



Information on data processing: Files of the Compensation Fund

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Terms of reference

The relevance of the Fund for the Compensation of Losses of Assets of Politically Persecuted Persons (Compensation Fund) for the work of the General Settlement Fund arises from a Sec. 10 (1) of the General Settlement Fund Law of 28 February 2001, according to which, payments rendered by the Compensation Fund for recognized losses of assets (officially designated “allocations”) had to be taken into account as a “prior restitution measure” when calculating the compensation payments. Moreover, the biographical details, excerpts from various National Socialist documents and documents from post-war restitution proceedings, all of which can be found in the Compensation Fund files, were of enormous importance for the General Settlement Fund’s application processing.

Digitization

In 2003, an excel list of the files of the Compensation Fund held at the Austrian State Archives was provided to the General Settlement Fund for Victims of National Socialism for use in its application research. Memos pertaining to files which were not contained in the boxes at the time the data was recorded allow the conclusion that the list was compiled in 2001 and 2002.

The original excel table contained the file numbers of the Compensation Fund, applicants’ surnames, forenames and dates of birth, as well as surnames, forenames and dates of birth of people who had suffered losses of assets under the National Socialist regime. The surname, forename and date of birth were all recorded a single data entry field. The original list contained approx. 11,700 records.

Processing the digitized data

In order to meet the demands of the application processing procedure using the Fund’s in-house database, the staff of the General Settlement Fund processed the data as follows: a record was created for each person in which the surname, forename and date of birth were each transferred into a separate data entry field. As a result, the number of records rose to approx. 13,100.

In cases where no personal data was available in the original list, the files of the Compensation Fund were reviewed. The index held at the Austrian State Archives was also consulted. Furthermore, the capitalization of the surnames was reworked to ensure accuracy. Shortened forenames were written out in full, dubious spellings were corrected and alternative spellings added in square brackets. Incorrect dates of birth were corrected (e.g. transposed digits). Where files were related to each other, the corrections were also made in the relevant data entry fields. If files had been merged, this was noted in the “remarks”.