Lenin had **two main economic objectives**

1. To improve **economic** performance in industry and agriculture
2. To use economic policy as a means of reinforcing Bolsheviki **political** power

### Important Point:
For the Bolsheviki economic and political objectives were inter-twinned - economic policy was used to reinforce political objectives. Economic success usually came second to the primary objective of retaining and consolidating political power. As a result, **economic policies changed to suit political needs**

The main objective of this policy was to win political support for the Bolsheviki, whose position was still very insecure.

This was achieved by...
1. Land Decree - abolished private ownership, land redistributed to the peasants via land committees. This simply recognised what was already happening in the countryside.
2. Worker control in the factories. This also simply recognised what was already happening

**State Capitalism was successful in one way - political:** it fulfilled the political objective of making the Bolsheviki more popular. e.g. it was popular among the workers and peasants

**State Capitalism was a failure in another way - economic:** it led to economic chaos, which meant it would be difficult for the Bolsheviki to win the coming Civil War

### Between 1918-24 the Bolsheviki had **3 distinct policies**, each of which was designed to meet one or both of the two objectives above

#### 1. 1917-18 State Capitalism

- **State Capitalism was successful in one way - political:** it enabled the Bolsheviki to win the Civil War
- **State Capitalism was a failure in another way - economic:** industry ground to a standstill. Production of heavy industry fell drastically

The main objectives of this policy were 1) **economic**: to kick-start the peasant economy in order to increase grain production. The money made from increased grain production would also help to fund industrialisation. 2) **political**: to improve economic productivity (Lenin recognised the need for this) and reduce political opposition to the Bolsheviki (such as the Tambov Rising).

This was achieved by...
1. Nationalisation of industries/private trade banned
2. Requisitioning of food from the peasantry to feed the Red Army

**Evidence for the unpopularity of War Communism can be seen in the Tambov Rising.**

#### 2. 1918-21 War Communism

- **War Communism was successful in one way - political:** Peasants resented requisitioning and resisted it by returning to subsistence farming
- **War Communism was a failure in another way - economic:** Peasants resented requisitioning and resisted it by returning to subsistence farming

**Industry ground to a standstill. Production of heavy industry fell drastically.**

The main objectives of this policy were 1) **economic**: to improve economic productivity (Lenin recognised the need to increase grain production). The money made from increased grain production would also help to fund industrialisation. 2) **political**: to reduce political opposition to the Bolsheviki (such as the Tambov Rising).

This was achieved by...
1. Returning ownership of small-scale industries to private hands
2. Ending grain requisitioning

**NEP was successful in two ways - 1) Economic: agricultural and industrial productivity increased. Living standards Peasants and workers were happier (fulfilling political objectives)**

**NEP was unsuccessful in other ways - 1) Political: concerns - Left-wing Bolsheviki saw it as a betrayal of the Marxist idea. As Marxists, Bolsheviki believed in a proletarian society. So the focus should be on industrialisation. Also concern about growth of NEPMEN (seen by left-wing Bolsheviki as capitalistic exploiters). Also, concern at growth of Kulaks (creating two-tier peasant class system). The increase in social inequality was in conflict with Bolsheviki ideas about equality. 2) Economic concerns: although productivity had increased it was not as high as pre-WW1 levels. Also there was a resurgence of the peasant commune system and of traditional (and backward) farming methods, which was seen as a backward step by the Bolsheviki.**

Lenin: "Socialist Russia will come from NEP Russia" i.e. NEP may not be ideal but we are slowly moving towards a socialist state. We must be patient.

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This usually asked as an 8 mark question (but it has been asked as a 22 mark question). It is a difficult question because most students simply start describing Bolsheviki economic policies rather than focusing on the objectives behind the policies.

**A 22 mark question is more likely to ask you 'How successful were Bolsheviki economic policies?' - in which case, you would explain what the objectives were, but spend more time describing what the policies involved and the ways they were successful/not successful.**

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