarck put high tariffs on ~~import~~ ^{imported} goods to prevent German citizens from buying cheap Russian or American goods but buying German goods. ~~The German and Free Conservative~~ ~~did have impact on Bismarck's policy seen through pressure~~ The Reichstag impacted this policy as both the German Conservatives and Free Conservatives pressured him into protecting German agriculture. ~~However this~~ This helped ~~agriculture to grow~~ Junkers to gain more money from their land but also affected the peasants allowing them to stay ~~where~~ where they were. Although the Conservatives supported the idea of protectionism it wasn't passed until 1879 as the National Liberals opposed this policy. Bismarck had to gain more support and this became one of the reasons the Kulturkampf ended so Bismarck could get Zentrum's vote. Protectionism of 1879 is a prime example to ~~see~~ the Reichstag having ~~an~~ impact on Bismarck's ~~ke~~ policies. However, a

Limitation to this is that ~~there~~ there were policies such as the Press Law of 1874 where he did not need any help as Bismarck had more power, so ~~where~~ he can just dissolve the Reichstag like he did in 1880. He created a war scare to get his 10% increase in ~~income~~ taxation for the military. This shows he can get his own policies. ~~Another example of~~ through without the Reichstag, it just didn't.

Another example of opposition in the Reichstag having impact on Bismarck's policy is in the years of 1871 to 1890 is the Anti-socialist law and state socialism. Bismarck feared that socialism would ~~threaten~~ threaten Germany's unification and his power as chancellor. Anti-socialist laws prohibited SPD ~~members from meeting~~ ^{or any socialists} having meetings, no publication ~~of anything~~ ^{of anything} and police ~~had~~ had increase in power, being able to arrest, imprison or search socialists houses. In the short term this worked, SPD struggled to run in elections. However, in the long run memberships increased from 0.5 million to 1 million. Votes and seats also increased. At first National Liberals and Zentrum agreed to these laws but soon ~~retracted~~ opposed them, ~~state~~ socialism also shows the Reichstag's eventually stopping Bismarck from making it a law. State socialism also shows the Reichstag having impact on Bismarck's

policies. Since Anti-socialist laws weren't working Bismarck created State Socialism that consisted of Medical Insurance in 1883, Accident insurance in 1884 and Pension for elderly and disabled in 1889. This was meant to convince people not to vote for the SPD however this failed. Many German citizens believed it was a scam and continued to vote for the SPD. This showed the need German people felt for socialism. The SPD influenced these policies creating a impact on Bismarck. However, a limitation is Bismarck's idea of the 'Reich Council' where ~~they would~~ ~~however~~ Bismarck could go through them not the Reichstag. This ~~was~~ failed however did show the power he had ~~in~~ in the 1871 constitution.

In conclusion, the opposition ~~in~~ in the Reichstag had little impact on Bismarck's policies in the years 1871 to 1890 ~~is~~ has little validity. The Reichstag influenced Bismarck's policies even in things such as the Press Law 1874. He had to change his own policies such as the Kulturkampf to be able gain support for new policies.

This is a Level 3 response

The response is rather sweeping and assertive in style at first, demonstrating an understanding of the question but not to a high level. The essay contains a good range of factual content. However, this is often deployed in a rather descriptive style and is not always focused effectively on the question, therefore lacking precision. There is a good deal of comment in relation to the question, although this is not always convincing or well-developed. Ultimately, the essay does not provide any overall judgement in a conclusion.

Get help and support

Visit our website for information, guidance, support and resources at aqa.org.uk/7042

You can talk directly to the History subject team

E: history@aca.org.uk

T: 0161 958 3865

Copyright © 2024 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

AQA Education (AQA) is a registered charity (registered charity number 1073334) and a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 3644723).

Registered address: AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX.

