Jewish Vienna – Heritage

and Mission

**Few European cities have a history as closely connected with Jewish history as Vienna. As early as the Middle Ages, the Vienna Jewish community was relatively large for the time, and despite two major expulsions, Jews continued to settle in the city on the Danube.**

Nazism caused yet another dramatic rupture in the historical development of the city in general and its Jewish community in particular. Before 1938, the Jewish community was one of the largest in Europe numbering some 185,000. After 1945, a small but active Jewish community reestablished itself again; today, it comprises over 8,000 members – out of the 10,000 to 12,000 Jews who live in Vienna at present.

During the past three decades, the city has stepped up efforts to face up to the history of Jews in Vienna, including both positive and negative aspects, and to reexamine Vienna’s Jewish heritage. In addition to the Jewish institutions that have sprung up over the last few years – thanks to the support of the City of Vienna – a number of museums and memorials evoke the city’s Jewish heritage: the Jewish Museum of the City of Vienna which comprises Palais Eskeles on Dorotheergasse and its second location on Judenplatz, the Sigmund Freud Museum, the Arnold Schoenberg Center, the Memorial against War and Fascism on Albertinaplatz and the Shoah Memorial on Judenplatz, to name only the most important.

# Jewish Vienna – Then and Now

The traditional religious center of Jewish life in Vienna is the Vienna City Temple, the only synagogue that survived the pogrom of November 1938, albeit in a state of devastation. The building complex at Seitenstettengasse 4 in the first district houses not only the synagogue, but also the offices of the Isrealitische Kultusgemeinde Wien (IKW, Jewish Community of Vienna), the Vienna Chief Rabbi, the editorial offices of both official community newspapers (“Die Gemeinde” and “Wina”), the Jewish community center which stages various events and a kosher restaurant.

Near Seitenstettengasse, in the heart of the so-called “Bermuda Triangle” – a popular bar and restaurant hotspot – there is yet another focal point on Judenplatz which confronts visitors with Jewish life past and present: the Shoah Memorial and the Judenplatz Museum, opened in fall 2000.

On the way from Seitenstettengasse to Judenplatz, you pass the Old City Hall (Altes Rathaus – Wipplingerstrasse 8, 1010 Vienna), where the Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance (*DÖW; www.doew.at/english*) is located; it features a permanent exhibition documenting the crimes of National Socialism and retains important materials about right-wing extremism and racism in Austria. The Documentation Archive database contains information on over 62,000 Austrian holocaust victims. DÖW also maintains two key memorials, one to victims of the Vienna Gestapo (Salztorgasse 6, 1010 Vienna, visits by appointment only) and the second to those of Nazi medical war crimes at the Otto-Wagner-Spital, now Klinik Penzing (Klinik Penzing - Wiener Gesundheitsverbund, Baumgartner Höhe 1, 1140 Vienna).

Another key institution that also conducts research into the Shoah is the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (*VWI, www.vwi.ac.at*), which was set up in 2008 following the death of Simon Wiesenthal. Simon Wiesenthal’s unique archives are stored at the research facility. The Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies is devoted to the study, documentation and communication of all questions related to anti-Semitism, racism and the holocaust including its background and consequences. Following an extensive renovation project, in 2017 the Simon Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies opened at Rabensteig 3. Besides the institute and its archive, it also houses a library that is open to the public. The same building contains the Jewish Museum Vienna library and the archives of the Jewish Community of Vienna (Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien). A museum space was also set up, offering a view into the life of Simon Wiesenthal, the way he worked, and his academic legacy. One room is dedicated to Wiesenthal’s philosophy and a selection of his cases. Film excerpts illustrate his thinking and shows the conflicts that made his life in Austria difficult. A touchscreen exhibit about Nazi criminals highlights the painfully slow progress of post-war prosecutions as well as the disinterest and sometimes outright hostility of the Austrian public.

Café Book Shop Singer opened at Rabensteig 3 in December 2018.

On November 9, 2022 Vienna officially unveiled a Memorial to the Jewish Children, Women and Men of Austria who were Murdered in the Shoah (wall of names). Based on a private initiative by Kurt Tutter, the project was realized with the support of the Federal Government, the Federal Provinces, the City of Vienna (which is responsible for the upkeep of the capital’s monuments), the Austrian National Bank and the National Fund of the Republic of Austria. The monument is located in the Ostarrichi-Park in front of the Austrian National Bank in Vienna’s ninth district *(www.shoah-namensmauern-wien.at)*.

