

# A1 Settlements

At the beginning of the 20th century, the overwhelming majority of the European Roma and Sinti were leading a settled life. When this photo was taken, the Roma village of Stegersbach was home to more than 200 people, and in the Austrian province of Burgenland more than 8,000 Roma and Sinti lived in 130 hamlets and settlements like this one - until 1938.



1910

1951

1931

## 💡 Did you know

... that in Central and Eastern Europe there are whole villages and suburbs that have been home to Roma for centuries?

## ✎ For you to do

Divide the photo into three parts and place a piece of paper over two of them. Describe what you can see in each of the three parts of the photo.

## 📷 The photo

Posed photograph of a Roma wedding in Stegersbach in the south of Burgenland produced for reporters from the Austrian state broadcasting company RAVAG. Department of Contemporary History, University of Vienna, Austria.



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

## A2 Middle Class

In most countries of Western Europe, Sinti and Roma were banned for centuries from joining trade associations and guilds, and many of them therefore became dealers and merchants. In Western Europe especially, many Sinti and Roma were successful business people. Their children attended local schools, and many Roma and Sinti served as soldiers in World War I. For their services to king and country, some Roma and Sinti were even raised to the nobility.



1910

1951

1935

### 💡 Did you know

... that many Sinti and Roma bought and sold wares at markets and fairs or went as pedlars from house to house? Others ran stalls or rides at fairs and amusement parks. Many cinemas also used to be operated by Sinti and Roma families.

### ✎ For you to do

Describe the clothes the people are wearing in the photograph. What would you say about the atmosphere in the photograph? What do you think was the occasion for which the photo was taken?

### 📷 The photo

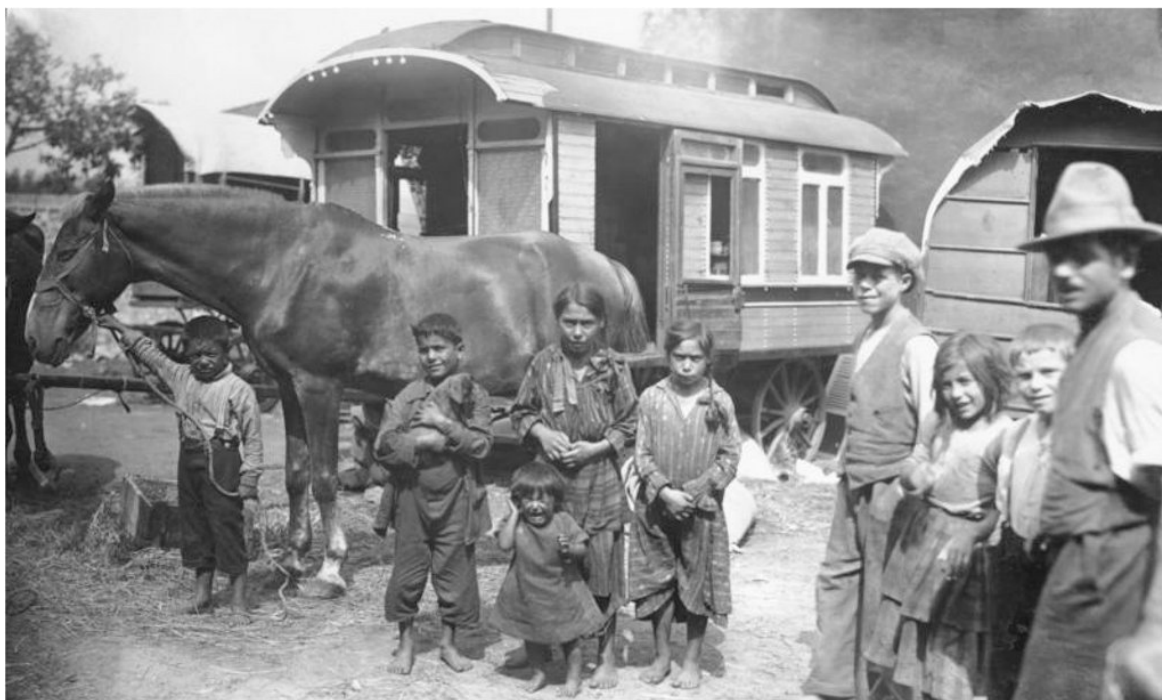
The Sinto Max Bamberger (on the right) with his family in a photograph taken in 1935. Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma, Heidelberg, Germany.



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

## A3 Itinerant Craftsmen and Artisans

While most Central European Roma actually settled down hundreds of years ago, some Western European Sinti families continued to travel to various fairs and markets in their caravans. They dealt in cattle, horses or scrap metal or worked as smiths, grinders and tinkers. They usually followed traditional routes during the summer, returning to their home towns and villages for the winter.



1910

1951

1926

### 💡 Did you know

... that before 1950 there were many travellers who were not Roma or Sinti in most countries of Europe? They lived with their families in caravans, moving from place to place in search of work.

### ✎ For you to do

Compare the photos on pages A.2 and A.3. What do the photos tell you about the lives of the two families? Can you think of three examples of people who often move from one place to another in the course of their work? What are the advantages and disadvantages of such a life?

### 📷 The photo

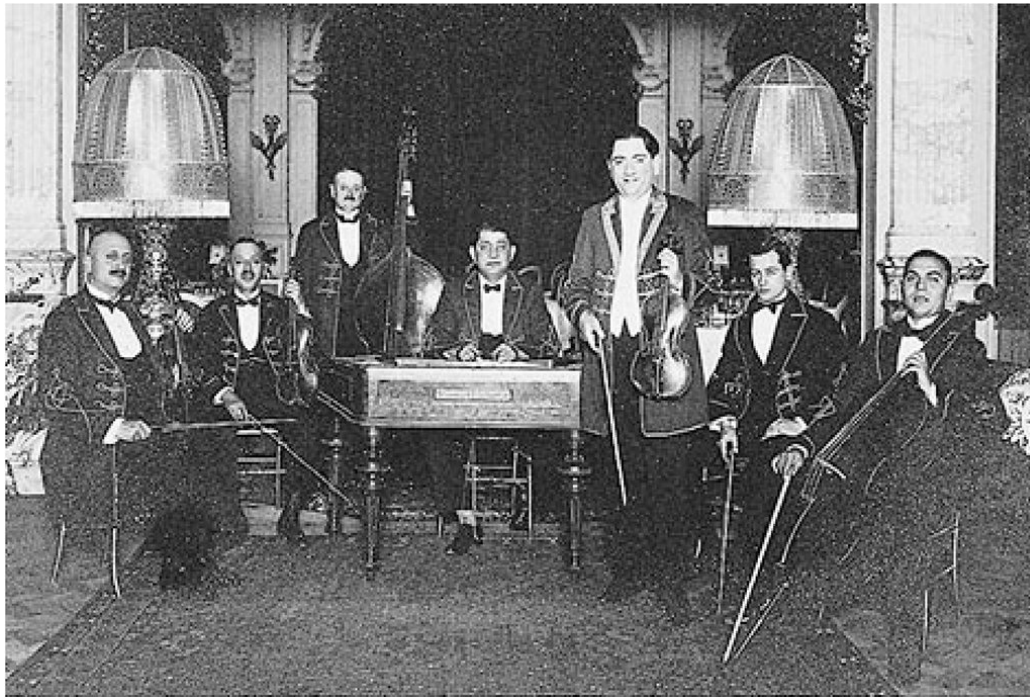
An itinerant German Sinti family with their caravan. Ravensburg Municipal Archives, Germany.



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

# A4 Professional Musicians

For many centuries, Roma and Sinti were employed as professional musicians by the nobility and in concert halls. Starting in the 19th century, Roma and Sinti received professional training in music schools, conservatories and universities. Many poor Roma found an additional source of income in winter playing music at dances and weddings. In many Roma families, the children still learn to play an instrument from their parents today.



1910

1951

1930-38

## 💡 Did you know

... that the so-called Gypsy music played by “Gypsy orchestras” was actually developed by Hungarian musicians in the 19th century? It has nothing to do with the traditional music of the Roma and Sinti.

## ✎ For you to do

Can you name any other famous families of musicians? Find out more about Roma music and about Roma musicians in your country.

## 📷 The photo

The Hungarian Béla Ruha Gypsy Orchestra in a hotel in The Hague, Netherlands in the 1930s. Museum of Ethnography, Budapest, Hungary.



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

# A5 Farmhands

Most of the Roma in Central Europe worked as agricultural labourers on big estates and as seasonal farmhands helping smaller farmers with the harvest. In the districts of Prešov and Košice in eastern Slovakia, the Roma accounted for a high percentage of the rural population. They have lived in this region for centuries.



1910

1951

1930-40

## 💡 Did you know

... that in Central and Eastern Europe many farm workers were not paid in money but with food?

... that in exchange for their work they were sometimes allowed to build their houses on their employer's estate or on common land in the village?

## ✎ For you to do

Describe what the people in the photo are doing. What kind of work do children do in your country? What is the law with regard to such work?

## 📷 The photo

“All helping with the preparations ...” Photo of a family making bricks in East Slovakia. Prešov District Museum, Slovakia.



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

# A6 Craftsmen

Many settled Roma travelled the area as tinkers, grinders and musicians during the winter; others were skilled basket weavers or wood carvers, making troughs, barrels, spoons and brooms.



1910

1951

1928-34

## 💡 Did you know

... that the police regularly raided the settlements of the Roma and Sinti and kept lists of their inhabitants?

... that one of the main tasks of the international police organisation Interpol was surveillance and registration of the Roma and Sinti?

## ✎ For you to do

How has the police photographer captured the people in this photo? Who is doing what in the photo? Why have the people been photographed in this way?

## 📷 The photo

Photograph of a police raid on the Roma settlement in the village of Gritsch in Burgenland, Austria. All the people living in the house had to stand outside with their equipment. The photograph was taken as a record of the work of the police. Burgenland Regional Archives, Eisenstadt, Austria.



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

# A7 School Child



Karl Stojka was born in 1931 in a small village in Lower Austria. His family belonged to the Lovara, a subgroup of the Roma. They were well-to-do horse dealers and travelled through the provinces of Styria, Burgenland and Lower Austria in the summer. During the winter they usually stayed somewhere in or near Vienna. Following the Nazi occupation of Austria, the family were no longer able to travel in summer and settled in Vienna. The children - Karl and his three sisters and two brothers - went to school in Vienna and soon made many friends there. His father's official name was Karl Horvath, but everybody knew him as Wakar. His mother's maiden name was Sidi Stojka, but they often used the surname Rigó, as they were related to that big and famous Lovara family.

## 💡 Did you know

... that an estimated 1.5 million children were murdered in the Holocaust, including an estimated 1.2 million Jewish children?

... that children were one of the biggest groups of victims of the Nazi regime?

## ✍ For you to do

What other subgroups of Roma and Sinti are there?

## 📷 The photo

Photograph of Karl Stojka at the age of nine taken in Vienna in 1940. German Federal Archives Berlin Lichterfelde, Germany.



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

1910

1951

1940

# A8 Fatal Stereotype

In the 19th century, stereotypes of Roma and Sinti became commonplace in newspapers, books and photographs. So-called "Gypsy" postcards became very popular in the first half of the 20th century. They reflected people's longings for a free way of life. Most people, who had never had any personal contact with Roma or Sinti, derived their ideas about them from illustrations like this.



1910

1951

1910-30

## 💡 Did you know

... that by the beginning of the 20th century more than 90 percent of the European Roma and Sinti were not living in caravans any more? The way of life of a very small group of Roma and Sinti became the stereotype for all members of this ethnic group.

## ✎ For you to do

Describe what you see on the postcard. What are the various people doing? What is not shown in the scene?

## 📷 The photo

Czech postcard from the early 20th century. Museum of Roma Culture, Brno, Czech Republic.



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



# B1 Global Crisis

During the world economic crisis, millions of people in Central Europe lost their jobs. At that time, few Central European countries had health insurance, unemployment benefit or old-age pension schemes. Large numbers of unemployed people left the cities to return to the villages they came from, and took over the jobs that the Roma had been doing there. Many Roma were soon starving, and the local authorities had to pay for poor relief. Tensions rose, and many communities simply wanted to get rid of those poor and hungry people.



1910

1951

1927-37

## 💡 Did you know

... that local councils had a duty to house and feed their poorest inhabitants and pay their doctors' and hospital bills?

... that during the 1920s and 1930s, child mortality among the Roma rose to more than 50% than half of all Roma children died before their second birthday.

## ✎ For you to do

Talk about social groups that are dependent on support provided by the rest of society. Consider why such support is often called into question.

## 📷 The photo

Inhabitants of the Roma settlement at Oberwart in Austria. Police photograph taken in the 1930s to illustrate the work of the police. Burgenland Regional Archives, Eisenstadt, Austria.



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

# B2 Competition

Tinkers travelled from village to village, mending pots and pans for rural families. During the world economic crisis, many local artisans and shopkeepers protested against this competition from outside. Itinerant traders and craftsmen were increasingly excluded from fairs and markets. Roma and Sinti people were regularly arrested by the police and made to pay heavy fines - just for working!



1910

1951

1927-37

## 💡 Did you know

... that, in order to protect their skilled workers, craftsmen and shopkeepers, more and more towns and cities and even whole provinces made it illegal for the Roma and Sinti to ply their traditional trades within their boundaries?

## ✎ For you to do

Why do people accept “illegal” work? What are the disadvantages for such workers?

## 📷 The photo

Itinerant tinkers in a village in northern Burgenland, Austria, between the wars. Austrian National Library, Vienna, Austria.



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

# B3 Police Control

From the 1890s, European Roma and Sinti increasingly faced police attention and checks. Authorities introduced regulations affecting their daily lives and work. There were penalties for Roma and Sinti who worked without a permit, while “vagrancy” and “begging” were made punishable offences.



1910

1951

1919-37

## 💡 Did you know

... that, for many police officers, dealing with “Gypsies” offered attractive career prospects, as they could use modern techniques like photography and fingerprinting and work with colleagues from other countries?

## ✎ For you to do

Describe the impression created in the photo. Find out whether begging is allowed or illegal in your community and your country. Discuss the reasons given for making begging illegal and imposing penalties.

## 📷 The photo

Police checking a man's identification papers during a raid on the Roma settlement in Allhau in the province of Burgenland in the interwar period. Burgenland Regional Archives, Eisenstadt, Austria.



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

# B4 Identification

From 1912, the French authorities required anyone with no permanent place of residence to carry a “carnet anthropométrique”. It was the first such document to list physical details and contained both a photograph and fingerprints. Other European countries soon followed suit.



1910

1951

1912

## 💡 Did you know

... that Roma and Sinti were the first Europeans to have to carry personal identification papers?

... that the modern passport only came into general use after the Second World War?

## ✍ For you to do

What forms of ID do you have on you? How much information do these documents reveal about you? What does an ID say about a person?

## 📷 The photo

A French “carnet anthropométrique” - a special identification paper for people of no fixed abode, complete with photographs and fingerprints along the lower margin of the document. Nothing more is known about the bearer of this document. Emmanuel Filhol Collection, Bordeaux, France.



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

# B5 Registration

With the rise of the modern nation state in the late 19th century, registration became widespread for all citizens. In the 1920s and 1930s, regional and local authorities in more and more countries began to list their local Roma and Sinti populations in special “Gypsy registers” and to issue them with special ID cards, which had to be carried at all times.



1910

1951

1937

## 💡 Did you know

... that one of the main tasks of Interpol, the international police association founded in Vienna in 1923, was to register and maintain checks on Europe's Roma and Sinti populations?

