

The list of Jewish Residents in the German Reich 1933-1945

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The list of Jewish residents in the German Reich 1933 – 1945 records the individual life and biography dates of about 600,000 persons, who resided in the German Reich (borders of the Reich as per 31 December 1937) and who were persecuted because of their Jewish origin or religion.

1 The first phase: A *List of Jewish Residents* for the compensation of Jewish life insurances (2002/03)

A first temporary register of Jewish residents in Germany was created at the Federal Archives in 2002/03 within a few months in connection with the compensation of unpaid insurance claims against German insurance companies during the National Socialist regime, which had been negotiated between the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims (ICHEIC), the German Insurance Association (GDV) and the Foundation “Remembrance, Responsibility and Future“ (EVZ).¹

In fact, the GDV had taken on the establishment of an electronic list of all policy holders from 1920 – 1945 with a total number of 8.5 million references. Since the insurance records did not disclose any affiliation to the Jewish minority, the Federal Archives received the order from the foundation EVZ to establish an electronic list of all Jewish residents in Germany (1933 – 1945) until 28 February 2003. This list of residents - in comparison with the directory of policy holders - was expected to help identify Jewish policy holders and therefore those entitled to claim.²

They started working on that in summer 2002 and were bound by contract on 16 October 2002. Upon request of the ICHEIC not only data from the territory of the Reich (borders of the Reich as per 31 December 1937) were recorded but also from the “Sudetenland“ and the Free City of Danzig. Within shortly, approximately 2.5 million crude individual references were gathered. The basis of this first *List of Jewish Residents* was formed by two major electronic data inventories at the Federal Archives: the first edition of the Memorial Book, the underlying database of which held 495,000 persons and the digitized supplementary cards of the population census of 17 May 1939.³ Efforts were made to fill the gaps caused by the lacking documents of the population census for the Rhine Province as well as Thuringia. In

¹ On the list of residents cp LARS NEBELUNG/SYLVIA ROGGE-GAU/CLAUDIA ZENKER-OERTEL, Die Liste der jüdischen Residenten in Deutschland 1933-1945, in: Mitteilungen aus dem Bundesarchiv 14 (2006), Booklet 2, pages 59-66; MICHAEL JANSEN/GÜNTER SAATHOFF (editor), „Gemeinsame Verantwortung und moralische Pflicht.“ Abschlussbericht zu den Auszahlungsprogrammen der Stiftung „Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft“, Göttingen 2007, pages 132f. The entire text of the so-called trilateral agreement of 16 Oct 2002 between ICHEIC, the GDV and the foundation EVZ is on the Internet at <http://www.icheic.org/pdf/agreement-GFA.pdf> (Version: 17 Feb 2010), while annex H represents the part that is important for the list of residents. Extensive lists about relevant existing source material can be found there as well.

² Cp. JANSEN/SAATHOFF, Abschlussbericht (as in note 1), page 132.

³ Cp. Gedenkbuch – Opfer der Verfolgung der Juden unter der nationalsozialistischen Gewaltherrschaft in Deutschland 1933-1945, edited by the BUNDESARCHIV Koblenz and the INTERNATIONAL TRACING SERVICE Bad Arolsen, Koblenz 1986. On the supplementary cards cp. <http://internet-spiegel/fachinformationen/01601/index.html.de>.

Poland and Israel, too, re-investigations were made. In addition, there were extensive literature evaluations of different commemorative books⁴ and special libraries like the Germania Judaica in Cologne. Numerous electronic data inventories of Federal and municipal archives and memorial places, e.g. that of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum were also taken into consideration.

Due to the purpose and the narrow time slot many unconfirmed names with incomplete information were fed into the list of residents, after all no stakeholder was to be excluded at random. Due to that procedure, which was quite understandable in view of the prevailing circumstances at that point in time, there is a number of references clogging up the database which are only of little help. Another problem is that at the time also non-Jewish relatives so-called mingled households were taken into consideration for inheritance law reasons – a group of people that does not belong to the target group anymore.

The *List of Jewish Residents* serves its purpose insofar as on 30 April 2003 the ICHEIC was able to publish the 360,000 potential Jewish stakeholders who had been identified by name matching procedure on the Internet at <http://www.icheic.org>.

2 The second Phase: Compiling a *List of Jewish Residents in the German Reich 1933-1945* as Project Work (2004/05-2006/07)

2.1 Appointment of the Project Group

In connection with the compensation negotiations, the Jews expressed the wish to upgrade the temporary *List of Jewish Residents* to a scientifically established directory of all Jewish residents in the German Reich 1933-1945 as a reminder of the formerly great Jewish community in Germany. Therefore this intention had explicitly been laid down in writing in Annex H of the previously mentioned so-called trilateral agreement of 16 October 2002 on the insurance compensation payment.