# Restitution and compensation

Long pursued half-heartedly, the issue of compensation and restitution of the victims of National Socialism has been addressed at various levels in the 1990s. The appointment of the Austrian Historical Commission in 1998 at last marked the creation of a body to scientifically and comprehensively investigate the whole complex of expropriation of Jewish property in all areas of business and society. Public institutions (museums etc.) were for the first time instructed on a broad basis to conduct provenance research. On January 17, 2001 the Republic of Austria committed itself to reparations under the Washington Agreement that compensate for property and assets that were stolen during the Nazi era. Under the Austrian General Settlement Fund Law (“Entschädigungsfondsgesetz”), a general fund was set up in 2001 to comprehensively address open claims regarding compensation for victims of National Socialism. The Austrian national fund is responsible for processing settlement claims. Background information, databases and legal material can be found on the fund’s website (*www.en.nationalfonds.org*)

Restitution is not confined to a national level. The City of Vienna has introduced various measures for restitution issues covering property to art. The City of Vienna’s website (*www.wien.gv.at/english/administration/restitution*) documents the Austrian capital’s far-reaching initiatives as regards restitution and, in addition, provides a service facility for those affected. It is also designed to ease the difficult search for victims and their descendants around the world (*www.wien.gv.at/english/administration/restitution/index.html*).

In line with the amended Federal Restitution of Art Objects Act, on April 29, 2011 Vienna city council passed a resolution extending the provisions for the return of arts and cultural items from the city’s collections. As a result, all items taken between 1933 (previously 1938) and 1946 must be restored to their rightful owners, and the provisions now apply to art works removed in all territories formerly under National Socialist control, including areas outside Austria. The provenance of over 100,000 objects in the City of Vienna’s collections has been investigated since 1999, and around 5,500 items from 60 collections have been returned to their rightful owners. (For the latest information on the now largely completed provenance research programs at the Wien Museum and the Jewish Museum, visit *https://www.wienmuseum.at/en/collections/restitution*). After the completion of restitution research, any artworks which cannot be returned to their original owners or for which there are no surviving beneficiaries are transferred to the Austrian National Fund to be sold. The fund ensures that any proceeds are used to help victims of National Socialism. The Jewish Community of Vienna (IKG) has a department dedicated to restitution issues. It also provides in-depth information on the subject as well as support services (*www.restitution.or.at/index\_e.html*).

Compensation by the City of Vienna, such as the return of the Hakoah sports ground and activities in art restitution, has been addressed, as have nationwide measures and social benefits for victims of the Nazi regime. Indeed, the issue of the Hakoah sports ground has been resolved. A new sports and training facility was opened in the second district in March 2008: Hakoah was granted 19,500 square meters of land behind the Ernst-Happel Stadium to compensate for what was taken by the Nazis. Construction was funded in equal parts by the Austrian State and the City of Vienna.

The Zwi Perez Chajes School was officially handed over in 2008, followed by the nearby Maimonides center a year later. The Aspangbahnhof station memorial was opened in 2017 after lengthy discussion. It commemorates the people who were deported from Vienna by the National Socialist regime between 1939 and 1942 and is located on the site of the former railway station in the city’s third district. 47,035 people were deported to concentration camps and extermination camps in Eastern Europe from here. Only 1,073 of them survived.

Further details about memorials and cemeteries in Vienna, as well as organizations and associations in the city, can be found in the City of Vienna brochure “Jewish Vienna – Heritage and Mission” which can also be accessed online at *www.wien.info/en/vienna-for/jewish-vienna*. The brochure looks at the flourishing bar and restaurant scene with tips on places to eat and includes some pointers on kosher shopping as well as a list of leading hotels offering kosher food. It also provides an overview of important memorials and archives throughout Austria.

# Judenplatz - Place of Remembrance

Since the construction of the Shoah Memorial and the establishment of the Jewish Museum Vienna’s Judenplatz Museum about medieval Jewry, Judenplatz has become an impressive place of remembrance. Here you also find excavations of the medieval synagogue which can be accessed through the permanent exhibition in the basement level of the museum in the Misrachi House (Judenplatz 8, 1010 Vienna).

