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General Government

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The **General Government**, also sometimes **General Governorate** (**German**: *Generalgouvernement*, **Polish**: *Generalne Gubernatorstwo*, **Ukrainian**: Генеральна губернія) was an **occupied area** of the **Second Republic of Poland** that was under **Nazi German** rule during the duration of World War II, from 1939 to early 1945. The Nazi government designated the territory as a separate administrative region of the Third Reich.

^[1] It included much of central and southern Poland, western Ukraine, and included the major cities of **Warsaw**, **Kraków**, and **Lviv**. Following the German invasion of the **Soviet Union** in **Operation Barbarossa** in June 1941, the region of **Eastern Galicia**, formerly Polish territory which was invaded and annexed by the Soviet Union subsequent to the **Nazi–Soviet pact**, was incorporated into the General Government.

In terms of international and civil law, all of these acts were illegal from their inception, according to section III of the **Fourth Hague Convention (1907)** accepted by Germany.^[2] The area was not a **puppet state**; its rulers had no goal of cooperating with Poles or Ukrainians throughout the war, regardless of their political orientation. The Nazi authorities made a determined effort to avoid even mentioning the name "Poland" in government correspondence. The only exception to this were the German-backed banknotes and coins (called *zloty* and *grosz*) printed in 1940 in which the word was used for propaganda purposes. The government and administration of the General Government was composed entirely of Germans, with the intent that the area was eventually to become an ethnic German province.^[3] According to the *Heim ins Reich* initiative the only locals remaining were to be those of German descent.

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Name [edit]

The full title of the regime in German until July 1940 was the *Generalgouvernement für die besetzten polnischen Gebiete*, a name that is usually translated as the **General Government for the Occupied Polish Territories**. On 31 July 1940 the name was shortened to just *Generalgouvernement* by governor **Hans Frank** on Hitler's authority.^[4] A more literal translation of *Generalgouvernement* would be **General Governorate**, however. The correct translation of the term "gouvernement" is not *government* but actually *governorate*, which is a type of administrative division or territory. It was also known colloquially as the ***Restpolen*** ("Remainder of Poland").

The designation *General Government* was specifically chosen in reference to the **Government General of Warsaw**, a civil entity created in the area by the **German Empire** during World War I. This 1914–1918 district existed together with an **Austro-Hungarian**-controlled **Military Government of Lublin** alongside the short-lived **Kingdom of Poland**, a similar rump state formed out of the then-**Russian parts of Poland**.^[5]

History [edit]



After the **attack on Poland** all areas (including the **Free City of Danzig**) that were occupied by the German army initially fell under **military rule**. This area extended from the 1939 eastern border of Germany proper and **East Prussia** up to the



<div></div> <div>General Government</div> <div><i>Generalgouvernement</i> (German)</div> <div><i>Generalne Gubernatorstwo</i> (Polish)</div> <div>Генеральна губернія (Ukrainian)</div>	
Administratively autonomous component of Nazi Germany ^[1]	
<div></div> <div>1939–1945</div> <div></div>	
<div></div> <div>Flag</div>	<div></div> <div>Insignia</div>
<div><div><div></div><div>GENERALNE GUBERNATORSTWO (Generalgouvernement) (1941–1945)</div></div></div>	
Capital	Łódź (12 Oct – 4 Nov 1939) Kraków (4 Nov 1939 – 1945)
Languages	German (official) Polish Ukrainian
Government	Civil administration
Governor-General	Hans Frank
Secretary of State	Arthur Seyss-Inquart
– 1939–1945	
– 1941–1945	Josef Bühler
Historical era	World War II
– Invasion of Poland	October 12, 1939
– Vistula-Oder Offensive	February 2, 1945
Area	
– 1939	95,000 km ² (36,680 sq mi)
– 1941	142,000 km ² (54,827 sq mi)
Population	
– 1941 est.	12,000,000
Density	84.5 /km ² (218.9 /sq mi)
Currency	Zloty

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Bug River where the German armies had halted their advance and linked up with the **Soviet Red Army**. Under the initial **Molotov-Ribbentrop treaty** concluded in August the territory between the Vistula and Bug rivers was assigned to the Soviet sphere of influence in divided Poland, while Warsaw was to be jointly ruled city between the two powers. To settle this deviation from the original agreement the German and Soviet representatives met again on September 28 to delineate the permanent border between the two countries. Under **this revised version** of the pact the territory concerned was exchanged for the inclusion of **Lithuania** into the Soviet sphere, which was similarly allotted originally to the other power, namely Germany. With the new agreement the entire central part of Poland, including the core ethnic area of the Poles came under sole German control.



