

Press folder
**NATIONAL FUND AND
CEMETERIES FUND**

“We acknowledge all the facts of our history and the deeds of all sections of our people, the good and the evil; and just as we take credit for the good, we must also apologise for the evil – to the survivors and to the descendants of the dead.”

Excerpt from the speech made by Dr Franz Vranitzky before the National Council on 8 July 1991
Taken from the stenographic minutes of the 35th session of the National Council

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INTRODUCTION

In 1995, on the 50th anniversary of the Second Republic, the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism was established at the Austrian Parliament as a belated expression of Austria's special responsibility towards the victims of National Socialism. Its establishment only became possible once the Austrian stance towards the Nazi era had evolved: from viewing Austria as the first country to fall victim to Hitlerite aggression, to a more nuanced perspective that takes account of the involvement of many Austrians in the crimes of the Nazis.

In a 1991 speech before the National Council, Federal Chancellor Franz Vranitzky emphasised Austria's historical responsibility and, on behalf of the Federal Government, promised help to all those who had not yet received adequate consideration.

Some 30,000 survivors from Austria living around the world have since accepted a gesture payment from Austria. Providing recognition and support for survivors is a key task of the National Fund, as well as advising the victims of National Socialism and their families.

In 2001 the Washington Agreement was concluded between Austria and the United States of America. It laid the foundation for restitution and compensation measures to be implemented by two funds, both administered by the National Fund: the General Settlement Fund for Victims of National Socialism and the Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries in Austria.

Other undertakings are also an expression of Austria's special responsibility, such as the renewal and running of the Austrian exhibition at Auschwitz-Birkenau, the awarding of the Simon Wiesenthal Prize and tasks involving the restitution of looted art and the Shoah Wall of Names Memorial in Vienna.

In 2024, the tasks of the National Fund were extended once more. New tasks include providing financial support for memorial servants and international exchange programmes for young people, creating a memorial for Roma and Sinti victims of the Holocaust, developing a platform and holding an annual conference to intensify the exchange of information and cooperation with other national and international organisations and institutions involved in coming to terms with the Nazi period and prevention work.



FIGURES, DATES AND FACTS

THE NATIONAL FUND

The National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism was established in 1995 to express the special responsibility of the Republic of Austria towards the victims of National Socialism from Austria. The Fund makes payments to victims of the Nazi regime, in particular to those who have previously received little or no compensation, those who are in special need of assistance and those whose personal circumstances warrant relief.

Payments to Nazi victims:

The National Fund makes a so-called gesture payment to surviving victims of National Socialism. The amount of 5,087.10 euros (originally 70,000 schillings) is intended as a symbolic acknowledgement of the injustices suffered. This payment acknowledges all victims of National Socialism, including victims who remained insufficiently or unacknowledged in Austria for many years, such as Roma and Sinti, the "Children of Spiegelgrund", victims of Nazi court martial or homosexuals.

178 million euros in payments to Nazi victims

Statistical breakdown of payments made to Nazi victims by the National Fund

As at: 18 November 2024

Payment type	Start date	Completion date	Quantity	Euros*
Gesture payment	1995	ongoing	30,317	154,206,000
Extraordinary gesture payment ¹	2023	ongoing	3,413	17,355,600
Additional payment on grounds of special need	1996	ongoing	964	4,868,416
Hardship Compensation Fund ²	2000	2021	100	508,700
Looted Gold Fund ³	1999	2010	48	244,200
Income from the disposition of art ⁴	2012	ongoing	43	219,096
Total	1995	ongoing	34,867	177,402,000

* Totals rounded

¹ On 20 September 2023, the Austrian Federal Government decided to provide additional financial support to all living victims of National Socialism from Austria. Among other things, the resolution provided for an extraordinary gesture payment of 5,087.10 euros to be made to all victims of National Socialism from Austria officially recognised as such under National Fund criteria.

² In May 1999, the Hardship Compensation Fund was created by the Board of Trustees of the National Fund. It was endowed with 508,710 euros (7 million Austrian schillings at that time) from the project funding budget of the National Fund. The Hardship Compensation Fund catered for aggrieved persons whose application for a gesture payment met many but not all of the criteria, and for whom the rejection of their application constituted a particular hardship.

³ In 1998, the National Fund was entrusted with distributing the means of the Looted Gold Fund. This Fund was endowed with means arising from several nations' waiver of their share in the residue of the so-called looted gold. The National Fund administered the Austrian share of this money. These funds were used to sponsor projects and to make payments to needy Holocaust survivors. The Fund was exhausted in 2010.

⁴ 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. The National Fund makes payments from these proceeds to individuals who incurred damage to their health or suffered loss of freedom, property or income as a result of Nazi persecution targeted at them directly, if they were of Austrian origin or were forced to leave the country or have a similar connection to Austria.

34,767
 4,175,288,823
 175,402,000
 2,961

Compensation for seized tenancy rights:

From 2001 to 30 June 2004, victims of National Socialism could apply to receive compensation for seized tenancy rights, household effects and personal valuables. The compensation took the form of a lump sum of 7,630 euros or

7,000 US dollars and an additional payment of 1,000 euros per person. The filing period ended on 30 June 2004 and the payments to compensate seized tenancy rights have been completed.

Statistical breakdown of the compensation for seized tenancy rights

As at: 18 November 2024

Payment	Start date	Completion date	Quantity	Euros*
Basic amount	2001	2019	20,351	154,793,800
Hardship cases	2002	2009	119	853,400
Additional payments	2004	2021	19,841	19,641,500
Total	2001	2021	40,311	175,288,800

*Totals rounded

Project funding:

The National Fund has been funding projects in accordance with its statutory mandate since 1996. All victim groups under National Socialism are taken into consideration when awarding project funding. Project funding is covered by the National Fund's budget; until 2010, funds from the International

Fund for Victims of National Socialism ("Looted Gold Fund") were also available for project funding. By 2019, the entire residue from the compensation for seized tenancy rights had been used to subsidise programmes benefiting victims of National Socialism.

Statistical breakdown of project funding

As at: 18 November 2024

2,961 projects and programmes

Source	Start date	Completion date	Quantity*	Euros**
National Fund budget	1995	ongoing	2,710	29,133,200
Residual funds under Sec. 2b of the NF Law	2013	2019	53	2,231,700
Looted Gold Fund	1999	2009	197	8,371,500
Total	1995	ongoing	2,961	39,736,400

* Number of funded projects and programmes that have been approved and paid out.

** Totals rounded

THE CEMETERIES FUND

In December 2010, the Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries in Austria was established in order to meet Austria's obligation under international law to restore and maintain the Jewish cemeteries in Austria, as set out in

the Washington Agreement. For this purpose, the Federal Government allocates an annual amount of 1.2 million euros to the Fund, which is established at the National Council.

List of Jewish cemetery restorations subsidised by the Cemeteries Fund

Status: 22. November 2024

Jewish cemetery	Federal province	Start date	Completion date	Subsidies in euros*
Baden	Lower Austria	2017	2016	1,388,600
Central Cemetery Gate 1	Vienna	2014	ongoing	1,227,500
Central Cemetery Gate 4	Vienna	2014	ongoing	1,572,600
Deutschkreutz	Burgenland	2011	2016	78,300
Göttsbach an der Ybbs	Lower Austria	2014	2016	189,600
Graz	Styria	2014	2022	1,296,700
Hohenems	Vorarlberg	2013	2021	180,000
Klosterneuburg	Lower Austria	2017	2021	504,900
Kobersdorf	Burgenland	2014	2017	580,800
Lackenbach	Burgenland	2014	2017	424,500
Linz	Upper Austria	2020	2022	1,560,900
Mattersburg	Burgenland	2024	ongoing	682,000
Mistelbach	Lower Austria	2019	ongoing	80,200
Oberstockstall	Lower Austria	2020	2023	182,600
St. Pölten	Lower Austria	2022	2024	876,900
Stockerau	Lower Austria	2011	2016	123,000
Währing	Vienna	2017	ongoing	2,362,100
Waidhofen an der Thaya	Lower Austria	2020	2023	448,800
Total				13,760,000

* Totals rounded

13,760,000

THE GENERAL SETTLEMENT FUND

The General Settlement Fund for Victims of National Socialism, which was established in 2001, was dissolved in 2022 after its tasks had been fully completed. The Fund was tasked with comprehensively resolving open questions relating to the compensation of victims of National Socialism and recognising Austria's moral responsibility for property losses suffered by victims of the Nazi regime in Austria between 1938 and 1945 by making voluntary payments. People who experienced Nazi property seizures firsthand and their legal successors were eligible to apply.