## ✍ For you to do

Are there any discriminatory laws against individual social groups in your country? Give two examples. Does your country have any special registers for members of ethnic or linguistic groups or religious minorities?

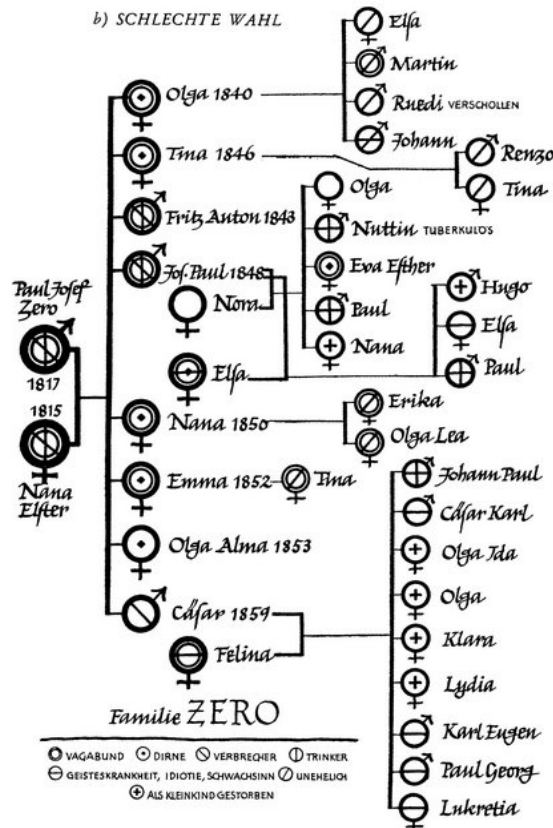
## 📷 The photo

A “Gypsy ID card” (“cigányigazolvány”) complete with photograph and fingerprints issued in the Austro-Hungarian border town of Szentgotthárd in 1937. János Barsony Collection, Budapest, Hungary.



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

# B6 Eugenics



*Eine einzige Mißheirat bedeutet oft Entartung und Schädigung des Erbgutes auf Generationen hinaus. Kranke, körperlich und geistig mißratene Kinder bringen Kummer, Leid und Not, wenn nicht gar Schande für die Eltern.*

The racist theory that the Roma and Sinti were “contaminating” the “gene pool” of the European population was first proposed by Swiss psychiatrists and later adopted by the National Socialists. In 1905 Josef Jörger, a Swiss psychiatrist and supporter of eugenics, used this genealogical tree to show how the Zero family had allegedly been “polluted” by marriage with a woman from a traveller family. In the study, the various members of the family were defamed by the use of vague, subjective and moralising labels such as “prostitute”, “criminal”, “feeble-minded” and “illegitimate”. According to the theory of eugenics, social behaviour is largely inherited. So the eugenics movement recommended improving the genetic make-up of the population with the help of “racial hygiene”, including forced sterilisation, experiments on humans, and the segregation of “undesirable” groups.

## 💡 Did you know

... that Adolf Hitler was not the only supporter of eugenic theory? Famous scholars and politicians such as Winston Churchill, H. G. Wells, Theodore Roosevelt, George Bernard Shaw, John Maynard Keynes and Linus Pauling were too.

... that the eugenics movement originated in the USA during the 1920s and 1930s, but programmes were also implemented in Switzerland, Brazil, Sweden and many other countries?

## ✍ For you to do

How is the question of “desirable” and “undesirable” members of society discussed today?

## 📷 The photo

Genealogical tree of the Zero family (a deliberately negative pseudonym) designed to illustrate Josef Jörger’s theories on the negative effects of a mixed marriage with a traveller. Thomas Huonker Collection, Zurich, Switzerland.



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

1900

1951

1905

# B7 Segregation

Representatives of local councils and political parties attended “Gypsy conferences” to address the problems confronting local authorities that were no longer able - or willing - to shoulder the financial burden created by their many destitute Roma inhabitants. The participants discussed what they saw as feasible solutions, such as creating a “Gypsy reservation”, deporting people to an island in the Pacific, or creating labour camps for unemployed Roma.



1910

1951

1933

## 💡 Did you know

... that the alleged “notorious criminality” of the Roma and Sinti was often the direct result of dedicated “Gypsy” laws and regulations, which penalised them for begging, travelling in large groups and working as musicians?

## ✎ For you to do

Choose the perspective of one of the children, a member of the commission or a chance passer-by to explain what is happening in the photo.

## 📷 The photo

Inspection of living conditions at the Roma settlement in Oberwart, Austria, on 15 January 1933 by members of a commission attending a conference on the “Gypsy problem”. Burgenland Regional Archives, Eisenstadt, Austria.



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

# C1 Racist Ideology

The National Socialists introduced the Nuremberg Laws to prevent any dilution of the “Aryan” race - which they considered superior - with races that they judged inferior, such as Jews, Roma and Sinti, black people, Slavs and many others. The Nazis believed intellectual abilities, social behaviour and moral values were all inherited.



1910

1950

1935

## 💡 Did you know

... that people classified as “Gypsies” were not allowed to marry or have relationships with “Aryan” Germans?

## ✍ For you to do

Talk about why the concept of race is no longer considered scientifically acceptable. Find out about the UNESCO Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice.

## 📷 The photo

A poster created to illustrate the provisions of the Nuremberg Race Laws, probably for display in public offices after 1935. German Federal Archives, Koblenz, Germany.



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



## C2 "Racial Science"

In 1936, the new Research Institute for Racial Hygiene and Population Biology of the Reich Health Office in Berlin launched a "racial research" project - later run in collaboration with the Institute of Criminal Biology - into the Sinti and Roma in Germany, Austria and the territory of today's Czech Republic. Research Director Robert Ritter and his assistant Eva Justin drew up genealogical trees of individual Sinti and Roma families, in many cases going back more than a hundred years. They photographed and measured parts of the body and registered people's blood groups and the colour of their hair and eyes.



1910

1950

1936

### 💡 Did you know

... that after 1941, such lists were used to select Roma and Sinti for deportation to the concentration camps?

### ✎ For you to do

What did the photographer wish to convey with this photo? Find out whether any authorities in your country still collect "racial" information.

### 📷 The photo

The "racial hygienist" Robert Ritter (right) and one of his assistants taking a blood sample from a young German Sintiza. The photograph was taken in 1936 as a record of their research work. German Federal Archives, Koblenz, Germany.



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

# C3 "Crime Prevention"

The National Socialists passed a whole series of laws and regulations that labelled all Roma and Sinti as "born criminals". They argued that even if a Rom had not yet committed a crime, he or she would do so sooner or later because it was part of their biological inheritance. In the interests of "crime prevention" the National Socialists therefore arrested not only those who actually had committed a crime but also people they thought might do so one day.



1910

1950

1940

## 💡 Did you know

... that the National Socialists thought that the Roma and Sinti inherited their allegedly "anti-social" behaviour from their families?

... that for so-called "crime prevention" many children were photographed like this?

## ✎ For you to do

Why do you think Karl Stojka from Vienna was put on file? Who is usually photographed like this? Describe the different effect these photos have compared with the single photo of Karl Stojka on page A.8.

## 📷 The photo

A file card for Karl Stojka created under the name Karl Rigo by employees of the "race researcher" Robert Ritter in 1940. German Federal Archives, Berlin Lichterfelde, Germany.



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

# C4 Municipal Camps

The first “Gypsy” camps in the Third Reich were not set up by Nazi Party officials or the SS but by German municipal authorities. In 1935, Cologne city council forced 500 Sinti and Roma to leave their flats, houses and caravan parks and moved them to a new “Gypsy” camp on the outskirts of the city in Blickendorf. Similar camps were established in Hamburg, Düsseldorf, Berlin, Frankfurt, Essen and Hanover.



1910

1951

1937

## 💡 Did you know

... that during the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, the Sinti and Roma living in the city were forcibly relocated to Marzahn Camp on the outskirts, where they had to live in caravans? They were only allowed to leave the camp if they had a steady job outside.

## ✎ For you to do

Find out about the forced relocation or deportation of people in Europe. Who decides where people may live and why? Which organisations protest?

## 📷 The photo

A German Sinti family in Blickendorf Camp in Cologne on 12 December 1937. German Federal Archives, Koblenz, Germany



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

# C5 Sterilised

529

## Reichsgesetzblatt

Teil I

1933	Ausgegeben zu Berlin, den 25. Juli 1933	Nr. 86
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**Inhalt:** Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses. Vom 14. Juli 1933 ..... S. 529  
 Platte Verordnung zur Durchführung des Gesetzes über die Dreifarbenermittlung. Vom 20. Juli 1933 ..... S. 531  
 Verordnung über die Errichtung einer vorläufigen Filmkammer. Vom 22. Juli 1933 ..... S. 531  
 Verordnung über Zolländerungen und Ausfuhrbeschränkung. Vom 24. Juli 1933 ..... S. 533  
 Verordnung zur Durchführung des Gesetzes über die Aufhebung der im Kampf für die nationale Erhebung erlittenen Disziplinar- und sonstigen Maßregelungen. Vom 25. Juli 1933 ..... S. 535

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**Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses.**  
 Vom 14. Juli 1933.

Die Reichsregierung hat das folgende Gesetz beschlossen, das hiermit verkündet wird:

§ 1

(1) Wer erbkrank ist, kann durch chirurgischen Eingriff unfruchtbar gemacht (sterilisiert) werden, wenn nach den Erfahrungen der ärztlichen Wissenschaft mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit zu erwarten ist, daß seine Nachkommen an schweren körperlichen oder geistigen Erbfehdn leiden werden.

(2) Erbkrank im Sinne dieses Gesetzes ist, wer an einer der folgenden Krankheiten leidet:

1. angeborenem Schwachsinn,
2. Schizophrenie,
3. jehidären (manisch-depressivem) Irresein,
4. erblicher Taubstcht,
5. erblichem Weistanz (Huntingtonsche Chorea),
6. erblicher Blindheit,
7. erblicher Laubheit,
8. schwerer erblicher körperlicher Mißbildung.

(3) Ferner kann unfruchtbar gemacht werden, wer an schwerem Alkoholismus leidet.

§ 2

(1) Antragsberechtigt ist derjenige, der unfruchtbar gemacht werden soll. Ist dieser geschäftsunfähig oder wegen Geisteschwäche entmündigt oder hat er das achtzehnte Lebensjahr noch nicht vollendet, so ist der gesetzliche Vertreter antragsberechtigt; er bedarf dazu der Genehmigung des Vormundschaftsgerichts. In den übrigen Fällen beschränkter Geschäftsfähigkeit bedarf der Antrag der Zustimmung des gesetzlichen Vertreters. Hat ein Volljähriger einen Pfleger für seine Person erhalten, so ist dessen Zustimmung erforderlich.

§ 3

(1) Dem Antrag ist eine Bescheinigung eines für das Deutsche Reich approbierten Arztes beizufügen, daß der Unfruchtbarmachende über das Wesen und die Folgen der Unfruchtbarmachung aufgeklärt worden ist.

(2) Der Antrag kann zurückgenommen werden.

§ 4

Der Antrag ist schriftlich oder zur Niederschrift der Geschäftsstelle des Erbgesundheitsgerichts zu stellen. Die dem Antrag zu Grunde liegenden Tatsachen sind durch ein ärztliches Gutachten oder auf andere Weise glaubhaft zu machen. Die Geschäftsstelle hat dem beamteten Arzt von dem Antrag Kenntnis zu geben.

§ 5

Zuständig für die Entscheidung ist das Erbgesundheitsgericht, in dessen Bezirk der Unfruchtbarmachende seinen allgemeinen Gerichtsstand hat.

§ 6

(1) Das Erbgesundheitsgericht ist ein Amtsgericht anzugehören. Es besteht aus einem Amtsrichter als Vorsitzenden, einem beamteten Arzt und einem weiteren für das Deutsche Reich approbierten Arzt, der mit der Erbgesundheitslehre besonders vertraut ist. Für jedes Mitglied ist ein Vertreter zu bestellen.

(2) Als Vorsitzender ist ausgeschlossen, wer über einen Antrag auf Vormundschaftsgerichtliche Genehmigung nach § 2 Abs. 1 entschieden hat. Hat ein beamteter Arzt den Antrag gestellt, so kann er bei der Entscheidung nicht mitwirken.

Reichsgesetzbl. 1933 I

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The 1933 Law for the Prevention of Genetically Diseased Offspring legalised the forced sterilisation of all men and women the Nazis considered undesirable to society, including people with physical or mental disabilities, members of allegedly "inferior races" and so-called "born criminals". Between 1933 and 1945, more than 400,000 people were sterilised against their will, including many Roma and Sinti. For some men and women sterilisation meant they escaped being sent to the concentration camps, but others were forcibly sterilised after deportation to a camp. The law was not repealed until 1988! No compensation was ever paid to the victims.

## 💡 Did you know

... that similar laws existed in many other countries, including Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland and the USA? In some countries, Roma women continued to be sterilised against their will until the 1970s.

## ✍ For you to do

Can you name countries where forced sterilisation is still carried out? Make a record of recent cases. Think about what it means to be prevented from having children.

## 📷 The photo

A full version of the text of the law is to be found in the Austrian National Library's historical legal text database (ALEX), which can be accessed at <http://alex.onb.ac.at>



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

1910

1951

1933

# C6 Excluded



In 1933, the German boxer Johann Wilhelm Trollmann - known as Rukeli to his family and friends - won the German light heavyweight boxing championship against the reigning champion Adolf Witt. Because Trollmann was from a Sinti family, the judges at first refused to recognise his victory and declared the result void. They then changed their minds in the face of public protest, but Trollmann was stripped of his title ten days later on the grounds of “unmanly” behaviour. He was arrested and deported to a concentration camp, where he is reported to have been made to box against an endless number of SS men. In 1944 he was murdered in Wittenberge, a sub-camp of the Neuengamme concentration camp.

## 💡 Did you know

... that in the 1930s, Johann Trollmann adopted the dancing style of boxing that was later to become the hallmark of the world heavyweight champion Cassius Clay (Muhammad Ali)?

... that it took the German Boxing Association 70 years to right this wrong and put Johann Wilhelm Trollmann on the list of German light heavyweight champions in 2003?

## ✍ For you to do

Do you know of any other sportsmen or women who were deprived of their titles for political reasons?

## 📷 The photo

Official photograph of Johann Wilhelm Trollmann taken by Hans Firzlaff in 1928. Documentation Centre of German Sinti and Roma, Heidelberg, Germany.



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

1910

1951

1928

# C7 Discharged



Bernhard Steinbach was a soldier in the German Wehrmacht, but when he was found to be from a Sinti family he was discharged from the army and imprisoned in Wiesbaden. Many other Sinti and Roma also served in the Wehrmacht and fought for Germany on various fronts - while members of their families were being deported and murdered in concentration camps. In 1943, Bernhard Steinbach and his family were deported to Auschwitz. "From the beginning I was the clerk in the camp. Every morning I had to note the ID numbers of those who had died. At first at least forty or fifty people died every day. Later, when the camp became overcrowded, their numbers increased continually. Disease became rampant, including malaria and various forms of typhus and typhoid, and claimed more and more lives. Every morning a count was made of those still able to work, who were used for forced labour on building and road construction sites outside the camp." That is how Bernhard Steinbach later described his role in the camp. He was one of the few members of the big Steinbach family to survive the various concentration camps in which 45 members of his family were murdered by the National Socialists.

