

Part 5: Were Stalin's economic policies a success or failure for the USSR?



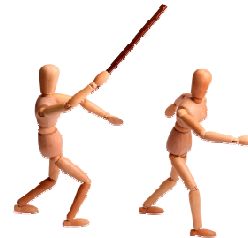
14. Why did Stalin introduce the 5 year plans and how successful were they?

- The NEP was working, but too slowly
- Russia was far behind other world powers with industry and needed to catch up in order to not fall behind forever
- Stalin wanted Russia to be a huge player in the world and to do that he needed to make other countries rely on buying things from Russia
- Stalin believed the capitalist countries would invade and he wanted Russia to be strong enough to prevent this

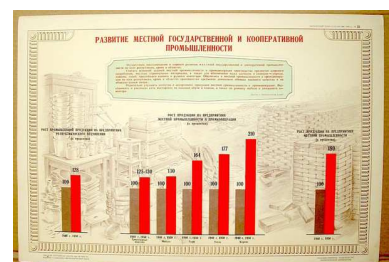
Which 5Year Plan?	Success	Failure
<p>First 5YP: 1928-33</p> <p>This plan focused on expanding the heavy industries in Russia, things like Coal, Steel and Iron. The targets set by the government were hugely ambitious</p>	<p>There was a huge increase in output in almost all major industries</p> <p>The plan had reached many of its targets after 4 years!</p> <p>The world watched in awe and fear</p> <p>Massive work ethic amongst workers—'Stakhanovites'</p>	<p>Transport network couldn't cope with the huge demands</p> <p>Living standards fell as people were rushed in, cheap and easy housing was used and working hours were long</p> <p>Rationing was introduced to make sure workers were fed. This highlighted the food problem</p>
<p>Second 5YP: 1933-37</p> <p>This focused on transport and automation (using machinery instead of people to do jobs) in the new hi-tech factories. At the same time heavy industries continued to expand</p>	<p>Some goods for people to use around the home and in their lives were produced in factories and sold around Russia and the world</p> <p>5 times as many new businesses were set up during this plan than during the first.</p>	
<p>Third 5YP: 1938-41 (3 and a half years!):</p> <p>This plan was geared towards military spending and the production of consumer goods (things people buy) to be exported to other areas of the world.</p>	<p>Living standards rose sharply in Russia</p> <p>Russia was now the world's 2nd largest industrial superpower</p> <p>They were ready to deal with any invasions from capitalist countries</p>	<p>By the time of this plan a lot of talented managers, engineers and others had died in the purges. This led to a slow down of growth</p>

15. Why did the workers work so hard during the 5 year plans?

Many people living in the West of Europe in countries like Britain wondered how Russia was escaping the world depression during the 1930s. This can only be down to the hard work of the Russian people. Many historians agree that there are 2 main reasons why the Russians worked so hard during this time, these are encouragement and fear.



Encouragement	Fear
<p><u>Propaganda:</u> people were encouraged to work hard by propaganda which bombarded the workers in all directions. This played on the belief that if most did it, the rest would follow on as they did not want to be seen as different.</p>	<p><u>Gulags:</u> The fear of the labour camps was usually enough to get people working hard</p>
<p><u>Encouraged competition</u> and celebrated hard work with awards and publicity to groups of workers and individuals. An example of this is Alexi Stakhanov, the worker who supposedly mined 102 tonnes of coal in 1 shift. His successes were celebrated and idolised in propaganda all over Russia. Many workers disliked the heavy burden this put upon them to work harder</p>	<p><u>Fines/Loss of rations:</u> Absenteeism from work was punishable by being fined or having your ration book taken from you, In 1940, it carried a prison sentence!!</p>
<p><u>Extra Pay:</u> another way of persuading the workers to work hard was to pay by results. Successful managers were also paid more though whether this extra money was shared by the workers in a factory or mine is unknown.</p>	<p><u>Labour books:</u> All workers had to carry labour books which stated whether you had worked hard or not. Bad comments from your manager could also lead to prison for a short sentence or, even worse, the Gulags.</p>
<p><u>Idealism/Belief:</u> The young were still idealistic. The whole concept of communism was still intoxicating. Stalin was known as "Uncle Joe" and they were willing to suffer a few years of hardship if they were going to get to the promised land of a better society</p>	<p><u>Weak were targeted:</u> In order to improve production, some managers would pick the less capable workers and send them to do work on difficult and high risk projects like roads. It was well known that hundreds of thousands died this way. Something you would want to avoid!</p>