Statistical breakdown of the compensation payments

As at: 14 November 2019

Payments	Start date	Completion date	Quantity	US dollars*
Advance payment ¹	2005	2009	18,169	161,519,000
Closing payment ²	2009	2019	22,322	53,524,900
Total	2005	2019	40,491	215,043,900

* Totals rounded

¹ It was originally intended that the means of the General Settlement Fund be distributed after a decision had been made on all applications. Once the value of all merited claims had been determined, the 210 million US dollars was to have been distributed in the form of a *pro rata* allocation for each of these claims. In view of the advanced age of many applicants, the General Settlement Fund Law was amended in 2005 (Federal Law Gazette I 142/2005), following the proclamation of legal closure. This enabled proportional advance payments to be made to the applicants whose losses had already been determined. In late 2005, the first "provisional payments" (advance payments) were able to be disbursed to the applicants.

² Due to the necessity of valuing all merited claims in order to determine the final quotas for the compensation, the General Settlement Fund Law was once again amended in 2009 (Federal Law Gazette I 54/2009) to prevent the closing payments for the elderly applicants being further delayed by the few complex cases that were still being processed. As a result, closing payments could be made before all applications had been decided on.

In rem restitution:

From 2001 to 2021, the Arbitration Panel for *In Rem* Restitution, established at the General Settlement Fund, decided on applications for the restitution of publicly-owned property. The Arbitration Panel received a total of 2,307 applications.

The processing of applications was completed on 30 November 2018 and the last filing period to have proceedings reopened expired at the end of August 2020. The Arbitration Panel for *In Rem* Restitution granted a total of 140 applications for *in rem* restitution. All of the Arbitration Panel's restitution recommendations were implemented by the public owners.

Compensation for seized assets:

Out of a total of 20,702 applicants, 9,650 (47%) filed claims as heirs of persecuted persons and 11,052 (53%) also claimed for their own losses. The filing period to receive monetary compensation from the General Settlement Fund ended on 28 May 2003. The applications were decided by the independent Claims Committee, which was dissolved in 2017.

**Applications filed
by 20,702 persons**

The total value of the real estate recommended for restitution came to an estimated 48 million euros, of which 9.8 million euros was awarded in the form of a comparable asset (monetary compensation).

40,491
215,043,900
9,650
11,052



VICTIM RECOGNITION AND GESTURE PAYMENTS

The National Fund was established to express Austria's responsibility towards all victims of National Socialism. It provides benefits to survivors, regardless of why they were persecuted – whether on political grounds, on grounds of origin, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, a physical or mental disability, due to accusations of "asociality", or because they were victims of typical Nazi injustice in some other form.

Victims of National Socialism receive official recognition of their status in the form of a symbolic payment, the so-called gesture payment, made in the amount of 5,087.10 euros (originally 70,000 Austrian Schillings) per person. Since 1995, over 30,000 people worldwide have received a gesture payment from the National Fund.



The National Fund's archive documents Nazi persecution and the bureaucracy of confiscation and seizure, as well as the earlier compensation and restitution measures that were put in place after 1945. Personal documents belonging to the Fund's applicants provide a compelling insight into the events of the time and their significance for those affected and for Austria.



Clockwise from top left: The Secretary General of the National Fund Hannah Lessing at the Austrian Embassy in Washington D.C. in 2010; at the ceremony to mark the 20th anniversary of the National Fund held at the Parliament in 2015; at the wreath-laying ceremony in Yad Vashem, Jerusalem in 2011; and in 2016 with students of the High School BG/BRG Baden at the Parliament's Democracy Workshop.

Since 2023, around 3,300 Holocaust survivors from Austria have received a further, so-called extraordinary gesture payment in the same amount. In total the National Fund has made gesture payments of around 172.5 million euros.

Survivors in particular need of assistance can apply to receive additional payments. Since 1996 around 4.8 million euros has been used to help needy Holocaust survivors.

[www.nationalfonds.org/
victims-recognition](http://www.nationalfonds.org/victims-recognition)



PROJECT FUNDING



Project funding has been a central activity of the National Fund from the outset. It caters to all victim groups that were subjected to Nazi persecution.

Emphasis is placed on social and medical projects for survivors from Austria.

Funding is also awarded to projects that undertake scientific research into Nazism and the fate of its victims, call to mind Nazi injustice or preserve the memory of the victims, such as school projects and workshops, exhibitions, art projects, film productions, academic projects, publications, opera and theatre projects and memorials.



"Stones of remembrance" in Barankapark in Vienna's tenth district.

Get-together in Café Centropa.



To date, the National Fund has sponsored over 2,900 projects and programmes in over 20 countries worldwide, in the amount of approx. 40 million euros (as at November 2024).

[www.nationalfonds.org/
project-funding](http://www.nationalfonds.org/project-funding)





ART RESTITUTION

The Art Restitution Act of 1998 provided the National Fund with a legal mandate to monetise “heirless” art and cultural objects from the museums and collections owned by the Republic of Austria and use the proceeds to benefit the victims of Nazism.

In 2006 an art database was set up to help victims of Nazi art theft and their descendants conduct a targeted search for looted art. The database contains information on 9,400 objects from the collections of twenty cooperating partners, including federal and provincial museums and universities.

In accordance with the Art Restitution Act, the Austrian National Library restituted “heirless” books acquired illegally during the Nazi era to the National Fund and subsequently repurchased them. In the picture from left to right: The Director General of the Austrian National Library, Johanna Rachinger, President of the National Council Wolfgang Sobotka and the Secretary General of the National Fund, Hannah Lessing at the commemoration ceremony in December 2018.