1910

1951

1941

## 💡 Did you know

... that soldiers found to be of Roma or Sinti origin were usually given leave so that they could be arrested at home and not in front of their comrades?

## ✍ For you to do

Find out about the life of Bernhard Steinbach after 1945.

## 📷 The photo

Military ID photograph in the possession of the family. Documentation Centre of German Sinti and Roma, Heidelberg, Germany.



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

# C8 Expropriated

When Sinti and Roma families were deported, everything they owned was confiscated by the local authorities. Their houses were destroyed, and their horses and carts sold. The proceeds were used to pay the guards at the camps. After the war, the survivors were never compensated for the loss of their property


Zu G.Zl.XI-589/26 vom 2.10.41. Markt: Halbturm.

**Verzeichnis**  
über das bewegliche und unbewegliche Vermögen der von Halbturm nach Lackenbach abtransportierten Zigeuner.

L.Zl.	Vermögens-Eigentümer	Art des Vermögens	Verkaufs- erlös im Auktionsw. den	Vorhande- erlös in ne Schul-	Gläubiger	Anmerkung
1	Ujvary Stefan, geb. 16.11.1895 u. Gattin Kath., geb. Hodosch, geb. am 14. Dez. 1903	1 Wohnhütte Div. Einrichtungsgegenst.	270.- 91.-	25.- 28.60	Steuerschuld Kaufm. Rupp	361.- 53.60 307.40
2	Ujvary Georg, geb. 4. III. 1902 u. Gattin Katharina, geb. Ujvary, geb. am 15. 4. 1901	Div. Einrichtungsgegenst. 78.-kg Weizen 1 Schwein, ca 80.-kg (+) 1 Schaf	150.90 18.64 -- -- -- --	5.- 38.- 17.90	Juliana Kiss Kaufm. Gyürü Kaufm. Rupp	169.54 60.90 108.64
3	Ujvary Elisabeth, geb. am 12.7. 1874 in Halbturm	1 Wohnhütte	74.-	12.15	Kaufm. Rupp	74.- 12.15 61.85
4	Ujvary Juliana, geb. am 3. April 1884 in Halbturm	1 Wohnhütte	350.-	----	-----	350.-
5	Ujvary Raimund, geb. 20.7.1900 u. Gattin Barbara, g. Horvath, geb. am 8. VIII. 1910 in Winden	1 Wohnhütte	170.-	18.20	für einen Kindersarg	170.- 18.20 151.80
6	Eigentümer unbekannt	1 Wohnwagen	85.-	----	-----	85.-
7	Eigentümer unbekannt	2 Wohnwagen	100.-	-----	-----	100.-
Gesamterlös:			1309.54	144.85	---	1164.69 RM

+) Das Schwein und Schaf wurde von der Lagerverwaltung Lackenbach abgeholt und dorthin überstellt.-

Halbturm, am 7. Febr. 1942. Der Bürgermeister: [Signature]



1910

1951

1942

## 💡 Did you know

... that in the Austrian province of Burgenland alone more than 1,350 Roma and Sinti homes were destroyed between 1939 and 1945?

... that when the survivors of the concentration camps returned, they had nowhere to stay and had to beg the local authorities to let them sleep in barns and stables?

## ✎ For you to do

What does the document tell you about the possessions and the living conditions of their former owners?

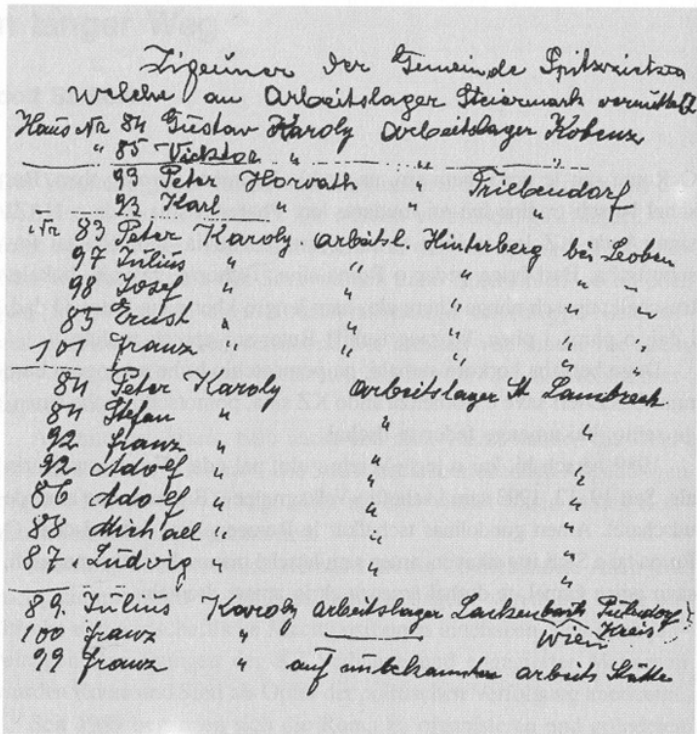
## 📷 The photo

“Register of the fixed and movable property of the Gypsies transported from Halbturm to Lackenbach”, 2.7.1942, Halbturm Municipal Archives, Austria.



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

# C9 Labour Camps



A deportation programme began immediately after the "Anschluss", Austria's annexation by the German Reich in 1938. Thousands of Austrian Roma and Sinti were deprived of their civil rights and deported, either to concentration camps in Germany or to forced labour camps near major public building projects such as dams, motorways or power plants. This document from the municipality of Spitzzicken/Hrvatski Cikljin in Burgenland lists 19 local Roma and the camps where they were taken.

## 💡 Did you know

... that by 1938 most Roma and Sinti were no longer unemployed? They had found new jobs - jobs created by German industry's switch to war production.

... that the deportation of most able-bodied men and women left thousands of dependent children and elderly people with no one to look after them? So the local authorities had to spend even more money on poor relief than before.

## ✍ For you to do

The argument that unemployed people should be forced to work can still be heard today. What do you think about it? What do you notice about the list?

## 📷 The photo

A list of Roma deported from Spitzzicken/Hrvatski Cikljin in Burgenland, Austria. Private collection of Gerhard Baumgartner, Vienna, Austria.



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

1910

1951

1940



# C10 "Gypsy" Camp

The Lackenbach "Gypsy" Camp was set up by various district councils in Lower Austria and the Vienna municipal authority. At times, the camp housed up to 2,000 people under atrocious conditions; 273 people died there. The inmates were often hired out to local companies as forced labour. Out of a total of 4,000 inmates, 2,000 were deported to Łódź in 1941. Most of the rest were taken to Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1943.



1910

1951

1940

## 💡 Did you know

... that this camp was the largest detention camp for Roma and Sinti in the whole of the Third Reich?

## ✎ For you to do

Where was the nearest camp for Roma and Sinti where you live? What is there to remind people of it today?

## 📷 The photo

Photograph of a Viennese policeman guarding Roma families deported to Lackenbach Camp taken on 23 November 1940, the day the camp opened. Private collection of Leopold Banny, Lackenbach, Austria.



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

# D1 Concentration Camps



The first groups of Roma and Sinti were deported to concentration camps in 1938, but in 1939 mass deportations began to Dachau, Buchenwald and Ravensbrück, where thousands of Austrian Roma and Sinti were sent as slave labour. As able-bodied breadwinners were deported, their families were left dependent on poor relief - which made the local authorities press for even more people to be deported! The prisoners in the concentration camps were divided into categories by the SS, and symbols were sewn onto their clothing to indicate their category. Roma and Sinti usually had to wear the black triangle used for "anti-social" prisoners. Some camps had a separate "Gypsy" category with a brown triangle.

## 💡 Did you know

... that there were Roma and Sinti prisoners in almost every concentration camp in the Third Reich?

## ✎ For you to do

The identification number of one of the prisoners in the photo is 17093. Try to find out more about this man.

## 📷 The photo

Austrian Roma at Dachau concentration camp photographed for the SS by Friedrich Franz Bauer. Archives of the Dachau Memorial Site, Germany.

1910

1951

1938



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

# D2 Death Camps

In December 1941, when a typhoid fever epidemic broke out in the “Gypsy” camp in the Litzmannstadt ghetto in the Polish city now known as Łódź, 4,600 Roma were killed in gassing vans used to transport them to Chełmno/Kulmhof. Ten weeks after arriving in Łódź, all 5,007 Austrian Roma and Sinti were dead; 4,400 of them are buried in unmarked mass graves in the forests around Chełmno, together with 150,000 Jews and thousands of Soviet prisoners of war.



1910

1951

1941-42

## 💡 Did you know

... that when worried friends and relatives enquired about the deportees in March 1942 and asked for permission to visit them in Poland, the police said no visiting rights applied to people “resettled” in Łódź?

... that “gassing vans” were first used to murder patients in mental hospitals and asylums?

## ✎ For you to do

What were the conditions like for the people living in the ghettos? What were the consequences of such living conditions?

## 📷 The photo

A Magirus-Deutz “gassing van” of the type used in 1941 and 1942 to murder Austrian Roma on the journey from the Litzmannstadt “Gypsy” camp to the death camp in Chełmno/Kulmhof. Yad Vashem Archives, doc. no. 1264/2, Jerusalem, Israel.



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

# D3 Auschwitz-Birkenau



On 16 December 1942, Heinrich Himmler ordered that all “Gypsies” still living in the German Reich must be deported to Auschwitz. This Auschwitz Decree marked the final phase of a plan for the extermination of the “Gypsies”. For the German, Austrian and Czech Roma and Sinti, mass deportation to Auschwitz-Birkenau began in April 1943. More than 20,000 Roma and Sinti were crammed into 32 wooden huts in the “Gypsy family camp” at Auschwitz. By July 1944 about 70 per cent of them were dead. Those still able to work were transferred to other concentration camps. The remaining 2,879 prisoners were gassed during the night of 2 August 1944.

## 💡 Did you know

... that the inmates of the “Gypsy” camp staged a revolt? In May 1944, when some were to be selected for gassing, the Roma and Sinti drove the SS guards out of the “Gypsy” camp with sticks and stones.

## ✍ For you to do

There is a register of deaths for Auschwitz listing the names of the Roma and Sinti murdered there. Go to the website of the Auschwitz Memorial Site and find out more.

## 📷 The photo

Inside a hut - clothes were spread out to dry overnight with the help of the stove in the middle of the picture. This is the only known photograph of the “Gypsy” camp in Auschwitz-Birkenau. German Federal Archives, Koblenz, Germany.

1910

1951

1943-44



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

# D4 Orphans

In May 1944, 35 Roma and Sinti orphans were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau from St Joseph's Orphanage in Mulfi ngen, which was run by nuns. The church did not protest against the deportation of the children, nor try to save them. Some of the children were subsequently used for medical experiments by SS doctors in Auschwitz. Only three of the 35 children survived.



1910

1951

1944

## 💡 Did you know

... that many Roma and Sinti orphans and foster children classified as "Gypsies" were separated from their foster families and sent to concentration camps?

... that most of those children had no idea that they were "Gypsies" or even what the word meant?

## ✎ For you to do

These girls can also be seen in a film on the internet. One of them is Amalie Schaich. Go to [www.romasinti.eu](http://www.romasinti.eu) to find out more about her.

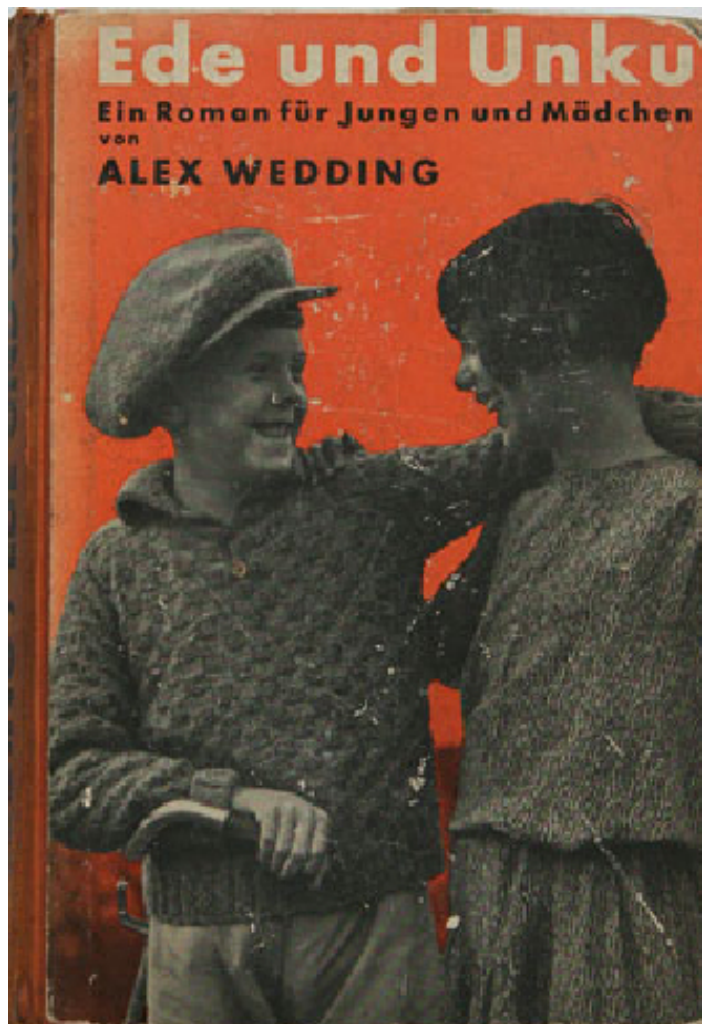
## 📷 The photo

German children in the orphanage in Mulfi ngen, Germany, in the care of the Sisters of St Joseph. Documentation Centre of German Sinti and Roma, Heidelberg, Germany.



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

# D5 Medical Experiments



Erna Lauenburger was a young Sintiza from Berlin, who grew up and moved to Magdeburg and had a family. In 1943, Erna and her two daughters were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where Erna became a victim of the medical experiments performed by SS doctor Josef Mengele. She was killed with a lethal injection. Her daughters also died in Auschwitz. Her husband, Otto Schmidt, died in Buchenwald concentration camp. Erna Lauenburger had been the inspiration for Alex Wedding's children's book Ede and Unku, in which a boy from Berlin makes friends with a Sinti girl. Ede and Unku was one of the most popular children's books in Germany in the interwar period and it was subsequently filmed. In 2011, a street in Berlin was named after Ede and Unku.

## 💡 Did you know

... that thousands of concentration camp prisoners - Roma and Sinti, Jews and gentiles, many of them children - were killed in medical experiments conducted by SS doctors?

... that those who survived the experiments were maimed for life?

## ✎ For you to do

Doctors are never permitted to conduct experiments on patients without their knowledge and consent. Why do you think doctors have ignored this rule?

## 📷 The photo

Front cover of the first edition of Alex Wedding's book Ede and Unku designed by John Heartfield with photos of Erna Lauenburger and her friend Ede. Malik Verlag Berlin, Germany



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

1910

1951

1931-43

# D6 Forced Relocation



In 1942, eight-year-old Anuta Branzan and her family were forcibly relocated - together with 30,000 other Romanian Roma and Sinti - from Bucharest to Transnistria, on the border with Ukraine. The camps were mostly consisted of primitive huts, and many of the deportees had to sleep out in the fields or in barns. Anuta survived two years of hunger and forced labour under inhuman conditions there. More than half of the other deportees did not.

## 💡 Did you know

... that Romania has the largest Roma population in the European Union, estimated at between 1.8 million and 2.5 million people?