This synagogue was among the largest of the medieval period. The six-sided Bimah, the pulpit for Torah readings, the foundation of the Torah shrine, sections of the old walls and the floor of the women’s school can still be seen. A multimedia exhibition brings the excavations to life, allowing visitors to get a feel for the size and appearance of the old synagogue, while also providing answers to archaeological questions. The location of the medieval synagogue’s Bimah is clearly outlined on Judenplatz. Launched in 2021, the new permanent exhibition, entitled Our Middle Ages! The First Jewish Community in Vienna, recounts the history of the medieval Jewish community starting in the eleventh century and continuing to the Vienna Gesera (the decree leading to the persecution of the city’s Jews) in 1420/21 and beyond. At the same time, the highly educational exhibition explores the foundations of Jewish life and introduces the institutions that serve a Jewish community. The ground floor of the Jewish Museum is given over to temporary exhibitions.

Following the Vienna Gesera, the first Jewish community was completely annihilated at that time – an anti-Jewish relief on the building at Judenplatz 2 (“Zum grossen Jordan”) serves as a reminder of this disastrous event. Austria’s Catholic cardinal Schönborn arranged for a memorial plaque to be placed on the house at Judenplatz 6, as a reminder of the anti-Jewish role of the Catholic Church. In April 2001, the Jewish Community of Vienna placed another memorial plaque, this one devoted to those who helped Jews during the Nazi era, on the “Misrachi House” at Judenplatz 8.

The memory of the crimes of National Socialism and the Holocaust is kept alive by the imposing memorial to victims of the Shoah by British artist Rachel Whiteread. The concrete cube depicts outwardly-facing library walls. It measures ten by seven meters and is almost four meters high. The names of the places where 65,000 Austrian Jews were killed are inscribed on the ground around the memorial. This memorial was erected by the City of Vienna at the initiative of Simon Wiesenthal and unveiled on October 25, 2000 after a long series of controversies. At the same time, the Jewish Museum’s location on Judenplatz was opened. As an extension of these shows, an offshoot of the Jewish Museum was opened on Judenplatz. The same building (Judenplatz 8, 1010 Vienna) contains the religious Zionist Mizrachi organization (the Mizrachi synagogue is on the first floor and the Bnei Akiva youth center is located on the floor above).

# Jewish Museum Vienna and Judenplatz Museum

Not far from Judenplatz is the Jewish Museum Vienna, which is housed in an old aristocratic mansion at Dorotheergasse 11. Here the history of the Jews of Vienna is comprehensively documented, and the permanent exhibitions – which opened in 2013 – are divided into three different areas. The museum’s repository of exhibits in the Schaudepot walk-through storage depot gives fascinating insights into the various collections, by presenting pieces within the context of the places they came from. It also introduces major collectors such as Max Berger and Martin Schlaff. Another popular feature of the Schaudepot is a virtual tour that takes in the various synagogues in the Austrian capital before 1938. Following extensive additions, this installation now offers research on all of the city’s synagogues that is as complete as can be.

The Jewish Museum studio is not only an education and outreach space, but also an exhibition space in its own right. Here, visitors can find out about the various rituals in Jewish life through various museum pieces and everyday objects. The audio guide featuring a pair of young people deep in discussion reveals interesting insights into some of the lesser-known aspects of Jewish life for visitors of all ages.

The Jewish Museum’s permanent exhibition, Our City! Jewish Vienna – Then to Now, is split over the ground and second floors. On the ground floor, it begins with a look at the city in 1945 and takes visitors on a journey leading all the way to Jewish Vienna today. The displays document the development of the Jewish community, as it grew over the decades to become a small but dynamic and vibrant community once again after being almost completely annihilated – in spite of the resistance encountered in post-war Austrian politics. It is a history of immigration, first from Central and Eastern Europe, then from the former Soviet Union and the countries of Central Asia in particular. Visitors can use the media station to view a city map that pinpoints the locations of Jewish institutions and various facilities which are important to Jewish life in Vienna today, together with background information.

The exhibits on the second floor are dedicated to Jewish Vienna from the Middle Ages up until the Shoah, examining issues such as the “tolerance” policy adopted by Emperor Joseph II and his successors. The exhibition highlights the creative strategies employed by a community that, before 1852, was officially outlawed, and how the newly acquired optimism of Vienna’s Jews led them to play an active part in the revolution as they fought against the humiliating restrictions imposed on their personal rights and rights of movement. It traces the palpable atmosphere of liberalism and spirit of new beginnings in the emerging modern capital, when Vienna was truly a city of immigrants, and focuses on the “third” Jewish community, which became the largest in the German-speaking world and the third-largest in Europe between the 1848 revolution and 1900. It is this era that has defined the perception of Jewish Vienna to the present day. This part of the permanent exhibition puts a spotlight on how Viennese Jews were already being subjected to rabid antisemitism in the years around 1900. The founding of the world's first Jewish Museum, covered in the exhibition by the "Gute Stube" (Good Room) spatial installation by the Israeli artist Maya Zack, comes against this backdrop. The focus also falls on the inter-war period, the years between 1938 and 1945 and the rupture torn in Jewish and Viennese history by the Shoah.

