



Germany Country Report January 2023

Germany's history of genocide spans back to the colonial rule of German Southwest Africa (DSWA), today Namibia. DSWA was Germany's primary settler [colony](#), with over 3,000 German citizens settling there by 1903. In response to colonization, Indigenous people, including the San, Damara, Ovambo, Nama and Herero groups, [rebelled](#) in the early 1900s, killing approximately 100 German settlers. After the riots, German General Lothar von Trotha order the [annihilation](#) of all Herero and Nama people. The German army forced the tribes into the desert and to labor camps. Approximately [80,000](#) died from disease, exhaustion, thirst, and starvation from 1904-1908, including 80% of the Herero and 50% of the Nama populations.

The Herero genocide later inspired Nazi policy. After World War I, Germany claimed Jews and communists [orchestrated](#) their defeat, known as the 'stab-in-the-back' myth. Adolf Hitler rose in the ranks of the Nazi Party through his [dedication](#) to nationalism and white supremacy, eventually becoming Chancellor in 1933. The Nazis sponsored the [killing](#) and sterilization of mentally and physically disabled, the segregation of Jews into ghettos, and antisemitic [pogroms](#) such as Kristallnacht, the Night of Broken Glass. The Nazis also targeted Soviet POWs, Poles, and Slavs by mass executions from [Einsatzgruppen](#) death squads. An estimated 6 million Jews and 11 million individuals of other targeted groups (Soviets, Poles, Roma and Sinti, asocials, homosexuals, disabled people, and Jehovah's Witnesses) were [killed](#) in the Holocaust.

Despite this history of genocide, there have been reconciliation efforts from Germany today. In May 2021, Germany agreed to pay [\\$1.1 billion](#) in reparations to the Herero and Nama peoples, officially recognizing the 1904 genocide. However, some criticized the century-long delay for these reparations. Germany has also paid [billions](#) of Euros in reparations to Holocaust survivors, memorials, and funds.

However, neo-Nazi activity and white supremacy still plague Germany. Scholars are concerned by the rise of the alt right Alternative für Deutschland ([AfD](#)) Party in Germany. In addition, reports by Human Rights Watch indicate a 72% [increase](#) in anti-immigrant hate crimes, and a 16% increase in antisemitic hate crimes during 2021. For example, Tareq Alaows, a Syrian human rights activist and the first refugee to run for German parliament, [withdrew](#) his campaign in March 2021 due to racist attacks and threats. Most recently, a right-wing extremist group, comprising of a former AfD politician, attempted to [overthrow](#) the German government in Berlin on December 7, 2022.

Because of the increase in right-wing extremist activity and threats to democracy, Genocide Watch considers Germany to be at **Stage 6: Polarization**.

Genocide Watch recommends the following:

- The German government continue to donate to Holocaust survivors, memorials, and educational funds, especially as Holocaust denial increases worldwide.
- The Herero and Nama genocide should be taught in German primary and secondary educational curriculums.
- Legal action should be taken against the former AfD policymaker that participated in the attempted coup in December 2022. AfD should also be investigated as a potential terrorist group and labelled as a threat to German democracy.