... that about half of all people regarded as Roma do not see themselves as Roma, but half of those who actually are Roma are often not recognised as such?

## ✍ For you to do

Pick a moment in the life of Anuta Branzan (before relocation, in the camp, after her liberation) and write a letter she might have written to a friend.

## 📷 The photo

Anuta Branzan (second right) and her sisters in 1942. An aunt had the photograph taken a few days before their deportation, to have a memento of her nieces. Private collection of Michelle Kelso, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA



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

1910

1951

1942

# D7 Death Marches

Camp Komárom served as the central collection point for Hungarian Roma pending deportation to concentration camps in Germany as slave labour in 1944. The Roma were first taken to regional “Gypsy” camps and then many were made to walk several hundred kilometres to Fort Csillageröd in Komárom. There, the men and women who were fit for work were selected for the next stage of the march, into Germany. Many of those who were left behind in Camp Komárom died of starvation. Many others died on the “death marches” to the German Reich. Only about 4,000 of the fort’s 10,000 inmates survived.



1974

2015

2006

## 💡 Did you know

... that very little is known about Camp Komárom, in Hungary, and its victims - even today?

... that in the last months of the Second World War, as the fighting came closer and closer, the prisoners in many concentration camps were sent on “death marches” to other camps?

## ✎ For you to do

What was the point of the “death marches”? Find out whether there were any “death marches” in your area and if so, where.

## 📷 The photo

A photograph taken in 2006 of the parade ground at Fort Csillageröd in Komárom, Hungary. In the background you can see the entrances to the dungeons where the deported Roma were imprisoned. Private collection of Szabolcs Szita, Budapest, Hungary



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



# D8 Shooting Of Hostages

In 1941, Roma from the Mac̃va region in Serbia were taken hostage together with a number of Jews and taken to the concentration camp at Šabac, where all 2,100 were shot by execution squads of the German Wehrmacht.



1910

1951

1941

## 💡 Did you know

... that the German army executed a hundred civilians for every German soldier killed by partisans in the Balkans? A few days before the Šabac massacre, 21 German soldiers had been killed in fighting with Yugoslav partisans.

... that tens of thousands of Roma and Sinti were murdered by SS squads and fascist militia in Russia and the Ukraine between 1941 and 1945?

## ✎ For you to do

On the photo you can see a witness to what is happening. What might he have said about it to a friend that evening?

## 📷 The photo

Jews and Roma taken as hostages being led to their execution by German soldiers in Šabac. Yad Vashem Archives, Jerusalem, Israel.



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

## D9 Anna Maria "Settela" Steinbach

Settela Steinbach was one of 574 Roma and Sinti arrested in 1944 and taken to Camp Westerbork. Her hair was cut off there, so she covered her head with a strip torn from a sheet as a scarf. On 19 March 1944, Settela was put on a freight train to Auschwitz. As the doors of the wagon closed, she was filmed staring out by Rudolf Breslauer, a Jewish prisoner who had been ordered to record the scene by the camp commander. Settela was killed within the next few months, together with her mother, two brothers, two sisters, her aunt, her two nephews and her niece. Of the large Steinbach family, only her father survived.



1910

1951

1944

### 💡 Did you know

... that for decades everybody thought the photograph was of a young Jewish girl? The "Girl with the Headscarf" became a symbol of the sufferings of the Jews during the German occupation.

... that her true identity was only discovered in 1994 by a Dutch journalist, Aad Wagenaar?

### ✎ For you to do

find out more about Settela, go to [www.romasinti.eu](http://www.romasinti.eu).

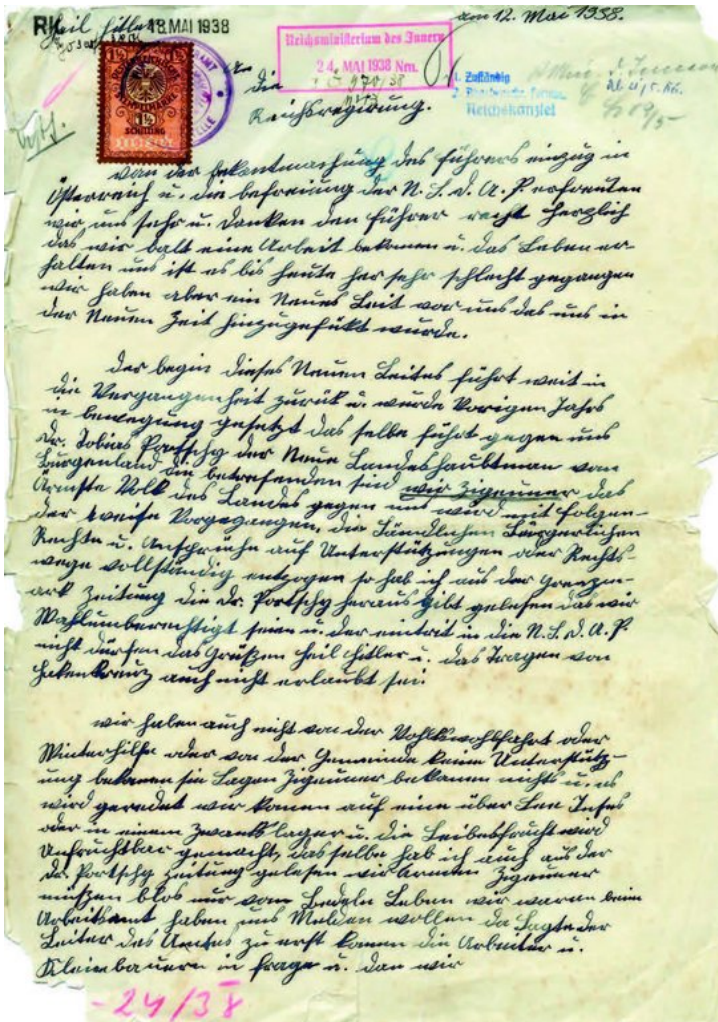
### 📷 The photo

Archives of the Westerbork Memorial Site, Netherlands.



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

# E1 Protest letter



On 12 May 1938, seven Roma from the village of Redlschlag in Burgenland wrote a letter to the “German Reich Government” (“Deutsche Reichsregierung”) in which they protested against their discrimination. They drew attention to the fact that the discrimination introduced by Nazi governor, Tobias Portschy – such as the loss of the right to vote, the ban on school attendance for Roma children and the denial of unemployment benefits – was instigated without any legal basis.

## 💡 Did you know

...that six of the seven signatories to the protest letter were arrested by the Gestapo within a few days and ultimately paid for their protest with their lives? Only one of the signatories was probably able to flee to neighbouring Hungary in time.

## ✍ For you to do

Find examples of public protests from the near and distant past, including, if possible, in your country. What disadvantages could a signatory to a public protest letter face?

## 📷 The photo

Letter of complaint issued by the Roma of Redlschlag to the Reich government in Berlin in May 1938 concerning their discrimination at the hands of the regional authorities. Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance DÖW 12.543.



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

1910

1951

1938

## E2 Political intervention



On 16 December 1942, Reichsführer SS Heinrich Himmler ordered the deportation of all Sinti and Roma still living in the German Reich to the Auschwitz concentration and extermination camp. On 5 April 1943, Oskar Wilhelm Rose, who was living in hiding with false papers, asked for a meeting with Munich Cardinal Michael Faulhaber, an act that meant he would be risking his own life. His attempt to persuade the cardinal to intervene against the deportations of the predominantly Catholic Sinti and Roma was unsuccessful. The cardinal noted in his diary: "A gypsy named Adler, Catholic, at the secretary's office – The 14,000 gypsies in the territory of the Reich are to be collected in a camp and sterilised, the Church is to intervene. Without a doubt, he will look to me for help. – No, I can't promise any help."

### 💡 Did you know

...that the Jehovah's Witnesses were the only religious community to take a firm stand against the National Socialists, and that many of their members were executed for this act of defiance?

### ✍ For you to do

Find out how different religious communities reacted to the National Socialist persecution of Jews, Sinti and Roma, as well as political opponents, disabled people and other persecuted groups.

### 📷 The photo

Oskar Wilhelm Rose (1902-1978)  
Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma Heidelberg.



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

1910

1951

1942-43

## E3 Escape from persecution



In 1941, fifteen-year-old Roma, Johann Baranyai, was deported from his place of work in Lower Austria to the so-called “Lackenbach Gypsy Camp”. There, he had to perform forced labour on road construction projects. In 1943, he and a friend fled across the nearby border to Hungary. Without papers, he secretly returned to the German Reich. In Germany, he found work in agriculture and later in a bakery. In order to avoid arrest, he volunteered for the German Wehrmacht’s armoured forces in 1944. After being seriously wounded at the front, he was eventually taken prisoner by the Soviets. In 1945, at the age of 19, he escaped from the military hospital and thus avoided deportation to Russia.

### 💡 Did you know

...that between 1939 and 1945, many people were only deported to concentration camps because they had been registered by the police or the municipal administration as members of a so-called “gypsy family” during the interwar period? In many instances, moving to another federal state saved them from persecution, as they were not registered as “gypsies” there.

### ✎ For you to do

Think about how to survive without the help of parents or relatives and without the use of identity documents.

### 📷 The photo

Johann Baranyai at the age of 18 as a soldier in the German Wehrmacht. d/ROM/a Special Series 03/15 Roma Service, A-7503 Kleinbachselten, Gartenstraße 3



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

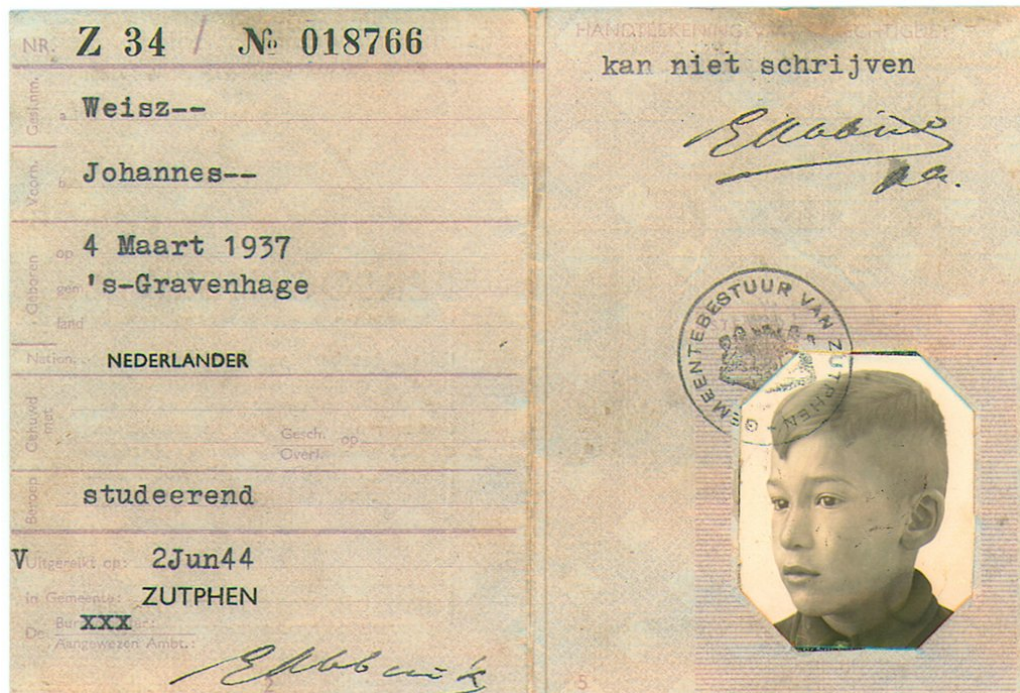
1910

1951

1941-45

# E4 Life in Hiding

In May 1944 the National Socialists organised raids in the Netherlands to round up all the “Gypsies” and take them to concentration camps. Johannes Weisz, known as Zoni, was just seven years old when he lost his whole family. He was not at home when the house was raided but he was caught later and taken to the railway station to be deported as well. But a kind police officer - probably a member of the resistance - helped him escape at the last moment and he went into hiding. Relatives and friends helped him to survive. After the war, Zoni studied horticulture and became one of Europe’s most prominent florists and a leading figure in the struggle of the European Roma and Sinti for equal rights



1910

1951

1944

## 💡 Did you know

... that on 27 January 2011, Zoni Weisz became the first Sinto to be invited to the German Bundestag to talk about the genocide of the European Sinti and Roma?

## ✍ For you to do

What does the document tell you about Zoni Weisz? Find out more about him and his social commitment at [www.romasinti.eu](http://www.romasinti.eu)

## 📷 The photo

ID card of Johannes (Zoni) Weisz as a schoolboy, issued a month after his parents and his brothers and sisters had been deported. Central Council of German Sinti and Roma, Heidelberg, German



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

# E5 Soldier and War Hero



Aleksandr Baurov was a Russian Rom from a family of well-known artists, musicians and singers. He played the guitar in an ensemble, but he also studied electromechanical communication in Leningrad. During the Second World War, he was made commander of communications support for the Red Army and later commander of the 1st Aeronautical Division. After the war, and by then a highly decorated hero, he joined the Soviet Engineering Corps, which built and launched the first Soviet rockets

## 💡 Did you know

... that Russia had a big Roma population and that the first Roma theatre, the Teatr Romén, was founded in Moscow in 1931?

... that during the 1920s and 1930s Russian Roma founded their own collective farms in southern Russia with several hundred inhabitants each?

## ✎ For you to do

Find out about other prominent or famous people who came from Roma or Sinti families.

## 📷 The photo

Aleksandr Baurov in the 1960s. Private collection of Nikolai Bessonov, Moscow, Russia

1940

1981

1960-70



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

# E6 Partisan

In 1942, Josef Serynek was deported with his wife and children to the "Gypsy" camp in Lety u Písku. Following the death of his wife in 1943, he escaped and joined the partisans. He managed to set up a group of resistance fighters called "Divison Čapajev", made up mostly of escaped Russian prisoners of war. Josef Serynek - better known as the Black Partisan - became one of his country's most decorated resistance fighters. He died in 1974.



1910

1951

1942-45

## 💡 Did you know

... that many Roma and Sinti were active in the resistance? Many had won medals and honours in the First World War and therefore knew how to fight.

... that during the Second World War, many Roma women fought as soldiers and partisans?

## ✎ For you to do

What is the difference between a partisan and a soldier? Were there partisans fighting in your country during the Second World War or later? Who did they fight against?

## 📷 The photo

Postwar photograph of Josef Serynek (second left). Museum of Roma Culture, Brno, Czech Republic



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



# 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

## E8 Saviours to the rescue



The landowner, Baron György de Rohonczy, became the saviour of many Roma in the Lackenbach camp. Until 1921, he has been a senior civil servant in the district administration in Oberpullendorf. A staunch monarchist, he resigned from the service after the proclamation of the Republic in 1919 and went on to run his estate's affairs. After the opening of the "Lackenbach gypsy camp" in 1940, he called in numerous Roma families and their children as labourers for his estates, providing them with proper food and accommodation, and thus saving their lives. At least 50 Roma employed as farm labourers on his estates were able to flee across the border to Hungary. Rohonczy was never prosecuted by the Nazi authorities for assisting the Roma. With his action, he set an example for other owners of large estates, who also called in several Roma from the camp and were thus able to save them.

1910

1951

1940

### 💡 Did you know

... that after 1945, many rescuers of persecuted people were ostracised by the rest of the population? For decades, many of them, therefore, chose to conceal the help and rescue operations they carried out at the risk of their lives.