A multimedia guide provides visitors with additional information in the form of newsreels, television broadcasts, newspaper articles, and photographs. Temporary exhibitions are staged in the grand *piano nobile* of the museum as well as in the séparée. Besides museum catalogues, the Gottfried & Söhne museum shop offers a selection of Israeli design objects and Judaica products, while Café Eskeles serves vegetarian Israeli cuisine.

# Jewish heritage documented

Other museums examine the importance of Jewish heritage to the cultural and intellectual history of the city: the Arnold Schönberg Center on Schwarzenbergplatz in the third district, the Sigmund Freud Museum at Berggasse 19 in the ninth district, and the Viktor Frankl Centre Vienna on Mariannengasse, also in the ninth district.

The Sigmund Freud Museum is located in the apartment where Freud had his consultation rooms and also lived until National Socialism forced him to emigrate to London in 1938. The new-look museum at Berggasse 19 opened to the public at the end of August following an extensive 18-month renovation project. Before work was completed, only the consulting rooms were included in the experience, but the new museum extends to Freud’s private rooms, too. In all 550m² of space is now available for the permanent and temporary exhibitions at the museum *(www.freud-museum.at).*

March 2015 saw the opening of a new museum dedicated to another eminent therapist with Viennese roots: Viktor E. Frankl, who is recognized around the world as the founder of logotherapy and existential analysis. It is located close to the Sigmund Freud Museum at Mariannengasse 1, where Frankl lived from the end of the Second World War until his death in 1997. The exhibits give an insight into the life and work of the pioneer of logotherapy *(www.franklzentrum.org)*.

The Arnold Schoenberg Center, located in the Palais Fanto (corner of Schwarzenbergplatz 6, Zaunergasse 1, 1030 Vienna), documents the life and work of this eminent modern Austrian composer. Various exhibitions are also put on here*(www.schoenberg.at)*. On the way from the Jewish Museum to Palais Fanto you pass Albertinaplatz – where Alfred Hrdlicka erected his Monument against War and Fascism – and the Vienna State Opera, of which famed composer Gustav Mahler was once the Music Director. Not far from the Schoenberg Center is the Vienna Konzerthaus; many Jewish upper middle class families were among its founders and patrons. Any walk along the Ringstrasse boulevard will take in splendid mansions, many of which were once owned by Jewish families – Palais Todesco near the Vienna State Opera, Palais Schey, Palais Epstein, and Palais Ephrussi, to name but a few. The story of the Ephrussi family re-entered the public conscience recently with the publication of Edmund de Waal’s book The Hare With Amber Eyes and an exhibition at the Jewish Museum Vienna. De Waal, an Ephrussi scion, recounts the history of his family.

# Jewish Life Today

Nowadays, Jewish people live all over the city. In addition to the focal point of the synagogue and center for the Jewish Community of Vienna in Seitenstettengasse in the first district, many Jewish families live in the second district, Leopoldstadt. Seitenstettengasse and adjoining Rabensteig, which are home to key facilities for the Jewish community – the Jewish City Temple, Rabbinate, Matrikenamt records office, and community center – are among the first places that international visitors with an interest in Jewish Vienna head to. 2016 brought a generation change in the Rabbinate: the long serving and universally popular Chief Rabbi Paul Chaim Eisenberg retired and Jaron Engelmayer has been selected as the successor to his successor Arie Folger. Schlomo Hofmeister has held the office of Community Rabbi for a number of years. Both can be reached via their offices at the Jewish Community of Vienna *(https://www.ikg-wien.at/en/contact)*.

Although the focal point is the synagogue in Seitenstettengasse, Jewish people today live all over the city. The second district, Leopoldstadt, has a particularly high Jewish population. There are also numerous Jewish institutions here, for instance the 2000 IKG campus, the Lauder Chabad Campus, the Jewish Vocational Education Center, prayer rooms, ritual baths (Mikwaot) and other religious educational institutions, and a Hakoah sports ground in the Prater which is close to the Zwi Perez Chajes School and the Maimonides Zentrum. The Zwi Perez Chajes School has a kindergarten, elementary school and high school (*www.zpc.at*). The Maimonides center was created for older people, and combines an outpatient’ clinic, care facility and day center for senior citizens (*www.maimonides.at*).