Hans Frank ruler of occupied Poland

Hitler decreed that **large parts** of the occupied Polish territory in the western half of the German zone were to be annexed directly to the German Reich to increase its **Lebensraum**.^[6] Most of these areas were organized as two new **Reichsgaue**, **Danzig-West Prussia** and **Wartheland**. The remaining three regions, the so-called areas of Zichenau, Eastern **Upper Silesia** and the **Suwalki** triangle were attached to adjacent **Gaus** of Germany. Draconian measures were introduced to facilitate their immediate **Germanization**, typically resulting in **mass expulsions**,

especially in the Warthegau. The remaining parts were to become a German *Nebenland* (**March**, borderland) as a frontier post of German rule in the east. The Government General was established by the Führer's decree of October 12, 1939, which came into force on October 26, 1939. **Hans Frank** was appointed as the Governor-General of these occupied territories. A sharp contrast was therefore made between the new Reich territory and a supposedly occupied **rump state** that could serve both as a bargaining chip with the western powers as well as a pool reservoir of slave labor. A closed border was also established between the two German zones to heighten the difficulty of cross-frontier communication between the different segments of the Polish population.

The official name chosen for this new administration was the *Generalgouvernement für die besetzten polnischen Gebiete* (General Government for the Occupied Polish Territories), then changed to the *Generalgouvernement* (General Government) by the Frank's decree of July 31, 1940. However, this name did not imply anything about the actual nature of the administration. These Polish territories, apart from the short period of **military administration** during the actual **Invasion of Poland**, was never at any point considered to be an **occupied territory** by the German authorities.^[7] The Nazis considered the Polish state to have effectively ceased to exist with its defeat in the September campaign, and that the demise of the Polish nation would follow; the very nationhood of the Polish people was to be simply eradicated.

Overall, 4 million of the 1939 population of the General Government area had lost their lives by the time the Soviet armed forces had entered the area in late 1944. If the Polish underground killed a German, 50–100 Poles were executed as a punishment and as a warning to other Poles.^[8]

As the Soviets advanced through Poland in late 1944 the General Government collapsed. **Hans Frank** who governed the region, was captured by American troops in May 1945 and was one of the defendants at the **Nuremberg Trials**. During his trial he converted to Catholicism. Frank surrendered forty volumes of his diaries to the Tribunal and much evidence against him and others was gathered from them. He was found guilty of **war crimes** and **crimes against humanity** and on October 1, 1946, he was **sentenced to death** by **hanging**. The sentence was carried out on October 16.

German intentions regarding the region [edit]

Germanization [edit]

"(...) The General Government is our work force reservoir for lowgrade work (brick plants, road building, etc.,etc.)(...) Unconditionally, attention should be paid to the fact that there can be no "Polish masters"; where there are Polish masters, and I do not care how hard this sounds, they must be killed. (...) The Fuhrer must emphasize once again that for Poles there is only one master and he is a German, there can be no two masters beside each other and there is no consent to such, hence all representatives of the Polish intelligentsia are to be killed. (...) The General Government is a Polish reservation, a great Polish labor camp." - note of **Martin Borman** from the meeting Dr. **Hans Frank** with **Adolf Hitler**, Berlin 2 October 1940.^[9]

In March 1941 Hans Frank informed his subordinates that **Hitler** had made the decision to "turn this region into a purely German area within 15–20 years." He explained that "Where 12 million **Poles** now live, is to be populated by 4 to 5 million **Germans**. The *Generalgouvernement* must become as German as the **Rhineland**."^[3] By 1942, Hitler and Frank had agreed that the Kraków ("with its purely German capital") and Lublin districts would be the first areas to be repopulated with German colonists.^[10] Hitler stated that "When these two weak points have been strengthened, it should be possible to slowly drive back the Poles".^[10] It was subsequently German policy that a small number of (non-**Jewish**) Poles, like other **Slavic peoples**, were to be reduced to the status of **serfs**, while the rest would be deported or otherwise eliminated and eventually replaced by German colonists of the "**master race**."