16. Why did Stalin introduce collectivisation and how successful was it?

- Stalin HATED the Kulaks. He blamed them for everything that had gone wrong in agriculture as they were private land owners. He blamed them for the famine that collectivisation caused too. He had 7 million sent to the gulags and killed!
- The NEP was working, but too slowly
- Agriculture was in private hands and many peasants were making profits from grain (Kulaks), Stalin believed the government should make the profits.
- Stalin wanted control of food prices and supply to prevent further shortages and hopefully sell some food abroad
- By modernising agriculture the Russian industry would be able to invent, build and benefit from making machinery to help produce food



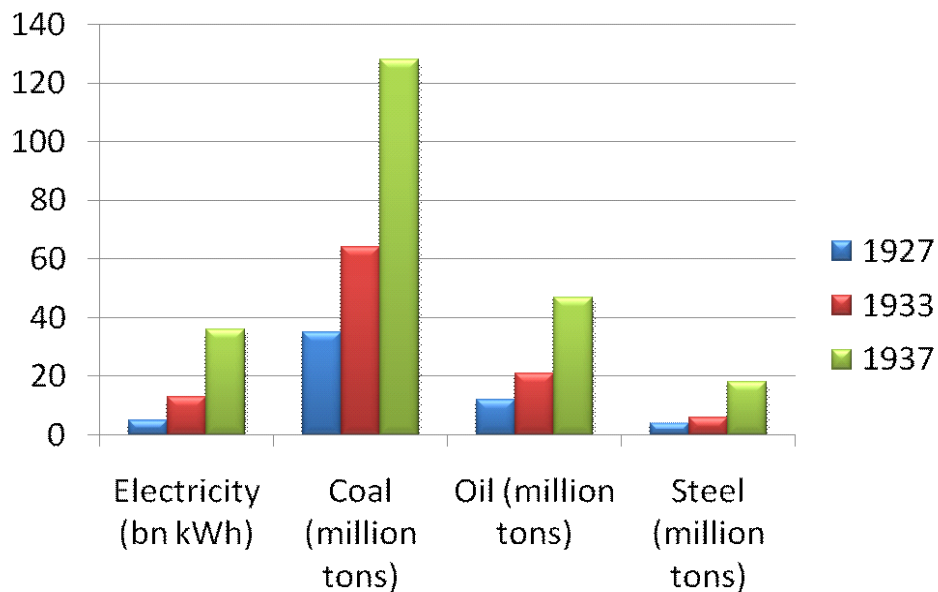
Collectivisation would mean that small farms would be gathered together to form massive ones. These bigger farms would be called collectives. As they are large we can use big machinery on them. The more food grown the better the cities and factories will be fed. Hungry factory workers cannot work effectively. Without collectivisation the 5 Year Plans would not succeed. The key to collectives is science and machinery. Tractors stations will be created to hire out tractors, combine harvesters etc.

Many of us peasants, 'rich' or poor, are against collectivisation. The land that Lenin had given us with his peace, bread, land policy is now being taken away by Stalin.



