

NATIONAL FUND

OF THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA FOR VICTIMS OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM

GENERAL

SETTLEMENT FUND

FOR VICTIMS OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM

FUND FOR THE RESTORATION

OF THE JEWISH CEMETERIES IN AUSTRIA

Imprint

Publishers: National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism, Parliament, Dr.-Karl-Renner-Ring 3, A-1017 Vienna.

Contact: Hannah M. Lessing (Secretary General)

Press: Peter Stadlbauer, Mail: presse@nationalfonds.org, Phone: +43 (0)1 408 12 63

Web: <https://nationalfonds.org>, <https://entschaedigungsfonds.org>, <https://friedhofsfonds.org>

Design: Nikolaij Kreinjobst

Translations: Sarah Fink

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THE FUNDS IN BRIEF

Taking responsibility. Sending a signal.

National Fund, General Settlement Fund, Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries in Austria – despite the many differences between these Funds – their origins, their tasks, their structure and their working methods – there is one thing they have in common: they are proof that Austria is also coming to terms with the darkest sides of its history – the years of National Socialist rule – and has been for a while; that it is assuming responsibility for the victims of this regime, a regime which was also supported by many Austrian citizens.

The National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism, the General Settlement Fund for Victims of National Socialism and the Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries in Austria are administratively linked: the operations of all Funds are led by the Secretary General, Hannah M. Lessing and are subject to the supervision of a Board of Trustees chaired by the President of the National Council, Doris Bures.

National Fund

The National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism was established in 1995 (Federal Law Gazette no. I 432/1995) as an expression of Austria's special responsibility towards the victims of the National Socialist regime. The National Fund makes lump sum recognition payments ("gesture payments") of 5,087.10 Euros to the surviving victims of National Socialism. Applications can be filed with the National Fund indeterminately; the Fund's payments are financed by the annual budget of the Federation (*Bund*).

Further tasks of the National Fund include the disposition of non-restitutable, so-called heirless "looted art" for the benefit of victims of National Socialism, supporting needy Holocaust survivors, and raising awareness of the National Socialist era and its aftermath by sponsoring projects. In 2001, the National Fund was also entrusted with the compensation for tenancy rights. 150 million US Dollars have been provided for these lump sum payments to the victims of National Socialism.

The National Fund is the first organization explicitly dedicated to recognition as well as to the active commemoration of the victims of the National Socialist regime in Austria, and is an important partner in international efforts to come to terms with the Holocaust. Programmes for research and educational work on the Holocaust spanning many countries are implemented by the International Holocaust Remembrance Association (IHRA), formerly Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research (ITF). The coordination office for Austria is based at the National Fund.

General Settlement Fund

The General Settlement Fund for Victims of National Socialism was established on the basis of the Washington Agreement of 2001 and endowed with 210 million US Dollars (Federal Law Gazette I no. 12/2001). The General Settlement Fund represents the recognition of the moral responsibility for property losses suffered by those persecuted by the National Socialist regime in Austria by awarding ex gratia payments. These payments do not constitute lump sums but are calculated based on the amount of the individually established property losses and are distributed in relation to the total available amount of 210 million US Dollars (*pro rata* payments).

The filing period for monetary payments from the General Settlement Fund ended on 28 May 2003. Persons personally affected by the National Socialist property confiscation as well as their legal successors were entitled to file applications. In total, 20,702 applications, which were decided by an independent Claims Committee, reached the Fund.

Furthermore, an Arbitration Panel for *In Rem* Restitution, which decides on applications for restitution of assets, is installed with the General Settlement Fund. Possible objects of restitution are real estate or movable property of Jewish communal organizations which had been seized from their owners during the National Socialist period and which were publicly-owned (by the Federation, provinces and certain municipalities) on the cut off day of the agreement, 17 January 2001.

Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries

In December 2010, the Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries in Austria was established (Federal Law Gazette I no. 99/2010) in implementation of Austria's obligation under international law to restore and maintain Jewish cemeteries in Austria, as set out in the Washington Agreement. The Fund, established with the National Council, will be endowed with one million Euros per year for 20 years. The Law also stipulates that the owners of the Jewish cemeteries must contribute funds of the same amount for the restoration.

The administration of the newly-created Fund was transferred to the National Fund, the Board of Trustees of which also functions as the highest body of the Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries in Austria. Within 20 years, more than 60 Jewish cemeteries throughout Austria – including several of great cultural and historical value, such as the cemetery in Vienna, Währing – are to be safeguarded from ruin. Upkeep agreements with the relevant cities and municipalities shall ensure the continued maintenance of the cemeteries once they have been restored.

The Funds in Figures

Since its establishment in 1995, the **National Fund** has made around 30,000 “gesture payments” of 5,087.10 Euros (originally 70,000 Schilling) to surviving victims of National Socialist injustice. The total amount of all payments comes to around 157 million Euros.

Furthermore, since 2001 the National Fund has also disbursed over 175 million Euros as compensation for seized tenancy rights. These took the form of lump sum payments of 7,000 US Dollars or 7,630 Euros and additional payments of 1,000 Euros. The deadline ended on 30 June 2004.

Additionally, the National Fund has so far sponsored around 1,700 projects with around 28 million Euros (as at: September 2016).

By 25 June 2012, all of the 20,702 applications for compensation of assets filed with the **General Settlement Fund** have been decided by the independent Claims Committee.

Thus far, the General Settlement Fund has disbursed advance payments totaling around 161.5 million US Dollars and closing payments of 51.3 million US Dollars, therefore totaling about 212.8 million US Dollars (as at: September 2016).

Once the payments have been completed, it is estimated that around 24,000 beneficiaries will have received a payment from the General Settlement Fund.

The Arbitration Panel for *In Rem* Restitution established with the General Settlement Fund has so far decided on 1,606 of 2,284 applications received, including 138 recommendations for the *in rem* restitution of property (as at: Juni 2016).

Here it must be taken into account that the large majority of applications are for property which was not publicly-owned on the cut off day. Roughly estimated, the total value of the real estate which had been recommended for restitution by the Arbitration Panel comes to around 47 million Euros.

The **Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries in Austria** for the first time resolved funding for urgent restoration work on two Jewish cemeteries in need of renovation on 20 June 2011. In 2011–2016, a total of around 1,338,000 Euros of Federal funds enabled measures to be taken to preserve the Jewish cemeteries in Deutschkreutz, Göttzbach/Ybbs, Graz, Hohenems, Kobersdorf, Lackenbach, Stockerau and Vienna Central Cemetery, Gate 1 and Gate 4. In addition, funding was provided for a database to record the graves in all Austrian Jewish cemeteries.

NATIONAL FUND OF THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA FOR VICTIMS OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM

General Information

The National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism was established in 1995 as an expression of Austria's moral responsibility towards all victims of National Socialism. The Federal Law on the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism (Federal Law Gazette no. 432/1995) provides for a gesture payment of 5,087.10 Euros (originally 70,000 Schilling) per person as symbolic recognition. The payments are financed from the Federation's annual budget. In cases of social need, a second and third payment is possible.

A Committee consisting of the chairperson of the Board of Trustees, a representative appointed by the Board of Trustees and three further members appointed by the chairperson with the consent of the Main Committee of the National Council, meets several times a year to decide on applications for the receipt of a gesture payment.

Those entitled to the gesture payment are persons who were persecuted by the National Socialist regime on political grounds, on grounds of origin, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, or of physical or mental handicap, or of accusations of so-called asociality, or had become the victim of typical National Socialist injustice by other means or who left the country to escape such persecution.

Additionally, persons entitled to file an application must further fulfill the following requirements. They must have:

- been Austrian citizens and been domiciled in Austria on 13 March 1938, or
- been permanently domiciled in Austria for a period of approximately ten years as per 13 March 1938, or been born as children of such persons in Austria within that period, or
- lost their status as Austrian citizens or their place of residence of at least approximately ten years before 13 March 1938 because they left the country due to the imminent march of the German Armed Forces into Austria, or
- been born before 9 May 1945 as children of such persons in concentration camps or under comparable circumstances in Austria.

Recognition of different groups of victims

Recognition by the National Fund not only means recognition of people's persecution in individual terms; it is also an important contribution towards raising awareness within society with regards to the different groups of victims and the different forms of persecution.

The definition of the term "victim" in the NF Law is worded in such a way that all persons who were victims of National Socialism can be taken into consideration.

The grounds of persecution listed in Sec. 2 (1) item 1 of the NF Law – political grounds, grounds of origin, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, physical or mental handicap, the accusation of so called asociality or grounds which caused people to otherwise fall victim to National Socialist persecution – signify a broader definition of the term "victim" than that used in earlier measures, such as the Victims' Welfare Act.

Since 1995, on the basis of this provision, people have been taken into account who had never been afforded recognition as victims of National Socialism until the establishment of the National Fund. In this way, people who had been persecuted on grounds of their sexual orientation or of accusations of so called asociality received recognition for the first time. From the outset, persons who were resettled from the "Döllersheimer Ländchen" between 1938 and 1941 to make way for the construction of the military training area Allentsteig (Lower Austria) were acknowledged as victims pursuant to Sec. 2 (1) item 1 of the NF Law.

The decision-making practice of the National Fund also takes into account the findings of academic historical research. Over time, further groups of victims were also subsumed under the NF Law. Here a few examples:

In 1996, the so called *Spanienkämpfer* were recognized for the first time as victims of political persecution in the meaning of the NF Law. The *Spanienkämpfer* fought against General Franco's troops in the Spanish Civil War and were subsequently surrendered to the German Reich and held in concentration camps.

