

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE VICTIMS OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM, WE TAKE ON RESPONSIBILITY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN PEOPLES. WE UPHOLD OUR COMMITMENT TO THE SURVIVORS.



In remembrance of the victims of National Socialist injustice, the Foundation »Remembrance, Responsibility and Future« works to promote human rights and understanding between peoples. It also upholds its commitment to the survivors. The Foundation is thus an expression of the continuing political and moral responsibility of the state, industry and society for the wrongs committed in the name of National Socialism.

The Foundation supports international projects in the following areas:

- A critical examination of history
- Working for human rights
- Commitment to the victims of National Socialism

The Foundation »Remembrance, Responsibility and Future« was established in 2000, primarily to make payments to former forced labourers. The payments programmes were completed in 2007. The Foundation's initial capital of EUR 5.2 billion was provided by the German Government and German industry. Of this, EUR 358 million was set aside to finance project work. The Foundation finances its long-term funding activities out of the income generated by this capital.

We cannot close this chapter on the past – and the payments disbursed to former forced labourers and other victims of National Socialism by the Foundation »Remembrance, Responsibility and Future« do not alter this. The payments were an important and long overdue contribution to the process of coming to terms with political injustice. But history does not fade away, and it cannot be overcome. It builds the foundation for the present, and how we deal with history affects the future of every society. National remembrance is therefore a political and a joint task that cannot be left solely in the hands of private or civic initiatives or state institutions.

In the foreseeable future, the eyewitnesses will no longer be among us. The challenging and important task of keeping alive the memory will then be the sole responsibility of younger generations.

We will have to find suitable ways of explaining these crimes to coming generations. Young people want to know what happened and how it was possible. However, it is not just a matter of learning about history, but about acquiring a political compass. For liberty and democracy, tolerance and humanity cannot be taken for granted. They demand unstinting commitment from each and every one of us. Fostering this commitment can and should be the central aim of the Foundation EVZ in its funding activities



Prof. Dr. Norbert Lammert
President of the German Bundestag

Financial payments cannot compensate for human suffering. When the Foundation »Remembrance, Responsibility and Future« was created ten years ago, we wanted to signal through our humanitarian commitment to the surviving forced labourers that the terrible suffering inflicted on them would not be forgotten. The creation of the Foundation was and therefore still is of great political and moral significance for the Federal Republic of Germany. The results of the Foundation's work are impressive: payments of around EUR 4.4 billion were made to over 1.6 million people in almost 100 countries.

Now that its main task is complete, the Foundation continues to cooperate with numerous projects whose work focuses on remembrance and the future.

I would like to thank all who have helped ensure that justice, recognition and respect has been shown to the surviving forced labourers.



Dr. Angela Merkel
German Chancellor

Looking back, the great difficulties we faced at the outset are fading in our memory. What remains is the satisfaction at the success of this great and historic project and the recognition on the part of the survivors that our country made this important gesture.



Dr. Michael Jansen
Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation EVZ

Only honest dialogue with young people can guarantee that our past will not become our future.



Irina Scherbakowa
Memorial, Moscow

No country in recorded history has ever undertaken such an obligation and on such a scale and scope following a war. (...) The compromise we reached succeeded in providing a measure of justice, while also assuring German industry of legal peace.



Stuart E. Eizenstat
Ambassador, USA

The German Industry Foundation Initiative, which led to the creation of the Foundation, was a unique and unprecedented expression of atonement by a nation's enterprises for their involvement in historical injustice and of the need to remain vigilant in the future.



Dr. Manfred Gentz
Cofounder and Spokesman of the German Industry Foundation Initiative and former trustee of the Foundation EVZ

THE INITIATIVE TO CREATE THE FOUNDATION EVZ



Photo: German Government

Neither after World War II nor as a result of German reunification was any mechanism set up to compensate former forced labourers. It was not until the end of the 1990s that the German Government and the German Industry Foundation Initiative agreed to negotiations.



Photo: German Government

On 17 July 2000 Germany signed an agreement with the US Government and entered into an international agreement with Israel, Central and Eastern European states, German industry and the claims lawyers. The German Government and German industry each agreed to contribute DM 5 billion to the Foundation.

