

E7 Resistance fighters



When war broke out in 1939, Josef Horvath was working with numerous Austrians at an airport in Germany. In 1940, he was called up to the Wehrmacht in Bremen. When he realised on home leave in Burgenland that his family had been deported, he deserted to France and eventually joined the French Foreign Legion. In 1945, he returned to Austria as a soldier with the French troops who were now involved in the fighting. Josef Horvath is the only Roma known to date to have actively fought for the liberation of Austria on the side of the Allies as a soldier in combat.

💡 Did you know

... that defectors were often suspected of being spies who had been tasked with infiltrating the enemy's troops?
...that for many decades, deserters were not recognised as resistance fighters, nor as victims of National Socialist persecution?

✎ For you to do

Research other people who fought on the side of the Allies for the liberation of their homeland. Explain the story of a person and the reasons that led them to do so.

📷 The photo

Josef Horvath as a pensioner in Vienna. Photo held in private possession. Johann Balogh: Althodis/Stari Hodas, Eisenstadt 1992.



<https://www.romasintigenocide.eu/en/e>

1910

1951

1939-45