Since 1997, persons who, alone by virtue of belonging to a group, were generally endangered – for example persons with one Jewish parent (so called *Mischlinge ersten Grades* ["first grade half castes"]) or Carinthian partisans – are recognized as victims in the meaning of the Law, even if they were not subjected to any acts of persecution. In 1997, the National Fund also acknowledged as victims widows, widowers and children of people who had been executed or died in prison or a concentration camp as well as parents and children of people who had fallen victim to "euthanasia".

In 1998, the National Fund recognized people who had emigrated from 12 July 1936 for racial or political reasons – the day of the so called July Agreement between Austria and the German Reich from which time on, persecution of persons of Jewish origin could be foreseen. In the same year, the National Fund recognized for the first time children who had been committed to the institution "Am Spiegelgrund" in Vienna during the National Socialist era, where they were subjected to abuse and were often also used as guinea pigs in medical experiments.

In 2002, conscientious objectors and deserters from the German Armed Forces were granted recognition.

In 2007, children of persecuted Carinthian Slovenes were recognized as victims in view of the particularly difficult circumstances in which they lived, which often meant they also suffered as a result of their parents' persecution.

Payments by the National Fund

The Gesture Payment

One of the National Fund's main task is the processing of gesture payments as an expression of recognition for the injustices suffered by people in Austria due to National Socialism. Fundamentally, all surviving victims are eligible to receive a payment. In contrast to the proceedings of the General Settlement Fund, there is no deadline for submitting applications.

From 1995 until 2016, gesture payments of around 157 million Euros have been made.

Status as at September 2016

Applications received:	31,434
Payments:	30,726

Compensation for tenancy rights

In 2001, on the basis of the Washington Agreement the National Fund was also entrusted with the compensation of tenancy rights, household effects and personal valuables seized by the National Socialist regime. 150 million US Dollars were earmarked for this purpose.

Applications could be submitted until 30 June 2004. The compensation took the form of a lump sum payment of 7,630 Euros or 7,000 US Dollars per person.

The amount remaining after all applications have been processed is distributed in the form of an additional payment of 1,000 Euros per person.

Pursuant to Federal Law Gazette I no. 9/2013 undisbursed residue will be used for programs benefitting the victims of National Socialism.

Status as at September 2016

Applications received within deadline	23,289
Payments	20,346
Additional payments	19,531

Persons who do not meet the requirements for a gesture payment may be eligible for a different payment:

Hardship Compensation Fund

Between 2000 and 2016, 93 payments of 5,087.10 Euros, in total around 473,000 Euros were made from the Hardship Compensation Fund.

Looted Gold Fund

The Fund was exhausted in 2010. Between 1999 and 2010, 48 payments of 5,087.10 Euros, in total around 244,000 Euros were made from the Looted Gold Fund.

Proceeds from the disposition of art

In accordance with the Art Restitution Act, the National Fund disposes of "heirless" art objects under public ownership and uses the proceeds to make payments to victims of National Socialism whose applications do not quite meet the requirements for a gesture payment. Since 2012, 19 payments of 5,087.10 Euros, in total around 86,000 Euros have been made from the proceeds from the disposition of art.

Supporting projects

In line with its statutory mandate, the National Fund has been sponsoring projects since 1996. A wide range of projects are sponsored, dealing with all groups of victims. When allocating the sponsorship monies, the Fund focuses on the surviving victims of National Socialism. As such, particularly social, medical and psychotherapeutic projects directly benefitting the victims will be supported.

Beyond this, the National Fund also sponsors projects which undertake academic research into National Socialism and the fate of its victims, which commemorate National Socialist injustice or which safeguard the memories of the victims. Educational and commemoration projects are particularly important.

The projects are financed from the budget of the National Fund; until 2010 funding was also provided by the International Fund for Victims of National Socialism. Since 2013, the undisbursed residue of the funds provided for compensating seized tenancy rights has been used for programs benefitting victims of National Socialism.

The National Fund has so far sponsored projects and programs with around 26 million Euros.

Supported projects and programs as at 7 September 2016

Sources	Number of projects and programs	Subsidies in millions of Euro
National Fund budget	1,429	17.77
"Looted Gold" Fund	197	8.37
Residue pursuant to Sec. 2b NF Law	32	1.31
Total	1,711	27.86



Restitution of Art

By 1998/1999, the range of activities of the National Fund had already been extended to include the disposition of non-restitutable artworks for the benefit of victims of National Socialism. Artwork which was seized from its owners under the National Socialist regime is subject to this disposition. Before the art objects are disposed of, the National Fund endeavors, exhausting all routes of enquiry, to reach persons who are possibly entitled to restitution. For this purpose, since 2006, the National Fund has been running a comprehensive online art database at www.kunstrestitution.at, in cooperation with the Federal Museums and the City of Vienna.

The Art Database

The Art Database contains information on around 9,000 objects in the collections and museums of the Federation and the provinces and is continuously updated. The database enables victims of National Socialist art theft or their heirs to specifically search for seized and restitutable art objects. In order to reach a further circle of potentially eligible persons, the database has also been available in English since July 2007 at www.artrestitution.at.

The National Fund maintains strong contacts with the Restitution Commission Vienna and the Commission for Provenance Research. This cooperation ensures that the database is continuously expanded and that it is up to date with the current research status.

ART RESTITUTION .AT

National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism

Art Database of the National Fund

Home News Information **Objects** Responsibility

- **Catalogue**
 - Books and other printed items
 - Prints
 - Photography
 - Manuscripts
 - Clothing
 - Arts and Crafts
 - Paintings
 - Drawings
 - Furniture
 - Philately
 - Coins and Medals
 - Musical Instruments
 - Sculpture
 - Jewellery
 - Weapons and Technical Instruments
 - Tapestry
 - Gobelin tapestry
 - Verdure tapestry
 - Further Categories
- Overview according to restitution status
- Advanced search

 BOOKS AND OTHER PRINTED ITEMS	 PRINTS	 PHOTOGRAPHY	 MANUSCRIPTS	 CLOTHING
 DRAWINGS	 FURNITURE	 PHILATELY	 COINS AND MEDALS	 MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS
 WEAPONS AND TECHNICAL INSTRUMENTS	 TAPESTRY	 GOBELIN TAPESTRY	 VERDURE TAPESTRY	 FURTHER CATEGORIES

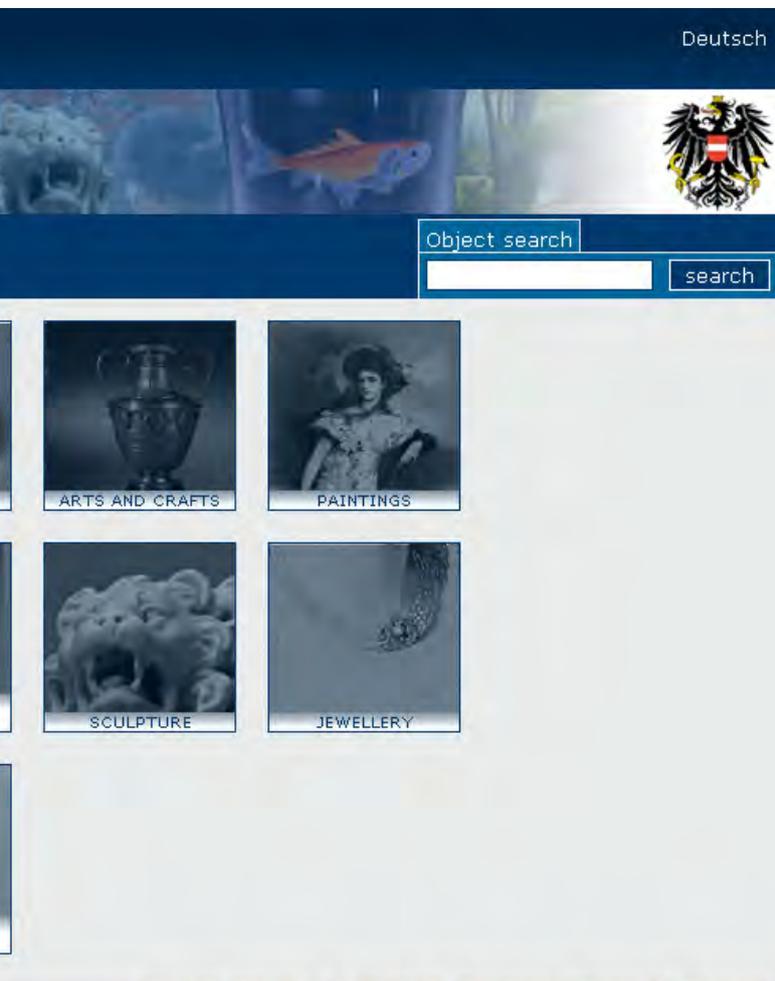
sitesearch search

Sale of art to benefit the victims

Since October 2010 an updated, barrier-free version of the National Fund's art database has been available. All objects are now able to be called up according to museum, inventory number and restitution status. Consequently, users can see which objects have already been restituted, which are still being examined or in which cases heirs of previous owners that have been identified are being sought.

On the basis of the Art Restitution Act, "heirless" art objects from public ownership have been sold by the National Fund with the profits being used for victims of National Socialism who do not quite meet the requirements for a gesture payment.

In 2012 the website was technically updated and optimized for numerous current browser versions and is now also available for smartphones, tablets and other mobile devices.



Renewal of the Austrian Memorial at Auschwitz-Birkenau

In 2009, the Austrian Federal Government resolved the renewal of the Austrian National Exhibition at the former concentration camp and present-day Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau and entrusted the National Fund with coordinating the redesign of the existing exhibition, which dated back to 1978. The move was taken in response to years of growing criticism of the “Victim’s Paradigm” propagated by the exhibition (the image at the exhibition entrance bore the proclamation “Austria – First Victim of National Socialism”).

The chief aim of the new exhibition is to convey Austria’s revised view of its own Nazi past. As such, although the exhibition shall continue to focus on the fates of the Austrian victims in Auschwitz, it will not gloss over the facts of Austrian complicity and perpetration of the crimes committed there.

