Without the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact there would have been no war in Europe.

To what extent is this statement true?

Whilst the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact was a key document within the forthcoming to WWII it was not the cause of the war within Europe causing this statement to be true to zero extent. This is due to other more significant causes of the war including German foreign policy and Hitler’s determination for Lebensraum a main driver for the invasion of Poland. Other causes such as the collapse of collective security and the policy of appeasement further contributed to the cause of war within Europe. Therefore, this statement is correct to zero extent due to other factors contributing to the cause of the war including German foreign policy, policy of appeasement and collapse of collective security.

The Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact whilst an important document was not the cause of war within Europe. The Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact also known as the Molotov Ribbentrop was signed 23rd of August 1939 less than two weeks before Germany. It outlined political and economic arrangements between the two countries but most importantly acted as a non-aggression. This would allow either nations to continue with military actions without the other intervening shocking Western nations to see politically opposite nations coinciding. Whilst, Hitler’s invasion of Poland was shorter after this agreement was signed several documents and events such as the Hossbach Memorandum and Hitler’s rearmament display Hitler’s determination for invading Poland before the treaty was signed. Furthermore, this foreign policy shows Hitler’s preparations for war and determination showing that the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact was not necessary in Hitler’s plans. Therefore, the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact whilst an important document in the lead up to war within Europe was not the key cause of war.

Germany foreign policy was a key cause of war within Europe due to Hitler’s militaristic ambitions and conquest of Lebensraum. From March 1935 it was apparent that the Nazi party had militaristic ambitions with Germany’s rearmament announced directly violating the treaty of Versailles highlighting Hitler’s opinions towards Germany’s current state. This was further highlighted in the Hossbach Memorandum where Hitler met with his military leaders in Berlin saying that there would be a future war and that preparations were needed. This commenced the next phase of Hitler’s foreign policy which was a path for war. This highlights Hitler’s determination for conflict within Europe and gives rise to the idea that even if there was no Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact there would still be war. Hitler’s determination can be also seen in May 1939 where he said Germany would “attack Poland at the first suitable opportunity.” This exhibits Hitler’s determination for Lebensraum and the invasion of Poland meaning that Hitler would have found other ways to invade Poland f the Soviet did not sign the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact. Furthermore, Hitler’s occupation of Czechoslovakia and Anschluss of Austria expanding Germany highlights his steps towards Lebensraum. This allowed Hitler to expand Germany allowing the supreme Aryan race to dominate these nations. His aims for Lebensraum can also be seen in Mein Kampf and Zweite Buch creating speculation among historians such as Hugh Trevor-Rope to conclude that Hitler was determined for war since his occupation of power. Therefore, Hitler’s foreign policy was a key factor in the causes for war within Europe due to his determination of Lebensraum causing the invasion of Poland.

Policy of appeasement and collapse of collective security were also important factors to a lesser extent in the cause of war within Europe. The League of nations was created as a way to promote peace by the enforcement of collective security by imposing economic and
military punishments when nations acted unjustly. However, this was not enforced as seen by the Manchuria incident in 1934 where the League asked Japan to leave Manchuria, but Japan refused and left the league. A similar incident was also observed in Abyssinia where economic sanctions were enforced on Italy but excluded things such as oil creating little impact. These events displayed the ineffectiveness of the League of Nations and the collapse of collective security. This allowed Hitler to invade Poland without worrying about punishment from the League of nations due to its inability in the past. Furthermore, the policy of appeasement is seen as another factor of the cause of war in Europe. This was seen in Britain’s and France’s response to the Anschluss of Germany on the 12th of March 1938 where they did not act. Appeasement was further seen in the Munich conference on September the 29th 1938 where France and Britain allowed Germany to reoccupy the Sudetenland in Germany and Hitler signing an agreement with Hitler that he would not occupy anymore land. However, Hitler occupied the rest of Czechoslovakia on the 5th of March 1939. Historian RAC Parker also said that the policy of appeasement was ineffective, and Chamberlin should have invaded Germany. This shows that the policy of appeasement was ineffective and was a factor in causing war within Europe. Therefore, the collapse of collective security and the policy of appeasement were important factors for the cause of war within Europe causing the statant to be false.

Therefore, the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact whilst a key document within the forthcomings to WWII it was not the cause of the war within Europe causing this statement to be true to zero extent. This is due to other causes of war within Europe including German foreign policy and Hitler’s intentions for war meaning war would have happened without the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact. Furthermore, the policy of appeasement and collapse of collective security were other causes for the start of the war. Consequently, the statement is true to zero extent due to there being other factors causing war within Europe.
Assess the impacts of the Holocaust on civilians in Nazi occupied territories.

The Holocaust had a large negative impact on Jewish civilians with varying severity escalating over time within Europe, however, other civilians experienced both positive and negative impacts of the Holocaust. Jewish civilians in Eastern European countries like Poland and Soviet experienced severe negative impacts from the holocaust with the presence of ghettos and death camps whilst, Western countries like France and Belgium experienced Holocaust impacts to a moderate extent. Furthermore, Jewish civilians in countries such as Denmark and Bulgaria experienced little negative impacts of the Holocaust. However, other citizens also were impacted by the Holocaust witnessing both social and economic impacts. Therefore, the Holocaust ad negative impacts on Jewish civilians escalating over time whilst non-Jewish civilians experienced both positive and negative impacts.

