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Files of the Commercial Court Vienna

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Title of the holdings

Archive: **Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv (MA 8)** (“Municipal and Provincial Archives of Vienna” [MA 8])
Record group: **Staatliche Gerichte**, 1725–20. Jahrhundert (“State courts, 1725–20th century”)
Holdings: **Handelsregister Wien**, 1863–20. Jahrhundert (“Commercial register, 1863–20th century”)
Former title of the holdings: **Handelsgerichtsakten, Register des Handelsgerichtes Firmenbuch Wien** (“files of the Commercial Court, register of the Commercial Court, commercial register Vienna”)

Period: as at 1937 (for 1938)
Abbreviation for this type of file: HR

Origins of the holdings

Registered companies (see section *Content of the files*) were entered into the *Firmenbuch* [originally *Handelsregister*] (“commercial register”), by the respective commercial register court (in this case by the Commercial Court Vienna). The same applied to companies recorded in 1937, which were recorded in the *Wiener Adreßbuch. Lehmanns Wohnungsanzeiger 1938* (“Vienna address directory. Lehmann 1938”), a directory which has been incorporated into the *Findbuch* as a searching aid. It should be noted that documents regarding companies which were cancelled from the register before 1939 are currently held in the *Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv* ([*WStLA*] “Municipal and Provincial Archives of Vienna”). The files of the companies which continued to exist after 1939 were either also stored in the Municipal and Provincial Archives of Vienna or held at the Commercial Court Vienna, depending on the date of their cancellation or their continued operation. These somewhat complex circumstances arise from the fact that since end of the war in 1945 the files numbers in the “commercial register” have been amended several times. Therefore, there are often several hurdles to overcome when locating company files with the respective company number from 1937.

Content of the files

Using both the index volume as well as the files of the commercial register, it is possible to gather important basic information such as the address of the company’s premises or the ownership (except for stock corporations). The commercial register of 1937 is subdivided as follows: general partnerships (A), stock corporations (B), limited liability companies (C), individual companies (Einz.), private companies (Ges.), as well as public service companies (Gen.). These abbreviations can be found at the beginning of the respective register numbers and folio (company) numbers.

Informational content

The company details in the *Findbuch* were entered in the respective data fields *name of company*, *type of company*, *location of company* and *file number*. Details regarding company partners or authorized signatories were not recorded in the *Findbuch* and must, as such, be gathered from the relevant files or from the entries in the “Vienna address directory. Lehmann 1938”. In addition, correspondence between the company and the Commercial Court, protocols of meetings, accounts, as well as, in some cases, lists of partners in the company or shareholders are included in the files (or documents) of the Commercial Court.

Alternative sources of information

The registered companies listed in the *Findbuch* were gathered from the “Vienna address directory. Lehmann 1938”. They are listed in alphabetical order according to the wording of the protocol. Information regarding property confiscation or company liquidation is found in the card indexes and files of the former *Vermögensverkehrsstelle* (“Property Transaction Office”) (in the *Österreichische Staatsarchiv – ÖStA* [“Austrian State Archives”]). Records on confiscations and restitution procedures may also be found in the files of the following entities: files pursuant to the *Vermögensentziehungs-Anmeldungsverordnung* (*VEAV*) (“Ordinance of the Notification of Seized Property”), restitution files of the Financial Directorate, files of the Restitution Commission, of the public administration (Municipal and Provincial Archives of Vienna [MA 8]) or in the card indexes *Erfassung Betriebe* (“list of companies”) of both the Collection Agencies A and B (Austrian State Archives). Based on the entries in the *Gewerberegister* [“trade register”] (MA 63 or MA 8), it is possible to establish who was in possession of a trade license, its time frame, as well as the location at which the trade was carried out.

Explanations and comments

As neither the former register numbers or the former file numbers stated in the “Vienna address directory. Lehmann 1938” are still in use, difficulties may arise when retrieving files at the Municipal and Provincial Archives of Vienna. Due to a new reassignment of file numbers in 1939, only the files of companies cancelled before 1939 are available under these old Commercial Court numbers. The former company numbers serve solely as reference numbers. Based on the last entry in the respective commercial register file and with the help of the skeleton service in the Municipal and Provincial Archives of Vienna, the following commercial register A-numbers and commercial register B-numbers can be determined and the files can be retrieved with this number at the Municipal and Provincial Archives of Vienna. However, due to a subsequent renumbering of the so-called *Firmenbuchnummer* (*FN-Nummern* [“commercial register numbers”]), the files of the companies that continued to operate after 1939 are held at the respective commercial courts. The index volumes for the commercial register A and commercial register B must therefore either be consulted directly at the Commercial Court Vienna (Justizzentrum in the 3rd District of Vienna), or ordered from the competent caseworker at the Commercial Court Vienna. Assistance is offered by the skeleton service of the Municipal and Provincial Archives of Vienna.

Information on data processing: Files of the Commercial Court Vienna

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