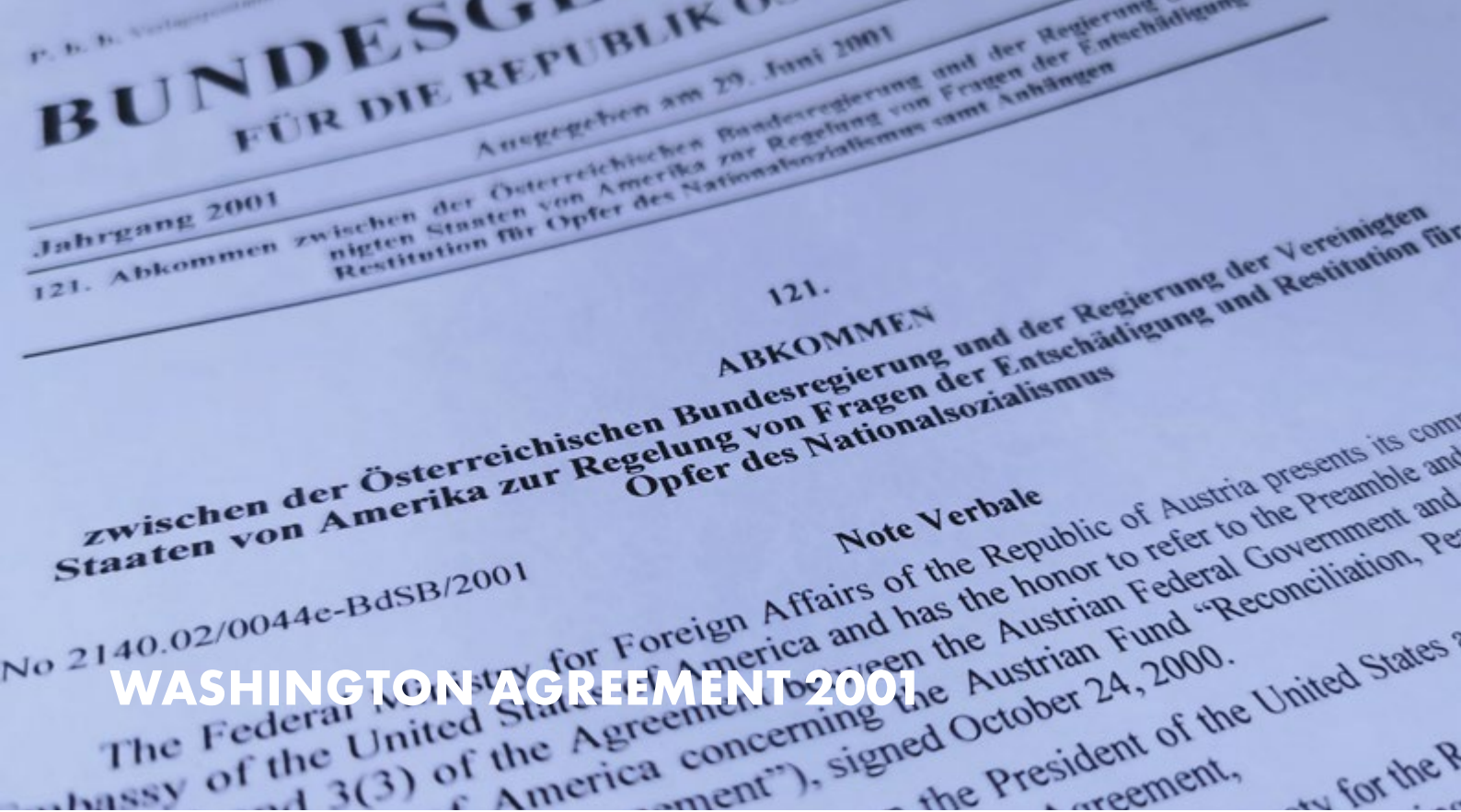
Left: Sledge figurehead from the Vienna Museum for Folk Life and Folk Art in the art database (questionable status still to be clarified). Right: Signing an agreement with the University of Vienna, with which the university transferred “heirless” art objects and books to the National Fund in 2017 and repurchased them.

The National Fund also provides assistance to provenance researchers at museums and collections and helps them to trace legal successors and establish contacts with Austrian institutions.

If, despite intensive research, the rightful heirs to art and cultural objects cannot be found, the items are transferred to the National Fund to be monetised. Ten thousand books from the National Library and numerous art objects from various collections have been monetised in this way. The proceeds raised are used for programmes benefitting the victims of National Socialism.

www.kunstdatenbank.at

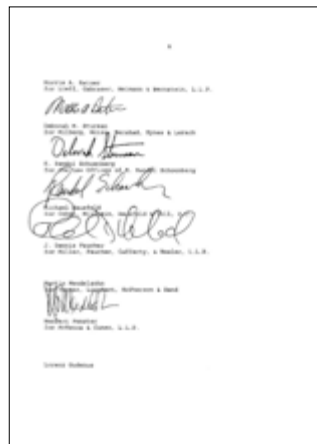




On 17 January 2001 representatives of the Republic of Austria, the United States of America and Nazi victims' organisations signed the "Joint Statement" in Washington D.C. This formed the basis for the "Agreement between the Austrian Federal Government and the Government of the United States of America on the Settlement of Questions of Compensation and Restitution for Victims of National Socialism". This international treaty set out concrete measures to benefit the Nazis' victims in a ten-item annex. Many of these measures were or are implemented by the National Fund of the Republic of Austria, the General Settlement Fund and the Fund for the Restoration of Jewish Cemeteries in Austria.



An historic moment: US chief negotiator Stuart Eizenstat and the representatives of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims, Israel Singer and Gideon Taylor, (from left to right) at the signing of the Joint Statement in Washington on 17 January 2001.



The first and the last three pages of the Joint Statement.

www.nationalfonds.org/washington-agreement





COMPENSATION FOR SEIZED TENANCY RIGHTS

According to the calculations of the Austrian Historical Commission, by April 1945 more than 59,000 rented apartments in Vienna had been "aryanised": many Jewish tenants were evicted and moved into collective housing from where they were deported to extermination camps. In 1948, a law on the restitution of tenancy and property rights was negotiated but never enacted.

Since 2001, the National Fund has awarded survivors compensation totalling around 175 million euros for the loss of property rights to apartments and commercial premises, household effects and personal valuables. These awards took the form of a lump sum payment in the amount of 7,630 euro and an additional payment in the amount of 1,000 euros per person. The remaining funds were used for programmes benefitting the victims of National Socialism.

Seized tenancy rights compensation

7,630 euros	20,344 persons
1,000 euros	19,623 persons



www.nationalfonds.org/compensation-for-seized-tenancy-rights





CLAIMS COMMITTEE COMPENSATION OF ASSETS

The General Settlement Fund for Victims of National Socialism was established in 2001 on the basis of the Washington Agreement. Its objective was to provide a comprehensive solution to open questions of compensation for losses and damages incurred by Nazi victims as a consequence of or in connection with events that occurred on the territory of the present-day Republic of Austria during the Nazi era.

The Fund had the task of expressing Austria's moral responsibility for asset losses suffered by victims of the Nazi regime in Austria between 1938 and 1945 in the form of ex gratia payments. This applied to losses which had not been (adequately) dealt with by previous Austrian restitution or compensation measures.



The Final Report by the Claims Committee of the General Settlement Fund for Victims of National Socialism provides an insight into one of the largest Austrian compensation projects after 1945: Allgemeiner Entschädigungsfonds für Opfer des Nationalsozialismus (ed.), Schlussbericht des Antragskomitees des Allgemeinen Entschädigungsfonds, Vienna 2020 (currently only available in German).



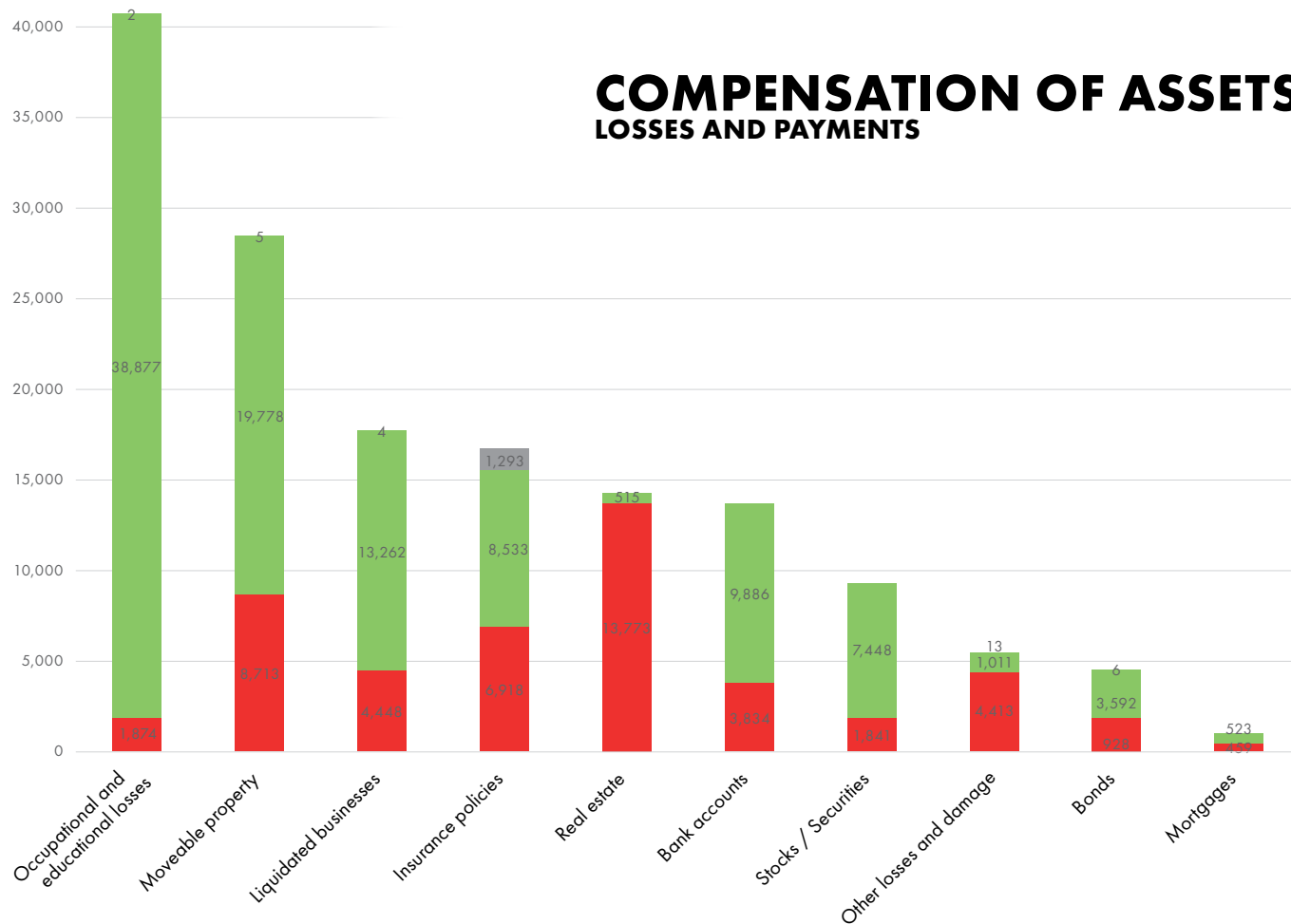
The Claims Committee of the General Settlement Fund, (from left to right) Kurt Hofmann († 2020), Sir Franklin Berman, G. Jonathan Greenwald. The Claims Committee was dissolved in 2017 following the completion of its tasks.

