

## History Knowledge Organiser: The Holocaust (Mechanics)

**KPI 1:** To analyse the treatment of the Jews in Germany and Europe in the mid-20th century.

- After 1919, Jewish people in Germany were free and legally equal and often felt more German than Jewish. Many were wealthy and successful.
- But there was an undercurrent of anti-Jewish racism, called '[anti-Semitism](#)', in Germany. Hitler appealed to this anti-Semitism by blaming the Jewish people for Germany's defeat in the First World War. Nazi race-scientists incorrectly claimed that the Jewish people were sub-human.
- **Anti-Semitism**, had been common in Europe since the Middle Ages, and was especially strong in the 19th century.
- An anti-Semitic movement in Germany in the 1890s failed. In the 1920s, Germany was one of the countries in Europe where Jewish people were free.
- German Jewish people:
  - were few in number - 1% of the population
  - were often wealthy and successful in business
  - were prominent in politics and the arts (theatre and film)
  - had married Germans – in some cases they had converted to Christianity
  - many had fought for Germany in the First World War
  - most (80%) were German citizens
- However, German-Jewish success and wealth made many non-Jewish Germans envious.
- In the 1920s and 1930s, so-called 'race scientists' declared that some races, eg German 'Aryans', were a master race, or 'Herrenrasse', and superior to other sub-humans, or 'Untermenschen', such as the Roma gypsies, and black people. Nazi race-scientists said that the Jewish people were an anti-race, or 'Gegenrasse', which means not really human at all.
- After the First World War, right-wing politicians looked for a scapegoat to blame for Germany's defeat. Hitler blamed the Jewish people – he said they had stabbed the German army in the back. He believed that the Jewish people had no ambition but greed. He thought that they were selfish and not truly German and saw them as enemies of Germany.

*A little background to Jewish treatment before the Nazi era taken from **The History of the Jews in Europe during the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries by Professor Monika Richarz***

- It is important to study Jewish life before the tragedy of the Holocaust. If we simply regard them as victims were are dehumanising them.
- Jews had lived in many parts of Europe ever since they came here with the Romans. They were regarded as a special nation. Under Christian rule in the Holy Roman Empire they became very restricted in their freedom and their rights.

Key Terms	Definitions
Anti-Semitism	Hatred of Jewish people
Ghettos	Areas within a town that were 'walled' off to the outside world.
Dehumanising	Not being seen as a human being.
Emancipation	Another word for freedom.

**KPI 1:** To analyse the treatment of the Jews in Germany and Europe in the mid-20th century.

- In the eighteenth century in all of Europe, Jews still did not have the freedom of movement and could settle only in territories where they had received special permission.
- Many rulers had completely closed their countries to the Jews. Even when admitted, Jews in many States could not buy land or houses. In some cities they had to stay in assigned areas called "ghettos", which they could only leave during the day. Also, Jews were highly restricted in their occupations.
- French Jews were the first to be emancipated in Europe. In 1791 they received legal equality by the French revolutionary parliament, which meant full citizenship without any conditions. **But this model of instant emancipation was not followed by the rest of Europe.**
- **During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Jews became emancipated in countries like Italy and England.**
- **It took over 125 years for Jews to become emancipated in Europe (by 1918), although this did not mean that things were easy for them.**
- Anti-Semitism existed more or less in all of the nineteenth century European societies, increasingly so up to the Second World War. The economic and social problems that accompanied the rise of capitalism and industrialization were often blamed on the Jews.
- But while in the East anti-Semitism even led to extended pogroms, in the West it was still mostly expressed in print and by putting up social barriers for Jews.
- The success of the western Jews during the nineteenth century frightened the middle class that became the main supporter of anti-Semitic ideas.

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**KPI 2:** To be able to assess and evaluate the mechanics of the Holocaust.

- As soon as Hitler came to power he introduced a programme of persecution. The Nuremberg Laws (1935) deprived Jewish people of many of their civil rights. On 9 November 1938, Kristallnacht or the 'Night of Broken Glass' took place. Jewish businesses, synagogues and homes were attacked and destroyed. This was a response to the assassination of a German diplomat by a Polish Jewish man in Paris.
- After the outbreak of World War Two in 1939, the Nazis stepped up the persecution of the Jewish people:
- They were herded into over-crowded 'ghettos'.
- The ghetto was not a Nazi invention. Its origins can be traced back to medieval times, when restrictions on the places where Jews were allowed to reside were commonplace throughout Europe. Although this restriction is usually perceived as relating to towns or cities, it even applied in certain cases to entire countries.
- Within them, the Jewish people faced a life of squalor. They had little food and provisions to keep them alive. They had to work for the Nazis and the war effort which was hard under the circumstances. They had little possessions with them as when they were forced to move from their homes, they had to take what they could grab. Many families were forced to live in one room or with more than one family. As the death rate increased more space became available.

