

Generalplan Ost

(General Plan East), plan devised by Nazi leaders in 1941--1942 to resettle Eastern Europe with Germans, and move about other "inferior" groups within the Nazis' domain.

In 1941 the Nazis fully believed that they were going to win World War II and maintain control over all the lands they had conquered. Thus, they came up with a long-term scheme for the fate of those territories: the expulsion or enslavement of most non-Aryans, the extermination of the Jews living in the conquered territories, and the resettlement of the empty areas with Germans and *Volksdeutsche* (ethnic Germans).

The territories involved included the occupied areas of POLAND, the Baltic states (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia), Belorussia, and parts of Russia and the Ukraine. There were about 45 million people living in those areas in the early 1940s, including five to six million Jews. The Nazis came up with an elaborate racial classification system by which to decide who would be enslaved, expelled, murdered, or resettled. Some 31 million of the territories' inhabitants, mostly of Slavic origin, were to be declared "racially undesirable," and expelled to western Siberia. The Jews were to be annihilated, euphemistically referred to as "total removal." The rest of the local population would be enslaved, "Germanized," or killed. After the area was cleared out, 10 million Germans and people of German origin, called ethnic Germans, were to be moved in.

During the war, many of the Nazis' activities were carried out with *Generalplan Ost* in mind. They massacred millions of Jews in Eastern Europe, in addition to millions of Soviet prisoners of war. Millions more were sent to Germany to do forced labor, and two million Poles living in the areas that had been annexed to the Reich were treated to a "Germanization" process. Approximately 30,000 Germans who had been living in the Baltic countries were moved from their homes and prepared for resettlement in Poland. From November 1942 to August 1943, Poles living in the Zamosc region of Poland were kicked out of their homes and replaced by Germans.

The Nazis quickly lost interest in *Generalplan Ost* after the battle of Stalingrad, when they realized that their victory in the war was not a sure thing.