

# Polish army order of battle in 1939

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**Polish OOB during the Invasion of Poland.** In the late thirties Polish headquarters prepared "Plan Zachód" (*Plan "West"*), a plan of mobilization of Polish Army in case of war with Germany. Earlier, the Poles did not regard the Germans as their main threat, priority was given to threat from the Soviets (see: Plan East).

The overall operational plan assumed the creation of 30 infantry divisions, 9 reserve divisions, 11 cavalry brigades, two motorized brigades, 3 mountain brigades and a number of smaller units. Most Polish forces were grouped into 6 armies and a number of corps-sized "Operational Groups". Later in the course of the war other operational units were created.

## Contents

### 1 Armies

- ■
  - 1.1 Karpaty Army
  - 
  - 1.2 Kraków Army
  - 
  - 1.3 Lublin Army
  - 
  - 1.4 Łódź Army
  - 
  - 1.5 Modlin Army
  - 
  - 1.6 Pomorze Army
  - 
  - 1.7 Poznań Army
  - 
  - 1.8 Prusy Army
  - 
  - 1.9 Warszawa Army

### 2 Operational Groups

- ■
  - 2.1 Operational Group Wyszaków



Placement of Polish divisions on September 1st

- 
- 2.2 Independent Operational Group Narew
- 
- 2.3 Independent Operational Group Polesie
- 
- 3 Supporting forces
- 
- 4 See also

## Armies

### Karpaty Army

Created on July 11, 1939, under Major General Kazimierz Fabrycy. *Armia Karpaty* was created after Germany annexed Czechoslovakia and created a puppet state of Slovakia. The main aim of the army was to secure mountain passes in the Carpathians. Initially the army consisted of 2 improvised mountain brigades and a number of smaller units, but later in the course of war was joined by forces of the withdrawing *Armia Kraków*.

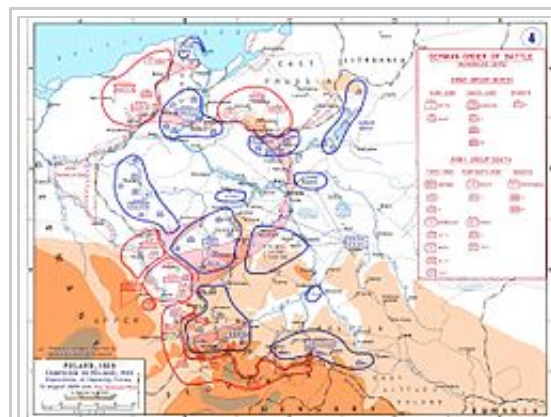
- 2nd Mountain Brigade (*2 Brygada Górska*), made of National Defence units from Limanowa, Gorlice and Nowy Sącz, as well as Border Defence Corps units from Volhynia,
- 3rd Mountain Brigade (*3 Brygada Górska*), made of National Defence units from Krosno, Sanok, Przemyśl and Rzeszów
- Carpathian Half-Brigade of National Defence (*Karpacka Półbrygada ON*)
- 2nd Regiment of the Border Defence Corps, made of regiments of the Border Defence Corps from the area of Wilno,
- 1st Motorized Artillery Regiment
- 9th Heavy Artillery Regiment

Additionally, mobilisation plans called for creation of the Tarnów Group consisting of:

- 22nd Mountain Infantry Division from Przemyśl,



Placement of divisions on September 1, 1939



Dispositions of opposing forces, August 31, 1939, and the German plan.

- 38th Infantry Division (reserve), created in August 1939 out of Border Defence Corps units from Polesie Voivodeship and Volhynian Voivodeship.

## Kraków Army

Created on March 23, 1939, as the main pivot of Polish defence. Its main task was to delay advancing German troops and withdraw eastwards along the northern line of the Carpathians. It consisted of 5 infantry divisions, 1 mountain brigade, 1 motorized cavalry brigade, 1 mountain brigade and 1 cavalry brigade under gen. Antoni Szylling.