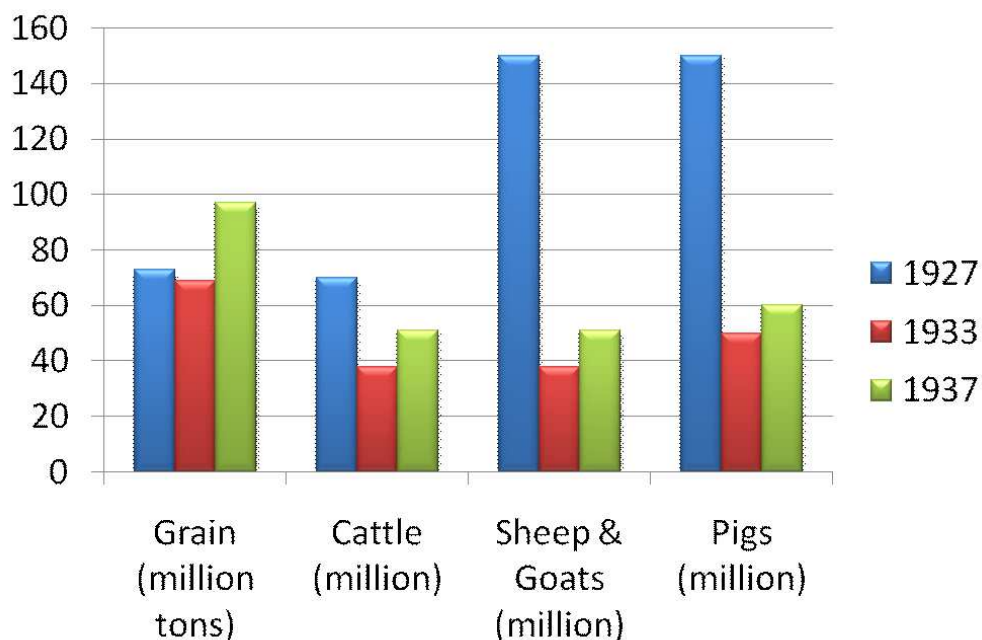
Successes	Failures
99% of Russian agriculture was now collectivised into 1/4 of a million farms called Kolkhoz's	Several million Kulaks were killed.
Over 17m peasants went to work in city factories from the countryside, boosting industrial production significantly	Terrible famines in 1930-33. The grain taken to the cities fed the workers, but left the countryside starving. The Ukraine was hit terribly. He paused collectivisation in 1932 to allow the countryside to recover, however famine returned in 1933.
Agriculture now used advanced technologies	
Communist party now had complete control over agriculture and the kulaks were eliminated	Millions of animals were slaughtered by their peasant owners to stop the communists taking them

17. How successful were Stalin's economic policies? (the stats)



Estimates of these figures are different depending on whether you use the communist (exaggerate) or capitalist estimates (under play). Also, because Stalin increased the targets whenever there was an increased need or when the old ones were met, it depends which ones a historian is quoting

The impact of collectivisation



Although grain increased during the course of collectivisation, because of the difficulties with peasants and geography progress was slow. The animals which were slaughtered caused huge problems with breeding enough animals, a problem which lasted decades

PART 5: TOP 10 QUIZ

1. Give 4 reasons why Stalin wanted to modernise the Soviet economy.
2. When did the first 5 year plan begin?
3. What was this plan focused on?
4. What did the second 5YP focus on?
5. What was the 3rd 5YP focused on and why did it end early?
6. Give 3 successes and 3 failures of the 5YPs
7. Why did Stalin hate the Kulaks?
8. How did collectivisation work?
9. What was a collective farm called?
10. Give 3 successes and 3 failures of collectivisation.

EXAM QUESTIONS: STALIN'S ECONOMIC POLICIES

DESCRIBE:

- Describe the main features of the 5YPs (4 Marks)
- What was collectivisation? (4 Marks)

EXPLAIN:

- Explain why Stalin introduced the 5 year plans (6 Marks)
- Explain why Stalin introduced collectivisation (6 Marks)
- Explain why Stalin considered the Kulaks to be a problem (6 Marks)

EVALUATE:

- How successful was Stalin in modernising the Soviet Union by 1941? (10 Marks)
- How far was Stalin a disaster for the USSR? (10 Marks)
- How successful were Stalin's 5YPs? Explain your answer (10 Marks)
- How far did the lives of ordinary Russians improve in the 1930s under Stalin's rule? (10 Marks)