In order to ensure that the planned exhibition is both scientifically well-founded and meets with general social consensus, in late 2009/early 2010 two advisory boards were convened: the Academic Advisory Board, composed of experts from the fields of academia, the culture of remembrance and memorial site education and the Societal Advisory Board, which repre-

sents the interests of affected victims’ organizations, religious communities and interest groups. Federal Ministries (Federal Ministry of Finance, Federal Ministry of Science, Research and the Economy, the Federal Chancellery, Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs), the Future Fund, the National Fund and the Federal Provinces have all contributed funds towards the new exhibition.

The historians Dr. Brigitte Bailer, Dr. Bertrand Perz and Dr. Heidemarie Uhl had already begun to thoroughly document the national exhibition in 2006, at the same time subjecting it to rigorous academic analysis. The Final Report for the project, presented in 2008, also contained some preliminary suggestions for a future overhaul.

These main themes, that have now been agreed with the Museum shall be: the fate of Austrian victims in Auschwitz, the resistance of Austrian inmates in the concentration camp and the involvement of Austrian perpetrators and conspirators in the atrocities committed there.



This picture shows the section „consequences of the occupation“ of the exhibition of 1978. © HBF



<https://nationalfonds.org/auschwitz.html>



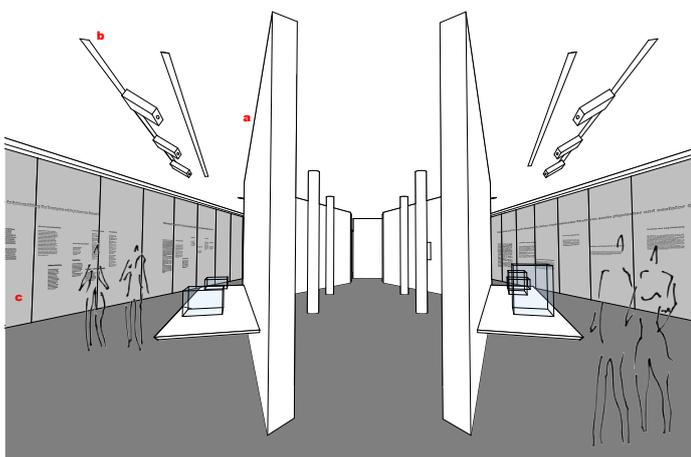
Documentation Volume „Österreichische Gedenkstätte 1978-2013. Staatliches Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau. © National Fund

In 2011, with the kind assistance of the Armed Forces Photo and Film Service of the Federal Ministry of Defense and Sport, the National Fund systematically photographed and inventoried the original exhibition. In 2015 photographs of the previous exhibition and articles about it were published and presented to the public at the Vienna Museum.

In October 2013 the National Fund closed down the exhibition in order to carry out structural investigations on the building, which is subject to a monument preservation order. Upon closure, the exhibition was carefully dismantled before being brought to Austria to be archived.

Following a Europe-wide call to tender, in late April 2014 the National Fund commissioned Hannes Sulzenbacher's successful team with the curation of the new exhibition. The submitted concept "Far removed. Austria in Auschwitz" seeks to convey the chasm between the reality of life and death in the camp at Auschwitz ("Here") and the terms of reference beyond the camp and in Austria ("There"). In the exhibition, the ambiguous meaning of the words "far removed" shall be reflected in the separation of the exhibition into two integrated areas.

The first area, "here", i.e. Auschwitz will be conveyed using physical artifacts; the other area, "there", i.e. Austria, shall be shown as a virtual world by means of video projections.



Interior layout for the new Austrian exhibition at Auschwitz.
Draft by Martin Kohlbauer. © Architekt Martin Kohlbauer ZT

In January 2015 the curatorial team presented the basic ideas of their concept to the public at the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna.

From August 2014 the National Fund and the Federal Chancellery held a European call to tender for the interior design and exhibition architecture. In March 2015 the architect Martin Kohlbauer was selected by the Board of Appraisal and awarded the contract by the National Fund. His drafts impressed the Board with their minimalistic approach and the room-in-room concept. In June 2015 the entire team working on the renewal presented their exhibition and design concept for the first time at the invitation of the Vienna Museum.

At present the National Fund is focusing on the further development of the exhibition and on preparing and undertaking the renovation of the building housing the exhibition. To achieve this, a general planner was appointed to implement the renovation concept in October 2015.

The Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation

In order to guarantee the long term future of the memorial, the State Museum set up the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation and issued an appeal for international financial support. In 2011, the Republic of Austria pledged its support in the form of a financial donation and renovation work, with a total value of 6 million Euros. The National Fund was tasked with realizing this pledge.

In October 2012, the National Fund signed a Donation Agreement with the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation. The Agreement stipulated that Austria would render this amount of 6 million Euros in the form of three annual instalments of 2 million Euros, with the expenditure incurred for the renovation of the building housing the Austrian exhibition being deducted from the last instalment. The National Fund transferred the first two instalments to the Foundation in 2012 and 2013.

The Republic of Austria is represented on the Foundation's International Committee by Secretary General Hannah Lessing and on the Foundation's Financial Committee by former State Secretary Dr. Alfred Finz.

Documentation of life stories

During recent years, not least due to the change of generations, remembrance work has become an increasingly important task of the National Fund, also as part of its educational mandate. The documentation and publication of the life stories of victims of National Socialism not only constitutes an important act of recognition for the victims but also renders a vital contribution to the development of a critical awareness among the future generations and to Austria's collective memory.

On this basis, the National Fund has sought from the outset to make these valuable testimonies available to the public. In the year 2000, applicants' life stories were published for the first time under the title *In die Tiefe geblickt* to mark the 5th anniversary of the National Fund. To mark its 10th anniversary, another publication containing victims' life stories was issued ("A Closer Look and Future Prospects").

On the 70th anniversary of the *Anschluss* of Austria to the German Reich, in March 2008 the National Fund commenced the publication of a series of autobiographical texts on its website which is continuously growing. The collection now contains more than 100 stories of applicants to the National Fund and the General Settlement Fund.

To mark the 15th anniversary of its establishment, in 2010 the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism brought out a two-volume publication. The first volume of this anniversary publication, "The National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism. Development, function, impact", introduces the diverse tasks and activities of the National Fund, reflects on the work of the National Fund and traces the developments which have occurred in recent years. The second volume of the anniversary publication, "Lives Remembered. Life Stories of Victims of National Socialism", is dedicated to those who are, as victims, at the centre of the work of the National Fund. It contains 33 life stories of applicants from all groups of victims, which document the most diverse stories of persecution.

Due to the amount of positive feedback on the 15th anniversary publications, particularly the positive reactions of teachers, above all to the 2010 volume of life stories, in 2011 a series of books with the title "Lives Remembered. Life Stories of Victims of National Socialism" was created. In 2011 a reprint of the 15th anniversary volume containing life stories was published; volume 2 was published in autumn 2012. The first two volumes of the series are out of print and only available as PDFs; volume 1 has been available on Amazon as an e-book since April 2015 and volume 2 will be available from autumn 2016.

The series was presented to the public in March 2013 in the psycho-social center ESRA; volume 3 was presented to the public in April 2014 in the Palais Mollard (Austrian National Library) and contains life stories of those applicants who found exile in Africa in both German and English. The three-part edition of volume 4, with the theme "Exile in Asia" was published in 2015 and presented at the MAK Forum in December of the same year. Over 35,000 copies have so far been distributed to interested schools in Austria.



<https://nationalfonds.org/collection.html>



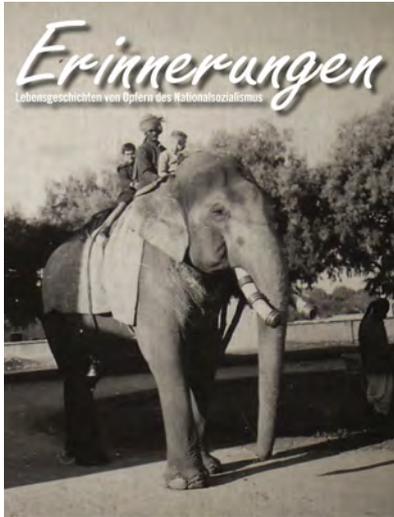
<https://nationalfonds.org/book-series-lives-remembered-518.html>

Volume 4/3 | 2015

"Lives Remembered.
Life Stories of Victims
of National Socialism"
German/English

Exile in Asia

© National Fund

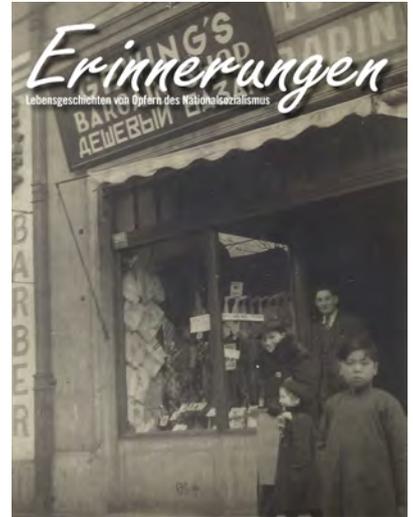


Volume 4/2 | 2015

"Lives Remembered.
Life Stories of Victims
of National Socialism"
German/English

Exile in Asia

© National Fund



Volume 4/1 | 2015

"Lives Remembered.
Life Stories of Victims
of National Socialism"
German/English

Exile in Asia

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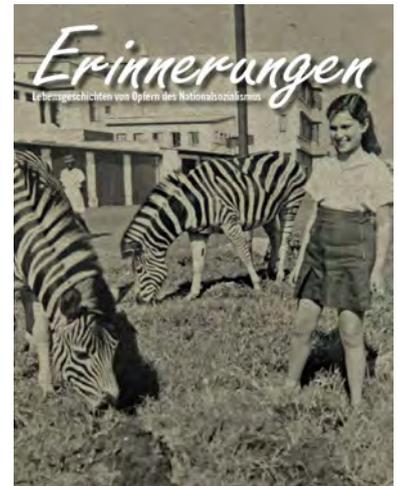


