

## Estimated Jewish Losses In The Holocaust

### Introduction.

The statistics presented here are an attempt to provide a well-founded and comprehensive picture of the losses incurred by the Jews of Europe as a direct result of Nazi persecution. This is not the first attempt at a full summation of Jewish losses during the Holocaust. Since the end of World War II, statistical data for individual countries, as well as a total figure, have appeared several times. Best known are the tables published by Jacob Lestchinsky, Raul Hilberg, Jacob Robinson, and Martin Gilbert. These researchers compiled statistics for the Jewish population in each European country before the war and for the number of survivors in those countries after the war. Yet they arrived at very different conclusions.

The Jewish sociologist Lestchinsky, basing his figures on Jewish populations in Europe as of 1939, arrived at a total figure of 5,957,000 Jewish victims, whereas Raul Hilberg, in the revised edition of his book *The Destruction of the European Jews* (New York, 1985), determined that 5,100,000 Jews perished in the Holocaust, basing himself on Jewish populations as of 1937. Hilberg also gave figures for the mortality in the camps, ghettos, and killing sites that led him to the same total. He noted in his explanation that the figures for the ghettos of Eastern Europe, for shooting in open areas, and for Auschwitz had been rounded to the nearest thousand; figures for other types of killing had been rounded to the nearest 50,000.

In his article for the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem, 1972), Jacob Robinson wrote that the simplest method of arriving at a total for Jewish losses during the Holocaust (including persons killed directly or indirectly and those who committed suicide) is to add up the figures in wartime statistical reports on ghettos, labor camps, extermination camps, and specific Aktionen perpetrated by the Nazis and their collaborators. Robinson calculated that 5,820,960 Jews were killed in the Holocaust. He stated that very reliable

numbers are available for the deportations to extermination camps from Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Theresienstadt. Robinson added, however, the figures are not available for all the different Aktionen, and that statistics for other countries are less exact, as are those in the Einsatzgruppen reports and for the Extermination camps. It is probable that these statistics were in Adolf Eichmann's office but were destroyed or disappeared; as is well known, Eichmann gave a total figure of 6,000,000 Jewish victims. Reasonably reliable figures are also available for Austria, Czechoslovakia (the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and Slovakia), Hungary, Luxembourg, Italy, Norway, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Greece. Significant difficulties arise regarding Poland and the Soviet Union, especially since the latter controlled the Baltic countries, part of Poland, and part of Romania during the war, which was not the case prior to 1939.

Since Robinson's research was published, many scholars in different lands, particularly in Israel, have devoted much time and energy to determining figures for those countries for which the data are less exact, especially Poland and the Soviet Union. For Poland, the estimated population of the Jews at the outbreak of the war has been studied, taking into account many diverse factors. The flight of the Jews in the wake of the Nazi advance was considered, and the figure arrived at includes the number of Jews who escaped to the South (Hungary and Romania), as well as the handful that reached the free world and the thousands who fled with troops and with non-Jewish Poles to Soviet Territory. There are also dependable figures for the number of Polish Jews who survived the Nazi camps and for those who remained alive in Poland itself, either with the help of the local population or by passing themselves off as Christians, in civilian areas or in partisan units.

The number of Jews who returned to Poland from the Soviet Union during the wave of repatriation has also been taken into account in studies on Polish Jewish losses. In these calculations an error of several thousand may have been made, especially since the Jewish origin of children who survived in Polish religious institutions or among religious Poles was not always divulged

after the war. On the other hand, people whom the Nazis considered to be Jews and who consequently perished, but who in actuality were Christians, are not included in statistics for the Jewish population in 1939. This too is a source of statistical inaccuracies. Moreover, mistakes were undoubtedly made during the registration carried out by the Jewish communities in Poland after the war; many survivors who traveled in search of surviving relatives were included in numerous community registers. It is also plausible that a certain number of Polish Jewish refugees who married and began families while living in the Soviet Union gave up their right to be repatriated to Poland and remained where they were. As a further complication, among the Jews repatriated to Poland there were spouses of Soviet origin, as well as Jews from the Baltic States who simply declared that they were Polish. Even if all these factors may seem to balance themselves out, it seems that the figures given for the number of survivors in Poland may be too large.

Conscientious research has also been devoted to calculating Jewish losses in the Soviet Union. These efforts have been based on the statistics for the number of Jews in the cities and towns of the areas forming part of the Soviet Union in 1939, in which the number of Jewish refugees was quite small. The number of Jews killed by the Einsatzgruppen has also been calculated, as has the estimated number of Jews believed by the Soviet authorities or by numerous witnesses to have escaped.