The amounts awarded were based on the individually determined asset losses and payments were made in proportion to the total amount available (pro rata payments). An independent, internationally-composed Claims Committee decided on 20,702 applications containing approximately 150,000 individual claims. Some 25,000 Nazi victims or their heirs received compensation payments totalling around 215 million US dollars.

[www.entschaedigungsfonds.org/
monetary-compensation](http://www.entschaedigungsfonds.org/monetary-compensation)

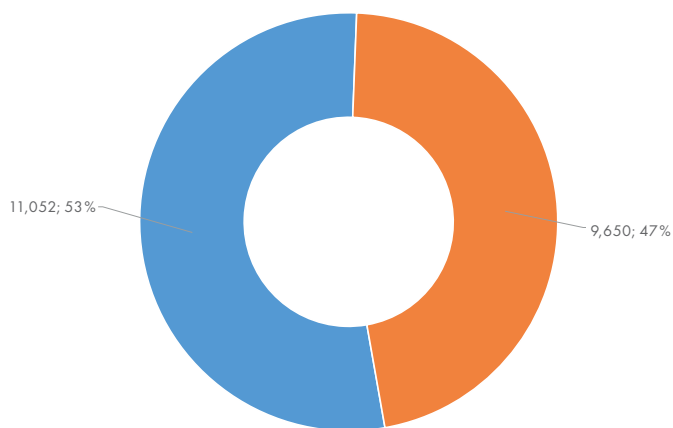


COMPENSATION OF ASSETS LOSSES AND PAYMENTS



The Claims Committee of the General Settlement Fund could award compensation for individual losses and damage in ten different categories. This task was incomparably more complex than other national or international compensation measures, where claims could be filed in just a few categories of assets or compensation was awarded in lump sums.

In total, the Claims Committee decided on 151,949 claims – over two thirds of which were accepted. Around 32 % related to occupational and educational losses, a further 22 % to liquidated businesses and around 15 % involved stocks and securities. The remaining 31 % were distributed among the other categories of assets.



The diagram above shows the asset categories in which claims were made and how many of them were granted (green), rejected (red) or not decided on (grey) by the Claims Committee. Most of the merited claims related to occupational and educational losses (38,877), movable property (19,778) and liquidated businesses (13,262). These results reflect Austrian post-war restitution policy, which followed the principle of only restituting assets that still existed after 1945. The majority of rejected claims concerned real estate (13,773), most of which had already been dealt with by earlier restitution measures and had been restituted or compensated in a financial settlement.

Applicants before the Claims Committee n=20,702, applicants as heirs (orange) or the originally injured party (blue). Out of a total of 20,702 persons, 9,650 (47 %) applied for compensation as heirs of persecuted persons and 11,052 (53 %) also requested compensation for losses they had incurred personally.

www.entschaedigungsfonds.org/monetary-compensation



THE ARBITRATION PANEL FOR *IN REM* RESTITUTION



The Arbitration Panel for In Rem Restitution was established on the basis of the Washington Agreement of 2001 and could recommend the restitution of real estate, superstructures, and the moveable assets of Jewish communal organizations, if they had been seized between 1938 and 1945 and were publicly owned on 17 January 2001.

In cases where the claim to restitution had already been decided on by Austrian courts or administrative bodies or settled by agreement, the Arbitration Panel could only recommend in rem restitution if it considered the prior measure in question to have constituted an “extreme injustice”.



Topographical distribution of the requested properties according to cadastral districts, online at maps.nationalfonds.org/sigis.

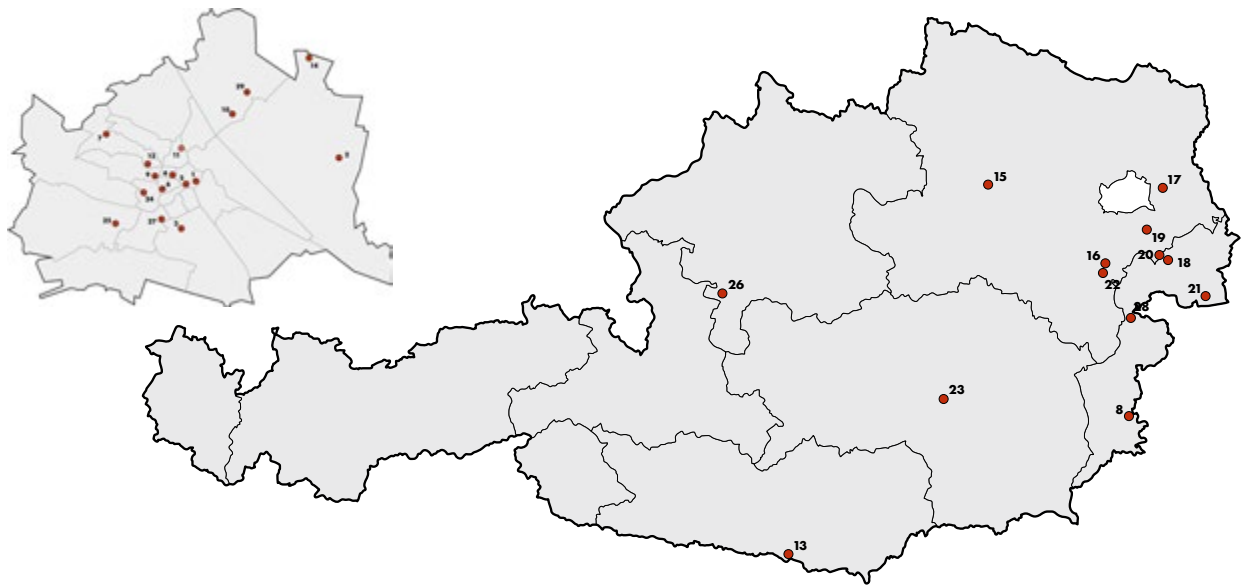
In total, the Arbitration Panel issued 1,582 decisions and was dissolved in 2021 having completed its tasks. Its decisions are published in anonymous form in a bilingual (German and English) database on the website of the General Settlement Fund. Since 2008 the decisions of the Arbitration Panel have also been published in a bilingual book series.



