



RUSSIAN PRESIDENTIAL  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR  
HISTORICAL MEMORY



**JUNE 22, 1941.**  
**NAZI WAR OF ANNIHILATION.**  
**Key points of historical memory**

# NAZI GERMANY'S WAR OF ANNIHILATION AGAINST USSR

The objectives of the war against the Soviet Union were outlined in Nazi Germany's strategic documents:

- ▶ “The Barbarossa” military plan;
- ▶ “The Ost” colonization general plan;
- ▶ “The Oldenburg” economic plan;
- ▶ and its most terrifying part — “hunger plan” by Herbert Backe.

**The Nazis prepared for war long and purposefully.**



Invasors on the Soviet territory, 1941.



The German army's offensive, June 1941.



“  
*In the future Europe, there should be only two races: Latin and Germanic. These two races must work together in Russia to destroy the Slavs*  
 ”  
 Adolf Hitler

From a conversation with the Deputy Prime Minister of Romania and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mihai Antonescu in Berlin on November 27, 1941.



# “THE BARBAROSSA” military plan was a plan of blitzkrieg on the East

**The Barbarossa Plan (Directive No. 21)**  
was signed by Hitler on December 18, 1940.



**The Nazis planned to capture USSR within 6-8 weeks.**

The Wehrmacht strategic goal was to defeat the Red Army and to destroy the Soviet statehood. The advance of German forces was planned to end at the Arkhangelsk-Astrakhan line (the “A-A” line). The territory eastern of the “A-A” line was a “gray zone” between the Nazi and Japanese occupation zones.



German troops near Kiev, September 1941.

The resilience of Soviet soldiers ruined the Nazis' plans. Brest fortress defended itself for a month, Sevastopol for 250 days, Kerch for 169 days, as did other cities that did not surrender without a fight. Instead of a lightning victory for Germany, the war dragged on for 1,418 days and ended with the victory of the USSR.

6-8 weeks

1 418 days

1941  
June 22

1942

1943

1944

1945

June 22, 1941. Nazi war of annihilation. Key points of historical memory





# “THE OST” PLAN to destroy statehood and national identity of East European nations and USSR

“The Ost” Nazi general plan envisaged settling Germans in annexed Poland and the captured western territories of the Soviet Union.

The Nazis planned to evict in conditions unsuitable for life (easterner of the line “A-A”) more than

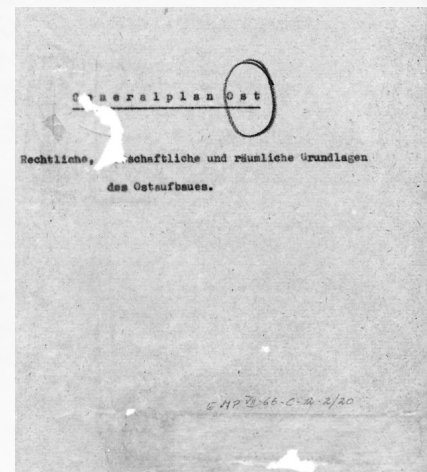
**30** million Russians,

most Lithuanians (85%), Belarusians (75%), Ukrainians (75%), Latvians and Estonians (50% each). The rest were subject to “Germanization”.

“  
Why should my West Germans live in difficult conditions when the East offers them a future?”

Adolf Hitler

From a conversation with the Deputy Prime Minister of Romania and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mihai Antonescu in Berlin on November 27, 1941.



“The general plan OST. Legal, economic, and spatial principles of settlement in the East” Memorandum by Konrad Meyer-Hetling was one of “The general plan OST” major documents. The plan envisaged the mass extermination of the population of Eastern Europe and the USSR.



## “THE BACKE PLAN” OR “HUNGER PLAN”

The “Bakke Plan” was adopted on May 23, 1941.

The plan was called “Economic Policy Directives of the Economic Headquarters East”.

After the Soviet territories were captured, all food was to be used to supply the Wehrmacht and meet the needs of the Third Reich.

