



1939

September 1, 1939

Outbreak of World War II

Jews in the Netherlands are successfully integrated into Dutch society and feel relatively secure. Despite this reality, the Dutch government orders the Jewish community to build and finance a refugee camp in the Drente province that will later be known as Westerbork, the main transit camp in the Netherlands through which 102,000 Jews, Sinti, and Roma passed before their final deportation to Auschwitz or Sobibor.

1940

May 10, 1940

Invasion of the Netherlands

The country falls under German control. A policy of discrimination against Jews is gradually imposed.

July-November 1940

Exclusion from Public Office

The first measures ensure that neither Jews nor German enemies are allowed to assist the public to shelter in the event of bombardments. On October 5th, all civil servants – such as doctors and lawyers – must register proof of near or distant Jewish ancestry. The following month they are suspended from their jobs and by January, they are fired without further pay.

1941

January 1941

Creation of a Jewish List

All Jews are required to register their Jewish ancestry at local municipal offices. This and earlier discriminatory measures are aimed at segregating and annexing the Jewish population, laying the groundwork for their eventual deportation.

September - December 1941

Physical Separation and Exclusion

The isolation of Jews from the rest of the population and their ban from all public places leads to their social exclusion and prevents them from maintaining their usual activities and relationships.

1942

January 1942

Identification and Isolation

The Nazi authorities improve their system of identifying Jews. As of January the letter "J" is stamped on the identity papers of Jews and by May, Jews over the age of six must wear the yellow star in order to be easily identified.

Deportation to Labour Camps

Deportations to 37 labour camps across the country begin. Food rations for Jews are reduced, and their salaries are 25% lower than those of non-Jews.

March 1942

Full Implementation of the Nuremberg Laws

The Nuremberg Laws, adopted in Germany in 1935, strip Jews of their citizenship and aim to isolate them from the rest of the population, so as "to protect the purity of the race." Jews are therefore not defined by their religion but by their origins, their blood. These laws are implemented in various stages in the Netherlands, beginning with the anti-Jewish measures in 1940. The final stage decrees that Jews can no longer marry non-Jews.

1943

1943

Deportation to the Death Camps Begin

Beginning in the summer of 1942 and throughout 1943, Jews are deported in overwhelming numbers to the death camps (such as Auschwitz) where they are murdered. About 75% of Dutch Jews (107,000) are killed. This figure is staggering when compared to that of other Western European countries (40% in Belgium and 25% in France).

May 1943

Sterilization or Deportation of Jews in Mixed Marriages

Thousands of Jews are married to non-Jews. Until now, they have been exempt from deportation. In 1943, the Nazis force them to choose between sterilization and deportation.

1944

August 1944

Anne Frank and her family are arrested and deported to Auschwitz the following month. Her father, Otto Frank, is the only member of her family that survives.

1945

May 5, 1945

Liberation of the Netherlands by the Canadian Army

The Netherlands is officially liberated. Thousands of Jewish survivors, however, find themselves without a home or family. They are forced to immigrate to new countries or are sent to displaced persons camps (active until 1957).