Kraków Army	Unit	Polish name	Commander	Remarks
<b>Army units - gen. Antoni Szylling</b>				
	6th Infantry Division from Kraków	<i>6 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	Bernard Mond	
	7th Infantry Division from Częstochowa	<i>7 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	gen. bryg. Janusz Gąsiorowski	
	11th Infantry Division from Stanisławów	<i>11 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	gen. bryg. Bronisław Prugar-Ketling	
	Kraków Cavalry Brigade from Kraków	<i>Krakowska Brygada Kawalerii</i>	gen. bryg. Zygmunt Piasecki	
	10th Motorized Cavalry Brigade from Rzeszów	<i>10 Brygada Kawalerii Zmotoryzowanej</i>	płk. Stanisław Maczek	
<b>Śląsk Operational Group - gen. Jan Jagmin-Sadowski</b>				
	23rd Infantry Division from Katowice	<i>23 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	płk. Władysław Powierza	<i>Upper Silesian</i>
	55th Infantry Division, reserve division made of several units from the area of Upper Silesia and Jaworzno	<i>55 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	płk. Stanisław Kalabiński	reserve
<b>Bielsko Operational Group - gen. Mieczysław Boruta-Spiechowicz</b>				
	21st Mountain Infantry Division from Nowy Sącz and Bielsko-Biała	<i>21 Dywizja Piechoty Górskiej</i>	gen. Józef Kustron	
	1st Mountain Brigade, made of several National Defence units from Żywiec, Zakopane and Jasło.	<i>1 Brygada Górską</i>	płk. Janusz Gaładyk	mostly elite KOP troops

## Lublin Army

An improvised army created on September 4 from 1 motorized brigade and various smaller units concentrated around Lublin, Sandomierz and upper Vistula. Commanded by mj. gen. Tadeusz Piskor.

- Warsaw Armoured Motorized Brigade (*Warszawska Brygada Pancerno-Motorowa*)
- Smaller units

## Łódź Army

Created on March 23, 1939, under gen. Juliusz Rómmel. *Armia Łódź* was to become a bolt between Armies "Kraków" and "Poznań". However, because of mistakes committed by Gen. Rómmel, the army was located too close to the German border and joined fighting from the very beginning of the campaign, which deprived it of any possibilities of cooperation with the surrounding units. It consisted of 4 infantry divisions and 2 cavalry brigades.

- 2nd Legions Infantry Division (*2 Dywizja Piechoty Legionów*) from Kielce,
- 10th Infantry Division (*10 Dywizja Piechoty*) from Łódź,
- 28th Infantry Division (*28 Dywizja Piechoty*) from Łomża,
- 30th Infantry Division (*30 Dywizja Piechoty*, reserve division) from Kobryn,
- Kresowa Cavalry Brigade (*Kresowa Brygada Kawalerii*) from Brody,
- Wołyńska Cavalry Brigade (*Wołyńska Brygada Kawalerii*) from Rowne,
- Sieradz National Defence Brigade (*Sieradzka Brygada Obrony Narodowej*)

## Modlin Army

Created on March 23, 1939, for defence of Warsaw from the north. The army was to defend fortified lines along the border with East Prussia near Mława, and then retreat towards Narew river. Led by brig. gen. Emil Krukowicz-Przedrzymirski. Consisted of 2 infantry divisions and 2 cavalry brigades.

- 8th Infantry Division (*8 Dywizja Piechoty*) from Modlin,
- 20th Infantry Division (*20 Dywizja Piechoty*) from Baranowicze,
- Nowogródzka Cavalry Brigade (*Nowogródzka Brygada Kawalerii*) from Baranowicze,
- Mazowiecka Cavalry Brigade (*Mazowiecka Brygada Kawalerii*) from Warsaw,
- Warsaw National Defence Brigade (*Warszawska Brygada Obrony Narodowej*)

## Pomorze Army

The Army was created on March 23, 1939, to defend Toruń and Bydgoszcz and to carry out delaying actions in the so-called "Polish Corridor". It was led by Lt.-Gen. Władysław Bortnowski and consisted of five infantry divisions, two National Defence brigades and one cavalry brigade.