Volume 3 | 2013

"Lives Remembered.
Life Stories of Victims
of National Socialism"
German/English

Exile in Africa

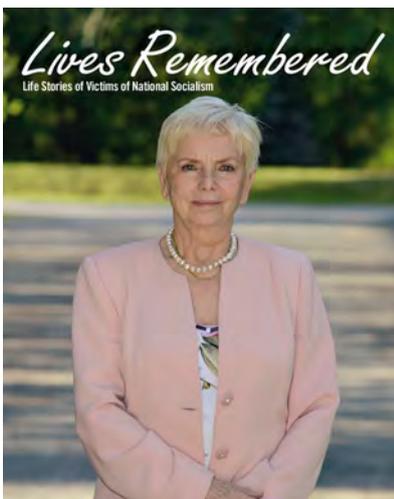
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Volume 2 | 2012

"Lives Remembered.
Life Stories of Victims
of National Socialism"

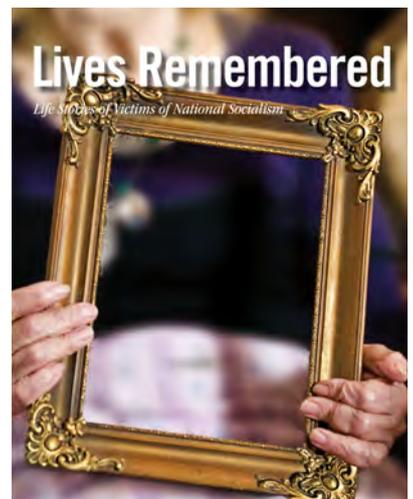
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Volume 1 | 2010

"Lives Remembered.
Life Stories of Victims
of National Socialism"

© National Fund



Supporting the applicants and public relations work

Providing a high level of individual support to the applicants is something to which the National Fund attaches particular importance.

As well as being in contact with the applicants by letter and telephone, since 1995 the staff of the National Fund have met with over 19,000 applicants in person. Members of staff are also on hand to assist in other matters beyond filing an application and, in this way, have managed to build up a special relationship of trust with many survivors.

Pursuant to Sec. 6 (3) of the NF Law, the Secretary General is responsible for fostering the relationship between Austria and the victims of National Socialism living abroad.

The Secretary General's public relations work is an important element of the National Fund's communication with the applicants. She travels abroad holding lectures on the work of the National Fund and strengthening relations with the victims from Austria who are resident abroad and with victims' organizations.

The numerous speeches, articles in the press and publications not only serve to inform and reach out to the victims but also raise awareness of National Socialism and its consequences among a wider public in Austria.



Hannah Lessing in conversation with guests of the ceremony at the Austrian Embassy in Washington D.C. to mark the 15th anniversary of the Austrian National Fund, 13 May 2010. © Karl Schrammel

Findbuch for Victims of National Socialism

A project by Historians of the General Settlement Fund

On 15 January 2013 the National Fund of the Republic of Austria presented the *Findbuch* for Victims of National Socialism (www.findbuch.at). This online portal makes it possible to search the holdings of several Austrian archives for material on National Socialist property seizures and Austrian restitution and compensation measures.

The main goal hoped to be achieved by publishing the *Findbuch* – also available in English – is to facilitate the search for “family traces” in Austrian archive holdings, not only for the victims of National Socialism from Austria and their descendants but also for academics and provenance or family researchers. It is intended to encourage people to come to terms with National Socialism and its aftermath in Austria, both in terms of family history research and at an academic, educational and societal level.

The *Findbuch* currently (as at September 2016) contains around 151,000 records from the Austrian State Archives and the Provincial Archives of Burgenland, Upper Austria, Salzburg, Carinthia, Tyrol and Vienna. New records are being added continually.

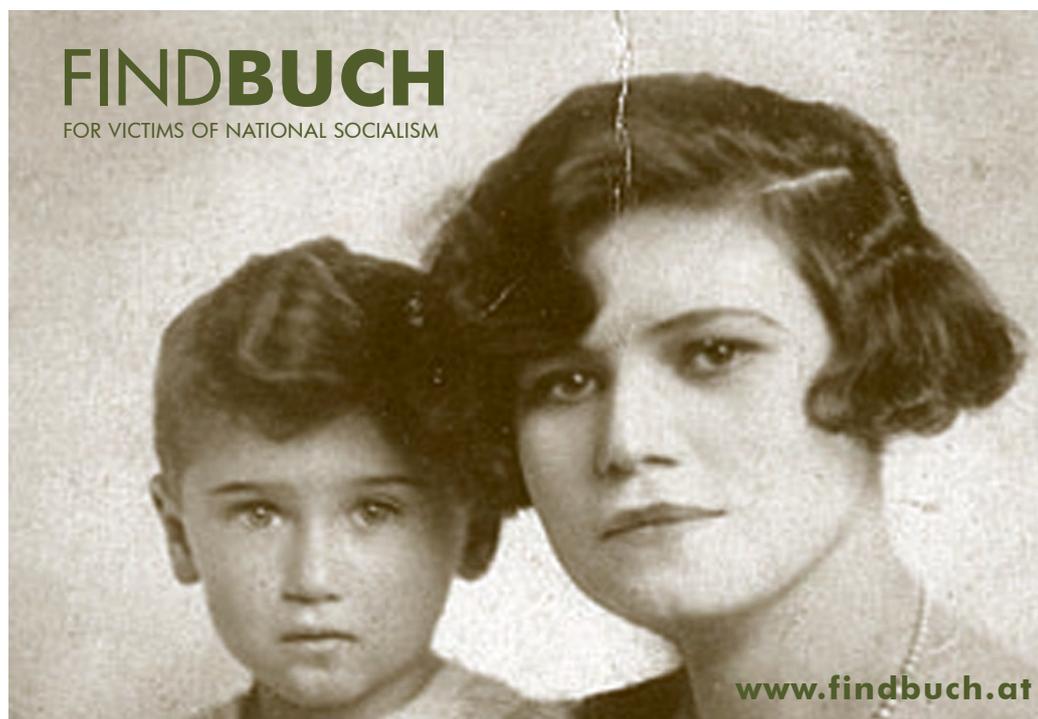
In addition, the *Findbuch* provides in digital form historical address books and official handbooks on public offices and institutions which facilitate research on private individuals, companies or the authorities which were responsible for the National Socialist seizures of property or restitution post-1945. As such, the *Findbuch* is one of the most comprehensive collections of personal data on National Socialist property seizures and Austrian restitution and compensation measures.

At present the ‘aryanization files’ of the Property Transaction Office provided by the Austrian State Archives and the so-called property notices and files of the Restitution Commission at the Provincial Court Vienna held at Municipal and Provincial Archives of Vienna are being prepared for the *Findbuch*.

User statistics (as at September 2016)

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Around 1,600 registered users
 Around 140,000 visitors
 Around 550,000 clicks



www.findbuch.at/en/

GENERAL SETTLEMENT FUND FOR VICTIMS OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM

General Information

The General Settlement Fund was established by law (Federal Law Gazette I 12/2001) as a result of the Washington Agreement of 23 January 2001 and endowed with 210 million US dollars. The Fund has the task of comprehensively resolving open questions of compensation for victims of National Socialism and recognizing through ex gratia payments Austria's moral responsibility for property losses suffered by victims of the National Socialist regime in Austria between 1938 and 1945. Those property losses which until now had not been taken into account or had only been inadequately compensated by means of previous Austrian restitution or compensation measures are a priority.

The independent, international Claims Committee decides on individual payments for compensation claims in several categories. The deadline for applications ended on 28 May 2003.

People personally affected by National Socialist property seizure and their legal successors were eligible to file applications. The compensation payments are calculated based on the amount of the individually established property losses and are distributed *pro rata* in relation to the total available amount.

The entire sum of 210 million Dollars is earmarked for the compensation payments. Administrative costs were covered by the Fund interest or paid by the Federation. The Claims Committee has already decided on all of the 20,702 applications received.

The General Settlement Fund provides compensation in ten different categories of losses:

- Liquidated businesses
- Immovable property
- Bank accounts
- Stocks/Securities
- Debentures
- Mortgage claims
- Moveable property
- Insurance policies
- Occupational and educational losses
- Other losses and damages

In comparison to other national or international compensation measures, according to which only few categories of assets could be claimed or the compensation took place in the form of a lump sum payment, the remit to make individual payments for damages in ten categories are incomparably more complex. Especially the category "other losses" provides the General Settlement Fund with the possibility of taking all types of damages into account which are not covered by the other categories.

In agreement with the Allied occupying forces of the time and with regard to the economic capacity of the then Republic of Austria, Austria's restitution policies pursued the principle of restituting available assets and leaving assets which no longer existed uncompensated.

After 1955, although several compensation laws were resolved they had a limited scope of application. The gaps in the Austrian restitution and compensation measures are reflected today in the fact that, for example, many claims were made in the category "liquidated businesses" and the Claims Committee awarded relatively large amounts of compensation in this category.

The Procedure

The General Settlement Fund developed its own procedure which had to be drawn up completely from scratch, from the drafting of the application form to the individual operating procedures, from the necessary software to the legal guidelines. The infrastructure, the personnel and the procedure were developed in order to implement the law with maximum efficiency. It was necessary to enable the processing of the around 150,000 individual claims as efficiently as possible, to treat identical things identically and disparate things differently, to apply relaxed standards of proof, to develop transparent working methods and not least to provide the applicants with comprehensive information on their claims.

