

## Gendarmerie, Hungarian

Police force whose job was to maintain law and order in the Hungarian countryside. During World War II, the *Gendarmerie* was supposed to destroy any opponents of the Hungarian regime and was responsible for carrying out the regime's anti-Jewish policies.

The *Gendarmerie* consisted of 3,000--5,000 policemen who were divided into 10 districts. At the time of the deportations of Hungarian Jewry in 1944, the country was divided into six zones, each with one or two *Gendarmerie* districts.

In the summer of 1941 the *Gendarmerie* participated in the roundup of Jews that resulted in massacres in Kamenets-Podolski by the *Einsatzgruppen*. It was also involved in the murder in February 1942 of 3,300 Serbs and Jews in the Novi-Sad area. After the Germans occupied Hungary in March 1944, the *Gendarmerie* was charged with putting the Jews in ghettos and then deporting them to extermination camps. Special *Gendarmerie* investigative units, located in the larger ghettos, were in charge of confiscating Jewish property. They set up a "mint" in each of the ghettos, where Jews were tortured into revealing where they had hidden their supposed valuables. The *Gendarmerie* men were so cruel in their treatment of Hungary's Jews that even some Nazis were shocked at their barbarity.

The *Gendarmerie* was disbanded by the Provisional National Government of Hungary in June 1945.