Various plans regarding the future of the original population were drawn, with one calling for deportation of about 20 million Poles to Western **Siberia**, and Germanisation of 4 to 5 million; although deportation in reality meant many Poles were to be put to death, a small number would be "re-Germanized," and **young Poles of desirable qualities would be kidnapped and raised in Germany**.^[11] In the General Government, all **secondary education** was abolished and all Polish cultural institutions closed.

In 1943, the government selected the **Zamojskie** area for further Germanization on account of its fertile black soil, and German colonial settlements were planned. Zamość was initially renamed to *Himmlerstadt* (**Himmler City**), but this was later changed to *Pflugstadt* (**Plough City**). The Polish population was expelled with great brutality, but few Germans were settled in the area before 1944. Himmler intended the city of **Lublin** to have a German population of 20-25% by the beginning of 1944, and 30-40% by the following year, at which time Lublin was to be declared a German city and given a German mayor.^[12]

Territorial dissection [edit]

The exact territorial reorganization of the Polish provinces in the event of German victory in the east was never definitively resolved. Large parts of western pre-war Poland had **already been annexed** upon the establishment of the General Government, and the remaining region was also

intended to be directly incorporated into the German Reich at some future date. Numerous initiatives to this effect were discussed by the Nazi leadership.

The earliest such proposal (October/November 1939) called for the creation of a separate *Reichsgau Beskidenland* which was to encompass several southern sections of the Polish territories conquered in 1939 (around 18,000 km²), stretching from the area to the west of **Kraków** to the **San river** in the east.^{[13][14]} At this time the **Łódź** area had not yet been directly annexed by Germany, and served as the capital of the General Government rather than Kraków.

In November 1940, Gauleiter **Arthur Greiser** of Reichsgau Wartheland argued for Hitler that the counties of Tomaschow Mazowiecki and Petrikau should be transferred from the General Government's Radom district to his Gau. Hitler agreed, but since Frank refused to surrender the counties, the resolution to the border question was postponed until after the final victory.^[15]

Upon hearing of the German plans to create a "Gau of the **Goths**" (*Gotengau*) in the **Crimea** and the Southern **Ukraine** after the start of **Operation Barbarossa**, Frank himself expressed his intention to turn the district under his control into a German province called the *Vandalengau* (Gau of the **Vandals**) in a speech he gave on 16 December 1941.^{[16][17]}

When Frank unsuccessfully attempted to resign his position on 24 August 1942, **Nazi Party Secretary Martin Bormann** tried to advance a project to dissolve the General Government altogether and partition its territory into a number of **Reichsgaue**, arguing that only this method could guarantee the territory's Germanization, while also claiming that it could also be economically exploited more effectively, particularly as a source of food.^[18] He suggested separating the "more restful" population of the **formerly Austrian territories** (because this part of Poland had been under **German-Austrian rule** for a long period of time it was deemed more racially acceptable) from the rest of the Poles and to cordon off the city of **Warsaw**, as the center of "criminality" and **underground activity**.^[18]

The proposed administrative streamlining resulting from these discussions was opposed by **Ludwig Fischer** (governor of Warsaw), who prepared his own project in his Main Office for Spatial Ordering (*Hauptamt für Raumordnung*) located in Warsaw.^[18] He suggested the creation of the three provinces *Beskiden*, *Weichselland* ("Vistula Land"), and *Galizien* (**Galicja** and **Chelm**) by dividing the Radom and Lublin districts between them. *Weichselland* was to have a "Polish character", *Galizien* a "Ukrainian" one, and the *Beskiden*-province to provide a German "admixture" (i.e. colonial settlement).^[18] Further territorial planning carried out by this Warsaw-based organization under **Major Dr. Ernst Zvanetti** in a May 1943 study to demarcate the eastern border of "Central Europe" (i.e. the Greater German Reich) with the "Eastern European landmass" proposed an eastern German border along the "line **Memel-Odessa**".^[19]

In this context this study propagated a re-ordering of the "Eastern Gaue" into three geopolitical blocks.^[19]

- a western group with the Gaue *Danzig-Westpreußen*, *Wartheland*, and *Schlesien* (**Silesia**);
- a central group with the Gaue *Ostpreußen* (**East Prussia**), *Südpreußen* (**South Prussia**), *Litzmannstadt* (**Łódź**), and *Beskidenland*;
- and an eastern group with the Gaue *Südostpreußen* (**South-East Prussia**), *Wolhynien* (**Volhynia** and the Lublin district), *Galizien*, and *Podolien* (**Podolia**).