Pomorze Army	Unit	Polish name	Commander	Remarks
<i>Army units - gen. Władysław Bortnowski</i>				
	9th Infantry Division from Siedlce	<i>9 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	płk. Józef Werobej	

	15th Infantry Division from Bydgoszcz	<i>15 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	gen. Wacław Przyjałkowski	<i>Greater Polish</i>
	27th Infantry Division from Kowel	<i>27 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	gen.bryg. Juliusz Drapella	
	Pomeranian National Defence Brigade	<i>Pomorska Brygada Obrony Narodowej</i>		
	Chełm National Defence Brigade	<i>Chełmska Brygada Obrony Narodowej</i>		
<b>Operational Group "East" - gen. Mikołaj Bołtuć</b>				
	4th Infantry Division from Toruń	<i>4 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	płk. Rawicz-Mysłowski, płk. Józef Werobej	
	16th Infantry Division from Grudziądz	<i>16 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	płk. Zygmunt Szyszko-Bohusz	<i>Pomeranian</i>
<b>Czersk Operational Group - gen.bryg. Stanisław Grzmot-Skotnicki</b>				
	Pomeranian Cavalry Brigade from Bydgoszcz	<i>Pomorska Brygada Kawalerii</i>	gen.bryg. Stanisław Grzmot-Skotnicki	
	Independent Units Chojnice and Kościerzyna	<i>Oddziały Wydzielone "Chojnice" i "Kościerzyna"</i>		

## Poznań Army

The *Armia Poznań* led by mj. gen. Tadeusz Kutrzeba was to provide flanking operations in the Grand Poland and withdraw towards lines of defence along the Warta river. It consisted of 4 infantry divisions and 2 cavalry brigades.

- 14th Infantry Division (*14 Dywizja Piechoty*) from Poznań
- 17th Infantry Division (*17 Dywizja Piechoty*) from Gniezno
- 25th Infantry Division (*25 Dywizja Piechoty*) from Kalisz
- 26th Infantry Division (*26 Dywizja Piechoty*) from Skierniewice
- Wielkopolska Cavalry Brigade (*Wielkopolska Brygada Kawalerii*) from Poznań,
- Podolska Cavalry Brigade (*Podolska Brygada Kawalerii*) from Stanisławów.

## Prusy Army

Under gen. Stefan Dąb-Biernacki. Created in the summer of 1939 as the main reserve of the Commander in Chief. According to the "Plan West" (*Plan Zachód*, code name for the Polish mobilization plan) it was to be composed of units mobilized as the second and third waves and its main purpose was to cooperate with the nearby armies "Poznań" and "Kraków".

Mobilized in two groups. Because of fast German advance both groups entered combat separately and most units did not reach full mobilization. It consisted of 6 infantry divisions, 1 cavalry brigade and a battalion of tanks.

<b>Prusy Army</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Polish name</b>	<b>Commander</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
<b>Army units - gen. Stefan Dąb-Biernacki</b>				
	39th Infantry Division, made of several regiments of the Border Defence Corps	<i>39 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	płk. Bruno Olbrycht	reserve
	44th Infantry Division, made of several regiments of the Border Defence Corps	<i>44 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	płk. Eugeniusz Żongołłowicz	reserve
<b>Northern group - gen. Stefan Dąb-Biernacki</b>				
	13th Infantry Division from Rowne	<i>13 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	płk. Władysław Zubosz-Kaliński	Kresowa
	19th Infantry Division from Wilno	<i>19 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	gen. Józef Kwaciszewski	
	29th Infantry Division from Grodno	<i>29 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	płk. Ignacy Oziewicz	
	Wileńska Cavalry Brigade from Wilno	<i>Wileńska Brygada Kawalerii</i>	płk. Konstanty Drucki-Lubecki	
	1st tank battalion	<i>1 battalion czołgów</i>		
<b>Southern group - gen. Stanisław Skwarczyński</b>				
	3rd Legions Infantry Division from Zamość	<i>3 Dywizja Piechoty Legionów</i>	płk. Marian Turowski	
	12th Infantry Division from Tarnopol	<i>12 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	gen. Gustaw Paszkiewicz	
	36th Infantry Division, made from troops of Border Defence Corps of the Podole area.	<i>36 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	płk Michał Ostrowski	reserve

## Warszawa Army

*For a detailed description of the Warszawa Army operations see: Siege of Warsaw (1939)*

Created on September 10, 1939, from various units in Warsaw and Modlin Fortress area. Initially it consisted of approximately 25 infantry battalions and 40 tanks. Later it was reinforced by forces of Łódź Army and elements of Modlin Army. It was commanded by col. Walerian Czuma, although the nominal commander was gen. Juliusz Rómmel.