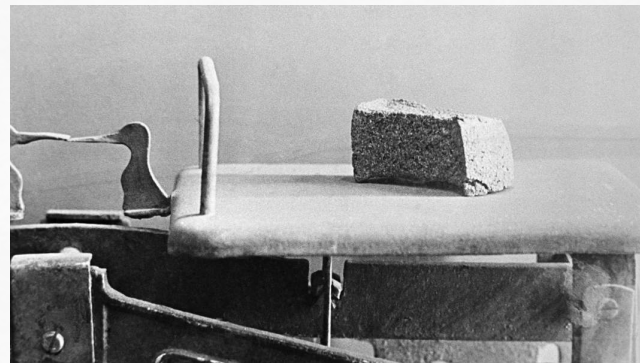
In the occupied territories of the USSR, up to **30 million people** were doomed to die of starvation.

The most horrific famine was to befall the major industrial centers—Moscow and Leningrad.

The plan to starve the inhabitants of the largest cities of the USSR was already in place a month before the war began, and the subsequent tragedy of the Leningrad blockade was the logical outcome of the Nazis' criminal plans.

More than **1 093 000** citizens of blockaded Leningrad were meaningfully doomed to death by Nazis

More **4 000 100** Soviet citizens died from hunger at the Great Patriotic War, 1941 – 1945



125 grams of bread was a minimal daily bread ration at the heaviest days of the Leningrad blockade.



# “THE OLDENBURG” AIMED to transform occupied USSR into the Germany’s source base

“The Oldenburg” Plan (Göring's “Green Folder”, full name: “Guidelines for the management of the economy in the newly occupied eastern territories”) was approved two months before the Nazi invasion of the USSR on April 29, 1941, and was the economic part of “The Barbarossa” plan.

The following had to be done as soon as possible:

- ▶ seize **all raw material reserves** and **put the work of large industrial enterprises** in the territory between the Vistula and the Urals at the service of the Reich;
- ▶ economically decentralize the European part of the USSR and turn it into an **agrarian and raw materials appendage of Germany**;
- ▶ to send the most valuable industrial equipment to the Reich, and destroy the unsuitable equipment.



**THE FAILURE OF “THE BARBAROSSA” PLAN PREVENTED THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF “THE OLDENBURG” PLAN.**



Plan “Oldenburg” plan front cover, 1941.

Central Archive of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation. F. 500. Inv. 12450. Case 94. Box 10.





## EISATZGRUPPEN – the beginning of Nazi terror

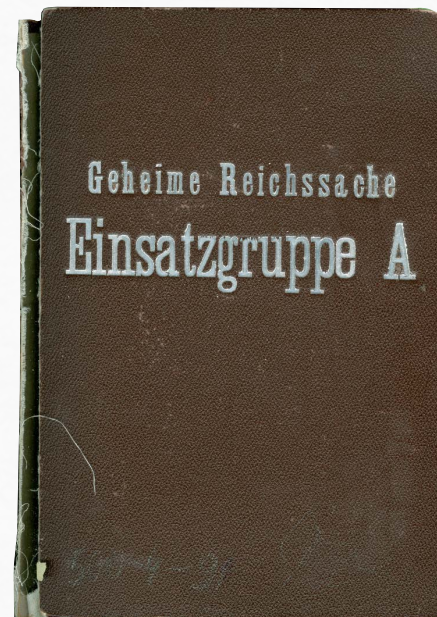
The Nazis created special SS “Einsatzgruppen” (“security police and SD operational groups”) for the genocide of the Soviet people.

**The main goal was to undermine the strength and break the spirit of the Soviet people and prevent the mobilization of Resistance efforts.**

The tasks of the Einsatzgruppen in the USSR:

- ▶ **identification and elimination** of the Communist party and Komsomol activists
- ▶ **the destruction** of Soviet party workers, NKVD officers, Army political instructors and officers
- ▶ **conducting extrajudicial arrests and reprisals**
- ▶ **seizure of authorities' archives** to identify new targets

**The Einsatzgruppen kept special books** in which they recorded executions and other crimes. Before their defeat, the Nazis deliberately destroyed the Einsatzgruppen's records. One of the few books survived and is kept in the Russian State Military Archive.



Report of “Einsatzgruppe A”, which carried out terrorist activities in the Leningrad region, the Byelorussian SSR, and the Baltic Soviet republics.



## SOVIET PEOPLE GENOCIDE was the Nazi Germany aim

The Third Reich's policy toward Soviet citizens included all elements of genocide, that is, "actions committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, any national, ethnic, racial, or religious group as such".