On completion of the compensation payments, the Federal Government instructed the Federal Archives on 18 October 2004 to work out a list of Jewish residents in the German Reich for the period of 1933 – 1945 in cooperation with the foundation EVZ. The broadly defined criteria for the inclusion in the directory still in brief referred to as list of residents was established on 9 December 2004 at a conference of representatives of the foundation EVZ, the Federal Archives, Jewish institutions and scientists; they can be gathered from the following project description precisely: The aim of the project was “to establish a list as completely and precisely as possible of the approximately 600,000 Jewish residents from a variety of sources, who [at any time] between 1933 and 1945 had resided in Germany – borders of the Reich as per 31 December 1937 – and who were persecuted or felt persecuted by the National Socialist regime because of their Jewish origin or their Jewish belief.”⁵ The Jewish population living in the Free City of Danzig was likewise included.

A project group – up to ten people at times - of the Federal Archives was busy compiling the list from spring 2005 until late 2007. The project was funded by the Federal Government with

⁴ The most important of these are amongst others the *Buch der Erinnerung. Die ins Baltikum deportierten deutschen, österreichischen und tschechoslowakischen Juden*, edited by WOLFGANG SCHEFFLER/DIANA SCHULLE, released by the Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge e.V., „Riga-Komitee der deutschen Städte“, the foundation „Neue Synagoge Berlin - Centrum Judaicum“ and the memorial place „Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz“, 2 vol., München 2003; *Theresienstädter Gedenkbuch. Die Opfer der Judentransporte aus Deutschland nach Theresienstadt 1942-1945*, released by the INSTITUT THERESIENSTÄDTER INITIATIVE, Prague 2000; SERGE KLARSFELD, *Le mémorial de la déportation des juifs de France*, Paris 1978.

⁵ NEBELUNG/ROGGE-GAU/ZENKER-OERTEL, *Liste* (as in note 1), page 59.

around one million Euro and the foundation EVZ with 570.000 Euro;⁶ the Federal Archives provided the project management as well as the infrastructure.

2.2 The Number of Jewish residents in Germany

When the project group was nominated, it was assumed that the names and individual stories of about 600,000 Jewish persons had to be determined who had lived in the German Reich between 1933 and 1945. What considerations had led to this estimation?

The two population censuses dated 16 June 1933 and 17 May 1939 give some clues about the number of Jewish residents, where it should be taken into account, though, that both the territorial conditions as well as the categorization of being Jewish (in 1933 purely seen as religion, in 1939 according to racial aspects) had changed. Nevertheless, the dramatic decrease of the Jewish share of the population in the 1930s due to emigration and expulsion as well as ageing of the population and the subsequent decline in the birth rate in the Jewish population becomes apparent: While in June 1933 almost 500,000 members of the Jewish religious community had been registered, there were only approximately 234,000 people of Jewish origin left in May 1939, who were spread across the territory of the old Reich.

If one assumes 500,000 believing Jews at the beginning of the National Socialist regime and tries to estimate the Jewish residents in Germany between 1933 and 1939, then all those have to be added that 1) were of non-Jewish belief, but who were of Jewish origin according to the National Socialist racial characterisation and were hence persecuted. It is known from the population census of 17 May 1939 that the total number of Jews in the old Reich included 19,716 persons or 8.44 % who did not belong to the Jewish belief.⁷ If one assumes the same relation in 1933, one has to expect some 42,000 additional individuals.

2) Those who entered Germany later than 1933 and those who were born there have also to be added to the total number. While the number of new arrivals can be neglected, approximately 13,000 people can be verified solely by the supplementary cards of the population census of 17 May 1939 that were passed on, who were born after the seizure of power of the National Socialist regime.

3) It is very difficult to estimate the number of so-called half-breeds in 1933. In 1939 the 84,674 so-called first and second degree half-breeds included only 5,569 (6.6 %) so-called believing Jews. If one transferred these ratios to the year 1933, the number would exceed 100,000 significantly; however, such an assumption is highly doubtful given the change in circumstances caused by, amongst others, the increased assimilation pressure in the Third Reich.

Due to the depicted considerations a number of at least 600,000 Jewish residents in the overall period of 1933 – 1945 is considered to be realistic amongst scientific investigators; while this is more likely to be seen as the minimum level if you include the so-called Jewish half-breeds.