FORCED LABOUR UNDER NATIONAL SOCIALISM



Photo: Federal Archives



Photo: Federal Archives

In establishing the Foundation, the main objective was to provide individual compensation to former forced labourers and other victims of the National Socialist regime. Between 1939 and 1945 more than 12 million people were subjected to forced labour in Germany.

Forced labour was a crime against humanity. People often had to work under inhuman conditions. Mortality rates were highest among concentration camp inmates, who included many Jews, Sinti and Roma, and Soviet prisoners of war. The forced labourers worked in companies, local authorities, agriculture and even in private households.

PAYMENTS TO FORMER FORCED LABOURERS



Photo: Foundation for Understanding and Reconciliation, Moscow



Over two million applications were received before the closing date for submissions. Seven international partner organisations helped process the applications and were responsible for the payments.



Photo: Foundation for Polish-German Reconciliation, Warsaw

Applicants at the Foundation for Understanding and Reconciliation, the Polish partner organisation, in Warsaw. Up to the end of 2006, a total of EUR 4.36 billion was paid out to 1.6 million former forced labourers or their legal successors in 98 countries. Payments were also made for property losses, insurance losses and personal injury in connection with National Socialist injustice.

Photo: Press and Information Office of the Federal Government



On 12 June 2007 the payments procedure was formally concluded at an official ceremony hosted by German President Horst Köhler and attended by the German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

For the victims, recognition of the suffering is at least as important as financial compensation

Dr. h.c. Charlotte Knobloch
President of the Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland (Central Council of the Jews in Germany)



The discussions leading to the creation of the Foundation EVZ were the first major post-war negotiations with representatives of the victims of National Socialist barbarity from Central and Eastern Europe.

Dr. Jiří Šitler
Ambassador of the Czech Republic and trustee of the Foundation EVZ



The compensation for the victims, who had to wait over 50 years for recognition of the injustices they suffered, is an important contribution towards peace and reconciliation.

Dr. Dieter Kastrup
Former ambassador and former Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation EVZ



The agreed payments had a symbolic value – for many they also came too late. Nevertheless, the creation of the Foundation was a breakthrough, also in German-Polish relations.

Prof. Dr. Jerzy Kranz
Former ambassador and trustee of the Foundation EVZ



Through the valuable work performed by its encounter and eyewitness programmes, the Foundation EVZ helps to ensure we do not forget.



Iris Berben
Actor

The creation of the Foundation was a tangible sign of hope established by our civil society.



Dr. h.c. Joachim Gauck
Chairman of *Gegen Vergessen – Für Demokratie e.V.* (Against forgetting – for democracy)

For me and for the victims associations, the major achievement of the Foundation is that forced labourers finally received public recognition and attention in Germany and in their home countries.



Prof. Felix Kolmer
Concentration camp survivor and deputy chairman of the *International Auschwitz Committee*, Czech Republic

For me, one of the most important features of the Foundation EVZ is that it makes the connection between human rights violations in the past and the current situation of people in Europe.



Lauren Karplus
Scholarship recipient in the Berlin scholarships programme operated by the Foundation EVZ and the Humboldt University, Berlin

HUMANITARIAN PROJECTS



Photo: IOM, 2007

As well as providing for individual payments to former victims of National Socialism, the Foundation Law made funding available for humanitarian programmes. This included projects organised by the Jewish Claims Conference for Jewish persecutees of National Socialism and projects that assisted persecuted Roma and Sinti.

SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS



Photo: Julia Gerstenberg

The Foundation EVZ was entrusted with a second statutory mandate when it was created, namely to support international projects. Unlike the payments programmes, this is a permanent task. Since 2000, the Foundation has provided a total of EUR 53 million for over 2,000 projects. The Foundation's support is delivered through three activity areas: A critical examination of history, Working for human rights, and Commitment to the victims of National Socialism.

