

# Institute of National Remembrance

<https://ipn.gov.pl/en/news/6832,The-Origins-of-the-Katyn-Massacre.html>

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## The Origins of the Katyn Massacre

# 1. THE ORIGINS OF THE KATYN MASSACRE

In September 1939, the Third Reich and the Soviet Union invaded Poland following the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact they concluded on 23 August 1939 and amended on 28 September 1939. 51.6% of the territories of the 2nd Polish Republic came under Stalin's control, and their population, especially Poles, fell victim to Soviet repressions. Polish intellectual elites – career soldiers and army reserve officers who played prominent roles in the society before WWII – were sent to camps and prisons. They were joined by teachers, doctors, engineers, lawyers, scientists, landowners, clergy of various denominations, and civil servants.

## THE FOURTH PARTITION OF POLAND

### ENSLAVED BY THE SOVIETS

Some 250,000 Polish officers and soldiers became Soviet prisoners-of-war. Almost 125,000 of rank and file servicemen were soon released. The POWs were detained in the NKVD detention facilities in the cities of the eastern 2nd Polish Republic.

TERRITORIES OCCUPIED BY THE USSR AFTER BORDER CORRECTION OF 28 SEPTEMBER 1939

TERRITORIES OCCUPIED BY THE THIRD REICH

51,6%

48,4%

### ARRESTED IN THE EASTERN BORDERLANDS

Between the autumn of 1939 and the spring of 1940, the NKVD set up several detention camps and prisons in the cities of the eastern part of the 2nd Polish Republic. In all, they held 18,632 POWs, including officers, policemen, members of political parties and resistance organizations, land- and factory owners, civil servants and refugees. 10,685 of them were identified by Lavrentiy Beria as Poles.



### FORCED LABOUR POW CAMPS

Ca. 25,000 privates and NCOs were put to work in inhuman conditions in the camps in Rovne and Lvov districts, and the mines of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic...



### INTERMENT, TRANSIT AND COLLECTION CAMPS

There were about 10 of them, located mainly in the European part of the USSR; from them, the POWs were transferred to 3 special camps...

### SPECIAL NKVD CAMPS

In late 1939 – early 1940, the camps held about 15,000 Polish officers and intelligentsia. They were tricked into believing they would soon be evacuated to Germany or a neutral country.

2. STAROBELSK  
3,893 POWs\*

3. OSTASHKOV  
6,364 POWs\*

1. KOZELSK  
4,594 POWs\*

2,900 lieutenants and 2nd lieutenants  
700 captains and cavalry captains  
500 officer cadets  
258 majors  
79 lieutenant colonels  
24 colonels  
4 generals  
1 rear admiral

2,450 lieutenants and 2nd lieutenants  
1,000 captains and cavalry captains  
230 majors  
127 lieutenant colonels  
55 colonels  
9 generals

4,924 rank and file policemen  
775 police NCOs  
240 police and military police officers  
198 Prison Guard officers  
72 NCOs and privates of the Polish Army and Border Protection Corps  
48 officers  
9 intelligence service officers

\*as for March 1940



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