

READING

A Wave of Discrimination

In addition to the April boycott and the civil service law, a wave of discriminatory actions were taken across Germany in order to “purify Germany of the Jewish spirit” after the Nazis took power.¹ According to historian Alon Confino, the Nazis and other Germans made 1,448 laws, policies, and decrees designed to remove Jews from the country’s political, economic, and cultural life between January 31, 1933, and August 31, 1939. In 1933 alone, 316 anti-Jewish measures were taken in Germany by the national, state, regional, and local governments as well as by civic associations throughout the country. The following is a partial list of the anti-Jewish laws, policies, and decrees made in 1933.

- Berlin: Jewish physicians are excluded from the list of doctors approved to receive patients under welfare and health insurance plans.
- Prussia: Jewish judges and lawyers working at courts are immediately removed from office; the percentage of licensed Jewish lawyers should be equal to the percentage of Jews in the population; Jewish lawyers cannot represent the state.
- Cologne: Jews cannot use the city’s sports facilities.
- Frankfurt: Jews must submit their passports for verification.
- Cologne: Jews cannot be employed in the city public administration.
- The German Boxing Association expels its Jewish members and will not work with Jewish entrepreneurs to organize events.
- The Law for the Reestablishment of the Professional Civil Service removes Jews from government service.
- The Law on the Admission to the Legal Profession forbids the admission of Jews to the bar.
- The Law Against Overcrowding in Schools and Universities limits the number of Jewish students in public schools.
- Bavaria: Jews cannot be admitted to medical school.
- Palatinate: Jews who are arrested for political reasons can be released from jail only when one of their guarantors or a physician who attests to their poor health will replace them.
- Baden: Yiddish cannot be spoken in the cattle markets.
- The Law on Editors bans Jews from editorial posts.

¹ Alon Confino, *A World without Jews: The Nazi Imagination from Persecution to Genocide* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 50–51.

- When sending a telegram by phone, it is prohibited to use Jewish names for spelling.
- Zweibrücken: Jewish businesses are forbidden to participate in the next annual market.
- Jews cannot own land sold by peasants.
- District of Bütow: Peasants are prohibited from selling their products to Jewish merchants.
- The following organizations expel their Jewish members: German teachers' associations, gymnastic and sports associations, the Association of German Blind Academics, the German Chess League, the Reich League of German Authors, and singing associations.
- Jewish newspapers from abroad are prohibited.
- Jewish students must have a yellow card instead of the regular brown student card.
- Jews are prohibited from practicing pharmaceuticals.
- Jews are prohibited from visiting the following beaches: Berlin-Wannsee, Fulda, Beuthen, Speyer, and others.
- Jews cannot be part of the lottery sector.
- Jews cannot be jockeys.
- The mentioning of Jewish holidays in official and business calendars is prohibited.
- Jewish businesses are prohibited from displaying Christian symbols at Christmas.²

² Alon Confino, *A World without Jews: The Nazi Imagination from Persecution to Genocide* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 50–51.

Connection Questions

1. In what ways do these laws and policies exclude Jews from German society? Which laws in this list are most troubling to you? Which ones are most puzzling?
2. What does this list suggest about the ways in which Nazi goals and objectives were carried out throughout German society? How does this list provide evidence of Germans “working toward the Führer”?
3. What do you think might have been the cumulative effect on Germans of the hundreds of discriminatory measures against Jews being enacted in a single year? How might this onslaught of laws, policies, and decrees have changed how individual Germans thought about Jews? How might it have changed individuals’ universes of obligation?