Administration [edit]

Main article: General Government administration

"No government protectorate is anticipated for Poland, but a complete German administration. (...) Leadership layer of the population in Poland should be as far as possible, disposed of. The other lower layers of the population will receive no special schools, but are to be oppressed in some form". - The excerpts of the minute of the first conference of Heads of the main police officers and commanders of operational groups led by Heydrich's deputy, SS-Brigadeführer **Dr. Werner Best**, Berlin 7 September 1939.^[20]

The General Government was administered by a General-Governor (German: *Generalgouverneur*) aided by the Office of the General-Governor (*Amt des Generalgouverneurs*), changed on December 9, 1940 to the Government of the General Government (*Regierung des Generalgouvernements*). For the entire period of its history, there was only one General-Governor (Dr. Hans Frank) and the Office (later, the Government) was headed by Chief of the Government (*Regierung*, title translated also as the State Secretary or Deputy Governor) **Josef Bühler**. Several other individuals had powers to issue legislative decrees in addition to the General Governor, most notably the Higher **SS and Police Leader** of General Government (**Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger**, later **Wilhelm Koppe**).

The General Government had no **international recognition**. The territories it administered were never either in whole or part intended as any future Polish state within a German-dominated Europe. According to the Nazi government the Polish state had effectively ceased to exist, in spite of the existence of a **Polish government-in-exile**.^[7] Its character could be compared to a type of **colonial state**, combined with many characteristics of a **police state**. It cannot be seen as a Polish **puppet government**, as there were no Polish representatives on anything but the local levels.

The government seat of the General Government was located in Kraków (German: *Krakau*) rather than the traditional Polish capital **Warsaw** for security reasons. The official state language was German, although Polish continued to be used to a large degree as well, especially on the local levels. Several institutions of the old Polish state were retained in some form for ease of administration. The Polish police, with no high-ranking Polish officers (who were arrested or demoted), was renamed the **Blue Police** and became subordinated to the **Ordnungspolizei**. The Polish educational system was similarly kept, but most higher institutions were closed. The Polish local administration was kept, subordinated to new German bosses. The Polish fiscal system, including the **złoty** currency, was kept, but with revenues now going to the German state. A new bank was created, and was issuing new banknotes.

The Germans sought to play Ukrainians and Poles off against each other. Within ethnic Ukrainian areas annexed by Germany, beginning in October 1939, Ukrainian Committees were established with the purpose of representing the Ukrainian community to the German authorities and assisting the approximately 30,000 Ukrainian refugees who fled from Soviet-controlled territories. These committees also undertook cultural and



Official proclamation of the General-Government in Poland by Germany, October 1939



Announcement of the execution of 60 Polish hostages

economic activities that had been banned by the previous Polish government. Schools, choirs, reading societies and theaters were opened, and twenty Ukrainian churches that had been closed by the Polish government were reopened. A Ukrainian publishing house was created in Cracow, which despite having to struggle with German censors and paper shortages was able to publish school textbooks, classics of Ukrainian literature, and the works of dissident Ukrainian writers from the Soviet Union. By March 1941 there were 808 Ukrainian educational societies with 46,000 members. Ukrainian organizations within the General Government were able to negotiate the release of 85,000 Ukrainian prisoners of war from the German-Polish conflict (although they were unable to help Soviet POWs of Ukrainian ethnicity).^[21]

After the war, the Polish [Supreme National Tribunal](#) declared that the government of the General Government was a criminal institution.

Judicial system [edit]

Other than summary German military tribunals, no courts operated in Poland between the German invasion and early 1940. At that time, the Polish court system was reinstated and was allowed to continue decision making in cases not concerning German interests or citizens, for which a parallel German court system was created. The German system was given priority in cases of overlapping jurisdiction.

New laws were passed, discriminating against the Poles, and in particular, the Jews. In 1941 a new [criminal law](#) was introduced, introducing many new crimes, and making the [death penalty](#) very common. A death penalty was introduced for, among other things:

- on October 31, 1939, for any acts against the German government;
- on January 21, 1940, for economic speculation;
- on February 20, 1940, for spreading [sexually transmitted diseases](#);
- on July 31, 1940, for any Polish officers who did not register immediately with the German administration (to be taken to [prisoner of war camps](#));
- on November 10, 1941, for aiding the Jews (including providing food);
- on July 11, 1942, for farmers who failed to provide requested contingents of crops;
- on July 24, 1943, for not joining the forced labor battalions ([Baudienst](#)) when required;
- on October 2, 1943, for impeding the "German Reconstruction Plan";

Police system [edit]

The police in the General Government was divided into:

- [Ordnungspolizei](#) (OrPo) (*German*)
 - [Blue Police](#) (*Polish under German control*)
- [Sicherheitspolizei](#) (*German*)
 - [Kriminalpolizei](#) (*German*)
 - [Gestapo](#) (*German*)

Military occupation forces [edit]

Through the occupation Germany diverted a significant number of its military forces to keep control over Polish territories.