The Holocaust greatly impacted Eastern European areas such as Poland and the Soviet union impacting large portions of Jewish civilians. Within Poland there were approximately 3.3 million Jews and 4 million within Western Russia. This greatly reduced after Germany acquired Poland in 1939 where ghettos were established forcing polish ethnic Jews into these gated communities and by June 1941 1.8 million Jews were imprisoned. Furthermore, Jews were forced to wear yellow stars by September 1941 causing more Jews to be excluded from communities and forced into ghettos as they were identifiable. This caused separation and segregation within the polish community impacting Jewish civilians as they lost jobs, social status and homes. This also commenced in the soviet union in the soviet union in 1941 when operation Barbarossa began. This saw mass extermination through killing units called Einsatzgruppenn murdering more than 500,000 Soviet Jews. In mid-1942 death camps within Poland and the Soviet union were established near train lines transporting Jews from Western and central Europe. These Nazi death camps greatly impacted the Eastern Jewish population with approximately 5 million Polish and Soviet Jews dying within Nazi death camps. This was even greater at the end of the war when ‘death marches’ took place where Jews were marched away from enemy lines killing another 250,000. These death camps and marches greatly impacted the Eastern Jewish population and culture with only 1 million Soviet Jews and 380,000 ethnic polish Jews surviving. This severity can be partially attributed to large amounts of antisemitism within Poland and the Soviet union. This allowed Nazi forces to enable the ‘final solution’ with little argument from civilians with many officials assisting in the round up of Jews. Therefore, the holocaust greatly impacted Jewish civilians in Eastern areas with impacts escalating over time.

The Holocaust moderately impacted Jewish civilians within countries such as France and Belgium. Before World war 2 there were approximately 350,000 Jews in France with half being French citizens and 65,000 to 70,000 Jews in Belgium, majority being stateless. After occupation in 1940 antisemitic legislation were out in place in France and Belgium restricting civil rights, excluding Jews from public services and by June 1941 within France all Jews were excluded from public life being dismissed from military, industry and commerce jobs. This created discrimination within France and Belgium impacting Jews ability to work, incomes and education. This impacted Jew’s economic and socioeconomic classes within these nations. In March 1941 French Jews were put into detention camps implementing separation impacts. In mid-1942 Jews within France and Belgium were transported to Eastern countries to death and concentration camps enabling extermination. This segregation and extermination caused a major disruption in communities and amily structures as well as the
continuation of culture. Through this stage transit camps were used featuring poor conditions causing starvation, lack of hygiene and the increase of diseases. These transit camps and deportations to extermination impacted the Jewish population within Belgium by 25,000 and French by approximately 77,000. This impact was not as severe as seen in Eastern countries such as Poland. This has been attributed to French officials favouring French-Jews as to maintain the ethnic population. However, Belgian and French citizen’s and officials anti-Semitism and negative approach to foreigners caused the impacts of the Holocaust to increase due to lack of objection. As such, Jewish civilians within France and Belgium were impacted to a moderate extent within the Holocaust

Jews within areas such as Bulgaria and Denmark were impacted to a lower extent during the Holocaust. Within Bulgaria from July 1940 antisemitic laws were introduced restricting jobs and residency. This created segregation within the community impacting Jewish civilians both economically and socially impacting education, income and community relations. However, this intervention did not occur within Denmark due to Germany respecting them as ‘fellow Aryans’ and having little antisemitism within the country. This was further witnessed in Denmark in August to September 1943 where citizens relocated 7,200 Jews to Sweden using fisherman’s boats as to prevent Jews being transported to detention camps. This impacted Danish Jews by displacing them from their homes, losing communities and immersing them in different culture. However, it also had a positive impact preserving Danish-Jewish culture and population. Through this course only 120 Danish Jews died in the holocaust majority from protests and movement to Sweden. Similarly, Bulgarian officials rarely targeted Bulgarian Jews but targeted Jews Bulgarian acquired territories as to maintain the Bulgarian Jewish population. However, in Mid 1943 20,000 Jews from Sofia were sent to labour camps. This suspected Jews to were awful conditions impacting Jews through starvation, loss of homes, and disease. This these impacted caused some camps among Bulgarian Jews due to the nature of these camps their population remained the same in 1945 as it was in 1939 showcasing the minimal impact the Holocaust had on Bulgarian Jews. Consequently, Bulgarian and Danish Jews were only slightly impacted within the Holocaust due to small a small fraction of Holocaust deaths happening in these countries.

Whilst the Holocaust had a large negative impact on Jewish citizens other citizens had both positive and negative impacts of the Holocaust. In majority of Nazi occupied states segregation laws were put in place against Jewish civilians causing a vacation of jobs and property. This allowed Aryan civilians to progress in careers and acquire homes positively impacting them as they increased in socio economic status. Furthermore, through the removal of Jewish civilian’s form cities class structures were greatly impacted as Jews made a large amount of the middle class. This allowed citizens to progress in social class and benefit from the Holocaust. However, the Holocaust also negatively impacted civilians through violent protests. This was seen in France as protests occurred regarding the separation of Jewish families resulting in 20 civilians dying due to official shots. Furthermore, many civilians throughout Europe had smuggled Jews within homes protecting them and if caught were harmed by German officials Therefore, the Holocaust both positively and negatively impacted civilians in Nazi occupied territories.

Consequently, the Holocaust had a large negative impact on Jewish civilians escalating over time, varying in locations. However, non-Jewish civilians experienced both positive and negative impacts due to the holocaust. Jewish civilians in Eastern countries experienced the most sever impacts of the Holocaust whilst Jew within countries like Denmark and Bulgaria experienced little negative impact. Countries such as France and Belgium also experienced
moderate impacts showcasing that there were varying impacts of the Holocaust. Furthermore, Non-Jewish citizens were impacted both positively and negatively through social and economic factors. Therefore, the Holocaust had a largely negative impact on Jewish civilians escalating over time whilst both positively and negatively impacting non-Jewish civilians.