

LABOUR CAMP

In the fall of 1939, following the German invasion of Poland, an extensive network of forced labour camps was established across Europe. From the beginning of the occupation, Nazi Germany transported more than 14 million civilians and 2.5 million prisoners of war to labour camps in Poland. Many labour camps were satellite camps or sections of concentration camps. Auschwitz, for example, had over 40 such satellite camps, and served as an administrative center for this enormous network.

The unanticipated continuation of the war alongside the shortage of labourers led to the requirement of new workers, and Jewish prisoners were used to fill this gap for the Nazis.

Camps were often established near industrial plants, as privately owned companies increasingly relied on forced labour for their operations. Inmates of these camps were kept in unsanitary conditions while being forced to perform strenuous labour without proper equipment, clothing, food or rest. For this reason, mortality rates at labour camps were extremely high.