The essential foundation for the legal processing of the cases was the historical research of the General Settlement Fund. In order to guarantee the equal treatment of all applicants, it ensured that the same comprehensive source holdings and archives were consulted in each case. In individual cases concerning certain questions, special research was initiated.

The legal processing of the applications occurred on the basis of the information obtained through the historical research, supported by a custom-made software ("SV" = *Standardisiertes Verfahren* – "standardized procedure"), which, as an integrated database application, contains innovative legal informatics functions. Each claim was individually examined and if granted on its merits, valued. If a claim could not be attributed a value due to lack of historical valuation guidelines, the General Settlement Fund employed a system of lump sum payments for the different categories of assets.

There were two different types of procedure for the examination of applications, the claims-based procedure and the equity-based procedure. In the equity-based procedure, the standards of proof were lower than in the claims-based procedure in order to account for the fact that the events occurred over 60 years ago and ownership and seizure of assets are often difficult to trace today.

In the claims-based procedure, the applicants also had a right of appeal against the rejection of claims. Moreover, the Claims Committee was able to reopen proceedings on its own initiative.

Payments

As the final determination of the compensation quotas required a valuation of all recognized losses, in view of the age of many applicants the General Settlement Fund Law (GSF Law) was amended in 2005 (Federal Law Gazette I no. 142/2005). This enabled advance *pro rata* payments to those applicants whose losses had already been established. In December 2005, the advance payments were commenced.

In order to expedite the payments from the General Settlement Fund, another amendment to the GSF Law, enacted on 1 July 2009 (Federal Law Gazette I no. 54/2009), enabled closing payments to be made before decisions had been issued on all applications.

Payment quotas

After the 2009 amendment to the GSF Law, the quotas for payments from the General Settlement Fund were calculated on the basis of the decisions reached by the Claims Committee by 1 July 2009 and the means at the Fund's disposal:

Process	Advance payment	Closing payment	Total
Claims-based process	10 %	0.565150 %	10.565150 %
Equity-based process	15 %	2.164658 %	17.164658 %
Insurance policies	15 %	5.736232 %	20.736232 %

For all decisions reached after 1 July 2009 or decisions revised due to an appeal or a reopening, the Federation has made further means available in accordance with the determined payment quotas pursuant to Sec. 2 (1) of the GSF Law.

Outlook

With the application processing already concluded, the General Settlement Fund's main focus is now to seek the applicants with whom contact has been lost and to determine the heirs of applicants who have passed away in order to be able to carry out the payment of the amounts which have already been awarded.

As many applicants passed away during the course of proceedings it is necessary to conclude those that are still pending and make the payments to the entitled persons, it is necessary to find the persons who are entitled to receive them. This process of finding heirs and representatives of estates of deceased applicants is extremely time-consuming. Identifying the entitled persons involves searching, assessing the respective national inheritance documents and, finally, preparing the decision on the resumption of proceedings with the entitled persons.

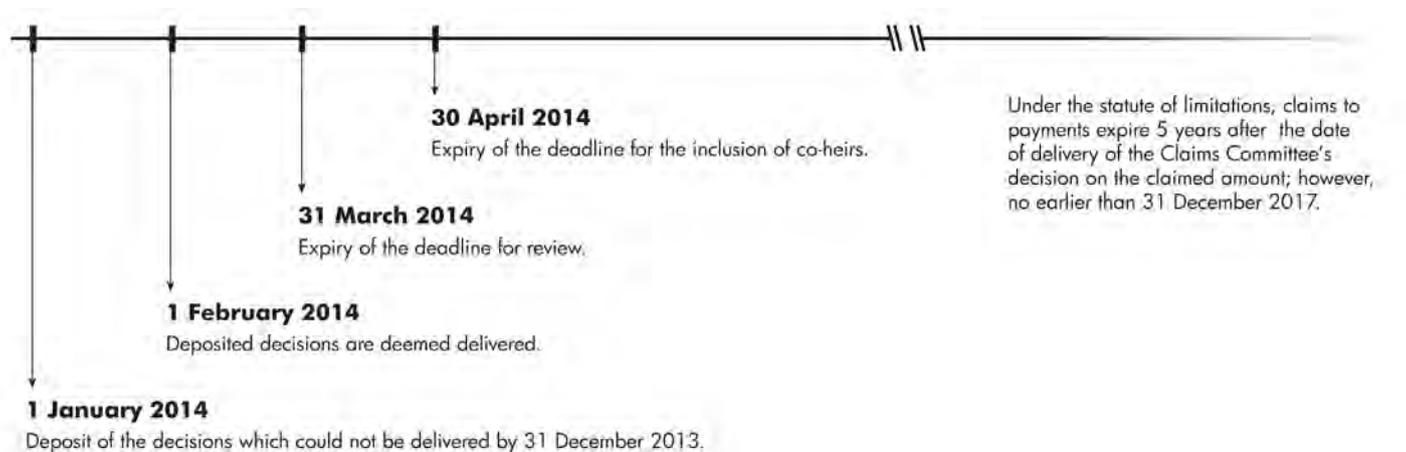
In order to fulfill this legal mandate, in its session on 25 June 2012 the Claims Committee adopted and published an amendment to its Rules of Procedure according to which all decisions which cannot be delivered to the applicants by 31 December 2013¹ and which, consequently, cannot become legally binding, have

been deposited with the Secretary General of the General Settlement Fund as of 1 January 2014. The deposit of these decisions was announced on the website of the General Settlement Fund. In compliance with data protection laws, the announcements have not however revealed the identities of the beneficiaries.

For the deposited decisions which have been served there was a right of recourse until 31 March 2014 and co-heirs could be included until 30 April 2014. Thereafter, these decisions became legally final. The entitled beneficiaries will be able to claim the amounts awarded within a period of five years after the service of the decision; this period will expire however no earlier than 31 December 2017 (for all decisions for which service had been effected by the time of the entry into force of the Law on 1 January 2013, Federal Law Gazette I no. 9/2013, the time period under the Statute of Limitations commenced on this day and hence will expire on 31 December 2017). For more information please read the press release of February 4, 2014 in the Annex.

On 1 September 2015 the Claims Committee presented a Final Report on its work to the Board of Trustees.

Deposit of decisions of the Claims Committee



¹ Reasons for a delivery not to have occurred are: applicants' updated contact details are not known; applicants have passed away before the proceedings have been concluded and heirs could not be found despite intensive research.

Statistical Report on the Proceedings before the Claims Committee as at 12 September 2016

Applications

Applications received within the deadline	20,702
Persons whose losses were asserted	37,623
Claims ¹	151,949

Application processing

Historical research

Files / documents from archives	41,796
Historical land register excerpts	19,624
Inquiries regarding insurance policies	10,902

Applications decided

Applications decided	20,702
Applications for which compensation was awarded	18,155
Applications for which no compensation was awarded	2,547
Claims for which compensation was awarded	103,425
Claims for which no compensation was awarded	48,524
Recourse ² (review) no longer possible	20,702
Decisions on recourse (review)	551
Decisions after reopening ³	1,523

1 This figure differs to previously published figures due to the application of a revised statistical method.

2 Applications for a renewed decision pursuant to Sec. 17 of the General Settlement Fund Law and Sec. 18 of the Rules of Procedure of the Claims Committee.

3 Sec. 17 (5) of the Rules of Procedure of the Claims Committee.

4 Applicants can allow claims of their co-heirs - these are further people who are heirs of people who originally suffered the losses - to be transferred to them and assert these claims before the Claims Committee, insofar as these co-heirs have not filed an application themselves.

5 Heirs and other persons authorized to continue the proceedings (e.g. executors).

6 Advance payments were made from December 2005 to July 2009. Elderly applicants were prioritized as long as their claim amounted to a minimum of 500 USD. As a result of an adjustment to the counting method for heirs and co-heirs, as of 26 November 2014 the number of advance payments and closing payments has slightly increased.

Ongoing proceedings

Ongoing proceedings	0
Recourse (review) proceedings	0
Reopened proceedings	0

Co-heirs⁴

Applicants who have extended their applications to include co-heirs	1,769
Co-heirs	3,268

The search for heirs

Deceased applicants whose heirs ⁵ could be established	4,117
Established heirs	6,893
Deceased applicants whose heirs are being traced	679

Payments**Advance payments**

Advance payments ⁶	18,169
Applicants	13,951
Heirs	1,874
Co-heirs	2,344

Closing payments

Closing payments	21,884
Applicants	13,185
Heirs	5,573
Co-heirs	3,126
Applications not yet completely disbursed	1,403

ARBITRATION PANEL FOR *IN REM* RESTITUTION

General Information

The independent Arbitration Panel for *In Rem* Restitution is also established at the General Settlement Fund. This committee can recommend the restitution of real estate and super structures and moveable assets of Jewish communal organizations if they were seized during the National Socialist era and publicly-owned on the cut off day 17 January 2001. Publicly-owned property comprises property owned by the Federation and by those provinces and municipalities which have opted in to the proceedings of the Arbitration Panel. So far, they are: the City of Vienna, the provinces of Upper Austria, Salzburg, Carinthia, Lower Austria, Styria, Vorarlberg and Burgenland and the municipalities of Bad Ischl, Eisenstadt, Frauenkirchen, Grieskirchen, Kittsee, Kobersdorf, Korneuburg, Mattersburg, Oberwart, Purkersdorf, Rechnitz, Stockerau, Vöcklabruck and Wiener Neudorf.

Further requirements for restitution are that the asset was seized during the National Socialist era in Austria between 1938 and 1945 and that the claim has not previously been decided by an Austrian court or administrative body or settled by agreement. In certain exceptional cases, the Arbitration Panel can recommend a restitution despite the existence of such a decision or settlement by agreement if it reaches the conclusion that the prior measure constituted an "extreme injustice". The same applies if the claim had been rejected in prior proceedings for lack of evidence and the evidence was not accessible then but has since become available. In practice, nearly all of the applications on which the Arbitration Panel decides concern properties which have already been the subject of restitution proceedings. The last deadlines for filing applications for *in rem* restitution expired on 31 December 2011.