The book series and the Final Report of the Arbitration Panel for In Rem Restitution

[www.entschaedigungsfonds.org](https://www.entschaedigungsfonds.org/in-rem-restitution)
/in-rem-restitution





RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ARBITRATION PANEL FOR *IN REM* RESTITUTION

In total, the Arbitration Panel granted 140 applications for in rem restitution of confiscated real estate and recommended the return of publicly-owned property with a total value of approx. 48 million euros. Every one of its recommendations was implemented by the public owners.

The images of Vienna and Austria above show the location of the properties recommended for *in rem* restitution. The red dots indicate the location of the properties. The numbers correspond to those in the table below, which lists the decisions chronologically according to date of issue and with the federal province and cadastral district.

Number	Decision number/s	Federal province, cadastral district
1	3/2003	Vienna, Innere Stadt
2	24/2005	Vienna, Aspern
3	25/2005, 25a/2005	Vienna, Inzersdorf-Stadt
4	27/2005, 27a/2006, 27c/2008	Vienna, Josefstadt
5	88/2006, 88a/2006, 88b/2007	Vienna, Innere Stadt
6	89/2006, 89a/2006, 550/2009, 550a/2009	Vienna, Neubau
7	206/2006, 206a/2008	Vienna, Neuwaldegg
8	WA1/2007	Burgenland, Althodis, Neuhodis Markt
9	WA2/2007, WA2a/2008	Vienna, Neulerchenfeld
10	481/2008, 481a/2008	Vienna, Donauefeld
11	482/2008, 482a/2009	Vienna, Alsergrund
12	507/2008	Vienna, Hernals
13	533/2009	Carinthia, Steindorf
14	643/2010, 643a/2010	Vienna, Süssenbrunn
15	654/2010, 654a/2010	Lower Austria, Willendorf
16	700/2010, 700a/2011	Lower Austria, Bad Vöslau
17	735/2011, 735a/2011	Lower Austria, Markgrafneusiedl
18	737/2011, 737a/2011	Lower Austria, Sommerein
19	872/2012, 872a/2013	Lower Austria, Schwechat
20	961/2013, 961a/2013	Lower Austria, Sommerein
21	977/2013, 977a/2014	Burgenland, Frauenkirchen
22	1005/2013, 1005a/2014	Lower Austria, Kottlingbrunn
23	1034/2014, 1034a/2015	Styria, Judendorf
24	1106/2015, 1106a/2015	Vienna, Rudolfsheim
25	1121/2015, 1121a/2015, WA14/2016, 1121b/2016, 1121c/2016	Vienna, Hietzing
26	1135/2015, WA13/2015, WA13a/2016	Upper Austria, Steinbach am Attersee
27	1151/2015, 1151a/2016	Vienna, Meidling
28	1160/2016, 1160a/2016	Burgenland, Mattersburg
29	1526/2018, 1526a/2018	Vienna, Leopoldau





19,624

historical land register extracts



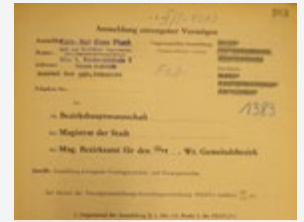
17,315

property notices



10,902

enquiries made with insurance archives



8,159

files on the "Ordinance on the Notification of Seized Property"

HISTORICAL RESEARCH AT THE GENERAL SETTLEMENT FUND

The historical research carried out at the General Settlement Fund formed an indispensable basis for the legal processing of the applications. In order to ensure the equal treatment of all applicants, care was taken to ensure that the same, in part very extensive, source material in archives was taken into account in each case. When special questions arose, the historians undertook specific, case-related research.

In total, the historical research department obtained **41,796** files and documents from archives, **19,624** historical land register excerpts, and carried out insurance policy research **10,902** times.



In addition, research was carried out using guardianship, victims' welfare and probate files, files from the office of the "Liquidation Commissar", from the holdings of the Assistance Fund at the Archives of the Republic (Austrian State Archives), extracts from the register of associations, residents' files, citizenship records, and files from the holdings of the Federal Office for the Protection of Monuments.

www.entschaedigungsfonds.org



4,864

files of the Compensation Fund



3,404

files from other holdings of the Provincial Archives



5,750

registration queries



1,545

excerpts from the trade register



582

excerpts from the commercial register



462

files of the Property Transaction Office



3,595

files of the Financial Directorates



1,486

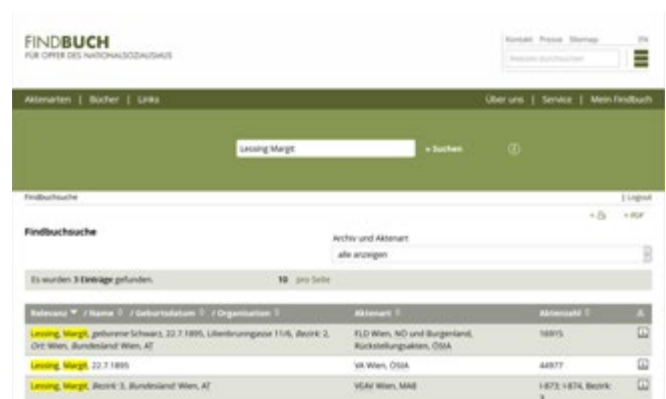
files of the Collection Agencies A and B



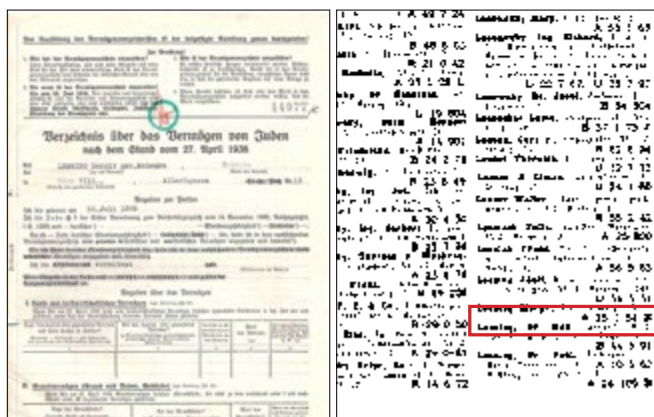
FINDBUCH FOR VICTIMS OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM

The *Findbuch* (“finding aid”) can be accessed at www.findbuch.at and enables users to search Austrian archives for material on Nazi property seizures and Austrian restitution and compensation measures. It currently contains over 215,000 records from the Austrian State Archives and the Provincial Archives of Burgenland, Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Salzburg, Styria, Carinthia, Tyrol and Vienna.

The *Findbuch* contains the most comprehensive collection of personal information on those topics. It is intended to encourage people to come to terms with Nazism and its aftermath in Austria, both in terms of family history and at an academic, educational and societal level.



The search for Margit Lessing in the *Findbuch* database yields three hits. This makes it possible, among other things, to locate Margit Lessing’s property notice, which is kept at the Austrian State Archives.

