

*“The International Tracing Service (ITS) in Bad Arolsen serves victims of Nazi persecutions and their families by documenting their fate through the archives it manages.*

*The ITS preserves these historic records and makes them available for research.”*

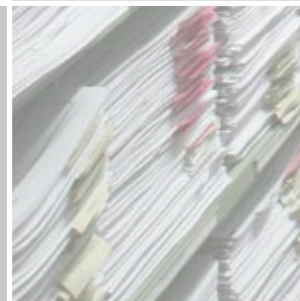


**Guided tours:**

Every first Tuesday of the month at 2:00 p.m.  
Registration required.

**Opening hours:**

Monday to Thursday: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.



**ITS online**

Further information on the International Tracing Service can be found on the web at [www.its-arolsen.org](http://www.its-arolsen.org). The homepage offers an overview of the facility's main tasks, its organisation, and its history. A newsletter provides information on the latest developments. At the website, information for visitors, as well as research applications, humanitarian request applications and the regulations for access can also be found.

**International Tracing Service (ITS)**

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[www.its-arolsen.org](http://www.its-arolsen.org)

An Introduction to the  
International Tracing Service



## In the Interest of the Victims From the Tracing Service to an Archive for Research

The International Tracing Service (ITS) in Bad Arolsen is one of the world's largest Nazi archives. It contains files documenting the fate of the millions of civilian victims of the national socialist regime. The documents archived by ITS include original records from concentration camps, details of forced labour, and files from displaced persons camps. Due to its sheer volume and historical relevance, the facility's inventory is unrivalled. ITS stores original documents, clarifies the fate of the Nazi-persecuted and supports historical research.



### Clarification of Individual Fates

Even 60 years after the end of World War II, numerous tracing requests still reach ITS from victims of the Nazi regime and their next of kin. Most of these requests concern information regarding imprisonment, but some of them also involve forced labour. For many years, ITS also issued letters of confirmation for pension payments and indemnification.

In some cases, people are still looking for their family members today. Finding out about the precise fate and whereabouts of relatives is of just as much relevance for the survivors of the Nazi regime of terror as conducting research on one's own family history. Since its founding, ITS has been able to provide over 11.8 million replies to requests.

### Preservation of Historical Documents

ITS's total inventory comprises 26,000 metres of original documents from the Nazi era and post-war period. The Central Name Index represents the key to these documents. With 50 million references on the fate of over 17.5 million people, it is based on an alphabetic-phonetic filing system that was developed especially for ITS. In order to preserve these historically valuable documents for future generations, they are being restored and conserved. The entire archive will simultaneously be digitalised by the end of 2011. The step of digitizing serves to further protect the records, in that the originals need not be handled.

### Valuable Source for Researchers

Since the ITS archive opened to the public in November 2007, scholars from research institutions, memorials, universities or museums have been able to examine the documents stored here. The opening marks the start of a gradual transition from a tracing service to a significant archive for historical research. The documents at ITS provide deep insights into the tremendous magnitude of the crimes committed by the Nazi regime. To make the documents more accessible for research purposes, ITS has started working on a much more in-depth catalogue. An academic library is also currently being instituted.



### Legal Basis of ITS

Supervision of the International Tracing Service's work is incumbent upon an International Commission comprised of eleven member states (Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Israel, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Poland, USA). By order of the commission, ITS is directed and administrated by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva. The facility and its 320 employees are funded by the German federal budget.