Historical background

After the *Anschluss* of Austria to the German Reich in March 1938, in addition to other assets, properties were also seized from the racially and/or politically persecuted owners through various avenues. The bureaucratically organized seizure of assets, executed on the basis of discriminating laws, concerned above all persons who were considered Jewish pursuant to the "Nuremberg Laws", the Roma and Sinti and political persecutees.

Assets belonging to Jewish associations and foundations, including properties but also religious and artistic items, were frequently seized by the Liquidation Commissar for Clubs, Organizations and Associations without compensation.

The registration of Jewish property, as introduced by law in April 1938, was a fundamental requirement for the state-supervised "aryanization". The seizure occurred by means of forced sales or direct confiscation by the state. In many cases assets were forfeited to the German Reich as a result of the flight abroad or the deportation to concentration and extermination camps.

After the war, the re-established Republic of Austria faced the task of constitutionally dealing with this enormous displacement of property from a legal perspective. The restitution acts passed in the second half of the 1940s, the implementation acts enacted within the scope of the State Treaty of 1955 and other measures covered a large number of the "aryanized" properties or those seized by other means.

The research of the Historical Commission shows that although the majority of the seized properties were restituted or the subject of settlements, the restitution proceedings of the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s were considered unsatisfactory by many restitution claimants. The range and complexity of the various restitution acts and deadlines and the lack of state assistance for the victims of the seizures in their attempts to achieve restitution were deciding factors in this regard. This is where the task of the Arbitration Panel, set out by the General Settlement Fund Law, begins.

The Proceedings

Application processing is carried out by historians and lawyers working in interdisciplinary teams. This approach seems necessary and practical, as the seizures and the restitution proceedings occurred decades ago and their interpretation requires a deep knowledge of the respective organizational and legal frameworks. Moreover, only seldom do the applicants themselves possess the necessary documentation (evidence). In many cases it is not until comprehensive research has been carried out by the historians at the relevant archives and authorities within the scope of an “*ex officio*” establishment of the truth that it is possible to reach the findings regarding the facts of the case which are necessary for legal decision-making.

As an initial step, the applications are examined for the formal statutory requirements of public ownership on the cut off day, 17 January 2001, and also whether the property was owned by the applicant or his/her predecessors in 1938. If these elements are present, the application is subsequently designated “substantive”. If this is not the case, it is designated a “formal” application.

In a further step for applications in which no specific property is stated, on the basis of the applicants’ submissions, the land register, historical address books and registration details and property notices from the National Socialist era are investigated in order to determine to which properties the application could apply. The applicants are informed of the outcome of this research in writing and given the opportunity to improve the application.

Each “substantive” application is processed by one lawyer and one historian, who initially determine the necessary research method. The duration of the historical research varies from case to case. On average, a duration of several months is to be expected for the application processing due to the comprehensive research of archives and official departments. The research serves to determine the eligibility to file an application, the ownership status in 1938, a persecution related seizure and a possible “prior measure” after 1945.

During the proceedings, both the applicants and the public owner have the opportunity to present their view of the case to the Arbitration Panel, thus ensuring a fair hearing. After concluding the research and obtaining the statements of the parties involved, the competent caseworkers produce a draft of the decision which is discussed in detail in the sessions of the Arbitration Panel, which are held several times a year, before it reaches its final decision.

If necessary, the Arbitration Panel can call a hearing with the parties to the proceedings if new findings which go beyond the written submissions can be expected. Thus far, three hearings have taken place.

The implementation of the decisions in which a restitution is recommended falls under the competence of the public owner. If *in rem* restitution is not practical or feasible (this is the case, for example, with public road areas, schools or municipal residential buildings), a comparable asset can be awarded. Generally, this takes the form of the market value of the property, which is determined by the Arbitration Panel on the basis of an independent expert valuation.

Since an amendment to the Rules of Procedure of the Arbitration Panel in 2007, proceedings which have already been concluded can be reopened. If such an application is filed, the Arbitration Panel initially decides whether the reopening of proceedings is granted. This occurs when evidence which was previously unknown is submitted which warrants the assumption that such evidence would have resulted in a different outcome to the previous proceedings. In such a case, the Arbitration Panel makes a renewed decision on the subject of the application and repeals its earlier decision.

The Publication of the Decisions of the Arbitration Panel

The recommendations of the Arbitration Panel must be published pursuant to Sec. 36 of the GSF Law. The Arbitration Panel meets this legal requirement in two ways. All decisions, including those on formal applications, are published in anonymized form and in English translation in a German and English online database (<https://entschaedigungsfonds.org/decisions.html>). Since 2008 the substantive decisions have been published in a bilingual series of books.

Outlook

It is expected that the Arbitration Panel will still be processing and deciding on the “substantive” applications until 2016. In 2018, it will, like the Claims Committee, have to present a closing report on its work. The publication of its decisions, stipulated by law, will also require more time and will continue for a while after the Arbitration Panel’s decision-making has been completed.



Book series ‘Decisions of the Arbitration Panel for *In Rem* Restitution’



Procedural statistics of the Arbitration Panel

Tables

The applications submitted to the Arbitration Panel which are mentioned below include all individual applications of applicants. In some cases several individual applications may refer to the same property (real estate, Jewish communal property).

Applications (as at 21 June 2016)

Total number of applications¹	2,284
thereof substantive applications ²	579
thereof formal applications ³	1,400
thereof applications withdrawn	63
thereof applications concluded without decision ⁴	242
Applications currently being processed	373
Substantive applications currently being processed	5
Formal applications currently being processed	368
Formal applications with requests for improvements pending ⁵	360
Applications decided	1,606
Substantive applications decided	574
Substantive applications decided – recommendations ⁶	138
Substantive applications decided – rejections ⁷	291
Substantive applications decided – dismissals ⁸	145
Formal applications decided	1,032

1 These applications were filed by 2,247 applicants. Despite the expiration of the filing period, the number of applications may fluctuate due to the fact that applications submitted thereafter are also included in the statistic and applicants can submit multiple applications.

2 Upon first inspection, these applications fulfill the fundamental requirements for an application, particularly public ownership on the cut off day, 17 January 2001 and ownership at the time of the seizure between 1938 and 1945. They require more detailed historical and legal (i.e. substantive) processing.

3 Formal applications do not fulfill the fundamental requirements for in rem restitution upon initial inspection, particularly public ownership on the cut off day, 17 January 2001 and ownership at the time of the seizure between 1938 and 1945. These also include applications which could only be granted if they had been filed by Jewish communal organizations; they were, however, filed by individuals on their own behalf.

4 The processing of these applications was suspended by the Arbitration Panel due to flaws in the applications (missing powers-of-attorney, no eligible applicants known).

5 During the course of processing these formal applications, the applicants were requested to provide further information in writing; the replies are still outstanding.

6 Regarding these 138 applications 55 decisions were issued.

7 Regarding these 291 applications 119 decisions were issued. The two rejections in reopening proceedings, no. 4/2004 and 46/2006 were not included in this figure.

8 Regarding these 145 applications 23 decisions were issued.

Applications for the reopening of proceedings¹ (as at 21 June 2016)

Total number of applications for reopening	41
Applications for reopening currently being processed	3
Applications for reopening granted ²	17
Applications for reopening rejected ³	21

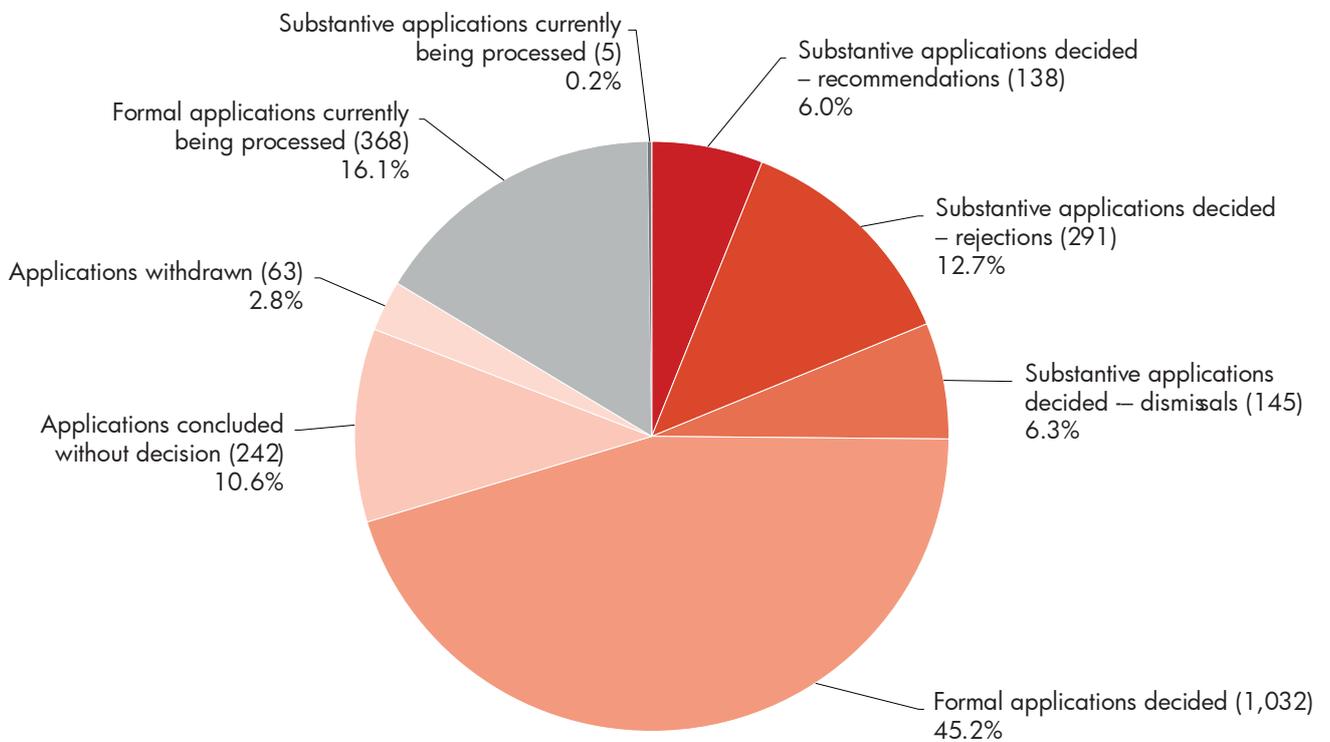
1 Since 2007, the Rules of Procedure of the Arbitration Panel have, under certain circumstances, provided for the reopening of proceedings which have already been concluded, within a period of two years after the decision has been issued. Proceedings are then reopened if an application for reopening is submitted with evidence which was previously inaccessible and warrants the assumption that it would have led to a different outcome in the previous proceedings. If the Arbitration Panel considers there to be new evidence pursuant to Sec. 21a of its Rules of Procedure, the proceedings are reopened. In these cases, the previous decision is repealed. If the requirements for a reopening are not met, the Arbitration Panel issues a decision rejecting the application for the reopening of proceedings. Applications for the reopening of proceedings may only pertain to applications which have already been processed and do not constitute new applications. They do not therefore lead to an increase in the total number of applications.

