

# “The East Needs You!” Recruitment Brochure for Women Settlement Advisors (n.d.)

## Abstract

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Reichsgau Wartheland, more often referred to as Warthegau, was the large western Polish region that was annexed by the Reich and renamed after the invasion in 1939. This region was slated for immediate “Germanization.” Local Jews were ghettoized, and non-Jewish Slavic Poles were evicted from their homes to make way for the settlement of ethnic Germans [Volksdeutsche] from across Eastern Europe. In order to facilitate the massive population transfer envisioned by Nazi planners, a campaign was undertaken to recruit single young women from within the “Old Reich” to travel to the East, where they would help arriving families settle into their new (stolen) homes. This image is taken from a cover of a recruitment brochure from that campaign.

In her well-known memoir, *Account Rendered (Fazit)*, Melita Maschmann, a young League of German Girls (BDM) leader, recounted her experience as a settlement advisor in Poland. Maschmann and others were excited to contribute to the Germanization of the region by turning “vacant” properties into welcoming homes. This effort involved transforming the interiors to reflect a more “German” aesthetic. This included procuring new tablecloths and hanging a picture of the Führer on the wall. Some of these volunteers also stayed to help with domestic tasks and childcare, in order to help build the new arrivals’ sense of a shared German identity. Ultimately, these women acted as agents of ethnic cleansing in the East, removing evidence of forced deportation and property theft.

## Source

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Source: Recruitment brochure for settlement advisers, title page, n.d. BA Berlin, R 49, 3060.

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