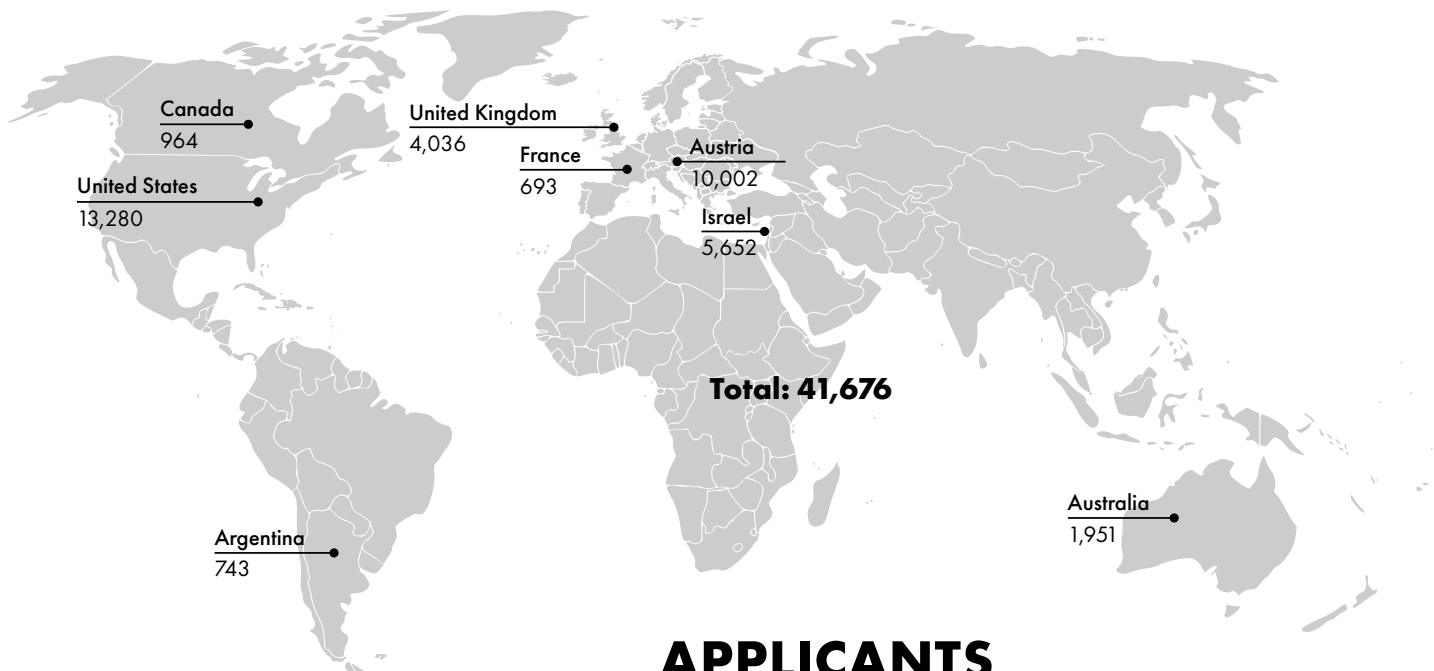


Left: property notice of Margit Lessing (born 22 July 1895) from the year 1938. Right: residential address of Margit Lessing in the “Official customer directory of the Vienna telephone network, May 1938” (telephone directory).

In addition, the *Findbuch* contains 25,000 digitised pages of historical address directories and official handbooks on public offices and institutions, which can be consulted to facilitate research on private individuals, commercial enterprises, authorities responsible for the Nazi property confiscation and on restitution after 1945. The series “Wiedergutmachungsgesetze” – an annotated collection of Austrian restitution laws published by Manz Publishers between 1946 and 1954 – is also available on the website.

www.findbuch.at



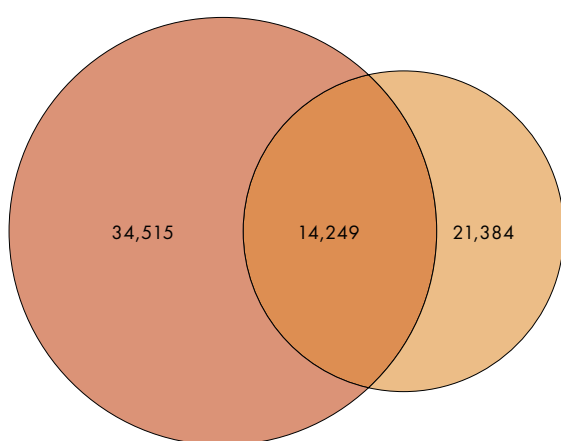


APPLICANTS NATIONAL FUND AND GENERAL SETTLEMENT FUND

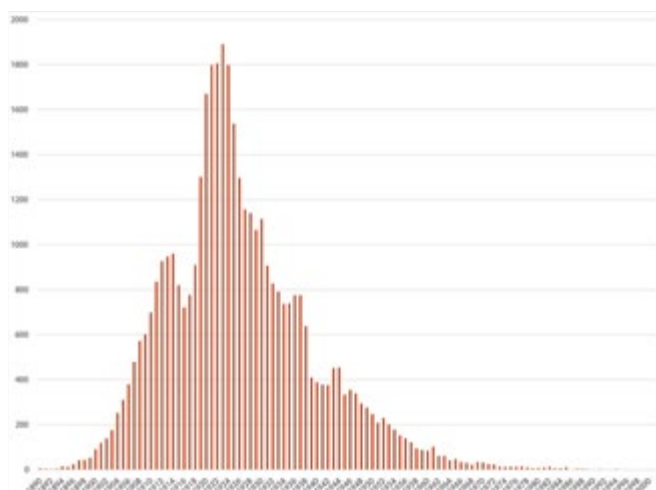
The applicants of the National Fund and the General Settlement Fund live or lived in over 80 countries around the world. The overwhelming majority of Austrians who fled persecution in Austria during the Nazi era did not return, but remained in their countries of refuge and exile after the war ended in 1945. The country in which most applicants live is the USA, followed by Austria, Israel, Great Britain, Australia, Canada, Argentina and France.

Since 1995, more than 34,000 persons have contacted the National Fund and submitted an application. Around two thirds of the applicants to the National Fund also submitted an application to the General Settlement Fund: a total of 2,307 applications have been filed for in rem restitution and 20,702 for compensation of asset losses.

The world map above shows the countries in which applicants of the National Fund and the General Settlement Fund live or lived.



The number of persons who filed applications with the National Fund, with the General Settlement Fund and with both Funds. Left circle: applicants to the National Fund (34,515); Right circle: applicants to the General Settlement Fund (21,384); Intersection: number of persons who have filed an application with both the National Fund and the General Settlement Fund (14,249).



Applicants to the National Fund and the General Settlement Fund by year of birth. All applicants born between 1890 and 2000 are included.

www.nationalfonds.org





AUSTRIAN EXHIBITION AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU

In October 2021 the new Austrian exhibition opened in Block 17 of the former concentration and extermination camp and present Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum.

The exhibition portrays the fates of the Austrian victims of Auschwitz and the involvement of Austrians as perpetrators of the crimes committed there. As a place of remembrance and learning, it is hoped that it will help foster understanding and dialogue between the generations and people with different religious, national and ethnic backgrounds.



The new exhibition "Far Removed. Austria and Auschwitz" is on display in Block 17.



Images of the new exhibition. Below right: Items hidden by inmates that were discovered in April 2020 during the renovation of Block 17.

The original exhibition, which opened in 1978, largely glossed over the role played by Austrians in Nazi atrocities. Therefore, the Austrian Government entrusted the National Fund with the task of renewing the content and design of the exhibition and overseeing the restoration of the listed building that houses the exhibition. Following a pan-European call to tender the National Fund appointed a team led by curators Hannes Sulzenbacher and Albert Lichtblau to conceive and architect Martin Kohlbauer to design the new exhibition.

The National Fund is responsible for overseeing the content of the exhibition, ensuring its day-to-day operation and running the exhibition website.

www.auschwitz.at





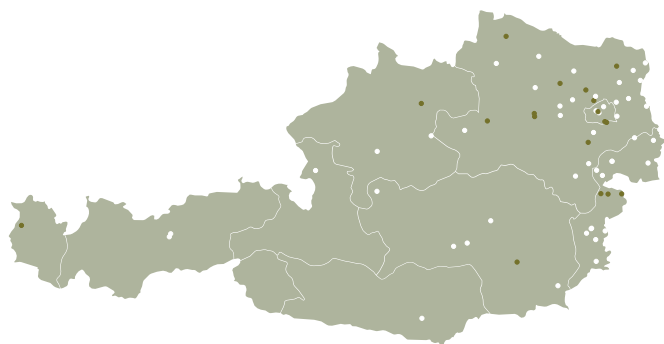
THE RESTORATION OF JEWISH CEMETERIES

Jewish cemeteries are special places of remembrance; many of them are of significant cultural and historical value. During the years of Nazi rule, countless graves were desecrated, the names of the dead extinguished. Following the expulsion of the Jewish communities and the murder of their members, for decades the Jewish cemeteries in Austria were left to fall into decay.