An attempt has been made in the statistics to clarify a number of issues and problems. Important subjects needing clarification included the changes in borders and the population exchanges in central Europe (Bohemia and Moravia, Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania) during the 1930s and 1940s. A thorough investigation was also made of the statistics on Germany, for which several versions exist. These versions reveal significant differences in the number of Jews who emigrated, as well as in the number who lived in Germany from 1939 through October 1941, when further emigration from Germany was forbidden. Not all the statistics here include figures for Jews who were considered such by racial definition and who were killed as Jews.

The birthrate of Jews during the war years was generally not taken into account, nor was the potential birthrate, which was reduced because of the Nazi oppression. Because all scholars do not agree on the figures, those presented here sometimes differ slightly from figures found elsewhere in the encyclopedia.

The statistics here are of special importance because they are not the work of a single researcher trying to encompass all of Europe; rather, they are the work of a number of scholars, each working in his own area of expertise. This method is of substantial advantage, since it permits a much deeper and more detailed analysis for each country and eliminates distortions caused by overlapping data.

Obviously, the data in Table 1, despite the substantial time and effort that went into compiling them as exactly as possible, are only estimates. But it may be said that they are closer to the true picture than previously published statistics, and that the error factor is no more than a few percent.

Table 1.

#### Estimated Jewish Losses in the Holocaust

Country	Initial Jewish Population	Minimum Loss	Maximum Loss
Austria	185,000	50,000	50,000
Belgium	65,700	28,900	28,900
Bohemia and Moravia	118,310	78,150	78,150
Bulgaria	50,000	0	0
Denmark	7,800	60	60
Estonia	4,500	1,500	2,000
Finland	2,000	7	7
France	350,000	77,320	77,320
Germany	566,000	134,500	141,500
Greece	77,380	60,000	67,000

Hungary	825,000	550,000	569,000
Italy	44,500	7,680	7,680
Latvia	91,500	70,000	71,500
Lithuania	168,000	140,000	143,000
Luxembourg	3,500	1,950	1,950
Netherlands	140,000	100,000	100,000
Norway	1,700	762	762
Poland	3,300,000	2,900,000	3,000,000
Romania	609,000	271,000	287,000
Slovakia	88,950	68,000	71,000
Soviet Union	3,020,000	1,000,000	1,100,000
Yugoslavia	78,000	56,200	63,300
Total	9,796,840	5,596,029	5,860,129
Rounded	9,797,000	5,596,000	5,860,000

### Losses by Country

#### Austria.

Jewish population in 1939: 185,000; losses, 50,000. Fifty thousand Jews were deported from Austria or died there; another 15,000 were deported from other European countries to which they had fled, and are included in their statistics. Most of the remaining Jews managed to leave Austria after the Anschlus for a safe haven as long as emigration was possible.

#### Belgium.

Jewish population prior to the start of deportations: 65,700; losses, 28,900. In addition to these Jews, about 25,000 more fled, primarily to France. Of the Jews living in Belgium on the eve of the war, fewer than 10 percent were Belgian Jews of long standing, the rest being classified as recent immigrants or refugees. A total of 34,800 Jews were imprisoned in Belgium or deported,

and of them 28,900 died. Although the figures for Belgium are quite reliable, there may be a small overlap between the Belgian statistics and those for some of the countries from which Jewish refugees immigrated to Belgium. German, Austrian, and Czech refugees to Belgium are included here, and not in the statistics of their countries of origin.

Bohemia and Moravia, Protectorate of.

Jewish population in 1939: 118,310; losses, 78,150. About 26,000 Jews escaped from the area before the start of the deportations, leaving 92,200, and 78,150 perished during the Holocaust.

Bulgaria.

Jewish population at the start of the war: 50,000; no losses from deportations, but an undetermined number died because of Nazi persecution. The Jews of Bulgaria proper, some 50,000, were generally spared the fate of most of the Jewish communities in the occupied countries or in countries aligned with the Nazis. Virtually all of the more than 11,000 Jews in the areas of Macedonia (annexed from Yugoslavia) and Thrace (annexed from Greece) were deported to their death by the Bulgarian regime. They are not included in the figures for Bulgaria but in those of their countries of origin.

Denmark.

Jewish population in 1940: 7,800; losses, 60. According to a definition of who was considered a Jew by race, about 7,800 Jews were living in Denmark on the eve of the deportations. Sixty- three hundred were Danish Jews, and 1,500 were refugees. A total of 7,220 Jews were rescued and found refuge in Sweden; 475 were deported to Theresienstadt, most of whom returned. At least 50 Jews hid successfully in Denmark. Fifty Danish Jews died in Nazi camps, and perhaps 10 more died in Denmark itself owing to Nazi persecution.

Estonia.

