

The outbreak of war



German propaganda photograph of a bridge over the Vistula in Tezew, blown up in September 1939, taken by Foto-Söhnke (AIPN)

Die von den Polen gesprengte Dirschauer Weichselbrücke Foto-Söhnke M. 119

The existence of Poland is intolerable and incompatible with Germany's vital interests. It must disappear and will do so.

Hans von Seeckt, German general and politician, in a letter to the German ambassador to the Soviet Union, 11 September 1922

The Germans never came to terms with the loss of Vistula Pomerania and Kuyavia, nor with the loss of the dominant position they had held before 1920. German propaganda referred to Pomerania as the "Polish corridor", pointing out that it artificially divided the territory of the Reich from East Prussia, which – from the perspective of the Berlin government – caused many negative consequences.

On 1 September 1939, the Third Reich launched an armed attack on Poland. On 8 October 1939, Adolf Hitler issued a decree annexing to Germany a portion of the Polish state covering over 90,000 square kilometres, including the Pomerania Province, which became part of the Reich province of Danzig-West Prussia.



Cover of a 1939 German propaganda book (public domain)

Administrative division of the province of Danzig-West Prussia, established by the Germans (prepared by Karolina Masłowska)

