

# RAVENSBRÜCK

Located in northern Germany, Ravensbrück was the only Nazi concentration camp built specifically for women. The camp opened in May 1939, but was expanded following the occupation of Poland.

The women of Ravensbrück came from 23 different countries, although the majority were Polish, German and Russian. Of these, only a small minority were Jewish.

Ravensbrück was a profit-making centre, established for the dual purposes of “re-education” and slave labour. Prisoners constructed buildings and roads, dug ditches, cleared forests, made general repairs and worked on surrounding farms. The women also provided slave labour for armaments factories and manufacturers. As a form of resistance, prisoners slowed production, pretended to make mistakes and intentionally removed parts from machines.

In its six years of operation, 132,000 women and children were sent to Ravensbrück. By the time the camp was liberated by Russian troops in 1945, 117,000 had perished. Of all the concentration camps in Germany, Ravensbrück had the highest mortality rate.