2.3 Key sources for the list of Jewish residents

The new database was initially based on all data that had been gathered for the first edition of the Memorial Book of the Federal Archives deriving from various sources gathered by the

⁶ Press release of the foundation „Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft“ of 17 Sept 2008 referring to the list of lost citizens. Foundation hands over „Verzeichnis der jüdischen Einwohner 1933-1945“ to the Federal Chancellery at: http://www.stiftung-evz.de/w/files/pressemitteilungen/pm_juedische_residentenliste.pdf (version: 17 Feb 2010).

⁷ Cp. INO ARNDT/HEINZ BOBERACH, Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus. Deutsches Reich, in: WOLFGANG BENZ (editor), Dimension des Völkermords, München 1991, pages 23-65, here pages 32f; STATISTISCHES REICHSAMT (editor), Volkszählung. Die Bevölkerung des Deutschen Reichs nach den Ergebnissen der Volkszählung 1939, in: Statistik des Deutschen Reichs, vol. 552, Booklet 4: Die Juden und jüdischen Mischlinge im Deutschen Reich, Berlin 1944, pages 6-8.

International Tracing Service and handed over to the Federal Archives in 1969 in form of a copy for further evaluation:⁸ current reports of municipalities in the former Federal Republic of Germany, deportation lists and other Gestapo documents including admission lists of the Ghettos in Theresienstadt and Litzmannstadt, questionnaires on the Jewish population prior to 1945 that were requested by the U.S. Military government at the municipalities in Bavaria and Hesse at the end of the war, the incomplete file of individuals of the Imperial Union of German Jews and membership lists of Jewish parishes after 1933; in addition there were evaluations of the memorial books from the Netherlands and Baden-Wuerttemberg.⁹

For the new edition of the Memorial Book released in early 2006 a variety of new sources had been taken into consideration in addition to countless amendment and supplementary reports.¹⁰ The most important being – no doubt – the supplementary cards with reference to information about origin and educational background based on census data of 17 May 1939. Apart from that investigations had concentrated primarily on two areas: On the one hand on the registration of residents of the newly added Eastern territories, on the other hand on the evaluation of foreign sources, in order to register the Jews that had emigrated to countries like France, Belgium or the Netherlands between 1933 and 1939, that were subsequently occupied by Germany and thus became involved in the Holocaust.

With the consolidation of the database *List of Jewish Residents*, that had been established for compensation payment purposes in the middle of 2006, with the data pool that had been compiled for both editions of the Memorial Book a major landmark for a list of Jewish residents in the German Reich 1933 – 1945 had been achieved. Furthermore, the project group was eager to extend the source base in the following two focus areas:

1. Records from municipalities: Since 2005 initially all 530 towns and cities with more than 50 Jewish residents at the time of the National Socialist regime, then in a second run all 460 towns and cities with a lower number of Jewish residents had been contacted in writing by Koblenz and had been asked to help investigating former Jewish residents.¹¹ Generally speaking the response was quite positive. Sources ranging from municipal residents files, registry files resp. certifications of any kind, post war lists, chronicles, local histories, students' works, investigations for a memorial art project called "stumbling stones" (this is a memorial project initiated by the German artist Gunter Demnig: cobblestones with a brass top, engraved with names and personal data of Holocaust victims are embedded in pavements in front of the houses that were their last freely chosen residence) and other publications were either evaluated locally or simply forwarded to the Federal Archives.

⁸ These copies formed up to volumes from Arolsen today represent the inventory BArch ZSg 138. On the development of the first edition of the Memorial Book and the sources used cp ARNDT/BOBERACH, *Deutsches Reich* (as in note 7), pages 53ff.

⁹ Cp. In *Memoriam. Nederlands Oorlogsslachtoffers*, edited by G. G. Couwenberg, released by von OORLOGSGRAVENSTICHTING, Den Haag 1961; *Die Opfer der nationalsozialistischen Judenverfolgung in Baden-Württemberg 1933-1945. Ein Gedenkbuch*, released by the ARCHIVDIREKTION STUTTGART, (Veröffentlichungen der Staatlichen Archivverwaltung Baden-Württemberg, Beiband zu Bd. 20) Stuttgart 1969.