*The genocide definition from the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of December 9, 1948.*

Murder of members of such a group

Measures designed to prevent childbirth within such a group

Forced transfer of children from one human group to another

Causing serious bodily harm or mental distress to members of such a group

The deliberate creation of living conditions for a group of people that are designed to cause their complete or partial physical liquidation.



“  
This is a fight to the annihilation... This war will be very different from the war in the West. In the East, cruelty itself is a blessing for the future  
”  
Adolf Hittler

From a speech delivered to the Wehrmacht high command. March 30, 1941.

**Approximately 84,8 million of the 196,7 million Soviet citizens lived at the occupied territory. One in six died as a result of Nazi extermination policies: executions, starvation, and unbearable slave labor.**





# THE WAR CLAIMED 26.6 MILLION LIVES OF SOVIET PEOPLE, most of whom were civilians and prisoners of war

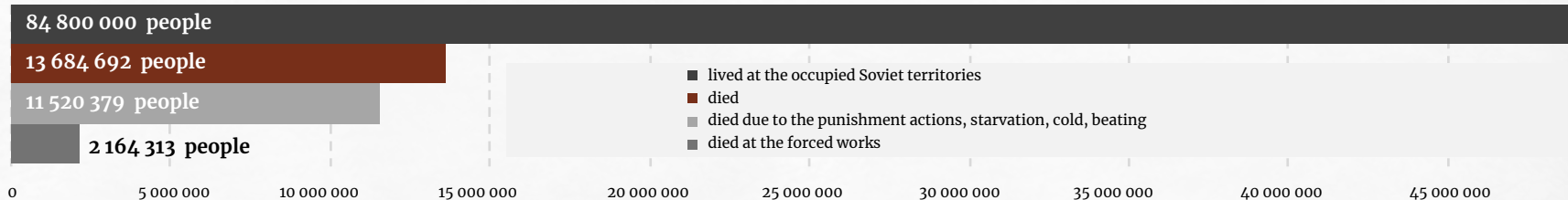
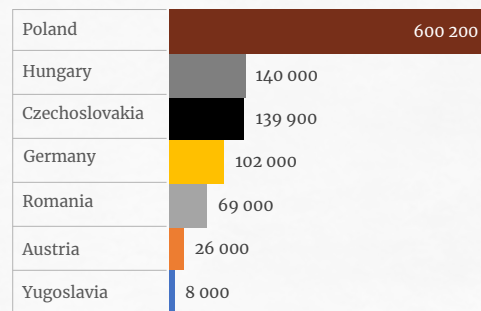
## Military losses

The losses of the Soviet armed forces amounted to over **8.6 million** people of whom more than **1 million** soldiers died in battle during the liberation of Europe.

## Civil losses

- 13.6 million** people died or killed in the occupied territory, of whom:
- 7.4 million** people were willingly killed
- 4.1 million** people died from starvation, infectious diseases, lack of medical care
- 2.1 million** people died in forced labor in Germany

More than **1 million** Soviet soldiers and officers died in liberation of Europe



# NAZI GERMANY DELIBERATELY VIOLATED THE GENEVA CONVENTION ON TREATMENT OF PRISONERS OF WAR (1929)

**The Geneva Convention** on treatment of prisoners of war was signed in Geneva on **July 27, 1929**.

**The Convention required** compliance with the guarantees it set out for prisoners of war if it was ratified by at least one of the warring countries.

After June 22, 1941, Nazi Germany continued to be bound by its obligations under international humanitarian law. **It deliberately refused to comply with them in relation to Soviet prisoners of war.**

## 3.3 million

**of Soviet POW's died in captivity in the Nazi concentration camps**

### Excerpts from the Geneva Convention on treatment of prisoners of war (1929)

**Article 10** Prisoners of war shall be lodged in buildings or huts which afford all possible safeguards as regards hygiene and salubrity.

The premises must be entirely free from damp, and adequately heated and lighted. All precautions shall be taken against the danger of fire.

**Article 11** The food ration of prisoners of war shall be equivalent in quantity and quality to that of the depot troops.

**Article 29** No prisoner of war may be employed on work for which he is physically unsuited.

**Article 82** In time of war if one of the belligerents is not a party to the Convention, its provisions shall, nevertheless, remain binding as between the belligerents who are parties thereto.



