

Ukrainian collaborationism with the Axis powers

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During the military occupation of Ukraine by Nazi Germany, a large number of Ukrainians chose to cooperate with the Nazis. Reasons for this generally included resurgent Ukrainian nationalism, aspirations for regaining Independence and widespread anger and resentment against the Russians over the Holodomor, which occurred only a few years before. These were coupled with rampant racism towards other ethnic groups (such as Jews, Tatars, Roma peoples and Poles) as well as a prevailing sentiment of antisemitism. However, the absence of Ukrainian autonomy under the Nazis, mistreatment by the occupiers, and the deportation of hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians as slave laborers, soon led to a rapid change in the attitude among the collaborators.

By the time the Red Army returned to Ukraine, a significant number of the population welcomed its soldiers as liberators.^[1] More than 4.5 million Ukrainians joined the Red Army to fight Nazi Germany, and more than 250,000 served in Soviet partisan paramilitary units.^[2]

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Attitudes towards German invasion

Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union in Operation Barbarossa began on June 22, 1941, and by September the occupied territory was divided between two German administrative units, the General Government and the Reichskommissariat Ukraine.

Ukrainians who chose to resist and fight German occupation forces joined the Red Army or the irregulars. However, especially in the region of Galicia assigned to General Government, there was little to no loyalty towards the Soviet Union; the region had only been part of the U.S.S.R since its seizure by