2 These concern 17 applications for proceedings to be reopened (including two ex officio reopenings), resulting in four recommendations.

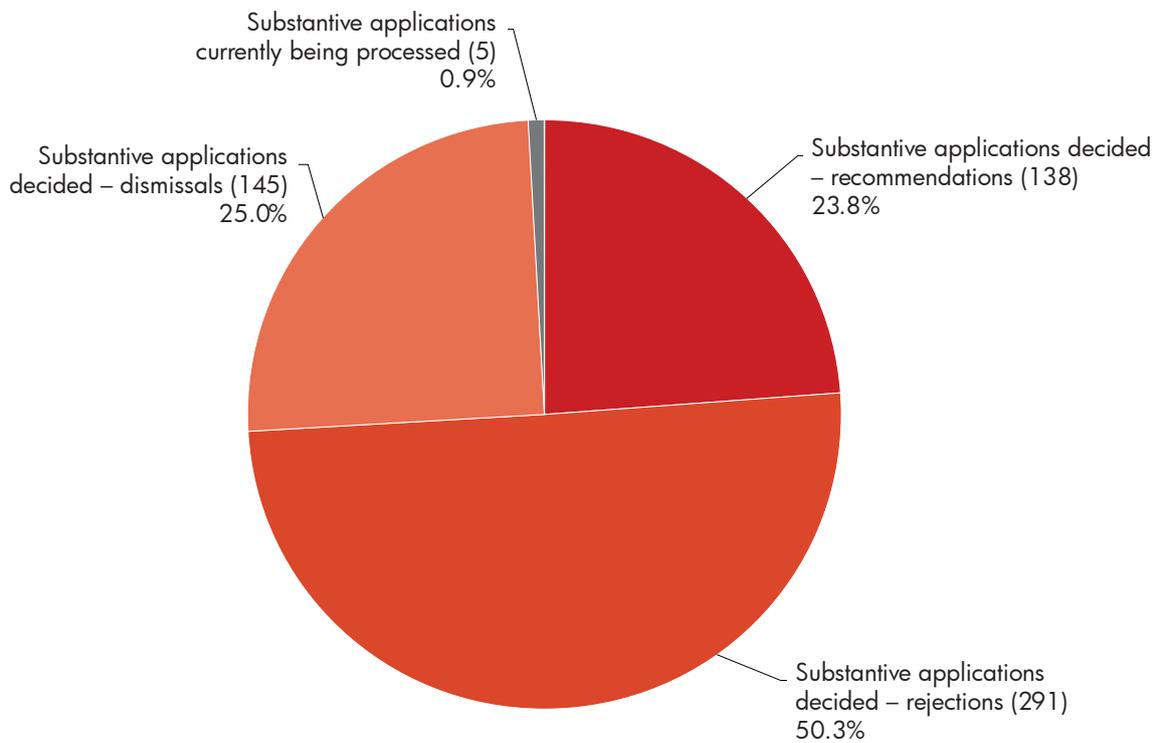
3 21 applications for the reopening of proceedings resulted in a total of 10 decisions rejecting the applications.

Procedural statistics of the Arbitration Panel

Arbitration Panel for *In Rem* Restitution
Applications received: 2,284
as at: 21 June 2016



Arbitration Panel for *In Rem* Restitution
 Substantive applications received: 579
 as at: 21 June 2016



FUND FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWISH CEMETERIES IN AUSTRIA

The Jewish Cemeteries in Austria

Jewish cemeteries are special places of remembrance and many of them are of particular cultural and historical value. During the National Socialist era, countless graves were destroyed, the names of the dead extinguished. For many decades after the expulsion of the Jewish communities and the murder of their members, the Jewish cemeteries in Austria were left to fall to ruin. It is only in places where Jewish communities were re-established after 1945 that the cemeteries are still used today – all others are closed.

Starting in 2001, systematic records were made of all of the Jewish cemeteries in Austria. The Jewish Community Vienna commissioned the historian Tina Walzer to catalogue the cemeteries in a “White paper on the condition of the Jewish cemeteries in Austria and necessary renovation work”, which was updated in 2008.

Additionally, the Federal Office for the Protection of Monuments has made a record of cemeteries and examined whether they are worthy of being heritage sites. The Sec. 2a-Ordinance of the Federal Office for the Protection of Monuments (which does not, however, list cemeteries which are privately owned) lists over 61 Jewish cemeteries.

The cemeteries contain between 10 and several hundred graves, the headstones date from the 15th century into the 20th century.

Establishment of the Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries in Austria

In 2001, the Austrian Federal Government and the Government of the United States of America signed the “Washington Agreement”. This agreement on the settlement of open questions of compensation and restitution for victims of National Socialism also stipulated Austria’s obligation under international law to restore and maintain known and unknown Jewish cemeteries in Austria.

In December 2010, the enactment of the “Federal Law on the Establishment of a Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries in Austria” (Federal Law Gazette I no. 99/2010) constituted a vital step towards the domestic implementation of this obligation.

Over a period of 20 years, more than 60 Jewish cemeteries throughout Austria will be safeguarded from ruin with the assistance of the Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries in Austria.

The organs of the Fund

The Fund is established with the National Council and its administration was transferred to the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism. The highest body of the National Fund, the Board of Trustees, now also presides over the Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries in Austria. The Board of Trustees decides on the applications for financial assistance on the basis of guidelines (accessible at <https://friedhofsfonds.org/guidelines.html>).

An Advisory Board, in which the Jewish Community Vienna, the Republic of Austria and the provinces, cities and municipalities are represented, pronounces recommendations for the decisions of the Board of Trustees.

The distribution of the money

It is estimated that, in total, 40 million Euros will be required for the restoration of all Jewish cemeteries.

Over a period of 20 years, the Federation will annually allocate an amount of one million Euros to the Fund.

The Law stipulates that, in addition to the funding from the Federation, the owners of the Jewish cemeteries will provide funding in the same amount so that the renovation work is financed by the Federation and the cemetery owners in equal shares. Moreover, the Fund is also open to receiving third-party funds and financial contributions from the provinces can either be paid into the Fund or directly to a restoration project.

Funding for the restoration of a cemetery is only granted under the condition that the subsequent maintenance and upkeep is ensured in the long term: the payments from the Fund are therefore only made if the local municipality undertakes to continue to maintain the respective cemetery for a period of at least 20 years.

The payments from the Fund are always rendered as needed and in relation to the progress of the project.

Projects

On 20 June 2011, the first funding was resolved for urgent conservation work on the Jewish cemeteries in Deutschkreutz (Burgenland) and Stockerau (Lower Austria). The funding for both cemeteries amounted to approx. 74,000 Euros. These two projects were completed in summer 2012. A database application for recording the graves in the Jewish cemeteries, in which all key information on Jewish cemeteries and graves in Austria will be recorded and collected was also funded in 2012 with an amount of 30,000 Euros. The data collected will form the basis for the determination of their condition, the development and planning of restoration strategies and targets and for the structured cost planning and documentation. It will also facilitate the prioritization of the upcoming restoration projects.

In 2013, funding totaling 68,000 Euro was approved for two further projects regarding the Jewish cemeteries in Deutschkreutz and Stockerau cemeteries. In addition, funding of 15,000 Euros was approved for a project at the Hohenems Jewish cemetery.

In 2014 the Advisory Board recommended to the Board of Trustees further cemetery restoration projects totalling 187,000 Euro for the restoration of the cemeteries in Hohenems, Lackenbach, Kobersdorf, Goettsbach/Ybbs and Graz. The project in Goettsbach/Ybbs, for which a 14,000 Euro subsidy had been awarded, was withdrawn by the applicant in March 2015.

In 2015, four applications for an amount totaling approx. 108,000 Euros were assessed and approved by the Board of Trustees.

The applications for funding submitted by the Jewish Community Vienna related to the Jewish cemeteries in Deutschkreutz and Stockerau and the two Jewish sections of the Central Cemetery, Gate 1 and Gate 4.

Funding was granted for restoration and conservation work on burial sites in Deutschkreutz and Stockerau. In Deutschkreutz, 30 headstones were restored with funding of approx. 19,000 Euros (expected completion 2016). In Stockerau, 109 headstones and eight wall plaques were restored with funding of approx. 40,000 Euros.