THE THREE ACTIVITY AREAS

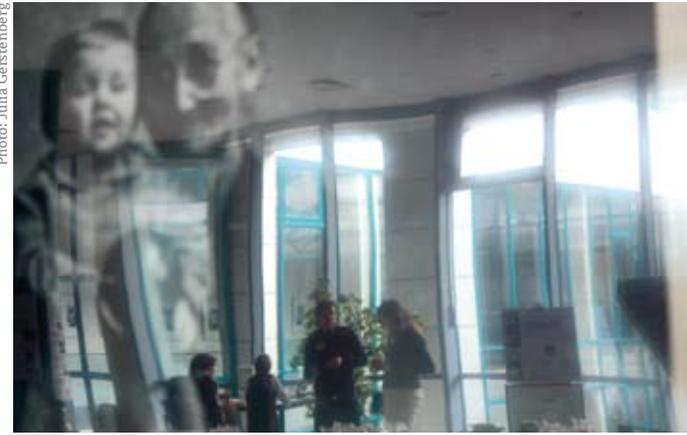


Photo: Julia Gerstenberg

In the activity area **A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF HISTORY**, the Foundation works to anchor the history of forced labour under National Socialism firmly in the European memory and to communicate the experiences of the victims. It also promotes understanding for the different portrayals of history in Europe.

Hope now lies in the future. Through the projects operated by the Future Fund, we must not only learn the lessons of history for the present and the future, but most importantly, we must keep these lessons alive in the minds of coming generations.

Dr. Jörg Freiherr Frank von Fürstenwerth
Chairman of the *German Insurance Association* and deputy trustee of the *Foundation EVZ*



Speaking out against injustice and giving victims the recognition they deserve opens up the future.

Gesine Schwan
Political scientist, German Government coordinator for German-Polish cooperation up to 2009



Photo: Amaro Drom (registered association)

In the activity area **WORKING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**, the Foundation initiates international projects that promote human rights education, combat right-wing extremism, anti-Semitism and modern forced labour, and work to help the victims. We support the descendants of minority groups that were persecuted under National Socialism, for example young Sinti and Roma from different countries. The most important aim is to learn the lessons of history for today.

The Foundation EVZ makes a valuable contribution to international understanding and human rights education.

Volker Beck
Member of the *German Bundestag* and trustee of the *Foundation EVZ*



Photo: Thomas Serwuschok, Photography competition 2008, Foundation EVZ

In the third activity area, **COMMITMENT TO THE VICTIMS OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM**, we support humanitarian welfare services. In addition, the Foundation initiates projects that promote recognition and respect for the life achievements of the victims of National Socialism and which strengthen their participation in community life. In the **DIALOGUE FORUM** funding programme, we support projects in Belarus, Ukraine and Russia.

The work of the Foundation EVZ is an outstanding contribution to the process of coming to terms with National Socialist injustice.

Dr. Max Stadler
Parliamentary State Secretary and trustee of the *Foundation EVZ*



Money is not everything, but you can do much good with it. And the Foundation EVZ has certainly done that over the last ten years. We thank you for working together with us for the benefit of needy victims of National Socialism, and we look forward to continuing our cooperation in future projects. We wish you all the best for the future.



Dariusz Pawłóś
Chairman of the Foundation for German-Polish Cooperation and trustee of the Foundation EVZ

This keystone (in the legislation on reparations) at the same time laid the groundwork for a permanent grant-giving Foundation that was established through the active support of German industry with 6,500 private donors. The solution, which involved the state and the private sector, was without precedent.



Dr. Ulrich Bopp
Former member of the Board of Directors of the Foundation EVZ

The terrible injustice and pain suffered by former forced labourers cannot be made good through money. However, what we are doing is making a humanitarian gesture and an important contribution to bringing about reconciliation with our former military opponents and the State of Israel.



Dr. Hans Otto Bräutigam
Former ambassador and former Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Foundation EVZ

REMEMBRANCE AND UNDERSTANDING



Photo: Falk Froehlich, Photography competition 2008, Foundation EVZ

Keeping alive the memory of National Socialist injustices for future generations is of central importance in the Foundation's funding activities. We established the first funding programme in 2002 – encounters with former forced labourers and other victims of National Socialism. Since then, we have supported 3,900 such encounters.

