



YAD VASHEM REFERENCE & INFORMATION SERVICES

Unfortunately, no full list of the Jewish Victims of the Shoah exists. Anywhere. In addition, there is no complete list of the Jewish survivors. Anyone wishing to trace an individual during the Shoah or thereafter may need to utilize a variety of resources, many, but not all of which can be found at Yad Vashem. Following is an outline of resources available at Yad Vashem.

I. Resources accessible online at our website, www.yadvashem.org:

The Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names

The Central Database, the single largest computerized database in the world of Jews who perished in the Shoah, includes over 2,000,000 records from Pages of Testimony and around 1,500,000 records from other sources.

While the majority of the records in the database relate to people who perished in the Holocaust, some of the lists do include records of people who survived. In addition, by searching according to the submitter of the Page of Testimony, some information can be found about survivors.

Pages of Testimony

"Pages of Testimony" are forms on which survivors and other relatives or friends recorded what they knew about Shoah victims. Yad Vashem has been collecting these Pages of Testimony since the mid 1950's. Anyone who cannot find their relatives in the database is encouraged to submit Pages of Testimony for them, and thus to commemorate their memory.

Other sources in the database

The database includes information on Holocaust victims from archival and bibliographical sources. Many of these sources were computerized at Yad Vashem, and others by our partner organizations. Following is a partial list of the sources in the database:

- Lists of those perished from Western Germany, Berlin, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Austria.
- List of those deported from France and Yugoslavia.
- Census from the Lodz ghetto.
- Partial lists of victims from Hungary, Theresienstadt, Slovakia.
- List of prisoners from the Mauthausen camp.
- Tens of thousands of names of those perished from the former Soviet Union from the Soviet Special Committee lists (CHGK)
- Lists from Yizkor books from various locations
- Other lists from archival sources.

Plans are underway to computerize and add all lists existing at Yad Vashem to the database within the next few years. The database is updated approximately four times a year with new material.

The Shoah-Related Lists Database

This database includes an index of existing lists at Yad Vashem and at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. In addition, many of the records from Yad Vashem include a scanned image of the list involved. Note that you cannot search in this database by an individual's name, but only by the description of the list, such as, place names, date of deportation etc. In the cases where a scanned copy exists in the database, it is possible to read through the list looking for specific names.

II. Resources available at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem

**Other archival documentation**

The Documents and Photo-Archives include many thousands of files containing information about individuals. In some cases, the information is quite extensive, in others sparse. The Photo Archive is fully digitized and will be uploaded to the Yad Vashem website during 2008. More and more of the other materials are digitized, and a computerized catalogue exists for much of the Archives' holdings.

Yizkor Books

The Library has the world's largest collection of Yizkor Books (books of commemoration about specific communities), often published by survivors of the community and often including lists of victims from that community. As noted above, some of the lists from Yizkor books have been computerized and added to the central database. There are also additional books containing information on some groups of individuals.

Our catalogue is integrated into the Israel Union Catalogue, available at the following url:
http://aleph1.libnet.ac.il/F/?func=file&file_name=find-b&local_base=uli02&con_lng=eng

The International Tracing Service (ITS)

The International Tracing Service (ITS) was established at the end of World War II to help survivors trace missing relatives and friends. In charging the ITS with its enormous task to help reunite families "torn apart by war," the Allies gathered all the documentation possible that pertained to individuals during the war – including its victims, deportations, concentration camps, forced labor and displaced persons. In 1956, Yad Vashem was allowed to copy much of the material from the ITS collection, and has provided service on this material since then.

The International Commission of the ITS recently signed a new agreement whereby scanned copies of the entire collection will be transferred to its 11 member states, among them Israel and the USA. Part of this material duplicates what Yad Vashem already has, but it also includes new material collected in the last 50 years by the ITS as well as documents not copied at that time. A new copy of the card index to the ITS collection has been received by Yad Vashem (and other repositories including the USHMM) all the material will be received by 2011.

Yad Vashem welcomes queries on this material. There is an online form that can be filled out on the Yad Vashem site. Replies can take up to 8 weeks, depending on the number of queries we receive.

Success in tracing individuals depends on a number of things:

- The existence of documentation (anywhere, or at Yad Vashem).
- The amount and quality of prior information known to the researcher. The more one knows in advance, the more precise a search can be carried out, and the greater the chances of finding something. Names alone will generally not be enough; dates, places, location, and so on will enhance the search possibilities.
- Proficiency in languages: The documentation exists in many languages, some neatly typed, some handwritten, in a multitude of scripts.

Please note: There is a small collection of genealogical sources in our library collection, but generally, it is not productive to engage in genealogical research, not pertaining to the Holocaust, at Yad Vashem.

If you cannot come to Yad Vashem, queries may be sent to us by mail, e-mail or fax. This service entails a fee and it can take up to a month to receive a reply. Our addresses: Ref@yadvashem.org.il, Fax: (972-2)-644-3669, Reference and Information Services
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