Sweden: Background

- Never occupied — neutral throughout the war and never formally aligned
- Coalition government
- Transit traffic
- Åke Lundqvist (1913-2000), Swedish correspondence chess champion 1945, correspondence chess grandmaster 1962, worked with Arne Beurling to break the Siemens Geheimschreiber
- Midsummer crisis 1941

Sweden: Neutral, and Playing

- Chess as usual: clubs, leagues and the Swedish Championship ran almost uninterrupted from 1939 to 1945.
- Federation president: Ludvig Collijn led Sveriges Schackförbund until 1939; Erik Olson (Göteborg) chaired it through the war years, 1940–47, before Folke Rogard took over in 1947.
- Tidskrift för Schack by Erik Lundin and Schackvärlden in Gothenburg.
- Munich 1941 – Stoltz and Lundin participated.
- Sweden invited to join the Europaschachbund in October 1941. The SSF board was positive.
- Folke Rogard attended the constituent meeting in Salzburg in June 1942. Stoltz and Danielsson played.
- Extraordinary congress in February 1943 reversed the decision to join.

Denmark - background

- Attack on 9 April 1940
- Danish institutions kept running: theatres, publishers, universities and clubs stayed in Danish hands
- After August 1943 the cooperation policy collapsed, the illegal press expanded rapidly and cultural life narrowed to what could be done at home.
- 7 000 jews were tipped off and escaped to Sweden in October 1943
- Liberated in May 1945

Denmark - chess

- Clubs open, borders closed: championships and leagues ran through the occupation in Copenhagen, Aarhus and Odense, while international travel was in practice limited to Germany and Sweden.
- Bjørn Nielsen, Nordic Champion 1934, took joint 5th–6th in Munich 1941, beating Alekhine on the way.
- Chairman Willumsen was under pressure to join the Europaschachbund.
- After August 1943 martial law replaced the cooperation policy and Danish chess turned inward — domestic championships, club play, Enevoldsen's dominance.
- Skakbladet, the union's journal since 1905, kept appearing throughout under paper rationing and censorship.

Norway: Background

- Occupied from 9 April 1940
- Government with Quisling
- Ministry of Culture and Popular Enlightenment under Gulbrand Lunde controlled press, film, radio and the arts from 1940.
- Idrettsstreiken, 1940–45: after the NS regime dissolved Norges Idrettsforbund, athletes and clubs answered with a total boycott of organised competition — no championships, no leagues, no records — sustained for five years by an estimated 300,000 participants.
- Repression followed — dismissals, arrests, Grini and deportation — and much of Norwegian cultural life went underground or fell silent for five years.

Norway: Chess

- The national championship lapsed and club life shrank to private play; several players joined the resistance, and some ended up in Grini.
- Strong workers' chess movement already. Dissolved in November 1940.
- Sigurd Heiestad vice president in 1935-1936.
- Oslo 1936: Norway had hosted a strong international tournament, won by Reuben Fine with 6½/7 ahead of Salo Flohr
- Federation president Olaf Smedal under pressure to join ESB in April and May 1942. Replaced in September. A Norwegian attended the Salzburg 1942 meeting.
- Oslo championship in 1941

Rudolf Spielmann

- Fled Vienna after the 1938 Anschluss and, via Czechoslovakia and the Netherlands, reached Sweden in 1939 as a stateless Jewish refugee.
- Sweden's chess world knew him well — he had played matches in Stockholm against Stoltz (winning in 1930) and Ståhlberg, and won the Stockholm 1919 tournament and the 1919 Nordic Championship.
- He died in Stockholm on 21 August 1942, destitute. He is buried in the Jewish section of Norra begravningsplatsen, Solna, outside Stockholm.

Salo Flohr

- World-title contender in the late 1930s: shared first at Moscow 1935 with Botvinnik, won Poděbrady 1936 ahead of Alekhine, and was FIDE's official challenger to Alekhine before Munich 1938 and the German occupation killed the match.
- Jewish and stateless after the destruction of Czechoslovakia in March 1939, he escaped westward and northward — through the Netherlands and Sweden — before settling in the Soviet Union, where he took citizenship in 1942.
- He had duelled Gösta Stoltz in two 1931 matches.
- First Stay in Sweden (March–April 1939).
- Second Stay in Sweden (Sept 1939 – April 1940).
- Returned for a short tour in Nov–Dec 1940.

Paul Keres

- At Buenos Aires 1939 he was the one leading European who chose to sail home.
- Estonia was annexed by the USSR in 1940 and occupied by Germany in 1941, leaving Keres to play under whichever regime controlled Tallinn.
- 2nd at Salzburg 1942 and at Munich 1942 behind Alekhine, and joint winner with Alekhine at Salzburg 1943.
- Nordic ties — a drawn 1938 match with Gideon Ståhlberg, and post-war meetings with Stoltz — and his wartime participation shadowed his standing for years.
- Travelled from Estonia via Finland to Sweden in June 1944.
- Participated in Swedish Championship in 1944.
- Returned to Estonia in July 1944.