

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics



Key facts in 1929

Area: 21'678'700km²^[1]

Population: 147 Million.^[1]

Literacy rate: 51-60%^[2]

Life expectancy: 37.4 Years^[3]

Biggest minorities: Technically none, practically Ukrainians, Jews, Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Turks, Georgian, Armenians, Azerbaijani^[4]

Selected Main Cities: Moscow, Leningrad, Stalingrad, Kiev, Minsk, Smolensk, Baku, Kazan, Novosibirsk, Vladivostok.

Neighbouring countries: Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Xinjiang, Tannu-Tuva, Mongolia, Manchuria, Japan (Korea), Japan (Sakhalin).

Sea Access: Baltic Sea, Seas of Arctic Ocean (oftenly blocked between November - March), Bering Sea, Japanese Sea, Okhotsk Sea, Black Sea, Caspian Sea (interior sea).

GDP: 31'000'000'000 \$1929^[5]



Recent Historical Background

The USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) was formed after a series of revolutions in 1917-1922 and a Civil War between Whites, Reds, Poland, Ukraine, Finland, and a few other republics. The USSR was proclaimed in 1922 during all national party meetings. Ukraine, Belarus, and the Caucasian SSRs technically were considered independent republics. The newly formed country suffered from the aftermath of the revolution, World War I and had a very poorly developed economy with a heavily illiterate population. Stalin was elected to the office of director of the Political bureau and later together with Kamenev and Zinoviev created the Troika focused on opposing Trotsky. Although Trotsky was sent out of the USSR in 1929, he still had a lot of supporters in the USSR, with many of them not agreeing with the politics of Stalin.^[6]

Political Situation

After the Soviet Civil War, the Bolsheviks began to implement their program in Russia and other Eastern European States, which included the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. They proclaimed the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) as the only party representing the interests of the working class and began to suppress other political organisations, considering them hostile. This led to the banning and liquidation of the activities of the non-Bolshevik parties, establishing a one-party system in 1922. Leon Trotsky put forward the idea of provoking a world socialist revolution, calling for strict state planning and the development of heavy industry. His views became known as Trotskyism. However, the grain procurement crisis in 1927 caused disagreement over the future course. Nikolai Bukharin and his supporters favoured retaining the New Economic Policy (NEP) and building socialism gradually. Meanwhile, Joseph Stalin and his supporters insisted on the forced development of heavy industry, believing it was necessary to prepare the country for a possible war. In 1929, the “right-wing bias” was condemned at a plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, and Bukharin, along with his supporters, were removed from their party positions.^[7] Important politicians included Joseph Stalin, the leader of the USSR and general secretary of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks; Kliment Voroshilov, the commissar of Defense and chairman of the Central Executive Committee; Leonid Kamenev, the Leader of the Leningrad Committee and Bolshevik politician; Nikolai Bukharin, the head of strategy of the NEP; Alexei Rykov, the chairman of the SNK as well as Mikhail Tomsky, a trade union leader and member of the Central Committee.^[8]

Economic Situation in 1929

In 1921, at the 10th assembly of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the NEP (New Economic Policy) was proclaimed. The NEP allowed the market economy, private ownership of small industries (with less than 30 workers or less than 18 with machines). It also was supposed to find a solution to fight hunger, with lands being rented out for periods for up to 12 years. In that context, it also allowed cooperatives and cancelled the requirement to work. Finally, it reformed the soviet currency. The NEP, while being able to solve the hunger problem, did not ensure stable economic growth. Therefore, from 1927 on, a Five-year plan was being developed. The Five-year plan for 1928-1932 was established on October 1st, 1928. The goal of this plan was to industrialise the country and to massively increase productivity. Despite this, the goals of the Five-year plan were not fully established by 1929. Possible goals to establish were to increase the production of means of production by 230%, the agricultural production by 55% and the industrial production by 180%. The means they wanted to create to achieve this included laying over 1200 factories as well constructing and modernising a network of existing roads and railroads. Simultaneously, more and more industries were nationalised. In the future, while the NEP remained active, Five-year plans could play a vital role in the economic structure.^[6,9,10]

Military Strength in 1929

The organisation of the armed forces of the workers is the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Workers' and Peasants' Red Army (RKKA) is divided into land, sea and air forces. The Workers' and Peasants' Red Army also includes special-purpose troops: the troops of the United State Political Department of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the convoy guards of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Soviet military was in a weak situation in 1929. It contained weak, copied French tanks of World War I, a poor level of motorization, an outdated air force which partially consisted of imported aircraft. However, major aviation constructors like Tupolev get financing to build bombing aviation. Major aviation designers included Tupolev, Polikarpov and Grigorovich. Some military equipment was imported from the USA.

| Key Facts about Military Strength of the USSR ^[11,12,13,14,15,16] | |
|---|---|
| Military personnel | 600'000 (Limited conscription) |
| Tanks | ~600 Light Tanks of World War I |
| Cavalry | ~20'000 |
| Mechanised / motorised equipment | ~200 armoured cars, 200 Soviet trucks, unknown US produced. |
| Ships | >125 |
| Planes | ~400 planes, ~80% of them are reconnaissance |
| Funding in 1929\$ | 538'700'000 |

Allies/Enemies/Existing territorial disputes in 1929

Allies: Mongolia, Tuvan People's Republic (Puppet States)[17,18]

Enemies: Great Britain (Anticommunist state), Japan, Poland (Territorial disputes), Republic of China (Sino-Soviet Conflict of 1929)[19]

Territorial Disputes: Sakhalin and Kuril Islands (with Japan)[20,21], Eastern Poland/Western Ukraine as well as Belarus (with Poland)[22]

Some of the Main Goals for the 1930s

1. Finish the Five-year plan and prepare a new Five-year plan for 1933-1937
2. Strengthen the Soviet military to be able to face threats from outside your borders.
3. Solve internal party disputes, avoid a Trotskyist plot inside of the party.

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