

## The Establishment of the *Judenrat*

The German Gestapo men (secret state police) went about the city, requisitioning the finest houses and various goods. When they came to Leon Kopiński's building, they seized his dwelling and set the time by which he had to leave it. On that occasion, Leon Kopiński and the Gestapo men had a brief conversation, the result of which he was appointed *Ältester* [Council Elder] of the Jewish population in Częstochowa and was tasked with forming a *Judenrat* of ten individuals. At first, Leon Kopiński was unwilling, but he later accepted the appointment and formed the *Judenrat* with the following composition<sup>1</sup>:

Leon Kopiński - President

Zelig Rotbard - Deputy<sup>2</sup>

Moryc Kopiński (his brother) - *Arbeitsamt* [Employment Office]

Bernard Kurland - Deputy of the *Arbeitsamt*

Dawid-Nusen Berliner - *Finanzamt* [Tax Office]

Natan Gerichter - *Finanzamt*

Samuel Kac - member of the *Judenrat*

Szmul Niemirowski - member of the *Judenrat*

Konieczpolder - member of the *Judenrat*

Weinryb - liaison officer with the Gestapo

Moryc Galster - member of the *Judenrat*

Lajb Bromberg - member of the *Judenrat*

Szymon Pohorile (lawyer) - member of the *Judenrat*

Dawid Borzykowski - member of the *Judenrat*

Jeremjasz Gitler (lawyer) - member of the *Judenrat*

For a short time (a few weeks), the lawyers Mendel Goldberg and Józef Broniatowski [also] belonged to the *Judenrat*. They could not adapt to the *Judenrat*'s atmosphere and working methods. Józef Broniatowski would raise "indiscreet questions" which, for the Jewish power-holders, were uncomfortable to answer. Mendel Goldberg demanded of the *Judenrat* that the finances be controlled collectively and that the forced labour be distributed fairly, instead of burdening [only] the poorest echelons of the Częstochowa Jewish populace with unpaid forced labour. For these reasons, Goldberg and Broniatowski left the *Judenrat*. The *Judenrat* began to persecute these two lawyers and wanted to send them away from Częstochowa to forced labour.

In November 1939, the *Judenrat* began its normal activity. It had an entire array of departments, each of which had a director and officials. These were the departments and their directors:

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<sup>1</sup> [TN: As there are several misprints and missing details in the list that appears in the original, we have corrected the mistakes and added some details from the same list which is printed in the book "Czenstochov" (1958) in an article by the same author, "Częstochowa Jews During the Nazi Era".]

<sup>2</sup> [TN: Vice-President, according to said article, which is basically the same as deputy.]

<u>Department</u>	<u>Director</u>
Presidium	Leon Kopiński and Zelig Rotbard
Tax Bureau	Dawid-Nussen Berliner
Employment Bureau	Bernard Kurland
Social Security	Engineer Lewkowicz
Evidence	Engineer Deutsch (from Łódź)
School System	Dr Anisfeld
Industry & Commerce	Mundek Praport
Rabbinate	Rabbi Josef Prokosz and Mojsze Asz as Secretary
Economy Dept.	Lawyer Szymon Pohorile
Personnel Bureau	Kolenbrener (from Danzig [Gdańsk])
Housing Bureau	Dr Zandsztajn
Health Bureau	Lawyer Maurycy Kacinel
Postal Bureau	Weksztajn
Food storeroom	Dr Lewin
Kitchens	Engineer Lewkowicz
Cemetery Dept.	Lorski (from Kalisz)

Table of the Jewish population in Częstochowa, in 1941, according to age and gender:

Ages	Total		Among them		№ of women per 100 men <sup>3</sup>
	Number	Percent	Women	Men	
0-4	1,762	5.4	845	917	92.2
5-9	2,440	7.4	1,200	1,240	97
10-14	2,847	8.7	1,373	1,474	93
15-19	3,269 <sup>4</sup>	9.9	1,663	1,606	103.5
20-29	5,599	17.2	3,102	2,497	124.5
30-39	6,184	18.9	3,275	2,909	112.5
40-49	4,255	13	2,376	1,879	126
50-59	3,199	9.8	1,701	1,498	113.5
60-69	2,006	6.1	1,057	949	111.5
70 [+]	1,183	3.6	678	505	134.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,744</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>17,270</b>	<b>15,474</b>	<b>111.5</b>

<sup>3</sup> [TN: The sums in this column have been rounded up or down in a manner that they do not add up with complete exactitude.]

