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Files of the Compensation Fund

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Title of the holdings

Austrian State Archives/Archives of the Republic
Record group: **Entschädigungs- und Restitutionsangelegenheiten** (“Compensation and restitution matters“), 1938–1945
Holdings: **Hilfsfonds** (“Assistance Fund”) 1955–1982
File series: **Abgeltungsfonds** (“Compensation Fund” [Fund for the Compensation of Losses of Assets Suffered by Political Persecutees]), 1961–1974

Abbreviation for this type of file: AF

Origins of the holdings

The Fund for the Compensation of Losses of Assets of Political Persecutees (Compensation Fund) was established with the *Abgeltungsfondsgesetz* (“Compensation Fund Act”, Federal Law of 22 March 1961 with which Federal Funds are Provided to Compensate Losses of Assets Suffered by Political Persecutees, Federal Law Gazette 100/1961). The Fund was to make “allocations” (*Zuwendungen*), as they were officially called, to persons who were persecuted by the National Socialist regime between 13 March 1938 and 8 May 1945 on grounds of race, religion or other grounds and who had suffered losses of assets as a result. Compensation was provided in the following categories of losses: bank accounts, cash, mortgage claims, discriminating taxes and charges. These were originally intended to cover the *Reichsfluchtsteuer* (“Reich Flight Tax”) and the *Judenvermögensabgabe* (“Jewish Capital Levy”). In subsequent years, this was extended to include further types of discriminating payments and fees. In total, six million US Dollar in Schilling was provided for the “allocations”.

Contents of the files

The files of the Compensation Fund contain the application form and enclosed documentation proving the losses of assets as well as written information (correspondence). They also contain the results of the Fund’s independent research regarding the categories of losses claimed in the applications. The application documents and results of the research are supplemented by the documentation of the decision-making process on whether a monetary “allocation” was to be awarded and in what amount or the reasons for a negative decision.

Informational Content

The files of the Compensation Fund contain information on seized assets and the extent to which they were recognized financially by the Fund. The subjective view of the applicant is illuminated through proofs of identity, documents on personal status and their status as heir and autobiographical writings.

Excerpts from the following historical documents are among the most important elements of the files:

- *Vermögensanmeldung* (“property notice”) of 27 April 1938 (Ordinance on the Registration of Jewish Property of 26 April 1938, German Reich Law Gazette 1938 I p. 414, Austrian Law Gazette 102/1938),
- Files of the former National Socialist *Vermögensverkehrsstelle* (“Property Transaction Office”) at the Ministry for Economy and Labor,
- Applications, rulings, settlements and negative decisions from the proceedings pursuant to the Third Restitution Act (Federal Law of 6 February 1947 on the Annulment of Property Seizures, Federal Law Gazette 54/1947),
- Bank statements and records of the banks and savings banks,
- Detailed records of the Financial Directorate for Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland on the payment of the “Reich Flight Tax” and the “Jewish Capital Levy”,
- Receipts and records of the auction house Dorotheum.

As a result of the Fund’s enquiries in the Federal Republic of Germany, decisions in proceedings regarding securities pursuant to the Federal Restitution Act before the German “Wiedergutmachung” departments are documented (the requirement for compensation was the proven physical movement of assets on the territory of the later Federal Republic of Germany).

Alternative sources of information

In formal terms, references to related files (*Verbundakten*) can be gathered from the file numbers which appear on the outside or inside cover of the file folder.

In terms of content, there are no alternative sources for the results of the research and decisions of the Compensation Fund. The information obtained by the Fund can be found in the competent archives (for example in the Austrian State Archives/Archives of the Republic: Property Transaction Office, Financial Directorate for Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland and in the relevant Provincial Archives). The file holdings of the competent authorities (District and Commercial Courts) also come into question.

Explanations and comments

Occasionally, during the course of processing a difficult application a main file contains the decisive documentary proof and research documents. As a result, the related files are mostly limited to personal and formal documents.

Data Processing Procedures: Files of the Compensation Fund

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