Number of Wehrmacht and police formations stationed in General government^[22]

Timeperiod	Wehrmacht	Police and SS (includes German forces only)	Total
October 1939	550,000	80,000	630,000
April 1940	400,000	70,000	470,000
June 1941	2,000,000 (high number due to imminent invasion of Soviet Union)	50,000	2,050,000
February 1942	300,000	50,000	350,000
April 1943	450,000	60,000	510,000
November 1943	550,000	70,000	620,000
April 1944	500,000	70,000	570,000
September 1944	1,000,000	80,000	1,080,000

Administrative districts [edit]

Further information: [Administrative division of Polish territories during World War II](#)

For administrative purposes the General Government was subdivided into four *Distrikte* (districts). These were the [Distrikt Warschau](#), the [Distrikt Lublin](#), the [Distrikt Radom](#), and the [Distrikt Krakau](#). After the [German attack on the Soviet Union](#) in June 1941, East [Galicia](#), at that point part of the [Ukrainian SSR](#), was incorporated into the General Government and became its fifth district, the [Distrikt Galizien](#). These new units were much larger than those organized by the Polish government, reflecting the German lack of sufficient administrative personnel to staff smaller units.^[23]

These five districts were further sub-divided into *Stadtkreise* (urban counties) and *Kreishauptmannschaften* (rural counties). Following a decree on September 15, 1941, the names of most of the major cities (and so respective counties) reverted to their historical German names, or were given [germanified](#) versions of their Polish or [Ukrainian](#) names if none existed.^[citation needed] At the same time the previous names remained valid as well.^[citation needed] The districts and counties were as follows:

[Distrikt Galizien](#)



Stadtkreise Lemberg (*Lviv/Lwów*)
 Breschan (*Brzeżany*), Tschortkau (*Czortków*), *Drohobycz*,
 Kamionka-Strumilowa (*Kamianka-Buzka*), Kolomea
Kreishauptmannschaften (*Kolomyia*), Lemberg-Land, Rawa-Ruska (*Rava-Ruska*),
 Stanislaw (*Ivano-Frankivsk*), Sambor (*Sambir*) *Stryj*,
Tamopol, Solotschiw (*Zolochiv*), Kallusch (*Kalush*)

Distrikt Krakau

Stadtkreise Krakau (*Kraków*)
 Dembitz (*Dębica*), Jaroslau (*Jarosław*), Jassel (*Jasło*),
Kreishauptmannschaften Krakau-Land, *Krosno*, Meekow (*Miechów*), Neumarkt (*Nowy*
Targ), Neu-Sandez (*Nowy Sącz*), *Przemysł*, Reichshof
(Rzeszów), *Sanok*, Tarnau (*Tarnów*)

Distrikt Lublin

Stadtkreise *Lublin*
 Biala-Podlaska (*Biała Podlaska*), *Bilgoraj*, Cholm (*Chelm*),
Kreishauptmannschaften Grubeschow (*Hrubieszów*), *Janów Lubelski*, *Krasnystaw*,
 Lublin-Land, *Pulawy*, Rehden (*Radzyn*),
 Zamosch/Himmlerstadt/Pflugstadt (*Zamość*)

Distrikt Radom

Stadtkreise *Kielce*, *Radom*, Tschenstochau (*Częstochowa*)
 Busko (*Busko-Zdrój*), *Jedrzejew*, *Kielce-Land*, *Konskie*
(Końskie), *Opatau* (*Opatów*), *Petrikau* (*Piotrków*
Kreishauptmannschaften *Trybunalski*), *Radom-Land*, *Radomsko*, *Starachowitz*
(Starachowice), *Tomaschow Mazowiecki* (*Tomaszów*
Mazowiecki)