### ✎ For you to do

Find other people in your country who helped people persecuted during the Nazi era. How are they remembered today? Are there other groups of refugees in your country who have been accepted?

### 📷 The photo

Baron György de Rohonczy. Private property Gerhard Baumgartner



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

# F1 Wounded Souls: Ceija Stojka



“When we got out, we were ill, completely ill! Our hearts were wounded; our heads, our souls were ill ... Those people should all have been given treatment. They should not have had children for five, six years - the few who did get out, who were still there - until they had enough strength, were healthy again, were able to laugh again and see that the world is not so bad ... And the fear, always the fear. The children grew up with it. That is why they still turn round when they walk the streets today. Do you understand? They turn round. Only someone who is afraid turns round! Somebody who emerges ill from the camp, whose head hurts and soul bleeds for a father, a sister, a brother who never came out can only have children that are also wounded in their souls. They come into this world, you see how sweet they are, how beautiful. You raise them and care for them, you kiss them and love them. They grow up. But the fear that was in you flows to the children with their mothers’ milk.”

## 💡 Did you know

... that Ceija Stojka’s book “We Live in Seclusion”, which was published in 1988, was one of the first books telling the tragic fate of the Roma and Sinti during the Holocaust from a survivor’s point of view?

## ✍ For you to do

Choose a sentence from Ceija Stojka’s text that moves you most. Discuss it in small groups.

## 📷 The photo

Ceija Stojka (1933 - 2013), a survivor of Auschwitz, with her daughter Silvia in 1953. Documentation Centre of Austrian Roma, Vienna, Austria.



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

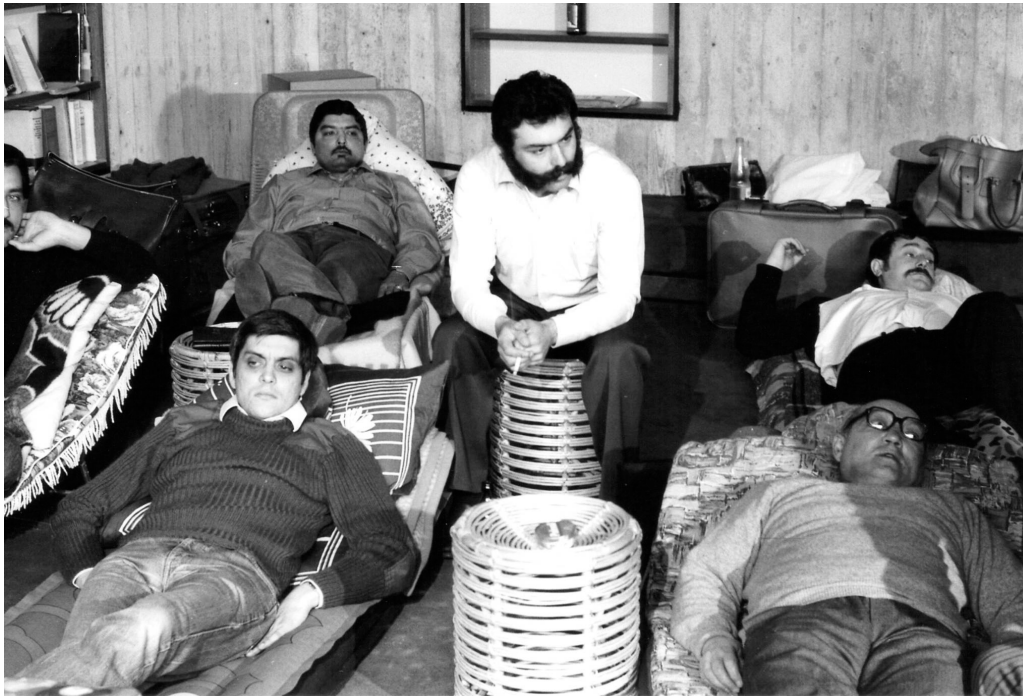
1920

1961

1953

# F2 Refusal of recognition

In 1980, the Association of German Sinti and the Society for Threatened Peoples (“Verband Deutscher Sinti und die Gesellschaft”) requested the disclosure of the files and records on Sinti and Roma from the Federal Archives that had been compiled during the National Socialist era. They demanded public rehabilitation efforts for this persecuted minority. On 4 April 1980, eleven Sinti went on hunger strike on the grounds of the former Dachau concentration camp. After eight days, the Bavarian Minister of the Interior promised to investigate the files’ whereabouts. As a result of the hunger strike, the then Federal Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, received a delegation from the recently founded Central Council of German Sinti and Roma in 1982. In his declaration, Schmidt recognised the genocide of the 500,000 Sinti and Roma for the first time as binding for the Federal Republic of Germany under international law.



1960

2001

1980-82

## 💡 Did you know

... that racist discrimination against German Roma and Sinti continued for almost four decades after the end of the Second World War, using files created by the Nazis and often by the same officials?

## ✍ For you to do

Find out which religious, linguistic and ethnic minorities are recognised in your country, and which are not. How can you tell whether someone is a member of a minority or not?

## 📷 The photo

The participants to the hunger strike at the Dachau concentration camp memorial in 1980. Central Council of German Sinti and Roma, Heidelberg.



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

# F3 No Compensation

Most Roma and Sinti never received any compensation for what they lost, especially not for their houses. Most Roma settlements were built in the 19th century on common land and few Roma realised the houses had to be registered. After the war, most survivors had no legal documents to prove that they had ever owned a house, or even that their house had existed.



1910

1951

1928-38

## 💡 Did you know

... that hundreds of Roma settlements were deliberately destroyed by local authorities during the Second World War?

... that the Roma only received the first restitution payments for the loss of their property fifty years after the end of the war?

## ✎ For you to do

People still lose all their possessions and documents in wars today. What are the consequences for such people and what can they do?

## 📷 The photo

Police photograph of the Roma settlement in Unterschützen in Burgenland, Austria, taken in the late 1920s. Burgenland Regional Archives, Eisenstadt, Austria.



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

# F4 Evacuated: Sofia Taikon



Sofia Taikon, a Polish Romni, was deported to Auschwitz with her family in 1943. In the summer of 1944 she and other prisoners were moved to Ravensbrück. In 1945, during the last months of the war, the Swedish Red Cross, under its president, Count Folke Bernadotte, launched an evacuation programme for Scandinavians in German concentration camps. White buses marked with the symbol of the Red Cross ferried some 15,000 prisoners to safety, including many other nationalities. Sofia Taikon was one of them. After the war she became one of the most respected representatives of the Swedish Roma. She died in 2005.

## 💡 Did you know

... that a Red Cross convoy was mistakenly bombed by the Allies, killing most of those who had just been liberated from the concentration camp?

... that Sofia's life story was published in the form of a comic?

## ✎ For you to do

What reason might the National Socialists have had to suddenly free concentration camp prisoners in the spring of 1945? The number Z4515 was tattooed on Sofia Taikon's arm. Try to discover where she was given this number and what it meant.

## 📷 The photo

Sofia Taikon as a young woman in Sweden. Living History Forum collection, Stockholm, Sweden.



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

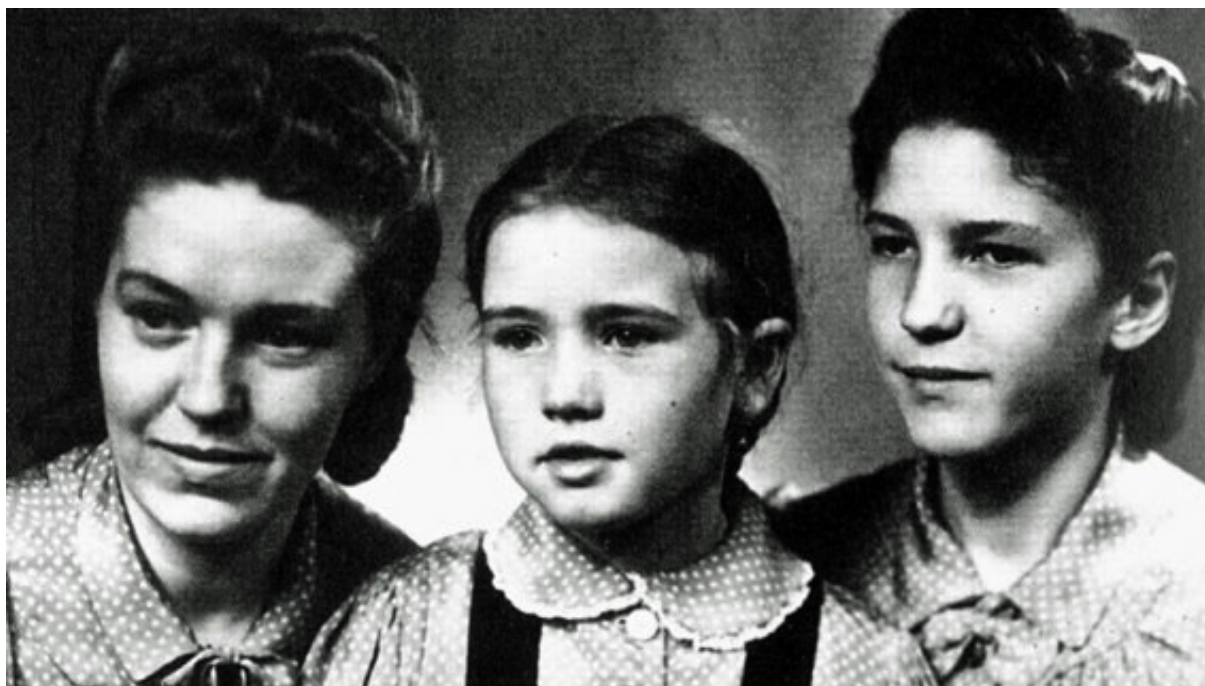
1940

1981

1955-63

# F5 Released: Else Schmidt

Else Schmidt from Hamburg, Germany, was a foster child of Emil Matula and his wife. In 1943, when she was eight, Else was deported to Auschwitz with other Roma and Sinti. A young woman called Wanda helped the lonely child survive the concentration camp, while her foster father ceaselessly petitioned the authorities to release his daughter. He finally succeeded in 1944, and Else was taken from Auschwitz to Ravensbrück and released into his custody.



1910

1951

1943

## 💡 Did you know

... that Else Schmidt's story was made into an illustrated children's book by the German authors Michail Krausnick and Lukas Ruegenberg?

... that the local authorities did have certain powers to prevent the deportation of Roma and Sinti?

## ✎ For you to do

Try to find out more about the fate of Else Schmidt and also about other cases where children were forcibly separated from their parents and taken to another country. What do you know about attempts to prevent people from being deported from your country today?

## 📷 The photo

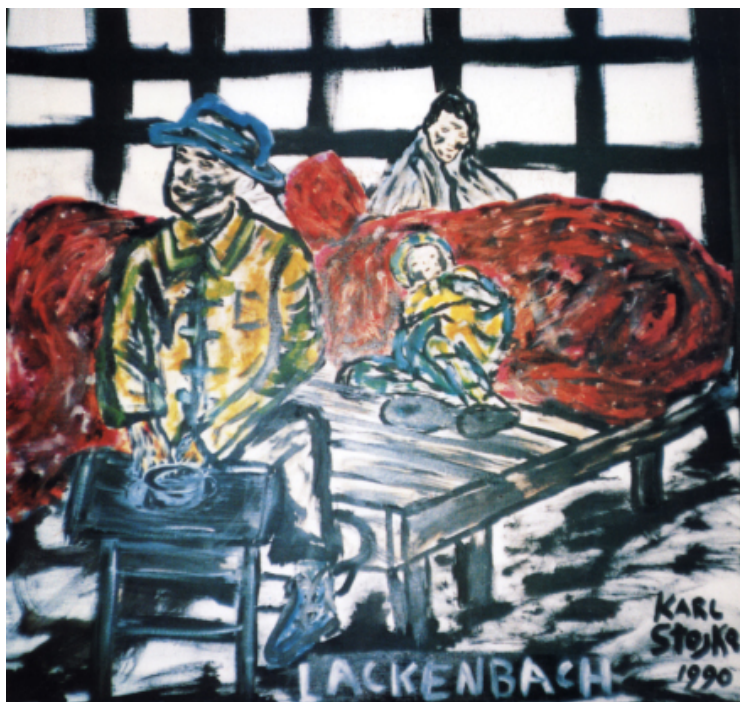
Else Schmidt with her two elder stepsisters in 1943. Central Council of German Sinti and Roma, Heidelberg, Germany.



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

## F6 Roma Rights Activist: Karl Stojka

After the Second World War, Karl Stojka became a successful businessman in Austria. In his spare time he started to paint pictures of his experiences in the Auschwitz, Buchenwald and Flossenbürg concentration camps. He was an active member of the Roma Rights movement, fighting for equal rights for the European Roma, for their official recognition as an ethnic group, and for compensation for the surviving Roma and Sinti for the wrong done to them during the Holocaust.



1950

1991

1990

### 💡 Did you know

... that in recognition of his long years of committed work, Karl Stojka was granted an audience by Pope John Paul II, who called him an “ambassador of the Roma people”?

### ✍ For you to do

Art is one of many ways of remembering. Find other artists whose works express their memories of the Holocaust. Present an example and explain your choice. Is there a Roma or Sinti organisation in your country? What does it do?

### 📷 The photo

Scene from Lackenbach Camp in Burgenland painted by Karl Stojka in 1990. The oil painting is now privately owned. Documentation Centre of Austrian Roma, Vienna, Austria.



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



# F8 Commemoration

During the night of 2 August 1944, the remaining 2,897 Roma and Sinti prisoners at the “Gypsy” camp in Auschwitz-Birkenau were murdered in the gas chambers by SS guards. Commemorating this tragic event has become one of the most important public memorial ceremonies in post-war European Roma culture. Every year, Sinti and Roma from all over Europe gather at the site of the former “Gypsy” camp.



1974

2015

2011

## 💡 Did you know

... that for many decades after the Second World War, there were no monuments commemorating the genocide of the Roma and Sinti? It was not until 1982 that the first commemorative plaque for Roma and Sinti concentration camp victims was unveiled in Dachau.

## ✍ For you to do

Do you have a special day of Holocaust remembrance in your country? Describe a memorial site for the Sinti and Roma genocide. Is there one in your region?

## 📷 The photo

Commemoration at Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp on 2 August 2011. Documentation Centre of Austrian Roma, Vienna, Austria.



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

# F9 International Memorial

The Memorial to the Sinti and Roma of Europe Murdered under the National Socialist Regime was officially opened in Berlin in October 2012. On the ridge around the pond a poem written by the Italian Rom Santino Spinelli is inscribed: "Sunken-in face / extinguished eyes / cold lips / silence / a torn heart / without breath / without words / no tears". The memorial is located near the German Bundestag and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe.



1974

2015

2012

## 💡 Did you know

... that a fresh flower is placed on the triangular at the centre of the monument every day?

... that the memory of the genocide is a key element in the identity of European Roma and Sinti after 1945?

## ✎ For you to do

In his opening speech, Zoni Weisz, representing the Roma and Sinti, said that the memorial was not an end but a starting point for greater involvement with the fate of the Sinti and Roma. What do you think he meant by that?

## 📷 The photo

Photographer: Marko Priske. Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe Foundation, Berlin, Germany



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

# G1 Crest



During the First World War, “Gypsy” families from Alsace- Lorraine were interned in an old monastery in the village of Crest, in southeast France. A hundred and sixty men, women and children were held there for four years. Ten of them died there.

## 💡 Did you know

.. that during the First World War many civilians all over Europe were held in camps by their own governments because they were considered a security risk?

