

Frankfurt am Main

City in western Germany. In 1933, more than 26,000 Jews lived in Frankfurt, making the city the second largest Jewish community in Germany.

As soon as the Nazis rose to national power in January 1933, the Jews of Frankfurt, like Jews all over Germany, were subjected to discrimination. The city's Jewish mayor was immediately kicked out of office and many Jewish workers were fired from their jobs. The Nazis in Frankfurt began their anti-Jewish boycott earlier than the rest of the country, and continued boycotting Jewish enterprises after the official one-day boycott of April 1, 1933 (see also *Boycott, Anti-Jewish*).

The Jews of Frankfurt responded to their community's seriously deteriorating economic circumstances by establishing a widespread welfare system. By 1935, almost 20 percent of the Jews in Frankfurt were being assisted by the welfare network. The Jewish community also boosted morale by setting up its own cultural activities, including a symphony, theater groups, and sports programs.

During the *Kristallnacht* pogrom of November 9--10, 1938, many of the city's synagogues were burnt down, Jewish stores were attacked and pillaged, and homes were ransacked. The Frankfurt *yeshiva* was also destroyed. Soon, thousands of Jews were arrested and over 2,000 were sent to Buchenwald. The grave violence led many Jews to flee the country, and by May 1939, only about 14,000 Jews were left in Frankfurt.

Just a few months after World War II broke out in September 1939, the *Gestapo* began the Aryanization process of confiscating Jewish property. The Frankfurt municipality bought Jewish community property for much less than its true worth, and the Jewish cemeteries were vandalized. In March 1941 Jews were made to do forced labor, and in October, the first Jews were deported to Lodz. On November 11, 1,052 Jews were sent to Minsk, and another 902 were deported to Riga on November 22. During 1942, 2,952 Jews from Frankfurt were sent to Theresienstadt. More Jews were deported eastward in late 1942 and throughout 1943. The last transport of Jews from

Frankfurt was transferred to Theresienstadt in January 1944. Altogether, only 600 Jews from Frankfurt survived the war.