In the second district you will also find Jewish shops, kosher supermarkets, butchers, bakers, restaurants, snack bars and, in the area around Tempelgasse, the Sephardic Center and Synagogue. An overview of the latest arrivals and a list of Koscher establishments is available online at *https://www.ikg-wien.at/kosher-life-in-vienna-2/?lang=en*. The site that until 1938 contained the Leopoldstadt temple is now home to the ESRA psychosocial institution (www.esra.at/en/about-esra.html) for survivors of Nazi persecution and their descendants.

Theater Hamakom on Nestroyplatz is the resurrection of an old theatre that, as Theater Nestroyhof, was a center of Jewish cultural life until 1938. For some years now the theater has addressed the complicated relationship between the city and its past. This is explored through a wide range of genres: theater, performance, readings, salons and concerts are all presented, as well as exhibitions (Nestroyplatz 1, 1020 Vienna, *www.hamakom.at*).

Another cultural venue is the Jewish Institute for Adult Education (a branch of the Wiener Volkshochschule) at Praterstern which also gives non-Jews the opportunity to learn more about Judaism, with courses on Yiddish, kosher cookery, Israeli folk dancing, Klezmer music and religious questions. Further sources of information are the Jewish newspapers and magazines which are published alongside the official voice of the Jewish Community “Die Gemeinde”. They include “Wina” “Das jüdische Echo. Europäisches Forum für Kultur und Politik”, “NU”, “Illustrierte Neue Welt”, “David” and “Atid”.

Over the past 300 years, the Leopoldstadt district has been home to the most concentrated settlement of Jews in Vienna. It was also the location of the so-called Mazzes-Insel (“Matzoh Island”), where poor Jewish families lived, often in close quarters. The settlement dates back to the seventeenth century, when the *Judenstadt* in the Unterer Werd could be found in today’s Karmeliterviertel district; this neighborhood was destroyed at the end of the seventeenth century during the second major expulsion of Jews during the reign of Emperor Leopold I, and a church (Leopoldskirche church, Alexander-Poch-Platz 6,1020 Vienna, a plaque with Latin inscription commemorates the destruction of the synagogue) was erected on the foundations of one of the synagogues. Since then, this city district has been known as Leopoldstadt. A small part of the Leopoldstadt Temple (today ESRA, Tempelgasse 5, 1020 Vienna) has been preserved.

However, this expulsion did not prevent a new settlement by Jews in the city only a few decades later – this part of the city once again became the focus of Jewish settlers. The new Lauder Chabad Campus school center was designed by Adolf Krischanitz and also houses a prayer room. Since 2008 Zwi Perez Chajes School has been re-sited to the new Campus of the Jewish Community of Vienna (IKG) where the Hakoah sports ground is also located. The new IKG Campus in Simon-Wiesenthal-Gasse behind the Ernst-Happel Stadium contains not only educational and sports facilities, but also a youth center and a home for the elderly. The latest information can be found on the IKG website (*www.ikg-wien.at*).

# Cemeteries

The oldest Jewish cemetery in Vienna is located in the grounds of a retirement home at Seegasse 9 in the ninth district. But what can be seen today is a reconstructed museum facility. Recovered medieval headstones were integrated into the side wall of the cemetery. The site was fully restored in 2010/11 by Austrian and international experts as part of an exhaustive scientific research project.

The situation at Vienna’s second oldest Jewish cemetery, Währinger Friedhof, is much more complicated, since it was all but destroyed by the Nazis. Only part of it survived the war and what remains is in an advanced state of disrepair. Although Vienna city council and the Save the Währing Jewish Cemetery association have redoubled their renovation efforts in recent years, the site is still out of bounds to the public. However, special guided tours of the graveyard are offered at regular intervals.

The largest Jewish burial ground in the capital occupies two sections of the Central Cemetery in the eleventh district: the old Jewish section can be found at Gate 1 (Tor 1), while the new section with ceremonial hall is accessible via Gate 4 (Tor 4). The old section contains the graves of many prominent Viennese Jews including Arthur Schnitzler, Friedrich Torberg, Carl Goldmark and Salomon Sulzer, as well as Sigmund Freud’s parents.

To visit the grave of Theodor Herzl, go to Döbling Cemetery in the nineteenth district. Today, however, there is only a cenotaph, because his remains were transported to Israel in 1948. Details and opening times can be found on the website of the Jewish Community of Vienna *(https://www.ikg-wien.at/en/rabbinate/cemeteries)*.

