

Central Office of Judicial Administration, Ludwigsburg

(*Ludwigsburger Zentralstelle*), office established in December 1958 in the West German city of Ludwigsburg, whose goal was to investigate Nazi crimes, committed between 1933 and 1945, which were based on Nazi ideology and which were now punishable according to West German law. Many of the members of Eichmann's office, for example, were investigated by the *Zentralstelle*. The *Zentralstelle* was staffed by judges and prosecuting attorneys from the 11 states that made up West Germany.

When it was originally established, the *Zentralstelle* only dealt with crimes that were committed outside the borders of West Germany. In 1964 that ruling guide was changed to include all Nazi crimes, no matter where they took place, as long as they were committed in the name of Nazi ideology. Thus, the office did not and does not deal with war crimes, by definition.

The *Zentralstelle* is responsible to collect any available information about Nazi crimes, sort the crimes into categories, and determine where to find the criminals. Once the *Zentralstelle* locates a Nazi criminal within West Germany, it passes the case on to public prosecutors in the appropriate area for indictment. During the 1990s the *Zentralstelle* initiated less and less investigations, whereas its importance as an archive about Nazi crimes grew.