For seven centuries, until 1789, Kielce was the property of the bishops of Kraków and Jews were banned from the city. Jews were admitted in 1818, but it was not until 1868 that czarist authorities recognized an official Jewish community in the city. Jews established themselves in industries related to natural resources, as the city's economy was based primarily on metallurgy and mining. In the interwar period, Kielce was known for its strong Jewish educational system and its large library sponsored by the Zionist cultural organization, Tarbut.

In April 1941, the Nazis created a ghetto in Kielce into which Jews from neighboring small towns were also driven, along with 1,000 Viennese Jews. The 27,000 inmates were rapidly reduced through starvation, shootings and an epidemic of typhus. In August 1942, the ghetto was liquidated and its surviving inhabitants shipped to Treblinka. After the war, Kielce was the site of an infamous pogrom. On July 4, 1946, responding to a rumor that a missing Christian child had been murdered by Jews, a mob attacked a residence for Holocaust survivors, killing 42 Jews and wounding more than 100. This pogrom became an impetus for the mass migration of Jewish survivors out of Poland.

Location
114 km NNE of Kraków
50° 53'/20° 37'
Voivodship: Kielce

General Population, 1939
48,000 (50% Jewish)

General Population, 1994
214,484

SYNAGOGUES
ul. Warszawska 17
Synagogue constructed in 1903.
Current use: State Archives.
Memorial commemorating Poles who helped Jews during the war (dedicated in 1996).
Monument in memory of 27,000 Jews of Kielce (dedicated in 1996).

ul. Słowackiego 3
Synagogue constructed in 1921.
Current use: warehouse.

DEPORTATIONS
Treblinka, Auschwitz-Birkenau, Buchenwald, Pionki, Skarżysko-Kamienna, Bliżyna.
JEWISH CEMETERY

ul. Pakosz Dolny
Cemetery founded in 1867.
Tombstones remaining: 150.

OTHER MEMORIALS

ul. Pakosz Dolny (cemetery)
Monument commemorating victims of 1946 pogrom.

ul. Plany 7
Memorial plaque on former Jewish communal building (dedicated in 1990).
Memorial commemorating the 1946 pogrom erected next to the former Jewish communal building (dedicated in 1996).

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL

ul. Pakosz Dolny (cemetery)
Memorial to 45 children killed on May 23, 1943.
SELECTED READING


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