Distrikt Warschau

Stadtkreise Warschau (*Warsaw*)
Garwolin, *Grojec* (*Grójec*), *Lowitsch* (*Lowicz*), *Minsk* (*Mińsk*
Mazowiecki), *Ostrau* (*Ostrów Mazowiecka*), *Siedlce*,
Kreishauptmannschaften *Sochaczew*, *Sokolow-Wengrow* (*Sokolów Podlaski-*
Węgrów), *Warschau-Land*

A change in the administrative structure was desired by Finance Minister *Lutz von Krosigk*, who for financial reasons wanted to see the five existing districts (Warsaw, Kraków, Radom, Lublin, and Galicia) reduced to three.^[18] In March 1943 he announced the merger of the Kraków and Galicia districts, and the partition of the Warsaw district between the so-called *Deutschtumsdistrikt* ("Germanom-district") Lublin and the district Radom, and the changing of Warsaw and Kraków into separate city-districts (*stadtkreise*), with Warsaw under the direct control of the General Government. This decree was to go into effect on 1 April 1943 and was nominally accepted by Heinrich Himmler, but *Martin Bormann* opposed the move, as he simply wanted to see the region turned into Reichsgaue. *Wilhelm Frick* and *Friedrich-Wilhelm Krüger* were also skeptic about the usefulness of this reorganization, resulting in its abolition after subsequent discussions between Himmler and Frank.^[18]

Demographics [edit]

The population in the General Government's territory was initially about 12 million, but this increased as about 860,000 Poles and Jews were expelled from the Germany-annexed areas and "resettled" in the General Government. Offsetting this was the German campaign of extermination of the Polish *intelligentsia* and other elements thought likely to resist. From 1941 disease and hunger also began to reduce the population.

Distribution of food in General Government as of December, 1941^[24]

Nationality	Daily calorie intake
Germans	2310
Foreigners	1790
Ukrainians	930
Poles	654
Jews	184

Poles were also deported in large numbers to work as forced labor in Germany: eventually about a million were deported, of whom many died in Germany. In 1940 the population was divided into different groups. Each group had different rights, food rations, allowed strips in the cities, public transportation and restricted restaurants. Listed from the most privileged to the least:

- Germans from Germany (*Reichdeutsche*),
- Germans from outside, active ethnic Germans, Volksliste category 1 and 2 (see *Volksdeutsche*).
- Germans from outside, passive Germans and members of families (this group included also some ethnic Poles), Volksliste category 3 and 4,
- Ukrainians,
- Highlanders (*Goralenvolk*) – an attempt to split the Polish nation by using local collaborators
- Poles (partially exterminated),
- Gypsies (eventually largely *exterminated* as a category),



Nur für Deutsche on the tram number 8 in occupied Kraków.

- Jews (eventually largely exterminated as a category).

Economics [edit]

Further information: *Baudienst* and *Forced labor in Germany during World War II*

Since the autumn of 1939, Poles from other regions of Poland conquered by Germany were expelled to the General Government and the area was used as a slave labour camp from which men and women taken by force to work as slave laborers in factories and farms in Germany.^[3]

Former Polish state property was confiscated by the General Government (or the Third Reich on the annexed territories). Notable property of Polish individuals (ex. factories and large land estates) was often confiscated as well. Farmers were required to provide large food contingents for the Germans, and there were plans for nationalization of all but the smallest estates. Currency was managed by the newly created *Bank Emisyjny w Polsce*.

Resistance [edit]

Main article: *Polish resistance movement in World War II*

Resistance to the German occupation began almost at once, although there is little terrain in Poland suitable for *guerrilla operations*. The main resistance force was the *Home Army* (in Polish: *Armia Krajowa* or AK), loyal to the *Polish government in exile* in London. It was formed mainly of the surviving remnants of the pre-War *Polish Army*, together with many volunteers. Other forces existed side-by-side, such as the communist *People's Army* (*Armia Ludowa* or AL), backed by the Soviet Union and controlled by the Polish Communist Party. By 1944 the AK had some 380,000 men, although few arms. During the occupation, the various Polish resistance organizations killed about 150,000 Axis soldiers.^[citation needed] The AL was about 15% of the size of the AK.

In April 1943 the Germans began deporting the remaining Jews from the *Warsaw Ghetto*, provoking the *Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*, April 19 to May. 16 That was the first armed uprising against the Germans in Poland, and prefigured the larger and longer *Warsaw Uprising* of 1944.