<b>Warszawa Army</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Polish name</b>	<b>Commander</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
<b>Modlin Fortress - gen. Wiktor Thommée</b>				
	2nd Legions Infantry Division from Kielce	<i>2 Dywizja Piechoty Legionów</i>	płk Antoni Staich	elements
	8th Infantry Division from Modlin	<i>8 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	płk Tadeusz Wyrwa-Furgalski	elements
	28th Infantry Division from Warszawa	<i>28 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	płk Broniewski	elements

	30th Infantry Division from Kobryn	<i>30 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	gen. Leopold Cehak	elements
<b>Western Approach - płk Marian Porwit</b>				
	13th Infantry Division from Rowne	<i>13 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	płk Władysław Zubosz-Kalinski	reinforced
	15th Infantry Division from Bydgoszcz	<i>15 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	gen. Zdzisław Przyjałkowski	reinforced
	25th Infantry Division from Kalisz	<i>25 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	gen. Franciszek Alter	elements
	Combined Cavalry Brigade	<i>Zbiorcza Brygada Kawalerii</i>	gen. Roman Abraham	combined
<b>Eastern Approach - gen. Juliusz Zulauff</b>				
	5th Infantry Division from Lwów	<i>5 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	gen. Juliusz Zulauff	elements, 1 regiment
	8th Infantry Division from Modlin	<i>8 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	płk Tadeusz Wyrwa-Furgalski	routed, 1 regiment under Sosabowski
	20th Infantry Division from Baranowicze	<i>20 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	płk Wilhelm Liszka-Lawicz	
	44th Infantry Division	<i>44 Dywizja Piechoty</i>	płk Eugeniusz Żongołłowicz	reserve, routed
	1st "Defenders of Praga" Infantry Regiment	<i>1 pułk piechoty Obrońców Pragi</i>	płk Stanisław Milian	improvised
	2nd "Defenders of Praga" Infantry Regiment	<i>2 pułk piechoty Obrońców Pragi</i>	płk Stefan Kotowski	improvised

## Operational Groups

### Operational Group Wyszaków

Was one of the reserves of the northern front of Polish defences, created on September 1, 1939. According to Plan West, it was supposed to defend the line of the Narew river from Wehrmacht units advancing from East Prussia. Due to rapid German advance, the group withdrew towards the Bug river, and on September 11, Polish Commander in Chief Edward Rydz-Smigly ordered General Wincenty Kowalski, commandant of Operational Group Wyszakow, to merge his unit with Northern Front under General Stefan Dab-Biernacki.

It consisted of the following units:

- 1st Legions Infantry Division (Poland) (*1 Dywizja Piechoty Legionów*) from Wilno,
- 35th Infantry Division (*35 Dywizja Piechoty* - reserve), formed on September 7, 1939, out of units of the Border Defence Corps from northern parts of the Wilno Voivodeship,
- 41st Infantry Division (*41 Dywizja Piechoty* - reserve), formed in September 1939, out of

- units of the Border Defence Corps,
- Bartosz Glowacki (armoured train),
- elements of 2nd Regiment of Heavy Artillery.

## Independent Operational Group Narew

Consisted of 2 infantry divisions and 2 cavalry brigades:

- 18th Infantry Division (Polish: *18 Dywizja Piechoty*) from Łomża,
- 33rd Infantry Division (Polish: *33 Dywizja Piechoty* - reserve), formed in late August 1939, out of Border Defence Corps units from the areas of Grodno and Wilno,
- Podlaska Cavalry Brigade (Polish: *Podlaska Brygada Kawalerii*) from Białystok,
- Suwalska Cavalry Brigade (Polish: *Suwalska Brygada Kawalerii*) from Suwałki and Grodno.

## Independent Operational Group Polesie

## Supporting forces

Air support

- **Lotnictwo Wojskowe** (Polish Air Force)

Naval and river support

- **Polska Marynarka Wojenna** (Polish Navy)

## See also

- Polish cavalry brigade order of battle
- Border Guard
- Fall Weiss
- History of Poland
- Invasion of Poland
- List of Polish armies in World War II
- Polish armaments 1939-1945
- Plan Wschod

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