

HOLODOMOR ('DEATH BY STARVATION')

FACT SHEET



This year is the 75th anniversary of the Holodomor and the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain is spearheading a campaign, with the whole Ukrainian community, to commemorate its victims.

In 1932-33 more than seven million Ukrainians died as a result of a barbaric and systematic starvation. This is a brief guide to the main facts.

- In 1932 there was enough grain harvested to adequately feed the Ukrainian population. However, the Soviet authorities imposed draconian quotas of grain to be supplied to the rest of the Soviet Union. They were aware this would result in a serious grain shortage in Ukraine. But Stalin was determined to quell what was perceived as the dangerous threat of regional nationalism in which farmers were seen as playing a major role.
- Soviet law was passed to specifically forbid grain being used locally until the quota was met. Ukrainian grain and all other food was collected, stored and guarded by military and secret police units who took harsh action against anyone caught hiding or stealing food.
- An internal passport system was implemented to restrict movements of Ukrainians preventing them from travelling to neighbouring Soviet Regions in search of food.
- Enforced Ukrainian starvation reached its peak in the winter and spring of 1933 when 25,000 people died every day. The result was extermination by famine – some 20-25% of the population of Soviet Ukraine, more than seven million people, perished. This was the largest of any of Stalin's purges.
- Children were especially badly hit. Although many children were smuggled across closed borders guarded by the Soviet Secret Police and left in areas where it was thought there was less starvation, orphanages and children's centres were already overcrowded and most of these children died of starvation and disease in the streets.
- 16 countries have passed Parliamentary resolutions about the Holodomor: Argentina, Australia, Canada, Columbia, Estonia, Ecuador, Georgia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Spain, Ukraine and USA.