<sup>4</sup> [TN: This sum is misprinted in the original as 3,219.]

The number of people employed by the *Judenrat* increased from day to day, as this table from the *Judenrat* shows us:

**General Department**

**Personnel Office**

**Table №1**

**Number of *Judenrat* Employees in 1940**

Row №	Department	January							December						
		Officials			Lower functionaries				Officials			Lower functionaries			
		Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Total
1	General	3	-	3	2	-	2	5	5	1	6	2	-	2	8
2	Office (Application Bureau)	2	-	2	-	-	-	2	3	-	3	-	-	-	3
3	General secretariat	7	3	10	-	-	-	10	9	3	12	-	-	-	12
4	Inspection of street traffic <sup>5</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	1	81	-	-	-	81
5	Housing Bureau ( <i>Kwaterunkowy</i> )	3	-	3	-	-	-	3	17	3	20	8	-	8	28
6	Commerce & industry	4	2	6	-	-	-	6	7	2	9	1	-	1	10
7	Provisioning	2	-	2	-	-	-	2	3	-	3	-	-	-	3
8	Registration & statistics	4	-	4	-	-	-	4	58	5	63	2	-	2	65
9	Forced labour	31	8	45	16	-	16	61	100	16	116	16	-	16	132
10	Finances [i.e. Taxes]	8	-	8	-	-	-	8	20	4	24	-	-	-	24
11	Social Security	14	2	16	-	8	8	24	29	2	31	11	136	147	178
12	Łódź sub-commission	5	-	5	-	-	-	5	7	-	7	-	-	-	7
13	Arbitration board	7	1	8	-	-	-	8	16	1	17	-	-	-	17
14	Technicians	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	-	9	1	-	1	10
15	Administration of houses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	2	9	-	-	-	9
16	Health	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23	1	24	-	-	-	24
17	Execution	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	2
18	Cash register & accountancy	3	1	4	-	-	-	4	6	1	7	-	-	-	7
19	Economy [viz. food etc.]	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	5	-	-	-	5
20	School, kom. <sup>6</sup> , trades & workshops	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	4	-	4	11	-	11	15
21	Religious [functionaries]	17	-	17	4	9	13	30	20	-	20	1	9	16	36
<b>Total</b>		<b>117</b> <b>[111]</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>39</b> <b>[172]</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>59</b> <b>[53]</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>676</b>

<sup>5</sup> [TN: Viz. Jewish police, as the author explains on p.70.]

<sup>6</sup> [TN: Possibly abbreviation of "committee", in which case the comma before it is a misprint.]

## The Jewish Population in Częstochowa

Profession	Men		Women		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Free professions</b>						
Lawyers	40	93.5	3	6.5	43	100
Actors	6	75	2	25	8	100
Dentists	5	25	15	75	20	100
Dental technicians	43	86	7	14	50	100
Doctors	47	84	9	16	56	100
Pharmacists & laboratory technicians	17	39.6	26	60.4	43	100
Medics	11	100	-	-	11	100
Nurses	3	7.7	39	92.3	42	100
Birth attendants	-	-	10	100	10	100
Engineers	47	98	1	2	48	100
Teachers	77	37	131	63	208	100
Technicians	31	100	-	-	31	100
Journalists	2	100	-	-	2	100
<b>Total:</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>57.5</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>42.5</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Industry &amp; commerce</b>						
Agents	120	97.5	3	2.5	123	100
Salespeople	184	58.6	130	41.4	314	100
Traders	344	78	97	22	441	100
Industrialists	218	97	7	3	225	100
Merchants	1,322	87.1	196	12.9	1,518	100
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2,188</b>	<b>83.4</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>2,621</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>						
Officials	761	70	327	30	1,088	100
Musicians	25	71.5	10	28.5	35	100
<b>Total:</b>	<b>786</b>	<b>70.1</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>1,123</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Agriculture</b>						
Gardeners	15	94	1	6	16	100
Farmers	49	96	2	4	51	100
<b>Total:</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>95.6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Labourers</b>						
Students	2,440	48	2,649	52	5,089	100
Without profession	1,531	13.2	9,479	86.1	11,010	100
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3,971</b>	<b>24.7</b>	<b>12,128</b>	<b>75.3</b>	<b>16,099</b>	<b>100</b>