1933	Hitler's 'brownshirts' stood outside Jewish shops and persuaded Germans to boycott them.
Summer 1935	'Jews not wanted here' posters began to go up around Germany.
September 1935	The Nuremberg Laws deprived Jewish people of their civil rights. They were forbidden to vote and they were not allowed to marry Germans. Other laws were passed forbidding them to go out at night or own a bicycle, among other things.
9 November 1938	Kristallnacht was when Jewish businesses, synagogues and homes were destroyed. Many Jewish men were killed or put in concentration camps.
January 1939	Hitler accused the Jewish people of stirring up other countries against Germany. He threatened them with annihilation if a war broke out.

Key Terms	Definitions
Propaganda	A method used to persuade people to believe in something that may not be necessarily true.
Final Solution	Plan to do something about the 'Jewish problem' once and for all. This is where the concentration camps etc. were put into use.
Hitler Youth	Young children were enrolled into the Hitler Youth in order continue the Nazi beliefs. Young boys were prepared for the army etc.
Reich	The German government

- After 1941, following the invasion of the Soviet Union, Nazi death-squads, called 'Einsatzgruppen', murdered more than a million Jewish people in eastern Europe.
- In 1942, a Nazi conference at Wannsee decided on the 'Final Solution' – the Jewish people were to be systematically taken to camps such as Auschwitz and gassed.
- **Propaganda** was essential to in the Nazi campaign.
- Posters, radio presentations, newspapers, magazines, theatre viewings and so on were controlled by the Nazi's. therefore, they would produce what they would want the people to hear and see. The more there was, the more you would start to believe. It also came down to fear for some people. It was easier to follow than fight against.
- Joseph Goebbels was the head of the propaganda campaign. He encouraged violence as well as the acceptance of the treatment of Jews amongst the majority of Germans. On top of this he created a race consciousness and political loyalty to the Nazi party.
- **Education and the Hitler Youth** were also two ways in which the Holocaust could be conducted.
- The Nazi's took over education and stripped it back to everything that taught German history and made people believe they will be the greatest country once again.
- Focusing on the young was important as they were the future of Germany. In Hitler's mind there would be a thousand year Reich, and it was the young that was going to take this forward. Therefore, it was key to focus on them to make sure this would happen.
- The Hitler Youth were set up in mind to encourage the young to be part of a group that developed and carried on Nazi ideology. They were taught and made to feel proud of their country through a variety of activities and were encouraged to 'spy' on those that were supposedly opposing the Nazi regime. This could even be their own parents.

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**KPI 3:** To be able to compare and contrast this persecution with at least one other example of recent genocide.

- After the Holocaust it was said 'Never Again'.
- In the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries however, there have been genocides.
- There are a number you may look at but here are some of the key ones that are focused upon:
  - Armenia 1915-1918 (1.5 million deaths)
  - Stalin's Forced Famine 1932-1933 (7 million deaths)
  - Bosnia-Herzegovina 1992 (200,000 deaths)
  - Rwanda 1994 (800,000 deaths)
  - Darfur 2003 (2 million deaths)

### **Armenia:**

- In 1915, leaders of the Turkish government set in motion a plan to expel and massacre Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire.
- Though reports vary, most sources agree that there were about 2 million Armenians in the Ottoman Empire at the time of the massacre.
- By the early 1920s, when the massacres and deportations finally ended, some 1.5 million of Turkey's Armenians were dead, with many more forcibly removed from the country.
- On April 24, 1915, the Armenian genocide began. That day, the Turkish government arrested and executed several hundred Armenian intellectuals. After that, ordinary Armenians were turned out of their homes and sent on death marches through the Mesopotamian desert without food or water. People who stopped to rest were shot.
- At the same time, the Young Turks created a "Special Organization," which in turn organized "killing squads" or "butcher battalions" to carry out, as one officer put it, "the liquidation of the Christian elements." These killing squads were often made up of murderers and other ex-convicts. They drowned people in rivers, threw them off cliffs, crucified them and burned them alive.
- Referred to as the "Turkification" campaign.



**KPI 3:** To be able to compare and contrast this persecution with at least one other example of recent genocide.

### **Stalin's forced famine:**

- The Soviet Union's 'Great Famine' between 1932 and 1933 may have resulted in the deaths of nine million people. The 'Great Famine' was a man-made affair and was introduced to attack a class of people – the peasants – who were simply not trusted by Joseph Stalin. He had once stated in front of others that given the opportunity he would have liked to have removed the whole Ukrainian peasant population of twenty million but that this was an impossible task.
- The 'Great Famine' – known as the 'Holodomor' (Hunger) in the Ukraine – was based on the fear Stalin had that the peasants simply could not be trusted to support his government in Moscow and uphold the revolutionary ideals of the Bolsheviks (a group that promote the rights and justice of the people).
- Stalin ordered in to agricultural areas troops and the secret police, who took away what food they could find and simply left rural villages with none. Those who did not die of starvation were deported to the gulags (labour camps). What happened was kept as a state secret within the USSR. This happened in the Ukraine, the Urals, to the Kazakhs – anywhere where there was a large peasant population.
- As a result, an estimated 7,000,000 persons perished in this farming area, known as the breadbasket of Europe, with the people deprived of the food they had grown with their own hands.

