

Timeline for the Kindertransport

1933

- January 30 Adolf Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany.
- February 28 The Nazi government of Germany suspends constitutionally protected freedoms, including freedom of speech, assembly, and press.
- April 1 The Nazi Party declares a nationwide boycott of Jewish-owned businesses in Germany.
- April 7 The German government enacts a new law excluding most “non-Aryans” from government employment, prompting the subsequent firing of Jewish civil servants, including university professors and school teachers.
- May 10 On Hitler’s hundredth day in office, students and many of their professors enter libraries and bookstores in cities throughout Germany, carting away books by Jewish authors, or non-Jews deemed “un-German,” for book burnings in cities and towns across Germany.
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1935

- September 15 The German government passes the Nuremberg Laws, which deprive Jews of citizenship and forbid marriage between Jews and non-Jews. The laws define Jews biologically—based on the religion of their grandparents rather than their own religious practices or identity.
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1938

- March 13 Germany occupies Austria and proclaims the union (“*Anschluss*”) of the two countries.
- July 6-15 Representatives from 32 countries meet at Evian, France, to discuss refugee policies. All countries but one—the Dominican Republic—refuse to relax immigration standards.
- October 1 The German army enters the Sudetenland, a largely German-speaking region of neighboring Czechoslovakia. The occupation follows the Munich agreement, in which Great Britain and France cede the territory in exchange for Hitler’s promise of an end to territorial ambition. Jews begin fleeing to unoccupied portions of Czechoslovakia.
- November 9-10 The German government instigates a nationwide series of anti-Jewish pogroms called “*Kristallnacht*.”
- November 15 Jewish children are officially expelled from public schools, forcing the creation of segregated Jewish schools.
- November 21 The British House of Commons approves the Kindertransport program.
- December 1 The first Kindertransport departs from Berlin, Germany.
- December 10 The first Kindertransport departs from Vienna, Austria (now part of greater Germany).

1939

- February 9 U.S. Senator Robert Wagner and Representative Edith Rogers introduce a bill to permit 20,000 refugee children from Germany to enter the United States. This bill will ultimately die in committee.
- March 14 Germany initiates the partition of Czechoslovakia and occupies the western portion of the country. Kindertransport organizers begin plans to rescue Jewish children from the city of Prague.
- May 17 The British government issues the White Paper of 1939, placing severe limitations on Jewish immigration to Palestine. No more than 15,000 Jews will be allowed to immigrate to Palestine each year for the next five years. For most of the Jewish population of Europe, one of the most promising avenues of escape is effectively closed.
- September 1 Germany invades Poland.
- September 1 The last Kindertransport departs from Germany.
- September 3 Great Britain, France, and other countries declare war on Germany.
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1940

- April 9-June 26 The German army invades and defeats Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and France.
- May-June The British government orders the internment of refugees between the ages of 16 and 70 from enemy countries, including Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria.
- May 14 The last Kindertransport departs the Netherlands as the Dutch army surrenders to German forces.
- July 10 The HMT *Dunera* sails from Liverpool, England.
- September 6 The HMT *Dunera* arrives in Sydney, Australia.
- November 14 The German *Luftwaffe* (air force) begins the massive bombing of Great Britain known as the "Blitz."
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1941

- June 22 Germany invades the Soviet Union. The German troops are accompanied by mobile killing units who murder Jews, Roma ("Gypsies"), Communists, and others in the conquered regions.
- December 7 Japanese airplanes bomb Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, prompting the United States to enter the war on the side of Great Britain.
- December 8 The first Jewish prisoners to be systematically murdered by poison gas are killed at the Nazi death camp known as Chelmno.

1942

- January German SS and state officials convene the Wannsee Conference to coordinate the “Final Solution”—the German plan to systematically murder the Jews of Europe by deporting them to extermination camps, already under construction.
- February-July The Nazis begin operating the gas chambers of the Auschwitz, Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka death camps, the chief apparatus by which millions of Jews will be killed over the next three years.
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1945

- January 27 With the German army in retreat, Soviet troops liberate the Auschwitz concentration camp and its remaining prisoners.
- April 15 British forces liberate Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.
- May 7 Germany surrenders to the Allies in the west.
- May 9 Germany surrenders to the Allies in the east; V-E (“Victory in Europe”) Day is proclaimed.