In July 1944, as the Soviet armed forces approached Warsaw, the government in exile called for an uprising in the city, so that they could return to a liberated Warsaw and try to prevent a Communist take-over. The AK, led by *Tadeusz Bór-Komorowski*, launched the *Warsaw Rising* on August 1 in response both to their government and to Soviet and *Allied* promises of help. However Soviet help was never forthcoming, despite the Soviet army being only 18 miles (30 km) away, and Soviet denial of their airbases to British and American planes prevented any effective resupply or air support of the insurgents by the Western allies. After 63 days of fighting the leaders of the rising agreed a conditional surrender with the *Wehrmacht*. The 15,000 remaining Home Army soldiers were granted POW status (prior to the agreement, captured rebels were shot), and the remaining civilian population of 180,000 expelled.



Young Polish girl wearing Letter "P" patch.



German announcement of the execution of 9 Polish peasants for unfurnished contingents (quotas). Signed by governor of Lublin district 25 November 1941

The Holocaust in the General Government [edit]

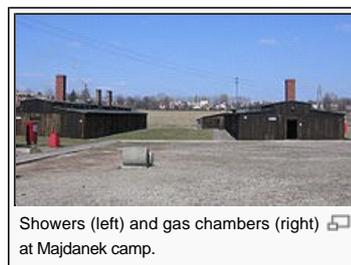


Nazi extermination camps in occupied Poland (marked with black and white skulls)

During the *Wannsee conference* on January 20, 1942, The State Secretary of the General Government, Dr. *Josef Bühler* pushed *Heydrich* to implement the "final solution" in the General Government. As far as he was concerned, the main problem of General Government was an overdeveloped black market that disorganised the work of the authorities. He saw a remedy in solving the "Jewish question" in the country as fast as possible. An additional point in favor was that there were no transportation problems here.^[25]

In 1942, the Germans began the *systematic extermination of the Jewish population*. The General Government was the location of four of the seven *extermination camps* in which the most extreme measures of the *Holocaust* were carried out, such as *Majdanek concentration camp*, *Sobibor*

extermination camp and *Belzec extermination camp*. The *genocide* of undesired "races", chiefly millions of Jews from Poland and other countries, was carried out by gassing between 1942 and 1944.

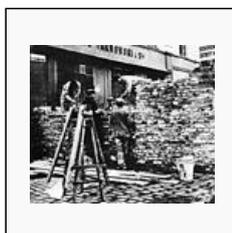


Showers (left) and gas chambers (right) at Majdanek camp.



New monument commemorating the victims at Belzec

Gallery [edit]



The wall of the *Warsaw Ghetto* being built under the orders of Dr. Ludwig



Announcement by the Chief of *SS* and Police 5.09.1942—Death penalty



Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, April 1943: Warsaw Jews being held at gunpoint by

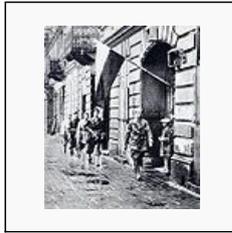
Fischer, Nazi governor of the [Warsaw](#) district, August 1940

for Poles for any help to Jews

[SS troops](#) (from a report written by [Jürgen Stroop](#) for [Heinrich Himmler](#))



Polish inmates of Pawiak prison hanged by Germans in Leszno Street, Warsaw, February 11, 1944 (photo taken secretly from tram by a member of the Polish [Home Army](#))



[Warsaw Uprising](#): Polish soldiers in action, August 1, 1944



Polish civilians murdered by [SS troops](#) in [Warsaw Uprising](#), August 1944



Aerial view of city of Warsaw, January 1945



[Portrait of a Young Man](#) by [Raphael](#), stolen at the behest of Hans Frank in 1939 and never returned; one of over 40,000 works of art robbed from Polish collections



Polish hostages being blindfolded during preparations for their mass execution in [Palmiry](#), 1940



The mass execution of Poles in [Bochnia](#), December 18, 1939

See also [[edit](#)]

- [Ernst Lerch](#)
- [German camps in occupied Poland during World War II](#)
- [Gestapo-NKVD Conferences](#)
- [Polish areas annexed by Nazi Germany](#)
- [Territories of Poland annexed by the Soviet Union](#)
- [World War II evacuation and expulsion](#)