¹⁰ Cp. on the sources of the second edition DIANA SCHULLE/UNDINE VÖLSCHOW, *Die Neubearbeitung des Gedenkbuches „Opfer der Verfolgung der Juden unter der nationalsozialistischen Gewaltherrschaft in Deutschland 1933-1945“*, in: *Gedenkbuch – Opfer der Verfolgung der Juden unter der nationalsozialistischen Gewaltherrschaft in Deutschland 1933-1945*, edited and released by the BUNDESARCHIV, Koblenz, second updated and extended edition 2006, pages IX-XIII, here pages XIff; UNDINE VÖLSCHOW, *Die Auswertung weiterer Quellen*, in: *Mitteilungen aus dem Bundesarchiv 14* (2006), Booklet 1, pages 12f; HANS-DIETER KREIKAMP, *Zur Geschichte des Gedenkbuches*, in: *Ibidem*, pages 17-19; ELISABETH BRACHMANN-TEUBNER, *Die Neubearbeitung des Gedenkbuches „Opfer der Verfolgung der Juden unter der nationalsozialistischen Gewaltherrschaft in Deutschland 1933-1945“*. Eine Zwischenbilanz, in: KLAUS OLDENHAGE/HERMANN SCHREYER/WOLFRAM WERNER (editor), *Archiv und Geschichte*, Festschrift für Friedrich P. Kahlenberg, Düsseldorf 2000, pages 275-290, here pages 279ff.

¹¹ For the list of the Jewish municipalities cp. *GEDENKSTÄTTE YAD VASHEM* (editor), *Black Book of Localities whose Jewish Population was exterminated by the Nazis*, Jerusalem 1965, pages 232-278.

2. Names of emigrants: In order to record the Jewish emigration, the total number of which is estimated to amount to approximately 250,000 people (as many as 132,000 in the United States alone), more efficiently,¹² different archives, Jewish municipalities and other institutions in the target countries have been asked for their cooperation. That way information about emigrants originating from Brasil, Sweden, South Africa or Switzerland reached the database.

Meanwhile information material from more than 1000 different provenances and sources have been incorporated in the database. One quarter of each originating from the municipalities and material that has been published before, the other half deriving from archives, memorial places and research facilities.

2.4 Working on the database

In the following paragraph there is a description of how the Federal Archives approach the 2.5 million references with numerous double entries to achieve 600,000 sensibly compacted individual dossiers with several allocated references (so-called clusters). The Federal Archives attach great value to keep the traceability of the origin of each single piece of information from the respective source or provenance to assure the scientific transparency of the documents. Therefore the IT company Ossenberg & Schneider has been developing a webbased application to provide technical support for the list of residents database since 2002 which allows any process work in two stages: automatically by machine and manually. Both of them continue to be applied. Since the database which has been established with J-Forma, exists as a MicrosoftSQL Server database and can be accessed on the Internet, the manual handling can be done from anywhere in a dislocated manner.

In a first step any matching references are identified with the aid of IT, i.e. references that refer to the same person but originate from different sources and therefore often contain inconsistencies. These deviations are partly due to false entries, but partly also to different spellings or different name spellings (many names had been recorded by listening only) or the like. In order to achieve automatically comparable references, various adjustments and normalisations should initially be done. In the area of names this means for instance that names made up of different elements (for example Dr. Elly Henriette von Brochwitz née Goldschmidt) are converted into several simple name combinations by deleting name supplements (Elly Brochwitz, Elly Goldschmidt, Henriette Brochwitz, Henriette Goldschmidt). Different name spellings like (Gold-) Schmidt, Schmitt or Schmied are standardized according to the basic phonetic rules, deviations caused by different versions of the first name can be minimized due to stored synonym indices (the following are identical: Jette, Henny, Henni, Henrietta, Henriette). By including three standardised data fields (surname, first name, date of birth) different matchings and similarities can be found, in which both criteria and programming of a higher or lower fault tolerance can be varied, depending on whether it is more important to consolidate as many identical references as possible or to keep the rate of wrongly classified references at an absolute minimum.¹³ The result is a certain number of references that are allocated as clusters to a superior master file. Since allocations— especially when birth dates are missing or deviating – are often not clear there is the option to allocate one reference to several individuals automatically.

On completion of the automatic processing, during which the most important information units automatically have to be transferred from the various references into the master data file clusters have to be reviewed and updated in a second step. It has to be decided whether they

¹² Cp. e.g. LUDOLF HERBST, *Das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933-1945*, Frankfurt/M. 1996, page 211.

¹³ Additionally cp UWE OSSENBERG, *Automatisierter Abgleich von Personendaten – Probleme, Lösungsansätze und Erfahrungen*, Lecture held on 15 October 2008 at the workshop „Datenbanken zu Opfern der nationalsozialistischen Gewaltherrschaft in Deutschland 1933-1945“ at the Federal Archives.

refer to a Jewish resident and whether the references allocated to one cluster definitely belong together and refer to the very same person. In case of a wrong allocation a new cluster is set up or the allocation is amended. Additional information about a person contained in the clearly corresponding references will be supplemented in the master input mask and any possible errors will be amended. Target is a list in which all Jewish residents are documented by their own cluster, all references have clearly been allocated to one individual and all information on that very individual is summarized in one single biography.

