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National Fund supports victims of the Nazis and their descendants in obtaining Austrian citizenship

20 Sep 2019

Yesterday evening the National Council unanimously passed an amendment to the Citizenship Act enabling people from Austria persecuted by the Nazi regime and their direct descendants to obtain Austrian citizenship more easily. In doing so, it met a long-time demand by the National Fund to take into account the precarious situation of the victims in the post-war years up to 1955. “I would like to thank all of the parliamentary factions for enabling this unanimous resolution in the interest of the Nazis’ victims and their descendants”, declared Hannah Lessing, Secretary General of the National Fund.

“Austria is a strong and well developed democracy and in recent years it has also faced up to the difficult sides of its history. The ability to award Austrian citizenship to victims of the Holocaust is a sign of its responsibility towards the victims and profound respect for them and the subsequent generations”, proclaimed National Council President Wolfgang Sobotka, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the National Fund.

The Act, whose provisions take effect from 1 September 2020 and also apply to citizens or nationals of the successor states of the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, will not only close gaps that had existed in the previous act but furnishes the National Fund with an important role. For almost 25 years the National Fund has been providing support to the Nazis’ victims and their descendants, who live scattered across the world in over 80 countries. Over the years a unique network of contacts has been built up and this network can now be used to help applicants obtain citizenship in the spirit of the “special responsibility of the Republic of Austria towards the victims of National Socialism”, by providing expert advice and the documentation that must be submitted to the competent Austrian authorities.

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Further Links

- Resolution of the National Council (235/BNR)
- Information on acquiring Austrian citizenship
- Website of the MA 35 - Immigration and Citizenship