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- ↑ Laws and Customs of War on Land (Hague IV); October 18, 1907, The Avalon Project, [Yale University](#). [The Laws of War](#)
- ↑ ^{***a b c***} "Germany and Eastern Europe: Cultural Identities and Cultural Differences" by Keith Bullivant, Geoffrey J. Giles, Walter Pape, Rodopi 1999, page 32
- ↑ [Hans Frank's Diary](#)
- ↑ Liulevicius, Vejas G. (2000). *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, Identity, and German Occupation in World War I*. Cambridge University Press, p. 54. [1]
- ↑ *"Erlaß des Führers und Reichskanzlers über die Gliederung und Verwaltung der Ostgebiete"*
- ↑ ^{***a b***} Majer (1981), p. 265.
- ↑ [Generalgouvernement](#) Shoah Resource Center
- ↑ "Man to man...", Rada Ochrony Pamięci Walk i Męczeństwa, Warsaw 2011, p. 11, English version
- ↑ ^{***a b***} Hitler, Adolf (2000). Bormann, Martin. ed. *Hitler's Table Talk 1941-1944*, 5 April 1942. trans. Cameron, Norman; Stevens, R.H. (3rd ed.). Enigma Books. ISBN 1-929631-05-7.
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- ↑ Rich, Norman (1974). *Hitler's War Aims: the Establishment of the New Order*, p. 99. W. W. Norton & Company Inc., New York.

Technical and logistics	Identification in camps Gas chamber Gas van Holocaust train Human medical experimentation Zyklon B
VTE	Aftermath, trials and commemoration
Aftermath	Kielce pogrom Anti-Jewish violence, 1944–1946
Trials	West German trials Frankfurt Auschwitz Trials Treblinka trials
	Polish, East German, and Soviet trials Auschwitz Trial (Poland) Extraordinary (Soviet) State Commission
Memorials	Museum of the History of Polish Jews March of the Living
Righteous among the Nations	Polish Righteous among the Nations Rescue of Jews by Poles during the Holocaust Albert Battel Hermann Friedrich Graebe Andrey Sheptytsky Oskar Schindler
VTE	Administrative divisions of Nazi Germany
Gaue	Gau Baden Gau Bayreuth Gau Berlin Gau Düsseldorf Gau Essen Gau Franken Gau Halle-Merseburg Gau Hamburg Gau Hessen-Nassau Gau Köln-Aachen Gau Kurhessen Gau Magdeburg-Anhalt Gau Mainfranken Gau Mark Brandenburg Gau Mecklenburg Gau Moselland Gau München-Oberbayern Gau Niederschlesien Gau Oberschlesien Gau Ost-Hannover Gau Ostpreußen Gau Pommern Gau Sachsen Gau Schleswig-Holstein Gau Schwaben Gau Südhannover-Braunschweig Gau Thüringen Gau Weser-Ems Gau Westfalen-Nord Gau Westfalen-Süd Gau Westmark Gau Württemberg-Hohenzollern
Reichsgaue	Reichsgau Danzig - Westpreußen Reichsgau Flandern Reichsgau Kärnten Reichsgau Niederdonau Reichsgau Oberdonau Reichsgau Salzburg Reichsgau Steiermark Reichsgau Sudetenland Reichsgau Tirol-Vorarlberg Reichsgau Wallonien Reichsgau Wartheland Reichsgau Wien
Operational zones	Adriatisches Küstenland Alpenvorland
Autonomous regions	Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia General Government (Distrikt Galizien)
Other districts	Bezirk Białystok District of Brussels
	Related topics Gauleiter List of Gauleiters
VTE	German administrative territories 1939–1945
German Reich (1939–1945)	Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia Incorporated Eastern Territories General Government
Military Administrations	France (1940–1944) Belgium and Northern France (1940–1944) Serbia (1941–1944) Greece (1941–1945) Poland (1939) <i>Soviet Union (1941–1944)</i>
Reichskommissariat	Founded Norwegen (1940–1945) Niederlande (1940–1945) <i>Ostland (1941–1945) Ukraine (1941–1944)</i> Belgien-Nordfrankreich (1944)
	Planned <i>Don-Wolga Moskowien Kaukasus Turkestan Ural</i>
	Administrations within or including <i>Soviet</i> territory shown in <i>italics</i> .
<p>Categories: Former countries in Europe Former client states States and territories established in 1939 States and territories disestablished in 1945 1945 disestablishments Client states of Nazi Germany The Holocaust in Poland Jewish Polish history History of Poland (1939–45) World War II occupied territories The Holocaust in Ukraine</p>	



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