

Ostindustrie GMBH

(East Industry, Inc., Osti), company established by the SS in March 1943 to capitalize on Jewish labor in the *Generalgouvernement*, as long as there were enough Jews living there to make it profitable.

At the Wannsee Conference of January 1942, it was made clear that Jews in the *Generalgouvernement* would be sent from ghettos to extermination camps. In the meanwhile, those Jews who were strong enough would be made to work. Thus, the SS set up its own economic firm (Osti) and labor camps under its jurisdiction, in order to be the main recipient of the Jews' work. The connection between Osti and the German intention to ultimately murder the Jews is reflected in who was chosen to head Osti: Odilo Globocnik, who was also in charge of carrying out Aktion Reinhard - the Nazis' program for exterminating all the Jews in the *Generalgouvernement*. In addition, the labor camps served as gathering points for transports being sent to the extermination camps.

Osti's main office was in Lublin, because most of the remaining Jews in the *Generalgouvernement* lived in the Lublin district. Osti took control of various businesses in the area, including brush factories, peat works, a fur plant, and ironworks. Until November 1943, some 16,000 Jews and 1,000 Poles were employed by Osti.