# Information

### Jewish Welcome Service Vienna

*Judenplatz 8, 1010 Vienna, tel. +43-1-535 04 31 500, www.jewish-welcome.at*

Founded in the 1980s by Leon Zelman, Vienna City Council and the Vienna Tourist Board, the Jewish Welcome Service has invited thousands of displaced Jewish citizens to Vienna since its creation. In October 2009 the Jewish Welcome Service moved from Stephansplatz to the Misrachi building on Judenplatz. In addition to enabling thousands of Viennese Jews to return to the city, the service’s main aim is to provide information about Jewish Vienna. The Jewish Welcome Service acts as an interface between the nearby Jewish Community of Vienna and the City of Vienna’s Jewish Museum. Its function is to allay any concerns Jewish visitors may have about traveling to the city. The Jewish Welcome Service provides support for dealing with the authorities and Jewish organizations, and helping people trace their family history. The Jewish Welcome Service information point (in the Judenplatz Museum foyer) is open from Sunday to Thursday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Fridays from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Further information on Jewish life in Vienna is available from the Jewish Welcome Service and the bilingual (English and German) brochure published by the Jewish Museum Vienna: *www.wien.info/media/files/juedisches-wien.pdf*

### Vienna Jewish Community (Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien)

*Seitenstettengasse 4, 1010 Vienna, tel. +43-1-531 04-0, www.ikg-wien.at*

The website of the Jewish Community has numerous links and many useful addresses, telephone numbers etc. to gain further information. It also contains details of where and how you can go about tracing the whereabouts and fates of relatives.

### Archive of the Jewish Community of Vienna

*Desider-Friedmann-Platz 1, 1010 Wien, Tel. +43-1-531 04-210, www.archiv-ikg-wien.at*

Infopoint Jewish Vienna

Tel. +43-1-53 104 -169, infopoint@ikg-wien.at, [www.ikg-wien.at/infopoint](http://www.ikg-wien.at/infopoint)

Multilingual information and services about Jewish life in Vienna past and present are available to guests at the Infopoint Jewish Vienna. Jewish Walking Tours through Vienna in German and English can also be booked at the Infopoint Jewish Vienna.

### Jewish Museum of the City of Vienna

*Dorotheergasse 11, 1010 Vienna, tel. +43-1-535 04 31, www.jmw.at/en*

### Judenplatz Museum

*Judenplatz 8, 1010 Vienna, www.jmw.at/en*

### Library of the Jewish Museum Vienna

*Entrance via Rabensteig 3, 1010 Vienna, tel. +43-1-535 04 31-412, www.jmw.at/en*

This reference library contains over 41,000 works in German, English, Hebrew and Yiddish spanning four centuries. Individual works can be looked up via the Jewish Museum website *(https://search-jmw.obvsg.at).*

### Sigmund Freud Museum

*Berggasse 19, 1090 Vienna, tel. +43-1-319 15 96, www.freud-museum.at/index.php/en\_home.html*

### Viktor Frankl Museum Vienna

*Mariannengasse 1/15, 1090 Vienna, tel. +43-699-109 610 68, www.franklzentrum.org*

### Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocausts Studies (VWI)

*Rabensteig 3, 1010 Vienna, Tel. +43-1-890 15 14-0, www.vwi.ac.at*

Archive: by telephone appointment Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

### Cafe Book Shop Singer

*Rabensteig 3, 1010 Vienna, Tel. +43-1-512 45 10,* [*info@singer-bookshop.com*](mailto:info@singer-bookshop.com)

Extended bookshop and café opening hours during events. The café is dairy kosher.

### Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance (DÖW)

*Altes Rathaus, Wipplingerstrasse 6-8, 1010 Vienna, tel. +43-1-22 89 469-319, www.doew.at*/*index.php/en/*

### Arnold Schönberg Center

Schwarzenbergplatz 6/entrance Zaunergasse 1, 1030 Vienna, tel. +43-1-712 18 88, *www.schoenberg.at*

### Steinhof Memorial

*Otto-Wagner-Spital, Baumgartner Höhe 1, 1140 Vienna, tel. +43-1-22 89 469-319, www.doew.at; additional information under www.gedenkstaettesteinhof.at*

Numerous places of remembrance and initiatives have been added over recent years. Check *www.erinnern.at/bundeslaender/wien/institutionen-projekte* for a complete list of all the latest projects.