3 The third phase: The list as ongoing task of the Federal Archives

After the funding by the foundation „Remembrance, Responsibility and Future“ had come to an end, the Federal Archives have solely been responsible for processing, amending and supplementing the list since early 2008. As it became apparent that this was a task that could not be rapidly solved in view of the huge extent of the venture, the list of residents has meanwhile been taken over by the Federal Archives on a permanent basis together with the further development of the Memorial Book as the subject area “Documentation of the Persecution of Jews“ in the task area of the Federal Archives, department Reich. At the same time the former staff members who had been working on the project were lost so that the work will now go ahead with fewer employees, however, on a longer term and hopefully will result in a satisfactory outcome.

Supplements, being the result of the consideration of numerous feedbacks and the initiation of newly accessible sources, are permanently added by the staff members of the Federal Archives responsible for the Memorial Book and list of residents. The database still needs large-scale revision work aiming at the aggregation of information and the deletion of duplicate records; currently (early 2010) 30% of the total clusters have been processed manually as well as a further 12 % edited with IT support to a large extent, so that the final review represents a task which will last several years. Further investigations aim to specifically diminish existing deficits in the areas of emigration and Eastern territories of the Reich. On the other hand it is quite obvious that a project like the list of Jewish inhabitants will probably never be fully complete.

4 Transfer, use and importance of the list of residents

The list of Jewish residents in the German Reich 1933 – 1945 was not only present in the media on the occasion of its transfer to the Federal Government in the Chancellery on 17 September 2008 but also when a wide range of data extracts from the residents list on DVD was handed over to the memorial place Yad Vashem in Jerusalem on 23 October 2008 and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington on 25 February 2009.¹⁴ But also other selected partner institutions like the Jewish Museum Berlin, the Jewish Claims Conference and the Central Archive of the Central Council of the Jews in Germany as well as almost all State Archives of the different states received a copy of the list.

¹⁴ Cp. press release of the foundation EVZ of 17 Sept 2008 (as in note 6); press releases of the German Press and Information Office of 23 Oct 2008 referring to Cultural State Minister Bernd Neumann hands over list of residents at memorial place Yad Vashem (http://www.bundesregierung.de/nn_914476/Content/DE/Archiv16/Pressemitteilungen/BPA/2008/10/2008-10-23-neumann-yad-vashem.html, version: 17 Feb 2010) and 25 Feb 2009 referring to Cultural State Minister Bernd Neumann hands over list of residents to Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington (http://www.bundesregierung.de/nn_914476/Content/DE/Pressemitteilungen/BPA/2009/02/2009-02-25-bkm-residentenliste.html, version: 17 Feb 2010).

The transfer of data represents a tightrope walk. On the one hand the Federal Archives care about giving way to considerable public interest and to provide research with this great instrument for which it had been developed after all. On the other hand the Federal Archives are anxious to gain time for the processing and to keep the circle of recipients relatively small at the current stage of the database, in order to keep the number of queries and the costs of maintenance and update under control. In addition, there are significant legal arguments. This is in connection with the rights of data suppliers – after all the Federal Archives have only gathered that information – and secondly it is about the privacy of persons affected, who are still alive to some extent. Therefore any data transfer follows a compromise which has been agreed with the Federal Privacy Commissioner, according to which recipients must commit themselves to the strict adherence of the Federal Archives Act including its retention periods on personal data and its provisions on shortening of retention periods.

Despite these restricted ways of usage, the list of residents represents a unique historic document, which has been compiled by hundreds of different sources. The list of Jewish residents wants to be part of both Germany's and the Jewish organisations' self-ascertainment of the former Jewish citizens of the Reich. It should help raise the awareness towards the history of Jews in Germany and give them back their identity. Based on hundreds of thousands individual stories it reminds of the once thriving Jewish life in Germany and helps comprehend what treasury of human beings, but also culture, knowledge and experience was lost in Germany through the persecution measures of the National Socialists. This aspect is well expressed in the term "list of lost citizens".¹⁵ This list wants to support historical research during any investigative work on a number of issues, for instance when investigating the age and population structure of the Jewish population in Germany, the migration movements, emigration and deportation activities. Furthermore, it aims to determine any Jewish origin of individuals and serves as a basis for family research and individual tragedies accordingly.

¹⁵ Press release of the foundation EVZ of 17 Sept 2008 (as in note 6).