

HISTORY OF THE HOLOCAUST – TIMELINE

1933:

30 JANUARY:

Adolf Hitler is appointed Chancellor of Germany. Beginning of the Third Reich.

1935:

15 SEPTEMBER:

Nuremberg Race Laws.

1938:

9 NOVEMBER:

The Night of Broken Glass (*Kristallnacht*).

1939:

23 AUGUST:

The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (also known as the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Treaty) is signed by the foreign ministers of the Third Reich and the Soviet Union. The treaty is officially a non-aggression pact, but also includes a secret clause that divides Poland between the two countries.

1 SEPTEMBER:

Nazi Germany invades Poland. Beginning of the Second World War.

3 SEPTEMBER:

Great Britain and France declare war on Germany.

17 SEPTEMBER:

The USSR invades eastern Poland.

28 SEPTEMBER:

Warsaw capitulates.

8 OCTOBER:

The first Jewish ghetto is established in Piotrków Trybunalski.

26 OCTOBER:

Creation of the General Government in Poland. Kraków is made the capital and Dr. Hans Frank becomes the Governor General.



1 September 1939



Swastika flags on the Main Market Square in Kraków

6 NOVEMBER:

'Special action' in Kraków (*Sonderaktion Krakau*) – 183 professors from Kraków's universities are arrested and deported to concentration camps.

1 DECEMBER:

All Jews over the age of 10 residing in the General Government are forced to wear an armband with the Star of David.

1940:**1 JANUARY:**

Jews are forbidden from changing residences.

8 FEBRUARY:

Creation of the Łódź ghetto. At its height, the ghetto held 200,000 Jews. It was liquidated in August 1944.

9 APRIL:

Nazi Germany invades Denmark and Norway.

27 APRIL:

The Auschwitz I concentration camp is opened.

10 MAY:

Nazi Germany invades Belgium, Holland and France.



The main gate at the Auschwitz I concentration camp

22 JUNE:

France capitulates. Creation of the collaborationist Vichy regime.

12 NOVEMBER:

The Warsaw ghetto is opened. At its height, between 460-490,000 Jews are imprisoned within its walls.

1941:**20 MARCH:**

The Kraków ghetto is established.

6 APRIL:

Nazi Germany invades Greece.

22 JUNE:

Nazi Germany invades the Soviet Union.

13 OCTOBER:

Beginning of Operation Reinhardt.

15 OCTOBER:

Introduction of the death penalty for anyone who helps Jews in the General Government.

OCTOBER:

Auschwitz II-Birkenau is opened. The first transport of Jews arrives there on 26 March 1942.

OCTOBER:

Opening of the Majdanek concentration camp.

7 DECEMBER:

Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

8 DECEMBER:

Killing operations begin in the Chełmno nad Nerem (Kulmhof) death camp.



The main gate of the Kraków ghetto

1942:**20 JANUARY:**

Wannsee Conference

17 MARCH:

First transport of Jews to the Bełżec death camp.

5 MAY:

Killing operations begin in the Sobibór death camp.

JUNE/JULY:

Killing operations begin in the Treblinka death camp.

28 JULY:

Creation of the Jewish Fighting Organization (ŻOB).

4 DECEMBER:

Creation of Żegota (Council of Aid to the Jews) in Poland, the only organization in occupied Europe exclusively focused on helping Jews.



Members of the Kraków Jewish Fighting Organization (ŻOB)



Irena Sendlerowa, one of the members of Żegota

1943:

18 JANUARY:

The first battle in the Warsaw ghetto. When the Nazis enter the ghetto to carry out its liquidation, they are met with armed resistance from Jewish fighters. The planned deportations are hampered to the point that the Germans are forced to leave the ghetto before finishing.

APRIL:

The Nazis uncover the mass graves of Polish officers massacred by the NKVD at Katyń in 1940. The Soviet Union denied responsibility for the massacre until 1990.

19 APRIL:

Outbreak of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, which lasts until 16 May. During the fighting, almost 90% of the ghetto is razed to the ground.



Captured Jewish fighters in Warsaw during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

1944:

6 JUNE:

D-Day: The Allies land at Normandy.

1 AUGUST:

Outbreak of the Warsaw City Uprising. Approximately 30,000 fighters hold off the Nazis until 3 October. Between 150,000-200,000 civilians die in the fighting.

7 OCTOBER:

The Sonderkommando in Auschwitz II-Birkenau revolt.



Insurgents in Warsaw

1945:

17 JANUARY:

The final mass execution of prisoners in Auschwitz-Birkenau.

17 JANUARY:

The Red Army enters Warsaw.

27 JANUARY:

The Red Army liberates Auschwitz-Birkenau.

8 MAY:

Unconditional surrender of the Third Reich. End of the Second World War in Europe (V-E Day).



Children liberated at Auschwitz-Birkenau

1946:

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER:

End of the Nuremberg Trials and the announcement of sentences for the major Nazi war criminals.