### **Bosnia-Herzegovina:**

- The multi-ethnic republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina quickly became the site of the deadliest warfare and the target of an 'ethnic cleansing.'
- Milosevic rose to power in 1987. With his view of a "Greater Serbia," Milosevic began a propaganda campaign that incited feelings of hatred among the people of Yugoslavia.
- Talks of independence began to spread throughout the six republics, and Slovenia and Croatia were the first to declare independence. Although Slovenia left Yugoslavia relatively peacefully, this was not the case for the other regions. The tensions between the Croats, Serbs, and others were exposed and proved too great to be dealt with in peaceful terms. War finally broke out.
- Bosnia was the most ethnically heterogeneous of Yugoslavia's republics, with 43 percent Muslims, 35 percent Orthodox Serbs, and 18 percent Catholic Croats, and suffered the worst fate. The multi-ethnic republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina quickly became the site of the deadliest warfare and the target of 'ethnic cleansing.'
- Like the Nazis' "cleansing" Europe of its Jews, the Serbs' aim was the "ethnic cleansing" of any Bosniak or Croat presence in Serbian territory. Human rights violations occurred in many different forms, including curfews, forced relocations, rape, castration, imprisonment in concentration camps, and killings.

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### Rwanda:

- Between April and June 1994, an estimated 800,000 Rwandans were killed in the space of 100 days.
- Most of the dead were Tutsis - and most of those who perpetrated the violence were Hutus.
- Even for a country with such a turbulent history as Rwanda, the scale and speed of the slaughter left its people reeling.
- The genocide was sparked by the death of the Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana, a Hutu, when his plane was shot down above Kigali airport on 6 April 1994.
- A French judge has blamed current Rwandan President, Paul Kagame - at the time the leader of a Tutsi rebel group - and some of his close associates for carrying out the rocket attack.
- Mr Kagame vehemently denies this and says it was the work of Hutu extremists, in order to provide a pretext to carry out their well-laid plans to exterminate the Tutsi community.
- Whoever was responsible, within hours a campaign of violence spread from the capital throughout the country, and did not subside until three months later.
- But the death of the president was by no means the only cause of Africa's largest genocide in modern times.



### Darfur:

- The "Darfur Genocide" refers to the current mass slaughter and rape of Darfuri men, women and children in Western Sudan. The killings began in 2003 and continue still today, as the first genocide in the 21st century.
- The genocide is being carried out by a group of government-armed and funded Arab militias known as the Janjaweed (which loosely translates to 'devils on horseback'). The Janjaweed systematically destroy Darfurians by burning villages, looting economic resources, polluting water sources, and murdering, raping, and torturing civilians. These militias are historic rivals of the main rebel groups, the Sudanese Liberation Movement (SLM), and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). As of today, over 480,000 people have been killed, and over 2.8 million people are displaced.



Key Terms	Definitions
Heterogeneous	Diverse. An area that is made up of different cultures for example.

**KPI 4:** To be able to form a judgement as to whether the Holocaust was unique.

## THE PATH TO GENOCIDE

Stage 1 Classification	The differences between people are not respected. There's a division of 'us' and 'them'. This can be carried out through the use of stereotypes, or excluding people who are perceived to be different.
Stage 2 Symbolisation	This is a visual manifestation of hatred. Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe were forced to wear yellow stars to show that they were 'different'.
Stage 3 Dehumanisation	Those who are perceived as 'different' are treated with no form of human right or personal dignity. During the Rwandan Genocide, Tutsis were referred to as 'cockroaches'; the Nazis referred to Jews as 'vermin'.
Stage 4 Organisation	Genocides are always planned. Regimes of hatred often train those who are to carry out the destruction of a people.
Stage 5 Polarisation	Propaganda begins to be spread by hate groups. The Nazis used the newspaper <i>Der Stürmer</i> to spread and incite messages of hate about Jewish people.
Stage 6 Preparation	Victims are identified based on their differences. At the beginning of the Cambodian genocide, the Khmer Rouge separated out those who lived in cities and did not work in the fields. Jews in Nazi Europe were forced to live in ghettos.
Stage 7 Extermination	The hate group murders their identified victims in a deliberate and systematic campaign of violence. Millions of lives have been destroyed or changed beyond recognition through genocide.
Stage 8 Denial	The perpetrators or later generations deny the existence of any crime.

Based on Gregory H. Stanton's *8 stages of genocide*. [www.genocidewatch.org](http://www.genocidewatch.org)

Think about what you know about the different genocides ... do they follow the same pattern but target different people?

- <http://worldwithoutgenocide.org/genocides-and-conflicts/darfur-genocide>
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