



Information on data processing: Collection Agencies A and B – negative files immovable properties

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Terms of reference

The series *Negativ-Akten Liegenschaften* ("Negative files immovable properties") of the *Sammelstellen* ("Collection Agencies") A and B, which are stored in the Austrian State Archive, contain relevant information and documents regarding immovable properties seized under the National Socialist regime. These records and files were considered a relevant source of information in connection with the applications filed with the General Settlement Fund for Victims of National Socialism: They were consulted for compensation claims asserted in the category "immovable properties" or for *in rem* restitution.

The digitization of records of the negative file immovable properties was necessary due to the absence of a finding aid that would enable direct access to files and records for the internal investigations of the Fund. The aim of the digitization was to make records and files accessible through their main characteristics for research on immovable properties. As a result, research for the application processing of the Fund was expedited. There was no intention to draft digital copies of the negative files.

Digitization

The transfer of data material is based on the examination of the file series and entered directly into an excel table. About 1,630 negative files were available for digitization; 13 negative files were not contained in the boxes and were subsequently recorded during the creation of the *Findbuch*.

The following methodology was generally used for recording data:

- Evident orthographic errors and wrong spellings were corrected
- For the processing of address information, directories such as the Vienna Address directory *Lehmann 1938* ("register of properties and names") was consulted while researches on the internet were made when location was unclear.
- Abbreviations of district names were written out in full
- In order to facilitate geographical location, name of place or name of district were assigned to local addresses when missing, while non-Austrian addresses were provided with the country information.
- Formal standard procedures were developed and adopted by the project team.

The following data was entered into the excel tables:

- Reference number: Sequential numbering of reference numbers (number of the negative file), which are preceded by the letter "N". In cases where more than one natural or juristic (aggrieved) person was indicated, an additional data entry was created. As a result reference numbers may appear several times.
- Personal Data (natural and juristic persons): The records of the historical owners were obtained from the *Meldungsblatt* ("registration sheet") on which each file is based. Surnames, forenames, firm names, and, if available, date of birth, home addresses and company addresses were entered into the excel sheet. Additional home and company addresses were entered into the data field "remarks" along with contradictory data regarding date of birth or date of death,
- Data on immovable properties: The key characteristics, such as cadastral district, register number and state, were conveyed into the data field "remarks". Cadastral districts may therefore incorporate multiple register numbers (immovable properties).

The work of compiling 2,300 data entries was carried out by the staff of the Historical Research Department at the General Settlement Fund and performed in 2006-2007.

Processing the digitized data

Negative files which could not be found during the digitization process and those files which had become incomplete during the course of their storage by the Collection Agencies A and B (e.g. missing documents) were subject to further research. The facts documented in files or parts of files that could not be found were reconstructed using a concordance list drawn up by the Collection Agencies and the *Meldungsblätter* ("registration sheets"). If they could be established, surname, first name, date of birth or the company name and address, as well as information on the property was recorded.

References to the file numbers within the series "Negative files immovable properties" or to claims files and equity files of Collection Agencies A and B were recorded in the field "remarks", in order to facilitate the location of supplementary documents or information.