Jewish population in 1941: 4,500; losses, 1,500 to 2,000. About 500 Jews were deported to Siberia by the Soviet authorities before the Nazis entered Estonia, and between 2,000 and 2,500 Jews fled in the wake of the Nazi advance. The figure for Estonia does not include Polish refugees in Estonia, who are included in the statistics for Poland.

Finland.

Jewish population in 1939: 2,000; losses, 7. About 2,000 Jews lived in Finland before the outbreak of the war, including about 200 refugees from Germany. Twenty-three Jewish soldiers lost their lives fighting in the Finnish armed forces. In November 1942, 28 Finns, among them 8 Jews, were handed over to the Gestapo. Only one of the Jews survived. The statistics on refugees from Germany in Finland are included here and not in the German figures.

France.

Jewish population before the start of deportations: 350,000 (including refugees from Belgium and central Europe); losses, 77,320. The figures for the losses suffered by French Jewry are well documented. More than 77,000 Jews were either deported to their death from France or died on French soil as a result of Nazi-fostered persecution. About one-third of them were French citizens of long standing, and the rest were Jews who had immigrated into France from eastern Europe after World War I, or Jews who had fled to France in the wake of Hitler's rise to power.

Germany.

Jewish population in 1933 following a definition of who was a jew by race: 566,000; losses (including German Jews who were deported from other

countries), 193,500 to 200,000. The figure for German Jewish losses given in Table 1 (between 134,500 and 141,500) does not include those German Jews who before the advent of the "Final Solution" emigrated or were expelled to countries from which they were later deported. Of the 137,500 deported from Germany directly to the ghettos of Eastern Europe (such as those of Lodz, Riga, and Minsk) and to various camps, at least 128,500 perished. Another 6,000 Jews were killed in concentration camps in Germany and in the Euthanasia Program or committed suicide (chiefly to avoid being deported). At least 65,000 of the 98,000 German Jews who were in other countries (from which they were later deported) perished during the Holocaust; they are included in the statistics for those countries in Table 1.

Greece.

Pre-Holocaust Jewish population: 77,380; losses, 60,000 to 67,000. In 1940 the Jewish population of Greece was 77,380 (including Thrace, which was under Bulgarian rule during the war and had over 2,600 Jews). Of this total, over 62,000 Jews were deported. In 1947, 10,230 Jews were living in Greece, among them some 2,000 who had returned from the deportations. This means that perhaps 60,000 deportees were killed leaving about 7,000 Greek Jews for whom there is no accounting. It is plausible that some perished as forced laborers in Greece and others in partisan units or during the deportation drives. Still others may have died of natural causes during the war years. Some of the 7,000 may have survived the war, but had left Greece or had not returned there by the time the statistics were compiled.

Hungary.

Jewish population in 1941, including annexed territories: 825,000; losses, 550,000 to 569,000. A total of 725,000 Jews, by traditional definition, lived in Hungary in 1941, according to the census of that year. The figure of 100,000 more usually offered for persons who were considered Jews by racial standards is only a rough estimate. The main issue regarding the statistics for

Jewish losses from Hungary during the war is that of the territorial changes that involved Hungary and its neighbors Romania, Czechoslovakia (including the Trans-Carpathian Ukraine, now in the Soviet Union), and Yugoslavia. In the table, the Jews of northern Transylvania have been included in the figures for Hungary (not Romania); the Jews of the Banat region in Hungary (not Yugoslavia), and the Jews of the Trans-Carpathian Ukraine in Hungary (not Czechoslovakia or the Soviet Union), according to the available statistics, although it might seem more logical to have included them in the countries where they lived prior to the outbreak of World War II. Some figures, like the number of forced laborers killed or imprisoned in the Soviet Union, or the number of Jews who escaped from Hungary in 1944, are available for Hungary only after 1941, and therefore those given for Hungary reflect its borders after the wartime annexations. Between 255,000 and 265,000 Jewish survivors were in Hungary and its former territories shortly after the war. These figures do not include the thousands of Hungarian Jewish laborers trapped in the Soviet Union until early 1947 and the Jews who had survived but did not return to Hungary or to former Hungarian territory (such as some of the 8,000 to 10,000 who fled to Romania). In the areas under Hungarian authority from 1941 to 1945, between 550,000 and 569,000 were killed, the large majority during the deportations of 1944.

Italy.

Pre-Holocaust Jewish population: 44,500; losses, 7,680. These figures include Rhodes, which was under Italian rule until after the war.

Latvia.

