

Pawiak Prison

Main prison in the Warsaw district, used by the German Security Police and Security Service (SD) from October 1939 to August 1944. Located in Warsaw's Jewish quarter, Pawiak was mainly a prison for men, but it also included a section for women known as "Serbia." It was guarded by SS men and Ukrainian collaborators.

Altogether, some 65,000 prisoners passed through Pawiak, most of whom were Poles from Warsaw. It is unclear how many Jews were interned there. The Jewish prisoners were generally people who had been caught outside the Ghetto. There was also a group of Soviet Prisoners of War imprisoned in Pawiak. As a rule, both the Jews and Soviets were shot soon after arriving at the prison. In all, about 32,000 prisoners were shot to death (sometimes in public executions), 23,000 prisoners were transferred to various camps, and several thousand were released. A few prisoners managed to escape from Pawiak, but an attempted revolt against the guards in July 1944 was a failure. Pawiak also had a strong underground that kept in contact with the outside world.

The last transports left Pawiak on July 30, 1944. The remaining prisoners were either released or shot. On August 21 the Germans blew up the prison.