

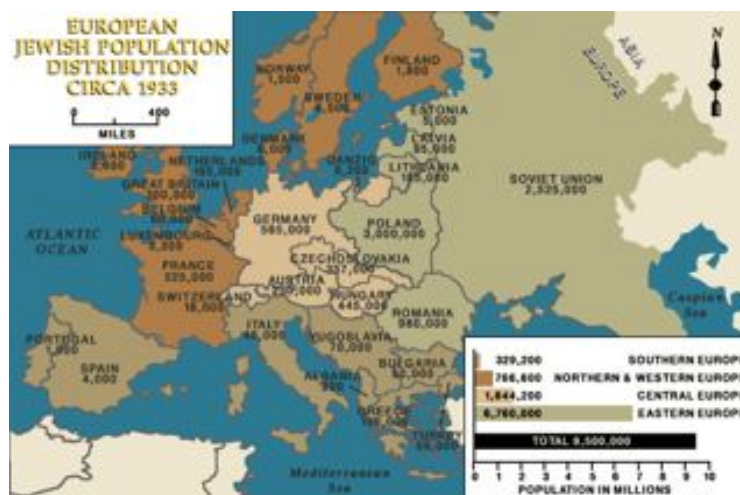
# The Holocaust

Between 1933 and 1945, the German government led by Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party carried out the systematic persecution and murder of Europe's Jews.

This genocide is now known as the Holocaust.

## Pre-War Jewish Population

- Jews were living in every country in Europe before the Nazis came into power in 1933



- Poland and the Soviet Union had the largest populations

- Jews could be found in all walks of life: farmers, factory workers, business people, doctors, teachers, and craftsmen

# History of Anti-Semitism

- Jews have faced prejudice and discrimination for over 2,000 years and were often used as scapegoats



- The late 1800s Russian Empire incited pogroms on Jewish neighborhoods

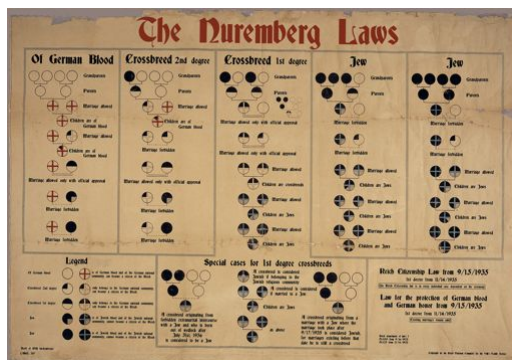
*On April 1, 1933, the Nazis initiated a boycott of Jewish shops and businesses across Germany. The picture at left shows a woman reading a boycott sign posted on the window of a Jewish-owned department store.*

# Anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany

Nazis began to apply the “principles” of racial science



Jews, like all other German citizens, were required to carry identity cards, but their cards were stamped with a red “J.” This allowed police to easily identify them.



In 1935, the Nuremberg Laws stripped Jews of their German citizenship.

They were prohibited from marrying or having sexual relations with persons of “German or related blood.”

# Persecution of the Jews



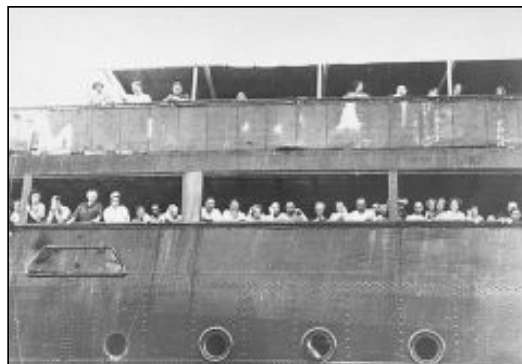
- Kristallnacht was the “Night of Broken Glass” on November 9-10, 1938
- Germans attacked synagogues and Jewish homes and businesses



- Einsatzgruppen: Nazi SS killing squads
- killed Jews in mass shootings throughout eastern Poland and the western Soviet Union

# US and World Response

- Evian Conference: 32 countries met in the summer of 1938 in Evian, France to discuss what to do about the Jewish refugees who were leaving Germany and Austria.
- Despite voicing feelings of sympathy, most countries made excuses for not accepting more refugees.
- Some American congressmen proposed the Wagner-Rogers Bill, which offered to let 20,000 endangered Jewish refugee children into the country; the bill did not pass.



*The SS St. Louis, carrying refugees with Cuban visas, were denied admittance both in Cuba and in Florida. After being turned back to Europe, many of the passengers perished in the Holocaust.*

# Ghettos

Late 1939

- areas that were designated for Jews only; Nazis aimed to control the Jewish population by forcing them to live here
- ghettos were established across all of occupied Europe, especially in areas where there was already a large Jewish population



- Many ghettos were closed by barbed wire or walls and were guarded by SS or local police.

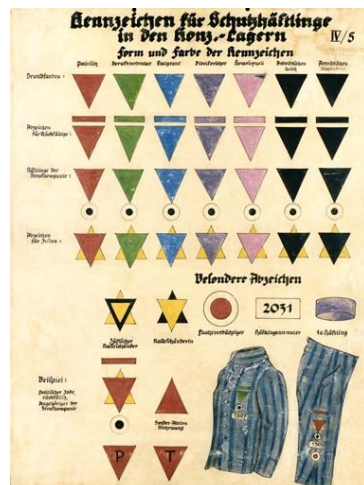
- Jews sometimes had to use bridges to go over Aryan streets that ran through the ghetto.

# Concentration Camp System

1938-1945

After Germany's annexation of Austria in March 1938, the Nazis arrested German and Austrian Jews and imprisoned them in German concentration camps.

After Kristallnacht (Nov 1938), the Nazis conducted mass arrests of adult male Jews and incarcerated them in the camps as well.



Within the concentration camp system, colored, triangular badges identified various prisoner categories.

This instructional chart shows how the Nazis distinguished between individuals with pure “German blood,” “Mixed blood,” and Jews.



# Concentration Camp System

1938-1945



Following the German invasion of Poland in September 1939, the Nazis opened forced-labor camps.

Death tolls were huge; prisoners died from a multitude of causes including exposure, exhaustion, starvation, extreme working conditions, torture, and execution.



# The Yellow Star

September 1941

- the Nazis ordered all German Jews over the age of six to sew a yellow Star of David with the word *Jude* on their clothing
- the following year, the measure was introduced in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Slovakia, and other German-occupied lands



*Members of a Jewish ice hockey team wearing stars of David on their shirts pose in the snow.*





Jews from the Lodz ghetto are loaded onto freight trains for deportation to the Chelmno killing center. Lodz, Poland, between 1942 and 1944.

*National Museum of American Jewish History, Philadelphia*

Exterior view of barracks at the Ravensbrueck concentration camp, Germany, between May 1939 and April 1945.

*US Holocaust Memorial Museum*



Camp survivors after liberation. Dachau, Germany, after April 29, 1945.

*US Holocaust Memorial Museum*

## The Holocaust - Legacy



Over 6 million Jews and other persecuted people were murdered by the Nazis.

Survivors rarely returned home - many had lost their families and been denounced by their non-Jewish neighbors.

The Allies held the Nuremberg Trials in 1945-46 to punish the perpetrators. During these trials, the atrocities committed by the Nazi were brought horrifyingly to light.

Increasing pressure to create a homeland for Jewish Holocaust survivors led to the creation of Israel in 1948.

In 1953, the German government began to make payments to individual Jews and to the Jewish people as a way of acknowledging the German people's responsibility for the crimes committed during the Holocaust.