## ✍ For you to do

What laws does your country have to protect people from unlawful arrest? What organisations provide support for people arrested unlawfully and how do they work?

## 📷 The photo

A Roma family from Lorraine in the internment camp in Crest in southern France, where they were held for four years. Collection of Emmanuel Filhol, Bordeaux, France.



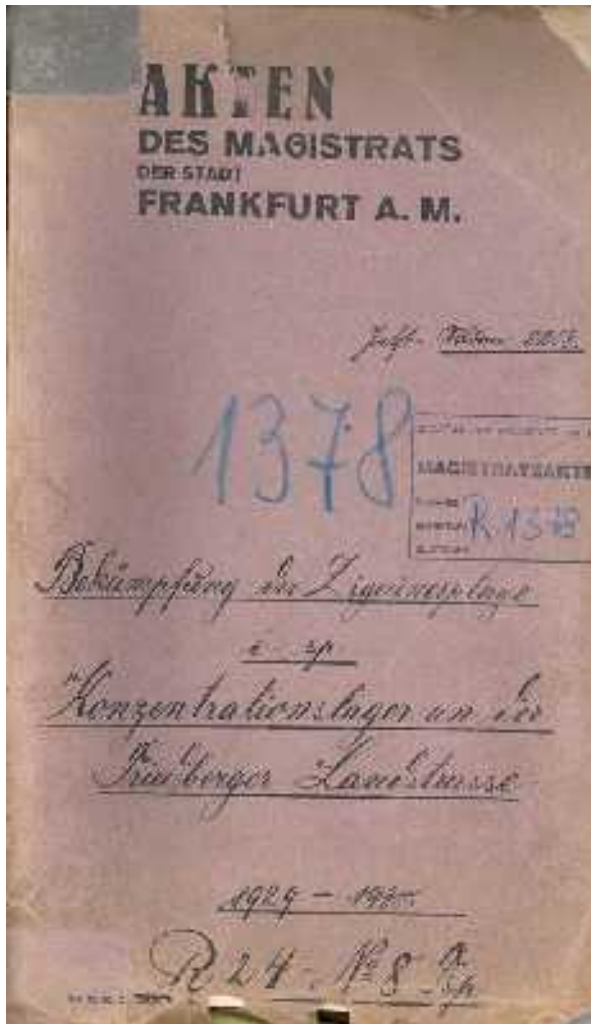
<https://www.romasintigenocide.eu/en/g>

1910

1951

1914-18

# G2 Frankfurt



In 1929 a camp was set up for local Sinti and Roma on the outskirts of Frankfurt. The council tried to force the Sinti and Roma families to leave their homes in the city. Many families who were dependent on local authority support had no choice but to move to the camp, where conditions were unhygienic. The camp was closed in 1935. Starting in 1937, Roma and Sinti from Frankfurt and the rest of Hessen were sent to a camp in Dieselstrasse, where Robert Ritter's Research Institute for Racial Hygiene and Population Biology started to carry out test on the inmates in 1938. Many of them were subsequently deported to the death camps.

## 💡 Did you know

... that the proposal to establish the camp was supported by nearly all the political parties?

## ✎ For you to do

Find out whether the authorities in your country have forced Roma and Sinti to move recently. Collect press cuttings on the subject. How was the matter reported? Can public authorities in your country force people to leave their homes and live somewhere else?

## 📷 The photo

A file created in 1929 by Frankfurt council covering "Measures taken against the Gypsy Nuisance" and the establishment of a "Concentration Camp on Friedberger Landstrasse". Institute of Municipal History, Frankfurt am Main, Germany.



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

1910

1951

1929

# G3 Witzwil

In 1894, Witzwil estate in Western Switzerland was turned into a prison. Prisoners had to work on the farm and dig irrigation 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.

## ✎ For you to do

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

## 📷 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>

# H1 BERLIN-MARZAHN (D)

While spectators from all over the world were gathering in Berlin for the 1936 Olympic Games, the Sinti and Roma living in the German capital were forced to move to Marzahn "Gypsy" Camp. They were only allowed to leave the camp to go to work. In 1939 many were taken to Sachsenhausen concentration camp as slave labour. The remaining Sinti and Roma were deported to Auschwitz in 1943, where most of them were killed.



1910

1951

1939

## 💡 Did you know

... that even today there are cities in the Ukraine, Bulgaria and Italy with "Gypsy" camps to which the local Roma have to return in the evening before the gates are locked for the night?

... that the Sinto boxer Jakob Bamberger qualified to compete in the 1936 Olympic Games but, for racist reasons, was prevented by the Nazis from doing so?

## ✎ For you to do

What impression of Berlin did the Nazis wish to create? Why? Where have similar things happened in recent times?

## 📷 The photo

Families cooking in the "Gypsy" camp at Marzahn on the outskirts of Berlin in 1939. German Federal Archives, Koblenz, Germany.



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

# H2 KÖLN (D)

The first “Gypsy” camps in the Third Reich were not set up by Nazi Party officials or the SS but by German municipal authorities. In 1935, Cologne city council forced 500 Sinti and Roma to leave their flats, houses and caravan parks and moved them to a new “Gypsy” camp on the outskirts of the city in Blickendorf. Similar camps were established in Hamburg, Düsseldorf, Berlin, Frankfurt, Essen and Hanover.



1910

1951

1937

## 💡 Did you know

... that during the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, the Sinti and Roma living in the city were forcibly relocated to Marzahn Camp on the outskirts, where they had to live in caravans? They were only allowed to leave the camp if they had a steady job outside.

## ✎ For you to do

Find out about the forced relocation or deportation of people in Europe. Who decides where people may live and why? Which organisations protest?

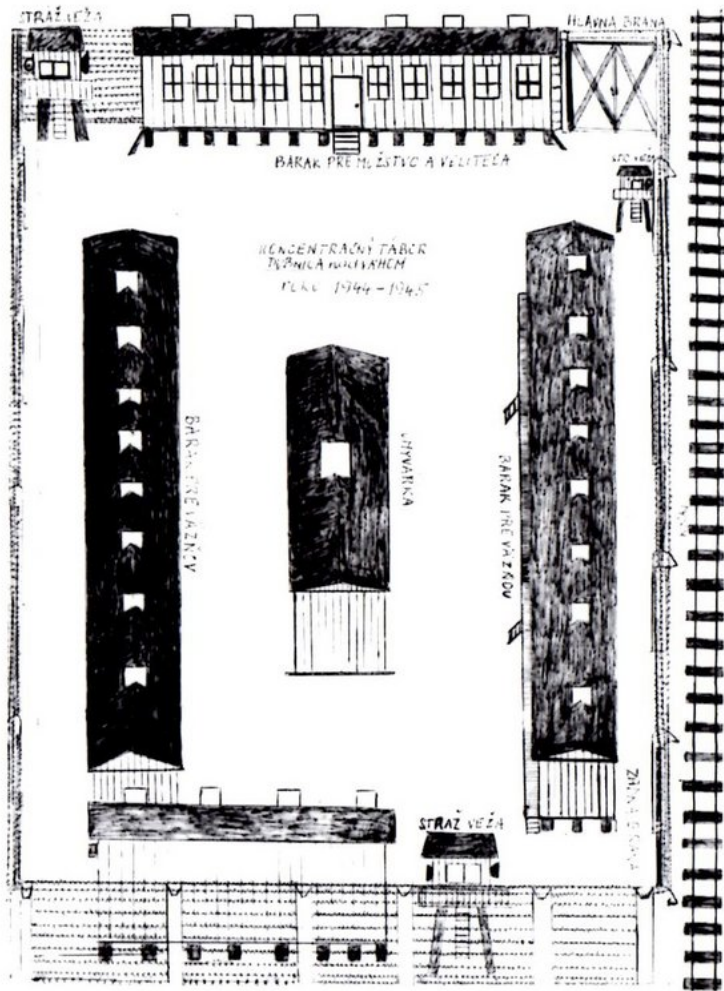
## 📷 The photo

A German Sinti family in Blickendorf Camp in Cologne on 12 December 1937. German Federal Archives, Koblenz, Germany.



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

# H3 DUBNICA NAD VÁHOM (SK)



Dubnica nad Váhom was the site of one of the largest civil engineering projects in Slovakia: the construction of a gigantic dam on the River Váh. From 1942 to 1944 Roma were used for slave labour there. When all the workers were discharged, the Roma were moved with their families to a detention camp. Many of the 700 inmates of that camp were killed during the final days of the war.

## 💡 Did you know

... that there were similar labour camps in the Slovak towns of Hanušovce nad Topľou, Ilava, Revúcej and Ústi nad Oravou?

## ✎ For you to do

Which politicians or political parties are today calling for people who receive welfare payments to be forced to work? What do you think of the idea?

## 📷 The photo

Drawing of the camp made by one of the prisoners. Private collection of Karol Janas, Považská Bystrica, Slovakia.

1910

1951

1942-45



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



# H4 DÜSSELDORF (D)



Bundesarchiv, Bild 146-1088-044-07  
Foto: o. Ang. | 1937/1938 ca.

In 1937 the authorities forced Düsseldorf's Sinti and Roma to move to the municipal "Gypsy" camp at Höherweg. There they lived in primitive brick buildings with barred windows and steel doors, which were locked from the outside. The camp was surrounded by a barbed-wire fence, and the inmates were only allowed to leave it to do forced labour. Nine people died in the camp. In 1943 the remaining prisoners were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau.

1910

1951

1937-43

## 💡 Did you know

... that the camp commander was a police officer notorious for his cruelty? He repeatedly set his dog on the prisoners.

...that Sinti and Roma survivors who returned to Düsseldorf after the war were housed in the same camp?

## ✎ For you to do

What does the decision to put the survivors back in the camp after the end of the war say about the attitude to Roma and Sinti and the general response to what had happened?

## 📷 The photo

Höherweg "Gypsy" Camp in Düsseldorf. Documentation Centre of German Sinti and Roma, Heidelberg, Germany.



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

# H5 GELSENKIRCHEN (D)

In 1937, after persistent harassment and threats, Sinti and Roma families in Gelsenkirchen were persuaded to move to a municipal traveller site overseen by SA squads and where they were charged for the use of the land. In April 1939, the local police “45 families with 237 persons in 51 caravans” in the camp. The families were later forced to move to the traveller site in Beginenstrasse shown in the photograph. Some fled to Cologne, from where most were deported to Poland in 1940. The remaining residents of the Gelsenkirchen Camp were deported to Auschwitz in 1943.



1910

1951

1937

## 💡 Did you know

... that the big mining and armaments companies in particular called for the “Gypsies” to be banished from the German city of Gelsenkirchen?

...that many Sinti in Gelsenkirchen were actually employed in the steelworks? But the Nazis suspected them all of sabotage, and so they were deported to concentration camps.

## ✎ For you to do

Under what circumstances can people be locked up merely on suspicion of having committed a crime today? Who can issue such an order?

## 📷 The photo

“Gypsy” camp in the former Beginenstrasse in Uckendorf, a suburb of Gelsenkirchen. Documentation Centre of German Sinti and Roma, Heidelberg, Germany.



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

# H6 HAMBURG (D)

Some of Hamburg's 1,300 Sinti and Roma lived on the traditional caravan site in the suburb of Harburg; others lived scattered around the city. In 1940, 500 of them were deported to camps and ghettos in Poland. In March 1943 the National Socialist authorities also deported 328 Roma and Sinti from Hamburg to Auschwitz. The last group was sent there in April 1944.



1910

1951

1938

## 💡 Did you know

... that the first Sinti and Roma were forcibly relocated, and in some cases imprisoned, years before the first Jews were relocated and deported?

...that similar camps were set up in the cities of Hanover, Braunschweig, Oldenburg and Osnabrück?

## ✎ For you to do

Find out about the forced relocation or deportation of people in Europe. Who decides where people may live and why? Which organisations protest?

## 📷 The photo

Inmates of the Hamburg Harburg "Gypsy" Camp being interviewed in 1938 by police or perhaps by employees of the "race researcher" Robert Ritter. German Federal Archives, Koblenz, Germany.



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

# H7 HODONÍN U KUNŠTÁTU (CZ)

Between 1942 and 1945, the “Gypsy” camp at Hodonín near Kunštát in Moravia was used as a detention camp for the Moravian Roma. The conditions, including food and accommodation, were dreadful. As a result, 207 of the 1,375 people held at Hodonín died of various illnesses, particularly typhoid.



1910

1951

1942

## 💡 Did you know

... that in 1939 the Roma and Sinti living in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia made up only 0.2 per cent of the population and that 90 per cent of them perished during the Holocaust?

... that Czech policemen played a major role in the persecution and deportation of the Czech Roma?

## ✎ For you to do

Find out what happened to Štefan Blahynka, the Czech commander of the camp, after 1945. Did he ever have to answer for his deeds? Who worked for a fitting memorial to the victims in this camp?

## 📷 The photo

Photograph of Roma women and children in the Hodonín u Kunštátu detention camp taken by O. Kucery in 1942. Museum of Roma Culture, Brno, Czech Republic.



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

# H8 KOMÁROM (H)

Camp Komárom served as the central collection point for Hungarian Roma pending deportation to concentration camps in Germany as slave labour in 1944. The Roma were first taken to regional “Gypsy” camps and then many were made to walk several hundred kilometres to Fort Csillageröd in Komárom. There, the men and women who were fit for work were selected for the next stage of the march, into Germany. Many of those who were left behind in Camp Komárom died of starvation. Many others died on the “death marches” to the German Reich. Only about 4,000 of the fort’s 10,000 inmates survived.



1974

2015

2006

## 💡 Did you know

... that very little is known about Camp Komárom, in Hungary, and its victims - even today?

... that in the last months of the Second World War, as the fighting came closer and closer, the prisoners in many concentration camps were sent on “death marches” to other camps?

## ✎ For you to do

What was the point of the “death marches”? Find out whether there were any “death marches” in your area and if so, where.

## 📷 The photo

A photograph taken in 2006 of the parade ground at Fort Csillageröd in Komárom, Hungary. In the background you can see the entrances to the dungeons where the deported Roma were imprisoned. Private collection of Szabolcs Szita, Budapest, Hungary.



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

# H9 LACKENBACH (A)

The Lackenbach "Gypsy" Camp was set up by various district councils in Lower Austria and the Vienna municipal authority. At times, the camp housed up to 2,000 people under atrocious conditions; 273 people died there. The inmates were often hired out to local companies as forced labour. Out of a total of 4,000 inmates, 2,000 were deported to Łódź in 1941. Most of the rest were taken to Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1943.



1910

1951

1940

## 💡 Did you know

... that this camp was the largest detention camp for Roma and Sinti in the whole of the Third Reich?

## ✎ For you to do

Where was the nearest camp for Roma and Sinti where you live? What is there to remind people of it today?

