

Decline in Jewish Businesses in Berlin by Sector (1933-1938)

Abstract

One point that deserves emphasis here is the diversity of Jewish business interests. While there were sectors in which Berlin's Jewish population had a particularly strong presence, such as textiles, we also must recognize how well-integrated Jews were throughout the economy in the capital. It is also apparent that experiences varied. In some sectors, such as pharmacies and restaurants, the vast majority of the Jews were pushed out within five years. In others, such as textiles and jewelry, Jewish-owned businesses were able to hold on somewhat more successfully. The reasons for decline were chiefly emigration, forced bankruptcy or sale, owing to the antisemitic legislation and climate of harassment and boycotts that made it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, for Jewish businesspeople to maintain their shops, studios, and companies. It is worth considering what conditions might have made some sectors more vulnerable and others more resilient to theft and closure.

Source

Sector	Number in 1933	Number in 1938	Percentage of Decline
Textiles and garments	2438	1966	19.4
Foodstuffs	815	548	32.8
Banks and insurance companies	691	338	51.1
Leather and shoes	271	227	16.5
Chemical and drugs	266	212	20.3
Furniture	262	192	33.7
Metal and metal goods	239	169	29.3
Machines and motor vehicles	201	156	23.4
Publishers and printers	177	99	44.1
Paper and paper goods	161	127	21.1
Pharmacies	156	11	93
Building materials and fuel	153	115	24.8
Real estate	113	65	42.5
Jewelry and precious metal	101	86	14.9
Books and art	93	44	52.7
Household goods	92	78	15.2
Department stores	92	59	35.9
Electrical goods	79	59	25.3
Restaurants	64	28	56.3
Construction	62	45	27.4
Photography and film	32	14	56.3
Advertising	32	19	40.6

Transport	27	20	25.9
Used goods	22	18	18.2
Other/unknown	249	184	-
Total	6888	4909	28.7

Source: Christoph Kreutzmüller, *Final Sale in Berlin*. New York: Berghahn, 2015, Table 7.1, p. 214.

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