In the Washington Agreement concluded with the USA, Austria undertook to provide additional support for the restoration and maintenance of known and unknown Jewish cemeteries in Austria.



The pictures above show the Tahara house at Baden Cemetery following its restoration. Below them are the cemeteries in Kobersdorf (left) and Lackenback (right), both of which have been restored.



This map shows the locations of the Jewish cemeteries in Austria. The green dots denote Jewish cemeteries that have been or are being restored using funding from the Jewish Cemeteries Fund.

In December 2010 the Federal Act on the Establishment of the Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries in Austria marked a decisive step in the domestic implementation of that international legal obligation. With the support of this Fund, by 2050 over 60 Jewish cemeteries throughout Austria will have been saved from falling into a state of disrepair. The Austrian government provides an annual sum of 1.2 million euros for this purpose.

www.friedhofsfonds.org





THE SIMON WIESENTHAL PRIZE

After surviving the Nazi concentration camps, Simon Wiesenthal (1908–2005) dedicated his life to hunting down Nazi criminals and bringing them to justice. Wiesenthal was also an advocate for vigilance and a tireless crusader against antisemitism. Austria bears a special historical responsibility and must remain watchful of the re-emergence of antisemitic tendencies. For this reason and to honour Wiesenthal's life's work, in 2020 the Austrian Parliament created the Simon Wiesenthal Prize for special civic engagement to combat antisemitism and to educate people about the Holocaust. This prize is awarded annually by the National Fund of the Republic of Austria and is endowed with 30,000 euros.

Both individuals and groups such as school projects, associations and others are eligible to enter.



The members of the Simon Wiesenthal Prize Jury sit for the duration of one legislative term. The current jury members are: Brigitte Bailer, Oskar Deutsch, Ariel Muzicant, Katharina von Schnurbein (Chairperson), Monika Schwarz-Friesel and Barbara Stelzl-Marx.



Group photo with the 2023 contemporary eyewitnesses and prize winners.

The prize winners are nominated by a jury and selected by the Board of Trustees of the National Fund. The Simon Wiesenthal Prize has been awarded since 2021. Around 200 applications are submitted to the National Fund every year from around the world. At the award ceremony, which takes place at the Parliament, tribute is also paid to contemporary eyewitnesses for their dedicated work.

www.wiesenthalprize.at





SHOAH WALL OF NAMES MEMORIAL

In November 2021, the “Memorial to the Jewish Children, Women and Men of Austria Who Were Murdered in the Shoah” was opened in Ostarrichipark, situated in the heart of Vienna. The 160 stone tablets are engraved with over 64,000 names and take the form of a generous oval covering an area of around 2,500 m2. They provide a central and peaceful place to remember the fates of those who were murdered and honor their lives.

The memorial was initiated by the Vienna-born survivor Kurt Yakov Tutter and the Association for the Building of a Wall of Names Memorial. The National Fund supported this initiative for many years and played a key role in its realization: it not only coordinated the memorial’s construction but also provided funding for the “List of Names of Austrian Holocaust Victims”, which was compiled by the Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance (DÖW) and formed the basis for the engravings.



Kurt Tutter, initiator of the memorial, pictured left as a child with nanny Bibi and sister Regi in a car in Vienna’s Prater, ca. 1935, and right at the inauguration of the Shoah Wall of Names Memorial in Ostarrichipark on 9 November 2021.



At the entrance, a stone tablet commemorates all other victim groups and individuals persecuted by the Nazi regime.

The costs for realizing the memorial – approx 5.3 million euros – were borne by the federal government, the Austrian federal provinces and a number of benefactors. Due to the historical significance of this memorial site, the City of Vienna and the National Fund have undertaken to share the responsibility of operating and maintaining the memorial.

The Shoah Wall of Names Memorial is a place of remembrance and learning from history, where regular guided tours take place that forge a connection with other memorial sites in the local area.

www.nationalfonds.org/shoah-wall-of-names-memorial





DOCUMENTING LIFE STORIES

The documentation and publication of life stories is of key importance to the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism. As the survivor generation dwindles, it becomes even more crucial to document these biographical recollections and make them available to a wider public, both as a valuable historical resource and in order to preserve the memory of the Nazis' victims. For many survivors and their families, the publication of their stories is perceived as a significant act of personal recognition.

The National Fund has been publishing the autobiographical testimonies of Holocaust survivors since the year 2000.

The online collection contains life stories in German and English, as well as videos in which Nazi victims relate their experiences.

The National Fund has been publishing the book series "Lives Remembered. Life Stories of Victims of National Socialism" since 2011. The series is distributed to libraries and archives in Austria and abroad and to schools throughout the country, where it can be put to versatile use in lessons.

Volume 6 of the book series "Lives Remembered. Life Stories of Victims of National Socialism" about "Survival in Auschwitz".



I thought that I had come to terms with the past and was stunned by how deep my wounds still are. [...] But writing it all down started a healing process. I feel that even if no one reads it now, it is on record for the future.

Margit Korn

[www.nationalfonds.org/
life-stories](http://www.nationalfonds.org/life-stories)



ONLINE DATABASES

The National Fund operates several online databases.

Projects funded by the National Fund:

The database documents the projects funded by the National Fund and contains a brief project description, information on the submitting institution, the project subject-matter and category as well as photos and the location of the project. The contents of the database are available in German and English, can be searched in full text and filtered according to various criteria.

www.nationalfonds.org/projects-sponsored



Decisions of the Arbitration Panel for *In Rem* Restitution:

This database contains the decisions of the Arbitration Panel for *In Rem* Restitution, which was established at the General Settlement Fund for Victims of National Socialism in 2001 and decided on applications for the restitution of real estate and movable assets of Jewish communal organisations in public ownership. The database documents all decisions of the Arbitration Panel in anonymised form in German and English. The contents of the database are available in both languages, they can be searched in full text and filtered according to various criteria.

www.entschaedigungsfonds.org/decisions



The Art Database:

The National Fund's art database contains information on around 9,400 objects in 19 federal and provincial collections and museums as well as other institutions. So far, restitution or a transfer of ownership has been recommended for 2,826 objects in the art database.

www.kunstdatenbank.at



The *Findbuch*:

The *Findbuch* for Victims of National Socialism currently contains over 215,000 data records from 35 file holdings in nine Austrian archives - including the Austrian State Archives and almost all Austrian provincial archives. The *Findbuch* also contains over 50 digitised historical address books and official calendars as well as printed sources amounting to around 22,000 digitised pages.

www.findbuch.at



Auschwitz Perpetrators and Victims:

The website of the new Austrian exhibition at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum includes a database of Austrians deported to Auschwitz with biographical information on 17,525 people and a database on Austrians among the guards and camp SS at Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp with biographical information on 163 people, as well as 41 biographical articles on Austrian victims and perpetrators in Auschwitz.

www.auschwitz.at



FOGIS:

The National Fund's geo-information system FOGIS geo-references on an interactive map all projects and programmes supported by the National Fund worldwide, around 1,600 decisions of the Arbitration Panel for *In Rem* Restitution, all Jewish cemeteries in Austria and the stones of remembrance for 4,289 people at 1,383 locations in Austria.