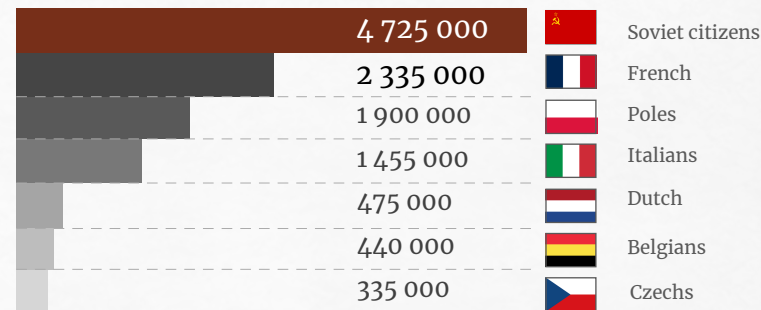
# USSR CITIZENS WERE PLANNED TO BE THE THIRD REICH SLAVES

During the war, Königsberg (now Kaliningrad) was the center of the slave trade. Within the city and its surroundings, there were **at least 56 specialized camps** where Soviet citizens and prisoners of war were held in inhumane conditions, deprived of food, subjected to experiments, beaten and brutally tortured, and used as slaves.

**12 million people — the total number of forced laborers in the Third Reich.**

These were civilians, prisoners of war, and concentration camp inmates. Nearly 40% of them were citizens of the USSR.

Number of forced laborers in the Third Reich



Ostarbeiters in Germany.



The occupiers deport the population of the USSR.



Deportation of Soviet people to Germany by the Nazis.





## BOMBING OF CIVILIAN TARGETS was a part of the Nazi war of annihilation

From the very first minutes of the war, the Nazis bombed Soviet cities. The purpose of such bombings was to destroy military forces and, most importantly, the fighting spirit of defenders and civilians.

**The first bombs fell at 3 a.m.  
on June 22, 1941, on Sevastopol.**

Minsk, Kiev, Riga, Vilnius, and Grodno were subjected to Luftwaffe terror.

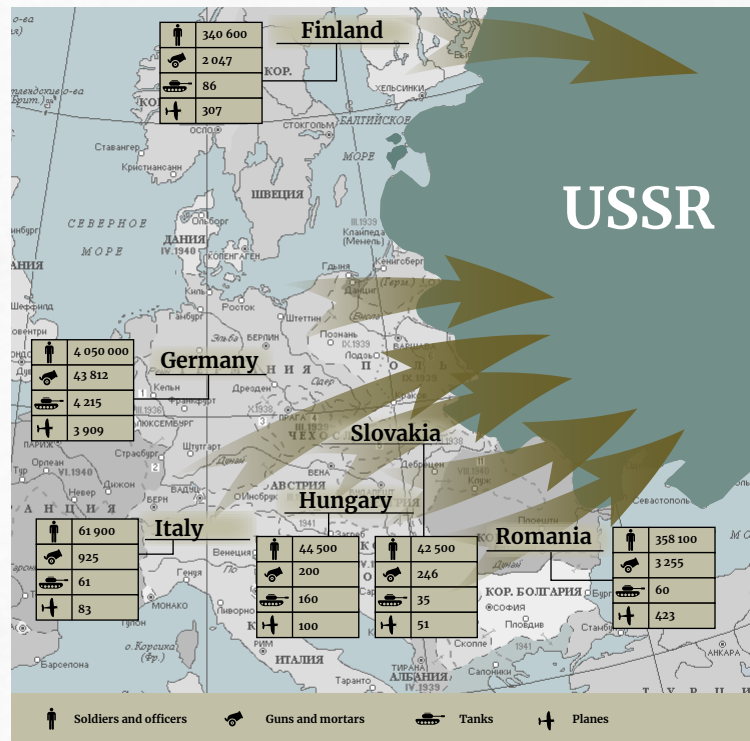
German fighter planes destroyed warehouses, communication centers, airfields, and, along with them, urban infrastructure.

First day  
of war

More than  
**16 000**  
Soviet civilians  
were killed



# PRACTICALLY WHOLE EUROPE FOUGHT AGAINST USSR



In addition to Germany, Italy and Romania (June 22), Slovakia (June 23), Finland (June 25), and Hungary (June 27) officially declared war on the USSR in 1941.

The Wehrmacht included military units from **Spain, Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Holland, Norway, Croatia, and other European countries.**

In total, around **2 million** soldiers from other countries fought on the side of the Reich during the war.