### Press texts about the Jewish Museum Vienna and the Jewish Museum Judenplatz

Jewish Museum Vienna Press Office

Natascha Golan, Media Management

petra.fuchs@jmw.at

presse@jmw.atTel.: +43-1-535 04 31-1519

# Time Line: History of the Jews in Vienna

1194: Duke Leopold V installs Shlom as mint master. Shlom is the first Jew whose settlement in Vienna can be documented.

1204: First mention of a synagogue in Vienna (excavations on Judenplatz).

1238: Emperor Friedrich II takes the Jews of Vienna under his protection as “Chamber Vassals”.

1244: First Jewish Privilege of Duke Friedrich the “Pugnacious”.

1267: The church forbids social intercourse between Christians and Jews and ordains a dress code for Jews.

1420-21: The Jews, impoverished by a large fire in the “Jewish City” and subsequent plundering, have become dispensable. Albrecht V permits the expulsion of Jews from Vienna and Lower Austria. The more affluent among them are blackmailed and imprisoned, then burned at Erdberger Lände. Some prisoners commit suicide beforehand. The synagogue is destroyed (excavated remnants can be viewed today at Judenplatz).

From 1584: Individual “court-freed” Jews settle in Vienna. “Court Freedom” notably means the exemption from tolls, custom duties and community taxes.

1624-25: Jews are restricted to a ghetto in “Unterer Werd” consisting of 15 dwelling houses. In the decades that follow, the Jewish community grows to 132 houses and 500 families.

1670: Emperor Leopold I decrees a second expulsion of Jews from Vienna and Lower Austria. The former Jewish area is renamed Leopoldstadt (Leopold’s City).

Circa 1680: Samuel Oppenheimer (and his household) and later Samson Wertheimer are granted the privilege of returning to Vienna as “Court Jews”. They are active mainly as military suppliers and mediators of international loans for the emperor. By 1700, there are ten privileged Jewish families living in Vienna.

1722: Diego D’Aguilar, a Marrano (forcibly baptized Spanish Jew), is called to Vienna to reorganize the tobacco monopoly. He helps finance the building of Schönbrunn Palace with 300,000 florins.

1718 – 1736: Due to peace treaties with the Ottoman Empire, Sephardic Jews who are subjects of the sultan are granted certain freedoms within the Habsburg Empire. They are permitted to form a legally recognized community in Vienna.

1763: Founding of the Vienna Chevra Kaddisha (Burial Fraternity).

1764: Restrictive laws governing Jews are established by Empress Maria Theresa, including severe restrictions on residence permits and privileges.

1781: A court decree by Joseph II forbids the charging of the Leibmaut poll tax which had been paid by Jews to enter certain cities since the Middle Ages.

1782: Joseph II passes the Toleranzpatent (Edict of Tolerance), which lifts numerous discriminating laws. However, the Jews gain no rights as a community.

1812: Convinced of the anti-Napoleonic loyalties of the Viennese Jews and their readiness to contribute financially, Franz I permits the opening of a temple and school at Dempfingerhof in Seitenstettengasse. Individual Jews are knighted. Salons, such as those of Fanny von Arnstein and Cäcilie von Eskeles, become cultural centers.

1826: Consecration of the so-called City Temple, built by Joseph Kornhäusel.

1848: Jews are strongly represented among the activists of the Bourgeois Revolution.

1852: The Israelitische Cultus-Gemeinde (Jewish Community) is constituted with temporary status. Jewish immigration to Vienna from the provinces of the monarchy increases.

1858: Consecration of the Leopoldstadt Temple. The orthodox community moves from a small temple to the (later famous) Schiff Shul, the second most important synagogue in Vienna.

1867: Constitutional law: Complete equality of all citizens of Austria, including Jews. At the same time, anti-Semitism increases.

1890: Israelitengesetz (Jewish Law) to regulate the “external legal relationships of the Jewish religious community.”

1896: Theodor Herzl founds political Zionism with the publication of his brochure “The Jewish State.”

From 1897: Mayor Karl Lueger attracts petit bourgeois voters through anti-Semitism.

1909: Founding of the “Hakoah” sports club.

1906 – 1911: Adolf Hitler lives in Vienna.

1914: Outbreak of the First World War. Jewish refugees from the Eastern war regions arrive in Vienna in large numbers.

March 12, 1938: German troops march into Austria. The same night, the SA raids Jewish apartments and businesses.

March through June 1938: Widespread anti-Jewish acts of violence. Jews are removed from public service. First deportations to Dachau concentration camp. Introduction of the Nuremberg racial laws. The Jewish Community is permitted to take up its official duties again, allowing official emigration.