maps.nationalfonds.org

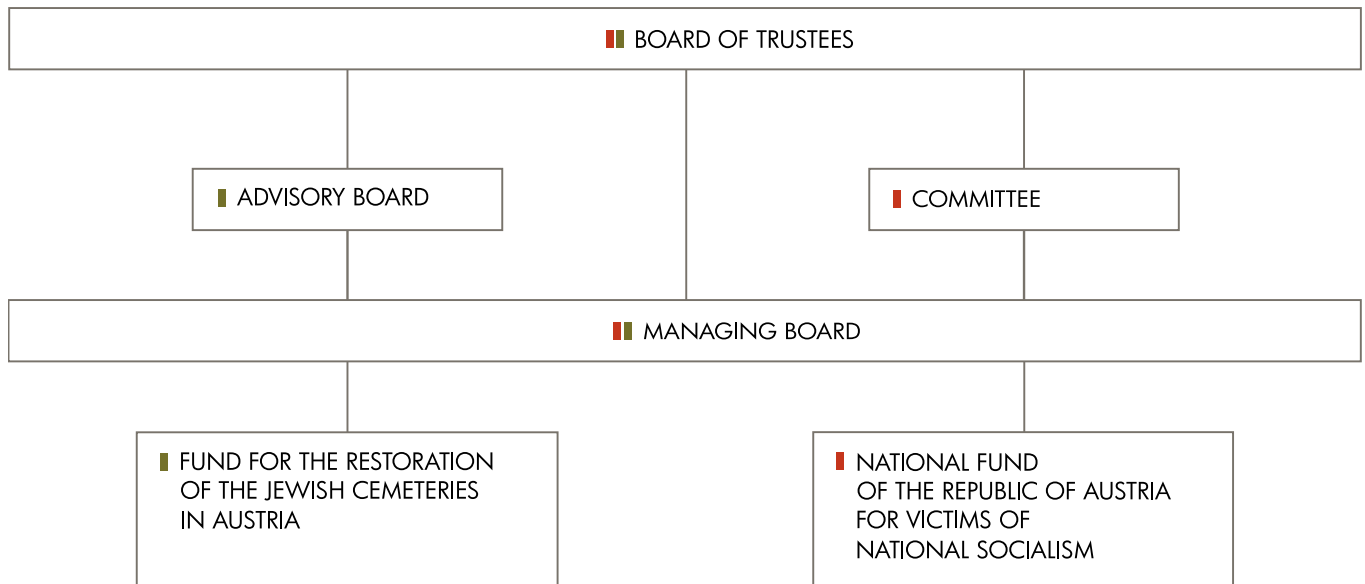


ORGANS

The bodies of the National Fund are the Board of Trustees, the Managing Board and the Committee.

The bodies of the Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries in Austria are the Board of Trustees, the Managing Board and the Advisory Board.

Organisation chart:



The Board of Trustees:

The Board of Trustees is the supreme body of the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism, the General Settlement Fund for Victims of National Socialism (dissolved in 2022) and the Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries in Austria. Its responsibilities include

establishing the guidelines and financial regulations for the payments by the Funds. It is also in charge of deciding how to invest the funds and ensuring that they are used for their designated purpose.

Members:

As at: 24 October 2024 (in alphabetical order)

- Mag. Dr. Gerhard Baumgartner (Advisory member)
- Dr. Dagmar Belakowitsch, Member of the National Council, Parliamentary Club of the Austrian Freedom Party
- Mag. Eva Blimlinger, Member of the National Council, The Green Club in Parliament
- Dr. Helmut Brandstätter, Member of the National Council, Parliamentary Club of the Neos
- Dr. Magnus Brunner, Federal Minister of Finance
- Doris Bures, Third President of the National Council
- Oskar Deutsch, President of the Jewish Community Vienna
- Mag. Martin Engelberg, Member of the National Council; Parliamentary Club of the Austrian People's Party
- DDr. Barbara Glück, Federal Ministry of the Interior / Mauthausen Concentration Camp Memorial
- Peter Haubner, Second President of the National Council
- Prof Dr. Udo Jesionek, retired President of the Vienna Juvenile Court
- Dr. Gerhard Kastelic (Advisory Member)
- Mag. Dr. Martin Kocher, Federal Minister of Labour and Economic Affairs
- Mag. Werner Kogler, Vice-Chancellor (until 2 October 2024)
- Willi Mernyi (Advisory Member)
- Karl Nehammer, MSc, Federal Chancellor
- Dr. Gerald Netzl, Working Group of Nazi Victims' Associations and Resistance Fighters in Austria
- Fritz Neugebauer (Advisory member)
- Dr. Martin Polaschek, Federal Minister of Education, Science and Research
- Johannes Rauch, Federal Minister for Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection

- Dr. Walter Rosenkranz, President of the National Council (Chairman)
- Andreas Sarközi, Cultural Association of Austrian Roma
- Mag. Alexander Schallenberg, LL.M., Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs
- Dr. Manfred Scheuer, Bishop of the Diocese of Linz; Diocesan Bishop
- Thomas Stern (Advisory member)
- MR Mag. Terezija Stoitsits (Advisory Member)
- Dr. Harald Troch, Member of the National Council; Social Democratic Parliamentary Club
- MinR. Priv.-Doz. Dr. Helmut Wohnout, Director General of the Austrian State Archives

The Committee of the National Fund:

The Committee decides on the award of payments within the scope of its authorisation (Sec. 4 (1) item 4 of the National Fund Law). The Chairperson of the Committee or his/her

deputy must report to the Board of Trustees at every meeting of the Board on the decisions it has issued since the last meeting.

Members:

As at: 24 October 2024 (in alphabetical order)

- Doz. Mag. Dr. Brigitte Bailer, delegated by the Austrian University Conference
- Doris Bures, Third President of the National Council
- Prof Otto Hochreiter, MA, delegated by the Austrian National Committee of the International Council of Museums
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Clemens Jabloner, university professor, former Federal Minister
- Dr. Susanne Janistyn-Novak, Deputy Director of Parliament
- Prof. Dr. Gerald Lamprecht, delegated by the Austrian University Conference
- PD MMag. Dr. Ljiljana Radonić, delegated by the Austrian Academy of Sciences
- Dr. Walter Rosenkranz, President of the National Council (Chairman)
- Dr. Ferdinand Trauttmansdorff, retired ambassador

The Advisory Board of the Cemeteries Fund:

The Advisory Board advises the Board of Trustees in its decisions on awarding payments and accompanies the projects for the restoration of the Jewish cemeteries in Austria. The work of

the Board is carried out in an honorary capacity. The Members of the Board must be informed of the restoration progress in Advisory Board meetings held at least twice a year.

Members:

As at: 24 October 2024 (in alphabetical order)

- Mag. Monika Anderl, Federal Ministry of Finance
- Oskar Deutsch, President of the Jewish Community Vienna
- DDr. Barbara Glück, Federal Ministry of the Interior / Mauthausen Concentration Camp Memorial
- Mag. Martin Grüneis, representative of the Provincial Governors' Conference (Office of the Provincial Government of Lower Austria)
- Konrad Gschwandtner, Bakk. BA, Austrian Association of Municipalities
- Dr. Michael Haider, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs
- Mag. Christiane Kada, representative of the Provincial Governors' Conference (Deputy Chairwoman)
- DI Brigitte Mang, Director of the Dessau-Wörlitz Cultural Foundation (external consultant)
- Benjamin Nägele, M.A.I.S Secretary General of the Jewish Community Vienna
- Hofrätin Sylvia Preinsperger, Federal Monuments Authority (Chairwoman)
- HR Dr. Robert Rill, Federal Chancellery
- OSR Mag. Dr. Thomas Weninger, MLS, Secretary General of the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns

The Managing Board:

Pursuant to Sec. 6 (1) of the National Fund Law, the Managing Board assists the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and prepares the decisions of the Board of Trustees and the Committee of the National Fund. The Managing Board consists of two Managing Directors and is appointed by the President of the National Council for a period of five years.

Members are selected following the public advertisement of the position and appointed on the basis of a recommendation by the Board of Trustees and the approval of the Main Committee of the National Council. The Managing Board also has the task of fostering relations between Austria and the victims of National Socialism who live abroad.

Members:

- Prof. Mag. Hannah M. Lessing, Managing Director (since January 2024, 1995–2023 Secretary General)
- Mag. Judith Pfeffer, MA, Managing Director (since April 2024)



Managing Director
Prof. Mag. Hannah M. Lessing



Managing Director
Mag. Judith Pfeffer, MA

CONTACT US

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