## 📷 The photo

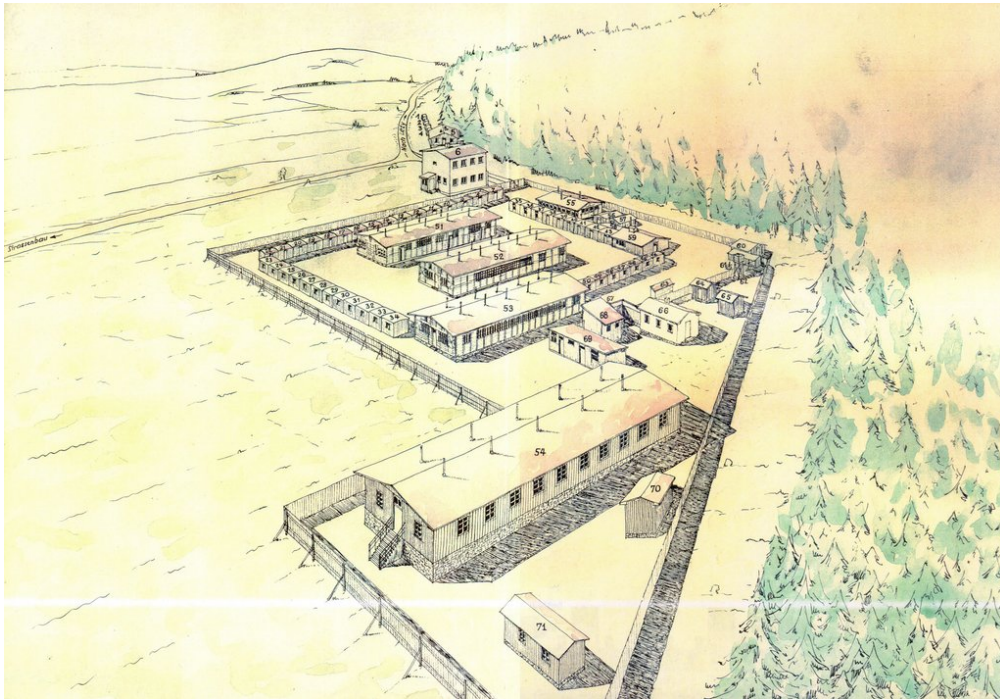
Photograph of a Viennese policeman guarding Roma families deported to Lackenbach Camp taken on 23 November 1940, the day the camp opened. Private collection of Leopold Banny, Lackenbach, Austria.



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

# H10 LETY U PÍSKU (CZ)

The “Gypsy” camp at Lety u Písku in Bohemia, now in the Czech Republic, was built in 1940 as a prison and labour camp for “anti-social elements”. It was designed to hold 600 prisoners, but after it became a “Gypsy” camp in August 1942 it held 1,392 men, women and children; 326 of them died there. Most of the inmates were deported to Auschwitz in 1943 and 1944.



1910

1951

1943

## 💡 Did you know

... that the site of the former “Gypsy” camp at Lety u Písku is now a pig farm? Since 1994 Roma activists have been campaigning for its closure. So far without success.

... that in 2012 Petr Nečáček became the first Czech prime minister to lay a wreath for the persecuted Sinti and Roma at Lety u Písku?

## ✎ For you to do

What is the current state of the debate on the former camp and today’s use of the site?

## 📷 The photo

A 1943 drawing showing the layout of the labour camp and later “Gypsy” camp at Lety u Písku. State Administration Archives, Prague, Czech Republic



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

# H11 LODZ (PL)

The first mass deportations of Roma and Sinti from Austria to Poland began in November 1941. They were taken to the Jewish ghetto in Litzmannstadt/Łódź. Out of a total of 5,007 people, mainly from the Austrian province of Burgenland, 60 per cent were children under the age of twelve. 12,630 deportees died of typhoid fever during the first few weeks and were buried in mass graves. Around Christmas 1941, the survivors were sent north to the Chełmno/Kulmhof extermination camp.



1910

1951

1941-42

## 💡 Did you know

... that Łódź was renamed Litzmannstadt by the German occupation authorities in 1939?

... that it has not been possible to identify the victims of the Litzmannstadt “Gypsy” camp?

... that most of the children deported to this camp were sent there without their parents?

## ✎ For you to do

Do you know of any cases of unaccompanied minors living in camps today? Who looks after them?

## 📷 The photo

A building in the “Gypsy” camp in the former Litzmannstadt ghetto in Łódź, Poland. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, Washington D.C., USA.



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



# H12 MAXGLAN (A)

About 230 Sinti and Roma were held in a small detention camp in Maxglan/Leopoldskron-Moos, a suburb of Salzburg. After 1939, when life as a traveller was made illegal, the families could only leave the camp to go to work. Later they were only allowed out under supervision as slave labour. In April 1943, 160 Sinti were deported from Maxglan to Auschwitz, including the 17 children born in the camp.



1910

1951

1940

## 💡 Did you know

... that the famous German film director Leni Riefenstahl used inmates of Maxglan Camp in Austria as extras in her film *Lowlands*, a melodrama set in Spain, for which she needed actors with dark hair and dark skin?

## ✎ For you to do

Study the photo carefully. What questions come to mind? What mood does the photo convey? Find out about everyday life for people living in similar situations today.

## 📷 The photo

Photograph of Sinti women and children taken in Maxglan Camp near Salzburg in 1939 or 1940. Documentation Centre of German Sinti and Roma, Heidelberg, Germany



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

# H13 MECHELEN / MALINES (B)

A camp was set up for Roma and Sinti in the village of Elewijt, on the outskirts of the Belgian city of Mechelen/Malines. Following the Germany invasion of Belgium in 1940, the old army barracks in Mechelen/Malines was used as a prison and detention camp for political prisoners, and also for Jews, Roma and Sinti. In 1944, 352 French and Belgian Sinti and Roma were deported from Dossin Barracks to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Only 31 of them survived. However, the families in the Elewijt Camp were not deported to Auschwitz.



1910

1951

1944

## 💡 Did you know

... that most Roma and Sinti from France and Belgium were not deported to concentration camps?

... that the memorial opened in Dossin Barracks in 2012 includes an exhibition on the fate of the 352 deportees?

## ✎ For you to do

What does this photo tell you about the conditions under which the mourning ceremony had to be held? Compare the living conditions in this camp with what you know about other camps.

## 📷 The photo

Belgian Roma families at a funeral meal in the Elewijt Camp on the outskirts of Mechelen/Malines in 1944. Dossin Barracks Memorial Site in Mechelen/Malines, Belgium.



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

# H14 MONTREUIL-BELLAY (F)

Montreuil-Bellay in the Loire, which operated from November 1941 to January 1945, was the largest internment camp for Roma and Sinti in France, with 3,000 inmates. It was neither a concentration camp, nor a deportation camp nor a labour camp. None of the prisoners were sent to extermination camps, but more than a hundred died during their years of detention. There were more than forty such camps in France.



1910

1951

1941-46

## 💡 Did you know

... that the camp was guarded not only by French police officers but often also by volunteers from the neighbouring villages?

... that many of the Roma and Sinti held prisoner in this camp were not freed in 1945? They had to wait until 1946, when the war had been over for almost ten months.

## ✎ For you to do

What might have been the reason why Sinti and Roma families were not released immediately after the end of the Second World War?

## 📷 The photo

Photograph of a group of children in the Montreuil-Bellay internment camp, probably taken from one of the watchtowers. Private collection of Jacques Sigot, Châteauneuf-les-Martigues, France.



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

# H15 TRANSNISTRIA (UA)



In 1942, eight-year-old Anuta Branzan and her family were forcibly relocated - together with 30,000 other Romanian Roma and Sinti - from Bucharest to Transnistria, on the border with Ukraine. The camps were mostly consisted of primitive huts, and many of the deportees had to sleep out in the fields or in barns. Anuta survived two years of hunger and forced labour under inhuman conditions there. More than half of the other deportees did not.

## 💡 Did you know

... that Romania has the largest Roma population in the European Union, estimated at between 1.8 million and 2.5 million people?

... that about half of all people regarded as Roma do not see themselves as Roma, but half of those who actually are Roma are often not recognised as such?

## ✍ For you to do

Pick a moment in the life of Anuta Branzan (before relocation, in the camp, after her liberation) and write a letter she might have written to a friend.

## 📷 The photo

Anuta Branzan (second right) and her sisters in 1942. An aunt had the photograph taken a few days before their deportation, to have a memento of her nieces. Private collection of Michelle Kelso, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA.



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

1910

1951

1942

# H16 WEYER (A)

Sinti families from Carinthia, the Tyrol, Salzburg, Bavaria and especially Upper Austria were taken to Weyer Camp from January 1941. They were used as slave labour, digging drainage ditches in the surrounding wetlands. On 1 November of the same year, they were all deported to the camp at Lackenbach in Burgenland, Austria. A few days later, they were probably “relocated” from there to Łódź, Poland, where they were murdered.



1910

1951

1941

## 💡 Did you know

... that the camp was operated in 1940 and 1941 as a “Work Reform Camp” for allegedly anti-social men? It was closed in 1941 because of the brutal treatment and murder of inmates by their Nazi guards.

## ✎ For you to do

Compare the photo with the text and say what strikes you. Talk about the situation in which the photo might have been taken and the relationship that may have existed between the photographer and his subjects.

## 📷 The photo

Young Sinti in the Weyer Camp photographed by the camp doctor Alois Stauer in the summer of 1941. Private collection of Andreas Maislinger, Innsbruck, Austria.



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

# I1 AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU (PL)



On 16 December 1942, Heinrich Himmler ordered that all “Gypsies” still living in the German Reich must be deported to Auschwitz. This Auschwitz Decree marked the final phase of a plan for the extermination of the “Gypsies”. For the German, Austrian and Czech Roma and Sinti, mass deportation to Auschwitz-Birkenau began in April 1943. More than 20,000 Roma and Sinti were crammed into 32 wooden huts in the “Gypsy family camp” at Auschwitz. By July 1944 about 70 per cent of them were dead. Those still able to work were transferred to other concentration camps. The remaining 2,879 prisoners were gassed during the night of 2 August 1944.

## 💡 Did you know

... that the inmates of the “Gypsy” camp staged a revolt? In May 1944, when some were to be selected for gassing, the Roma and Sinti drove the SS guards out of the “Gypsy” camp with sticks and stones.

## ✍ For you to do

There is a register of deaths for Auschwitz listing the names of the Roma and Sinti murdered there. Go to the website of the Auschwitz Memorial Site and find out more.

## 📷 The photo

Inside a hut - clothes were spread out to dry overnight with the help of the stove in the middle of the picture. This is the only known photograph of the “Gypsy” camp in Auschwitz-Birkenau. German Federal Archives, Koblenz, Germany.



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

1910

1951

1943-44

## I2 BERGEN-BELSEN (D)



By the summer of 1944, the Allied advance was forcing the Nazis to close down concentration camps. That autumn, tens of thousands of completely exhausted prisoners arrived in Bergen-Belsen after days spent in railway wagons or on “death marches”. In the winter of 1944/45, the hopelessly overcrowded camp held more than 60,000 prisoners, including hundreds of Sinti and Roma transferred there from Buchenwald. When the camp was liberated by British troops in April 1945, they found piles of unburied bodies and most of the survivors were on the verge of starvation.

### 💡 Did you know

... that in the first few months following the liberation of the camp, 14,000 of the survivors died due to starvation and exhaustion? Attempts were made to help them in British Army field hospitals, but they were too weak to recover.

... that about 80,000 people died in Bergen-Belsen?

### ✎ For you to do

Find out what the most common causes of death were for inmates of the prisons and internment camps in the two world wars.

### 📷 The photo

Prisoners of Bergen-Belsen concentration camp after their liberation. International Tracing Service, Bad Arolsen, Germany.



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

1910

1951

1945

# I3 BELZEC (PL)

By the summer of 1944, the Allied advance was forcing the Nazis to close down concentration camps. That autumn, tens of thousands of completely exhausted prisoners arrived in Bergen-Belsen after days spent in railway wagons or on "death marches". In the winter of 1944/45, the hopelessly overcrowded camp held more than 60,000 prisoners, including hundreds of Sinti and Roma transferred there from Buchenwald. When the camp was liberated by British troops in April 1945, they found piles of unburied bodies and most of the survivors were on the verge of starvation.



1910

1951

1940

## 💡 Did you know

... that in the first few months following the liberation of the camp, 14,000 of the survivors died due to starvation and exhaustion? Attempts were made to help them in British Army field hospitals, but they were too weak to recover.

... that about 80,000 people died in Bergen-Belsen?

## ✎ For you to do

Find out what the most common causes of death were for inmates of the prisons and internment camps in the two world wars.

## 📷 The photo

Prisoners of Bergen-Belsen concentration camp after their liberation. International Tracing Service, Bad Arolsen, Germany



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



# I4 BUCHENWALD (D)

By 1938 hundreds of German Sinti and Roma had already been deported to Buchenwald concentration camp near the city of Weimar. In 1939, 600 Austrian Sinti and Roma arrived from Dachau, including many teenagers. In 1940, 500 of the surviving Roma and Sinti were transferred to Mauthausen concentration camp. When the Auschwitz extermination camp was abandoned in the summer of 1944, another 1,800 Roma and Sinti men arrived in Buchenwald, but 200 of them were returned to Auschwitz for extermination in September. About 1,000 Roma and Sinti women evacuated from Auschwitz were sent to the Buchenwald sub-camps at Altenburg, Schlieben and Leipzig-Taucha. Few of them survived the inhuman conditions in the arms factories there.



1910

1951

1945

## 💡 Did you know

... that Buchenwald concentration camp had 129 sub-camps?

... that at the end of the war, the surviving prisoners were forced by their guards to join “death marches” to other concentration camps? Prisoners who were too weak to go on were shot on the spot. Thousands were killed only days before the end of the war.

## ✎ For you to do

Find out where similar “death marches” took place in the last months of the Second World War. Find out whether there are any mass graves in your area. If so, who was buried there and why?

## 📷 The photo

Buchenwald concentration camp after liberation. Buchenwald and MittelbauDora Memorials Foundation, Weimar, Germany.



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

# I5 CHELMNO/KULMHOF (PL)

In December 1941, when a typhoid fever epidemic broke out in the “Gypsy” camp in the Litzmannstadt ghetto in the Polish city now known as Łódź, 4,600 Roma were killed in gassing vans used to transport them to Chełmno/Kulmhof. Ten weeks after arriving in Łódź, all 5,007 Austrian Roma and Sinti were dead; 4,400 of them are buried in unmarked mass graves in the forests around Chełmno, together with 150,000 Jews and thousands of Soviet prisoners of war.



1910

1951

1941-42

## 💡 Did you know

... that when worried friends and relatives enquired about the deportees in March 1942 and asked for permission to visit them in Poland, the police said no visiting rights applied to people “resettled” in Łódź?

... that “gassing vans” were first used to murder patients in mental hospitals and asylums?

## ✎ For you to do

What were the conditions like for the people living in the ghettos? What were the consequences of such living conditions?

## 📷 The photo

A Magirus-Deutz “gassing van” of the type used in 1941 and 1942 to murder Austrian Roma on the journey from the Litzmannstadt “Gypsy” camp to the death camp in Chełmno/Kulmhof. Yad Vashem Archives, doc. no. 1264/2, Jerusalem, Israel.



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

# I6 DACHAU (D)



The first groups of Roma and Sinti were deported to concentration camps in 1938, but in 1939 mass deportations began to Dachau, Buchenwald and Ravensbrück, where thousands of Austrian Roma and Sinti were sent as slave labour. As able-bodied breadwinners were deported, their families were left dependent on poor relief - which made the local authorities press for even more people to be deported! The prisoners in the concentration camps were divided into categories by the SS, and symbols were sewn onto their clothing to indicate their category. Roma and Sinti usually had to wear the black triangle used for “anti-social” prisoners. Some camps had a separate “Gypsy” category with a brown triangle.

## 💡 Did you know

... that there were Roma and Sinti prisoners in almost every concentration camp in the Third Reich?

## ✎ For you to do

The identification number of one of the prisoners in the photo is 17093. Try to find out more about this man.