Summer-fall 1938: Numerous discriminatory decrees and edicts, such as the requirement that Jews take the first name “Sara” or “Israel” and the ban of Jews from public parks. Closing or “Aryanization” of many Jewish shops. Establishment of the Central Agency for Jewish Emigration under Adolf Eichmann.

November 9 and 10, 1938: November Pogrom: Devastation and arson of all Viennese synagogues and temples. 6,547 Jews are arrested.

By May 1939: About 100,000 Jews have left the territory of former Austria.

October 1941: Start of mass deportations from Vienna. By the end of 1942, only 8,102 Jews remain in the city. By the end of the War, 65,459 Austrian Jews have been murdered in the concentration camps. Only 5,816 live to see the liberation of Austria.

April 1945: Re-establishment of the Jewish Community of Vienna.

September 1945: Provisional re-opening of the City Temple, the only Jewish synagogue in Vienna that was not completely destroyed in 1938.

After the War: Much of Vienna becomes a camp for Displaced Persons from the East. Most are Jews who want to emigrate to Palestine.

From 1970: Vienna becomes a “bridge” for Soviet Jews, who cannot emigrate directly to Israel from the USSR. Many remain in Vienna.

1978: Talmud Torah School becomes a public school.

1980: Foundation of the Jewish Welcome Service Vienna.

August 1981: Bomb attack by Palestinian terrorists at Seitenstettengasse 2.

1984: Re-opening of the Zwi Perez Chajes School, a high school founded before the Second World War by Chief Rabbi Chajes.

1988: Jewish Institute for Adult Education is founded.

1989: Establishment of the Jewish Museum of the City of Vienna.

1990-91: “Vienna Yeshiva”, a vocational school for Jewish social work, becomes a public school.

November 18, 1993: Opening of the Jewish Museum of the City of Vienna at Dorotheergasse 11.

1994: Official institutionalization of ESRA, a project aimed at psychosocial and sociocultural integration of traumatized Holocaust victims and their descendants.

1999: Opening of the Lauder Chabad Campus at Rabbiner Schneerson Platz close to Augarten.

October 25, 2000: Unveiling of the Shoah Memorial and opening of the Judenplatz Museum.

2001: Establishment of the Department for Restitution Matters within the Municipal Administration of the City of Vienna.

2004: Official opening of Theodor-Herzl-Platz on Vienna’s Gartenbaupromenade in the 1st district.

2005: The City of Vienna launches the Information Platform for Restitution in April. In May agreement is reached by the General Compensation Fund of the Republic of Austria and the Jewish Community of Vienna (IKG) concerning outstanding restitution claims.

2008: Opening of the “S.C. HAKOAH Karl Haber Sport- und Freizeitzentrums” in the Prater.

Opening of the new Zwi Perez Chajes School building (Simon-Wiesenthal-Gasse 3, 1020 Vienna)

2009: Opening of the Maimonides Center at the IKG campus (Simon-Wiesenthal-Gasse 5, 1020 Wien).

Agreement between the Federal Government and Austrian Provinces regarding the restoration and maintenance of Jewish cemeteries in accordance with the 2001 Washington Agreement.

2010: Redesign of Judenplatz Museum

2011: Renovation of the Jewish Museum Vienna/Palais Eskeles

2013: Opening of the new permanent exhibition at the Jewish Museum Vienna

2014: Laying of the foundations for the new Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies at Rabensteig 3, 1010 Vienna

January 28, 2017: Opening of the new Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies, Rabensteig 3, 1010 Vienna

September 7, 2017: Unveiling of the Aspangbahnhof memorial on the former site of the Aspangbahnhof railway station, from which more than 45,000 Jews were deported to extermination camps.

June 22, 2020: Start of construction on the wall of names Memorial to the Jewish Children, Women and Men of Austria Who Were Murdered in the Shoah

March 15, 2021: Opening of the new Our Middle Ages! The First Jewish Community in Vienna permanent exhibition at Judenplatz Museum.

November 9, 2021: Opening of the new wall of names memorial

### www.vienna.info

### The rights to the use of this text are owned by WienTourismus (Vienna Tourist Board). The text may be reproduced in its entirety, partially and in edited form free of charge until further notice. Please forward sample copy to: Vienna Tourist Board, Media Management, Invalidenstrasse 6, 1030 Wien; press@vienna.info. No responsibility is assumed for the accuracy of the information contained in the text.

### Author: Dr. Alfred Stalzer, former Jewish Museum Vienna media spokesman and curator

### Last updated: October 2023