<https://friedhofsfonds.org/home.html>

At the Vienna Central Cemetery, urgent tree surgery and clearing was carried out for safety reasons. This required funding totaling 49,000 Euros for Gate 1 and Gate 4. These measures were completed in 2015.

In 2016, the Board of Trustees had assessed and approved six applications by 12 September 2016, for an amount totaling 870,000 Euros.

At the cemetery in Graz, funding in the amount of approx. 240,000 Euro was granted for gardening work around the south-side wall and pruning/clearing and the restoration of 474 headstones. The local construction supervisory authority was commissioned to monitor the work.

An application for approx. 30,000 Euro was submitted for the Jewish cemetery in Göttsbach/Ybbs. A call to tender will be issued for a general planner (inventorying/producing a plan, object/damage record, landscaping/gardening work, planning services/architecture and overall administration)

Applications for a total of 500,000 Euros were submitted for Gate 1 and Gate 4 of the Central Cemetery and approved by the Board of Trustees. Gardening work will be carried out (crown thinning and lifting, removal of dead wood and clippings, weed removal).

At the cemetery in Hohenems a third sub-project is being carried out in the value of 60,000 Euros. The work shall include restoration of the western cemetery wall and restoration of nine headstones.

An additional application was submitted in 2016 for approx. 40,000 Euros for the headstone database of the Jewish Community Vienna, which had already been awarded funding in 2012. The requirements of the existing software had changed (recording further cemetery data, extension of the data on measures regarding the burial sites, separating the measures according to theme, etc.).

APPENDIX

Football Club „FK Austria Wien“ faces up to its past

Press Release of 7 June 2016

Last Monday at Café Landtmann the football club Austria Wien presented a scientific research project subsidized by the National Fund that will investigate the history of the club during the Nazi era in Austria (1938–1945).

In addition to the funding received from the National Fund, the project will be co-funded by the Future Fund and the City of Vienna, whose representatives were also present on the podium. Markus Kraetschmer, Chairman of Austria Wien Football Club Inc., emphasized the importance of coming to terms with history. Efforts had already been made to shed light on certain aspects of the club during the Nazi era – Austria Wien was the first club in Austria to establish its own Museum, for example. Now, during the course of this project, the club’s history will be investigated in detail.

Hannah Lessing, Secretary General of the National Fund, spoke of her own personal connection to the club. She had been a huge fan from a young age and was a close friend of former club secretary and Auschwitz survivor Norbert Lopper, who had passed away in 2015. Lessing stressed that the National Fund had subsidized around 1,600 projects since its inception. Many of these projects were aimed at dealing with the past in such a way that younger generations could learn from it. In view of the nationalism prevalent in the football fan clubs, this was a particularly important aspect to address.

The Vienna City Councilor for Sport and the Sciences, Andreas Mailath-Pokorny, pointed out that the project had succeeded in exposing the myth of non-political sport. Football was an integral part of social change and was, as such, also subject to political trends.



The team carrying out the project – expected to span a period of 15 months – comprising historians Rudolf Müllner, Matthias Marschik and Bernhard Hachleitner, led by the sports journalist and author Johann Skocek, will address questions such as: “In what way did the ‘Anschluss’ of Austria to the German Reich in 1938 affect the Club, the functionaries, the players and the fans?” and “What room for manoeuvre was available to individual proponents and what were their areas of responsibility?”. The team will not only seek to yield new findings but will also take a closer look at some of the more familiar stories, such as that of the “one-in-a-million Austria player” Matthias Sindelar or the brief period during which the club was renamed “Sportklub Ostmark”, in an effort to determine their veracity and identify any causalities.

The research project is also to be understood as an attempt to gain a better understanding of the modern proclivity for racism and offensive language in the fan sector in order to be able to suppress it. The outcome of the research shall then be collated and published in a book.

Commemorating the victims of National Socialism who lived at Neutorgasse 15

Press Release of 4 May 2016

On 4 May 2016 a commemoration ceremony was held at Neutorgasse 15 in the 1st District of Vienna during which a memorial plaque remembering the victims of National Socialism was unveiled in the presence of the Israeli Ambassador, representatives of the Jewish Community Vienna, the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism and the City of Vienna. At the request of Christine Spiess, the City of Vienna's project director for "Aspern + Vienna's Urban Lakeside", the National Fund had compiled a dossier on the fates of the residents of Neutorgasse between 1938 and 1945. Sadly, the research confirmed that many of these residents had indeed been deported to concentration camps and murdered.

The building at Neutorgasse 15 in the 1st District of Vienna is inextricably linked to the fates of many victims – it was their penultimate or final place of abode before being carried off to their deaths in the Nazi camps. The building's history in the years 1938 to 1945 plainly illustrates the expulsion, disenfranchisement and genocide of Austria's Jewish population.

The residents of the apartments at doors no. 3/4, 5 and 6 – Margit and Dr. Fritz Tintner, Ignatz and Margarethe Popper, and Dr. Samuel Popper – had already been living in the building prior to the Nazi assumption of power in March 1938. Margit Tintner, the building's owner, was driven out of the property. Although the property was not seized and no change of ownership was ever recorded in the land register, she – like many other Jewish owners – was not able to dispose of her property freely. After 1945, Margit Tintner's heirs sold off the property, piece by piece.

Between 1939 – following the introduction of so-called collective apartments – and 1943, a total of 39 individuals were registered at the address Neutorgasse 15, all of whom were deemed Jewish in accordance with the Nuremberg Race Laws. Six people died there, a further 27 were deported from there to ghettos or concentration camps (Łódź or Terezín) or extermination camps (Maly Trostinec near Minsk or Auschwitz-Birkenau), only one of whom survived, and the remaining five were transferred to other collective apartments or the Jewish retirement home, from where they were later deported and murdered.



Unveiling a memorial plaque remembering the victims of National Socialism at a commemoration ceremony at Neutorgasse 15 in the 1st District of Vienna on 4 May 2016.

Photo: Bohmann / PID

“Exile in Asia” – National Fund presents volume 4 of the series “Lives Remembered”

Press Release of 1 December 2015

On Tuesday, 1 December 2015 at 6.30pm the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism shall present the fourth volume of the series “Lives Remembered. Life Stories of Victims of National Socialism”, dealing with “Exile in Asia”, in cooperation with the MAK – the Austrian Museum for Applied Arts / Modern Art at the MAK FORUM.

The journalist Sybille Hamann will guide the audience through the evening. Following some words of welcome from the curator of the MAK’s Asia collection, Johannes Wieninger the event shall be introduced by Secretary General Hannah Lessing. Renate S. Meissner, editor of the series, will then present the book to the public. To follow, Sybille Hamann will lead a group discussion with three survivors’ children, Lilian Kauders, Irma Schwarz and Ruth Steiner, as well as the historian Margit Franz. They will discuss individual fates and things that were specific to exile in Asia.

Volume 4 is the second of four planned volumes in the series “Lives Remembered” which deals with life in exile beyond Europe’s borders. The three-part edition documents 23 life stories, spanning almost 1,000 pages, of people who found short-term or permanent refuge in China (Shanghai, Hong Kong, Beijing), India, Burma (present-day Myanmar), Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines. Certain political events, such as the Japanese occupation of several of these countries, meant that some escapees were to fall victim to persecution a second time. The stories are complemented by a wealth of historical and recent photos from private archives.

A guest contribution by the historian and expert on German-speaking exile in India, Mag. Dr. Margit Franz, illuminates the special situation in Asia, the political (colonial) and cultural backgrounds and the circumstances and networks that had an effect on and among the refugee society.

The Secretary General of the National Fund, Hannah Lessing had already presented the three-part volume 4 in Hong Kong and Shanghai during her business trip to East Asia last week. During this trip, on 25 November 2015 a memorial plaque co-funded by the National Fund was unveiled at the Jewish Refugees Museum in Shanghai. The plaque recalls the 2,000 Austrian Jews who fled to Shanghai between 1938 and 1941. In her speech, Lessing highlighted the plaque’s ability to build bridges, between the past and the present as well as between Europe and Asia.

The series “Lives Remembered” is intended for all interested readers, but above all it is aimed at school and university students in Austria. Over 36,000 copies of the three foregoing volumes have been distributed to Austrian schools for use in class. Volumes 1 and 2 are now out of print; volume 1 is available as an e-book, volume 2 can be downloaded on the website of the National Fund as a PDF. Volumes 3 and 4 can be purchased from the National Fund at cost price.



Presentation introducing volume 4 of the series “Lives Remembered” on the subject of ‘Exile in Asia’ in the MAK Forum on 1 December 2015.
Photo: Nationalfonds

APPLICANT STATISTICS BY COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE





Country of residence	Compensation of assets	<i>In rem</i> restitution	Gesture payment	Compensation for seized tenancy rights
USA	6,795	822	11,073	8,610
Austria	3,802	225	8,450	3,810
Israel	3,160	254	4,261	3,477
Great Britain	2,180	211	3,315	2,454
Australia	1,178	114	1,544	1,246
Canada	554	52	757	601
Argentina	535	32	460	367
France	406	44	511	411
Germany	349	49	346	255
Switzerland	229	21	318	235
Serbia	33	67	14	493
Sweden	137	17	200	153
Brazil	119	19	188	139
Belgium	114	11	172	129
Uruguay	91	4	107	85
Hungary	118	8	68	67
Czech Republic	123	4	82	48
Chile	64	3	104	74
Poland	33	2	109	5

* This table shows in which countries at least 100 applicants to the National Fund or the General Settlement Fund are/were resident. Persons who have filed several applications in different proceedings are, accordingly, listed several times. Persons whose applications had to be rejected are also included.