## 📷 The photo

Austrian Roma at Dachau concentration camp photographed for the SS by Friedrich Franz Bauer. Archives of the Dachau Memorial Site, Germany.

1910

1951

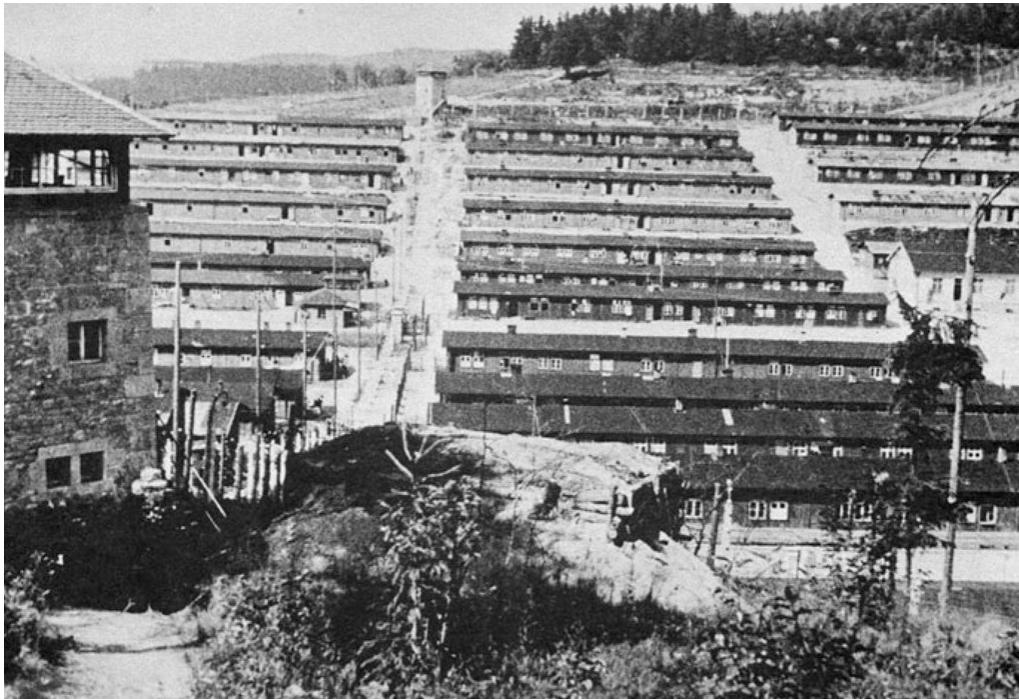
1938



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

# I7 FLOSSENBÜRG (D)

The National Socialists planned Flossenbürg as a concentration camp with forced labour under their “Extermination Through Work” policy. That was the fate intended for political opponents and “anti-social outsiders” particularly. More than 1,200 Sinti and Roma were deported to Flossenbürg as alleged “anti-social elements” and forced to carry out extremely hard physical labour, e.g. in the local quarry or nearby arms factories.



1910

1951

1946

## 💡 Did you know

... that towards the end of the war, thousands of prisoners of Flossenbürg concentration camp were forced to go on a “death march” to southern Germany?

...that many of the weak and starving prisoners were shot by their guards during the last days of the war in 1945? One of the survivors was 14-yearold Karl Stojka.

## ✎ For you to do

Find out what rules apply to the treatment of prisoners. Can they be forced to work?

## 📷 The photo

Photograph taken in April 1946 of the Flossenbürg concentration camp following its liberation by US forces. Foundation of Bavarian Memorial Sites, Flossenbürg Concentration Camp Memorial Site, Germany



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

# 18 JASENOVAC (HR)

Jasenovac, which is about a hundred kilometres southeast of Zagreb, was the biggest concentration camp in Croatia. It was built in 1941 and guarded by members of the Croatian Fascist Ustaša movement. So far, 83,145 victims have been identified by name. The biggest single group was almost 50,000 Serbs, followed by more than 16,000 Roma.



1910

1951

1941-45

## 💡 Did you know

... that the Roma were transported to the camp in cattle wagons? ... that the transport documents merely showed the number of prisoners, but not their names?

... that hardly any of the Roma - regardless of their age or sex - survived the camp? ... that there is no agreement on the exact number of victims?

## ✎ For you to do

Why is it important to discover the identity of the victims, even today, more than seventy years later?

## 📷 The photo

Roma women and children in the Stara Gradiška women's camp, a sub-camp of Jasenovac concentration camp. Jasenovac Memorial Museum, Jasenovac, Croatia.



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

# I9 MAUTHAUSEN (A)

Mauthausen concentration camp in Upper Austria was one of the biggest in the Third Reich - with more than 200,000 prisoners, mainly Soviet PoWs, Jews and political prisoners. About 100,000 people died there between 1938 and 1945. Among the 500 Roma victims was the father of Karl Stojka, who was one of the first Roma to be deported to the camp in 1939. In 1994 Karl Stojka unveiled a memorial plaque on the site of the former concentration camp.



1960

2001

1994

## 💡 Did you know

... that many of the inmates died in the nearby quarries run by the SS?

... that prisoners who were too weak to carry the heavy stones were shot on the spot?

## ✍ For you to do

Find out whether the genocide of the Roma and Sinti is commemorated in your area or country and if so, how.

## 📷 The photo

The unveiling of the first memorial plaque for the victims of the genocide of the Roma and Sinti at the former Mauthausen concentration camp by Rudolf Sarközi, Karl Stojka and Mongo Stojka (from the left) on 27 April 1994. Documentation Centre of Austrian Roma, Vienna, Austria.



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

# I10 RAVENSBRÜCK (D)

Most of the 152,000 prisoners in the Ravensbrück concentration camp in northern Germany were women, many of them Roma and Sinti, who were deported to the camp with their small children. Of the 28,000 victims of the camp, only 16,500 are known by name.



1910

1951

1939-45

## 💡 Did you know

... that the first prisoner to die in Ravensbrück was a 16-year-old Roma girl from Austria? She was so thin that she managed to crawl under the barbed-wire. But her escape was discovered and she was caught and brought back to the camp, where she was sentenced to be beaten with a stick - a punishment

## ✎ For you to do

Find out more about the conditions under which the women in Ravensbrück lived and worked. Why is it that almost a quarter of the prisoners died? What can be done to commemorate the countless unknown victims?

## 📷 The photo

Austrian Roma women making rush mats under supervision in the Ravensbrück concentration camp. Archives of the Ravensbrück Memorial Site, Germany



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

# I11 TOPOVSKE SUPE (SR)

In August 1941, the German military and civil administration set up a concentration camp for Serbian Jews, Roma and political prisoners on the site of the so-called "Topovske Šupe" – a collection of former army barracks and warehouses in the centre of Belgrade. The camp, which was run with the help of Serbian collaborators, served as a prison for roughly 5,000 Jewish men and around 1,500 male Roma, all of whom were later shot at various execution sites around Belgrade.



1910

1951

1941

## 💡 Did you know

...that military or civilian camps were already in place at the sites of many of the camps operated by the National Socialists before the Nazi era. Many of them continued to be used for decades – both before and after the Nazi era – as military camps, detention centres or refugee camps.

## ✎ For you to do

Choose a camp that operated during the Nazi era in the neighbourhood where you live and research its history – including before and after. Who ran the camp, and which people were detained or quartered there?

## 📷 The photo

Entrance to the Topovske Šupe site from Tabanovačka ulica in Belgrade's Autokomanda district before the Second World War. Source: Rena Redle, Milovan Pisarri: Mesta stradanja i antifašističke borbe u Beogradu. Priručnik za čitanje grada, Beograd, 2014.



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



# I12 WESTERBORK (NL)

Camp Westerbork in the Netherlands was set up in 1938 as a refugee camp for German and Austrian Jews fleeing the Third Reich. After Germany occupied the Netherlands in May 1940, Westerbork became a transit camp for Dutch Jews and Roma and Sinti being deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, Sobibór and other camps. In May 1944, 574 “caravan dwellers” were arrested and taken to Westerbork. They were examined and 245 whom the Nazis considered to be “Gypsies” were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Only thirty survived.



1910

1951

1944

## 💡 Did you know

... that 64 of the Roma and Sinti inmates were saved from deportation by their Swiss or Italian passports?

... that 200 people were released because they were not considered Roma or Sinti but “travellers”?

## ✎ For you to do

Why do you think people holding Italian and Swiss passports were treated differently? Why do you think the Nazis released the “travellers” but deported the Roma and Sinti?

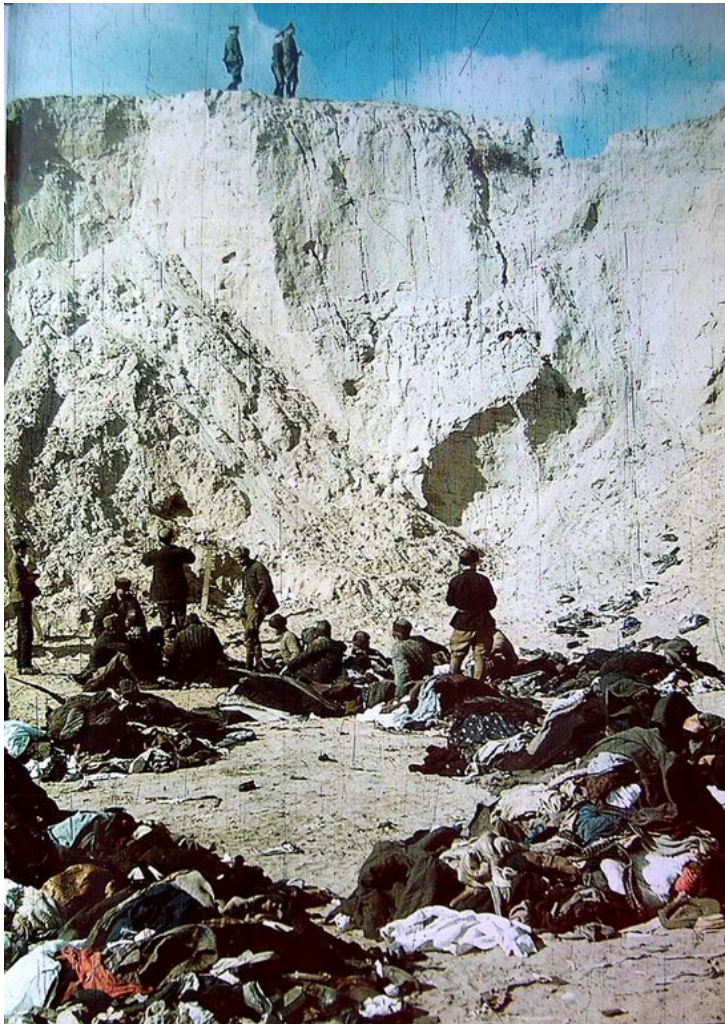
## 📷 The photo

A photograph of “Main Street” in Camp Westerbork - taken in 1944 by a Jewish prisoner on the orders of the camp commander, probably from the upper storey of the commander’s building.



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

# J1 BABYN YAR (UA)



The Babyn Yar ravine near the Ukrainian capital Kiev was the site of some of the biggest massacres committed in the Second World War. Between 1941 and 1943 the SS killed tens of thousands of Jews, Ukrainians, Roma and Sinti and buried their bodies in huge mass graves. The massacres started with the killing of 37,771 Jews from Kiev on 29 and 30 September 1941. In the following month, the inmates of five local “Gypsy” camps were also murdered and buried at Babyn Yar.

## 💡 Did you know

... that only about ten percent of the victims of Babyn Yar, in the Ukraine, have so far been identified by name?

... that the Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich dedicated a symphony to the victims of Babyn Yar?

... that before their retreat, the German troops exhumed and burned thousands of bodies from Babyn Yar to obliterate all traces of their deeds? The ashes were scattered on nearby fields.

## ✎ For you to do

Compare the roles of the various groups of perpetrators in the photo.

## 📷 The photo

Piles of clothes belonging to the victims of a mass execution in Babyn Yar. The four men in the gorge are probably members of a Ukrainian auxiliary unit of the SS. German Federal Archives, Koblenz, Germany



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

1910

1951

1941-43

# J2 HRASTINA (HR)



On 24 April 1945, just a few days before the end of the war, members of a retreating German SS unit caught 43 German Sinti who had fled to Croatia and were hiding in a village near Zagreb. Some of them were tortured and all 43 of them - men, women and children - were then killed and burned in a barn. One of the victims was Max Bamberger (see page A2).

## 💡 Did you know

... that many Sinti and Roma tried to escape across borders into safe countries like Switzerland but were usually refused entry, as were many Jewish and political fugitives? One of the fugitives turned away by the Swiss authorities was the famous jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt.

## ✎ For you to do

What can you find out about the Swiss border guard Paul Grüniger, who helped many refugees to cross into Switzerland? Where would you go if you had to flee your country? How would you do it?

## 📷 The photo

The Sinto Max Bamberger in a photograph taken in 1935. Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma, Heidelberg, Germany



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

1910

1951

1935

# J3 SZCZUROWA (PL)

The photograph shows a wedding in the Polish village of Szczurowa, where Roma families had lived peacefully with their neighbours for many generations and married into farming families. In 1943 German troops surrounded the village and rounded up 94 Roma men, women and children. They were taken to the local cemetery and executed.



1910

1951

1943

## 💡 Did you know

... that more than 200 massacres of Polish Roma and Sinti have been uncovered on the territory of the former General Government of occupied Poland alone, and that there were probably many more?

... that the very first memorial commemorating the genocide of the European Roma was erected in Szczurowa in 1966? It remained the only such memorial in the whole of Europe for almost thirty years.

## ✍ For you to do

Go to [www.romasinti.eu](http://www.romasinti.eu) to find out about Krystyna Gil, who survived the massacre.

## 📷 The photo

A wedding attended by Roma and Gadshe (non-Roma) families in 1943. Ethnographic Museum Tarnów, Poland.



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

# J4 SABAC (SRB)

In 1941, Roma from the Mac̃va region in Serbia were taken hostage together with a number of Jews and taken to the concentration camp at Šabac, where all 2,100 were shot by execution squads of the German Wehrmacht.



1910

1951

1941

## 💡 Did you know

... that the German army executed a hundred civilians for every German soldier killed by partisans in the Balkans? A few days before the Šabac massacre, 21 German soldiers had been killed in fighting with Yugoslav partisans.

... that tens of thousands of Roma and Sinti were murdered by SS squads and fascist militia in Russia and the Ukraine between 1941 and 1945?

## ✎ For you to do

On the photo you can see a witness to what is happening. What might he have said about it to a friend that evening?

## 📷 The photo

Jews and Roma taken as hostages being led to their execution by German soldiers in Šabac. Yad Vashem Archives, Jerusalem, Israel.



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

# J5 VÁRPALÓTA (H)

In February 1945 members of the Hungarian fascist Arrow Cross party and local police officers killed 123 Hungarian Roma from Várpalóta and Székesfehérvár. The victims had to dig their own graves and were then shot. Two women survived the massacre. The mass grave now lies under the waters of Lake Grabler, near Inota, a suburb of Várpalóta.



1974

2015

2008

## 💡 Did you know

... that similar massacres took place in several other Hungarian towns and villages?

... that in 1998 the local authority refused permission for the construction of a memorial to the victims of the massacre?

## ✎ For you to do

Design a memorial plaque and write a text commemorating the massacre of Várpalota.

## 📷 The photo

Lake Grabler, near the village of Inota, summer 2008. Private collection of János Bársony, Budapest, Hungary



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