G3 Witzwil (CH)

In 1894, Witzwil estate in Western Switzerland was turned into a prison. Prisoners had to work on the farm and dig irrigations ditches in the surrounding wetlands. From 1913, all Roma and Sinti entering Switzerland were interned. Families were split up and the men were sent to Witzwil to do hard labour until they and their families were deported.



1910 1951

1913-25

Did you know

... that in 1888 Switzerland became one of the first Euro- pean countries to generally close its borders to Roma and Sinti?
... that Switzerland was also one of the first countries in Europe to create a national register of “Gypsies”? That was in 1911.

Your task

What happens to people who enter your country illegally? Try to find information on the internet or from organisations that offer support for refugees.

About the photo

Inmates of Witzwil prison, in Switzerland, working in the fields. Private collection of Thomas Huonker, Zurich, Switzerland.

https://www.romasintigenocide.eu/en/g