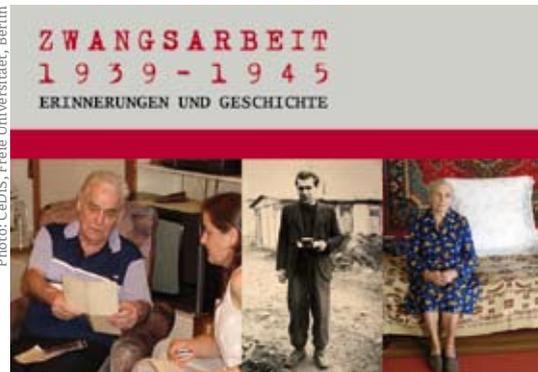


Photo: CaDiS, Freie Universitaet, Berlin

The internet archive »FORCED LABOUR 1939–1945« commemorates the people who were forced to work for Nazi Germany. Almost 600 former forced labourers from 26 countries tell their stories in extensive audio and video interviews.



Photo: Jan Zappner, Foundation EVZ

EUROPEANS FOR PEACE is the largest German funding programme for international youth projects between Germany, Central and Eastern Europe and Israel. The programme was launched in 2005 to mark the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II. Since then, we have provided funding of EUR 4.25 million for around 330 projects. In this programme, the Foundation supports international school and youth partnerships that implement cross-border projects.

RESPECT AND DIALOGUE

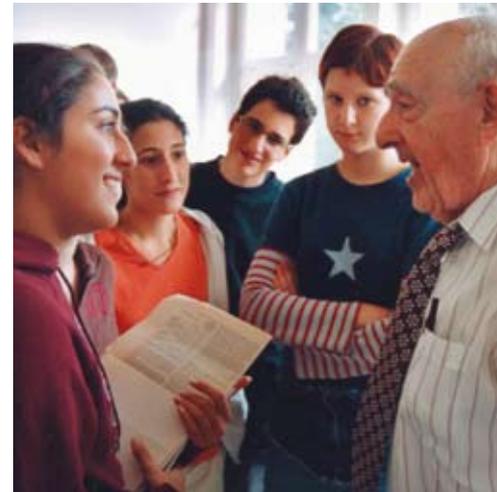
Today, many survivors of National Socialist crimes and those who suffered forced labour, inhuman imprisonment and other injustices live in poverty and social isolation. As they get older or if they fall ill, the physical and psychological consequences of their suffering become more acute.

The huge need for medical and social care demands an international response. By strengthening the social welfare systems in these countries we can help improve conditions for the survivors and give them a chance to grow old in dignity.

The Foundation EVZ recognises its special responsibility for the surviving victims of National Socialism. Through humanitarian projects, the DIALOGUE FORUM programme and the ENCOUNTER PROGRAMME, the Foundation supports projects that improve the situation of the victims and promote intergenerational dialogue.

The compensation of the forced labourers from World War II was of the utmost necessity and an extremely important token of moral reparation. A contribution to human understanding and peace.

Avi Primor
Director of the Centre for European Studies at IDC Herzliya, a private university in Israel; former ambassador and former member of the Board of Directors of the Foundation EVZ



The future of the Foundation EVZ in my view lies above all in fighting the discrimination faced by ethnic minorities and in enhancing international understanding by bringing together representatives of many nations.

Veronika Patočková
Student in the Berlin scholarships programme



Photo: Photography competition of the Foundation EVZ 2008



In summer programmes and internships, young people have come face to face with human rights issues, explored questions that concern minorities and taken a close look at diversity and how we deal with it. Many have written to tell us how this has changed their lives.

Cornelia Schmalz-Jacobsen
Former Chair of Humanity in Action Deutschland e.V.



EXHIBITION ON FORCED LABOUR UNDER NATIONAL SOCIALISM

»The Germans – their forced labourers and the war«

An exhibition organised by the Buchenwald and Mittelbau-Dora Memorials Foundation at the Jewish Museum Berlin, initiated and supported by the Foundation »Remembrance, Responsibility and Future«

The exhibition »Forced labour. The Germans – their forced labourers and the war« tells the complete history of this crime for the first time. Over 20 million people in the German Reich and countries under German occupation were subjected to forced labour. The exhibition shows how forced labour was part of the racist social system of the National Socialist state from the outset. The Volksgemeinschaft (Hitler's racial community) and the forced labour imposed on those excluded from this community were part of the same ideology.

German President Horst Köhler is patron of the exhibition.

**28 September 2010–30 January 2011
at the Jewish Museum Berlin.**

www.ausstellung-zwangsarbeit.org



Photos: Buchenwald and Mittelbau-Dora Memorials Foundation

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**A dossier on the subject »Foundation EVZ – The First Decade«
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