## By Profession – Statistics of 1941

Profession	Men		Women		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Craftsmen &amp; Professionals</b>						
Bookbinders	17	100	-	-	17	100
Bakers	218	99.5	1	0.46	219	100
Tinsmiths	105	100	-	-	105	100
Confectioners	68	99	1	1	69	100
Electricians	51	100	-	-	51	100
Photographers	27	90	3	10	30	100
Hairdressers	142	73.2	52	26.2	194	100
Glaziers	64	100	-	-	64	100
Engravers	31	100	-	-	31	100
Embroiders	20	24.7	61	75.2	81	100
Cap-makers	62	100	-	-	62	100
Gaiter-makers	265	99	3	1	268	100
Furriers	62	85	11	15	73	100
Painters	116	100	-	-	116	100
Dressmakers	11	12	79	88	90	100
Masons	2	100	-	-	2	100
Metalworkers <sup>7</sup>	249	99.6	1	0.4	250	100
Tailors	1,118	59	776	46	1,894	100
Chauffeurs	50	100	-	-	50	100
Cobblers	416	100	-	-	416	100
Upholsterers	76	100	-	-	76	100
Carpenters	249	100	-	-	249	100
Turners	39	100	-	-	39	100
Experts	205	99	2	1	207	100
Typesetters	70	98.6	1	1	71	100
Watchmakers	46	100	-	-	46	100
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3,779</b>	<b>79.2</b>	<b>991</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>4,770</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Labourers</b>						
Qualified	422	92.35	39	7.45	461	100
Unqualified	1,175	67	876	33	2,651	100
Housekeepers	8	4.25	180	95.75	188	100
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2,205</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>1,095</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>3,300</b>	<b>100</b>

<sup>7</sup> [TN: The German and Yiddish word "Schlosser" used in the original can mean either metalworkers or locksmiths.]

The establishment of the *Judenrat* was the German authorities' first step by which to separate the Jewish population from the Polish one. It dealt with all the administrative affairs of the Jewish populace. No Jew needed to go to the *Rathaus* (Town Hall), because the *Judenrat* had parallel administrative departments – and, thus, he did not come into contact with the Polish officials.

The *Judenrat* was a nominated Jewish administration, subordinate to the German authorities to carry out their orders. Until the *Judenrat* was established, the Germans had to run about in the streets and to residences in order to seize Jews for unpaid forced labour. Once the *Judenrat* had been established, they only had to telephone the Jewish Employment Bureau in order to be provided with the required number of workers at the appointed time and place. The same was with the requisitioning of houses - it sufficed with the making of a phone call to the effect that this or that building needed to be vacated by this or that deadline in order for the houses to be redecorated and refurnished. It was similar with the “contributions” - [viz.] the provision of furs and suchlike items.

All the German authorities' orders were detrimental to the Jews. Carrying out these directives via the *Judenrat* made things technically easier for the Germans and was a heavy burden for the Jews. As a result, there was continuous opposition to the *Judenrat* on the part of the Jewish population.

There were two principal standpoints:

The first was that Jews should not be in the service of the German regime and put a noose around their own necks. The German authorities were our bloodthirsty foe and Jews needed to always sabotage their regulations and commands.

The second view - the one expressed by the wealthier echelons of the Jewish populace - was that, rather than have the Germans seize Jews for work, beatings and killing of people, it was far better that the *Judenrat* should regulate the matter in a decent manner.

We must emphasize the difference between the Jewish *Kehilla* management committee and the *Judenrat*- the Jewish *Kehilla* management committee denotes a self-governing institution elected upon democratic foundations, which conducts an activity for the benefit of the Jewish population, whereas the *Judenrat* was an institution nominated by the Gestapo, which carried out the orders of the Nazi regime against the interests and will of the Jewish populace.