Jewish population in 1941: 91,500; losses, 70,000 to 71,500. The figure for Latvia's Jewish population at the time when the Germans invaded includes 90,000 native Jews and another 1,500 refugees from Germany, Austria, and Bohemia and Moravia. Jewish refugees from Poland, however, are not included among the refugees in Latvia but in the statistics for Poland. On the

eve of the German occupation, the Soviet authorities deported about 5,000 Jews to Siberia. Between 14,000 and 15,000 Jews fled as the Germans advanced, and about 70,000 native Jews, together with the above-mentioned 1,500 refugees, were actually trapped in Latvia. Some 68,500 to 69,000 native Latvian Jews were killed, as were nearly all the refugees.

Lithuania.

Jewish population in 1941: 168,000; losses, between 140,000 and 143,000. On the eve of the German occupation, the Soviet authorities deported about 7,000 Jews to Siberia. Some 14,000 to 15,000 Jews fled from Lithuania during the German advance. When the occupation began about 145,000 Lithuanian Jews and some 3,000 German, Czech, and Austrian Jewish refugees were in Lithuania. The statistics for Lithuania do not include the Vilna area, which is included in the figures for Poland, nor do they include the Polish refugees who were in Lithuania. If these figures are added, the pre-Holocaust population of Lithuania amounts to about 265,000, with losses proportionate to this increase.

Luxembourg.

Jewish population in 1940: 3,500; losses, 1,950. The figures for Luxembourg are well documented, although there is an overlap of several hundred, representing Jews who fled Luxembourg and were deported from other countries.

Netherlands.

Jewish population in 1940: 140,000; losses, 100,000. The figures for the Netherlands are reliable, but as with other countries that Jewish refugees entered, the problem of overlapping statistics remains. Some 15,000 Jewish refugees were in the Netherlands at the time of the German invasion, and the largest group, German Jews, is included in the statistics for the Netherlands,

not for Germany. Two thousand Dutch Jews who had fled to France and Belgium were also killed during the Holocaust, and are included in the figures for those countries.

Norway.

Pre-Holocaust Jewish population: 1,700; losses, 762. Since the Jewish community was quite small (the figure of 1,700 includes 200 refugees), the statistics for Jewish losses in Norway are precise: 762 Jews perished.

Poland.

Jewish population in 1939: 3,300,000; losses, 2,900,000 to 3,000,000. This population figure applies to Poland according to its boundaries before September 1, 1939, and includes the areas that later became part of the Soviet Union. Polish refugees who perished in the areas of the Soviet Union that came under Nazi control are included in the figures for Poland.

Romania.

Jewish population in 1941: 609,000, not including northern Transylvania; losses, 271,000 to 287,000. The changes in the boundaries of Romania make statistics here problematic. Of the 609,000 Jews living in Romania after northern Transylvania was ceded to Hungary in 1940, about 20,000 successfully escaped from Bessarabia and Bukovina during the German advance. Some 150,000 to 160,000 Jews were killed on the spot in Bessarabia and Bukovina, between 105,000 and 110,000 were killed during the deportations to Transnistria and in Transnistria itself, about 12,000 were killed during the Lasi Pogram, and between 4,000 and 5,000 were killed in other parts of Romania owing to Nazi- inspired persecution.

Slovakia.

Jewish population at the start of 1942: 88,950; losses, 68,000 to 71,000. The parts of Slovakia ceded to Hungary are included in the Hungarian (not the Slovak) figures. It is impossible to determine an exact number for the losses of Slovak Jewry: many Jews from other countries who were en route to Palestine under Aliya Bet auspices passed through Slovakia before the deportations, and some were trapped there; hundreds of Polish Jewish refugees were in Slovakia at the time of the deportations and after the war as displaced persons; hundreds of German Jewish refugees were trapped in Slovakia during the war; and many Slovak Jews left Slovak territory before and during the deportations and immediately after liberation.

Soviet Union.

Jewish population within the borders of the Soviet Union as of 1939: 3,020,000; losses, 1,000,000 to 1,100,000. Not including Polish refugees, about 2,100,000 Jews were in the areas of the Soviet Union destined to be taken over by the Germans. More than 1.5 million were in the western Ukraine, nearly 400,000 in Belorussia, and 200,000 in other parts of the Soviet Union occupied by the Germans. About 1,000,000 fled in the wake of the Nazi offensive or were mobilized into the Soviet army; virtually all the rest were killed. As with Poland, because of the large size of the Jewish population, it is impossible to determine exact numbers. The figures in the table include Jewish soldiers in the Soviet army who were taken prisoner by the Germans and singled out for death, but they do not include Jewish soldiers who died in battle. Polish refugees killed in the Soviet Union by the Germans are not included in these statistics.

Yugoslavia.

Pre-Holocaust Jewish population: 78,000; losses, 56,200 to 63,300. Macedonia is included in the figures for Yugoslavia, but statistics for the Banat region are reflected in the Hungarian figures. Including the Jews of the Banat, up to 67,000 Jews were killed within the borders of what is now Yugoslavia.