“

*...all European nations must work together in the fight against the Slavs, and tomorrow jointly transform Russia for Europe...  
My mission, if I succeed, is to destroy Slavdom*

Adolf Hitler

”

From a conversation with Romanian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mihai Antonescu in Berlin on November 27, 1941.



# THE ECONOMY OF ALL EUROPE COUNTRIES FOUGHT AGAINST THE USSR

Nazi Germany used the economies of the occupied countries of Europe to wage war against the USSR.

This significantly expanded the military-economic base of the Third Reich.

The German economic system adapted the economies of the occupied countries to its own system, and also used methods of contribution, systematically draining reserves of raw materials, fuel, and food.



**60–70%** of all large enterprises in occupied Europe were under German control

**233.5** milliard Reichsmarks was the price of resources obtained by plundering European countries during World War II

**34%** of Nazi government spending was covered by resources from European countries





# THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP ANTICIPATED AN ATTACK BY THE NAZIS AND SYSTEMATICALLY PREPARED FOR WAR

The Soviet leadership took diplomatic steps in an attempt to delay the outbreak of the war.

The secret protocols of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact were a response to the refusal of Western countries to conclude an anti-Hitler treaty with the USSR in 1939. Their desire to redirect the aggressor left the USSR alone in the face of the threat of war.

Rearmament of the Soviet Army and Navy. In the pre-war years, new types of weapons were developed, which allowed for their rapid production at the beginning of the war:

Battle tanks T-34 and KV-1 “Klim Voroshilov”

Multiple-launch rocket system BM-13 “Katyusha”

IL-2 ground-attack aircraft

Shpagin submachine gun (PPSh)

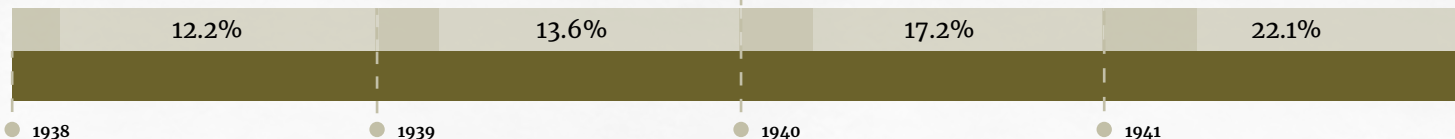
Industrial production increased in the Urals and in the east of the country.

In 1940, there were 25 machine-building plants in the Sverdlovsk region. The Chelyabinsk Tractor Plant, Izhevsk Plant, and Kungur Machine-Building Plant increased their output.

In the Khabarovsk region, 18 major facilities were built (the Amurstal plant, oil refinery, chemical plant, brick factory, aircraft manufacturing plant, shipbuilding plant, etc.).

During the pre-war five-year plans, the Soviet military-industrial complex was created. Industrial production expanded in the Urals and in the east of the country.

## RATIO OF DEFENSE EXPENDITURES TO NATIONAL INCOME IN THE USSR (1938–1941)



# THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR SHOWED THAT ONLY A SOCIETY UNITE IN IDEAS AND SPIRIT CAN DEFEAT THE ENEMY

Every year, **10.5–11.5 million people** were called up from different regions of the country to serve on the front lines of the Great Patriotic War.

**Among the Heroes of the Soviet Union during the war years** were Russians, Belarusians, Ukrainians, Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Armenians, Turkmen, Estonians, Tatars, Bashkirs, Kalmyks, Kabardians, Chechens, Ossetians, and representatives of other nationalities — the united family of the Soviet state.

**The heroism and feats of soldiers on the front lines** were supported by the courage, fortitude, and mass heroism of workers in the rear.

In the Soviet Union, **12 cities** were awarded the title of “Hero City” for their mass heroism and courage during the Great Patriotic War, and **the Brest Fortress** was awarded the title of “Hero Fortress”.

In the Russian Federation, **since 2006, 47 cities** have been awarded the title of “City of Military Glory”

**In 2020–2025, 70 cities** were awarded the honorary title “City of Labor Valor”



**35.5 million** men  
were mobilized into the army

**201 people**

were awarded Hero  
of the Socialist Labor



**11 696 people**

were awarded Hero  
of the Soviet Union



during the Great Patriotic War



**More than 1.7 million**

citizens of the blockaded  
Leningrad were accepted  
at 40 regions of the USSR

