



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



International Tracing Service  
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Memory of the World



**ITS**

International Tracing Service  
Service International de Recherches  
Internationaler Suchdienst

## About the general inventory of the ITS

The general inventory offers an overview of all archival collections kept in the archives of the International Tracing Service (ITS). Here archive users can gain an impression of how the collections are structured and find basic information on the various sub-collections. The general inventory is not a complete catalog, but rather an aid enabling researchers to make an initial assessment of whether documents on a certain subject are available. With the aid of the general inventory, users can also prepare for a visit to the ITS and for research in the documents on site. Users can save their search results in a memo list and create a PDF document of that list. It is not possible to order document copies by way of the general inventory.

Searches can be carried out in the inventory structure or by keyword. The structure of the general inventory is shown as a navigable tree. Proceeding from the highest level, the user can access the individual hierarchical levels of the collections. The keyword function allows the user to carry out research on the basis of place names (e.g. Auschwitz, Vienna), names of companies and organizations (e.g. Krupp, SS), certain terminology (e.g. relocation, Lebensborn) and other key terms appearing in the descriptions.

As a rule, the inventory offers a brief description of the contents within a sub-collection. Several of the collections also contain documents not referred to in the brief descriptions. It is not possible to search for individual names or the fates of individual persons. Since the indexing process has not yet been completed, users with specific research interests are advised to inquire with the ITS. You can also carry out research on your own on site in Bad Arolsen or in the facilities of our partner organizations, which have copies of all documents digitalized to date.

## How the general inventory is structured

The collections consist of a large number of different types of documents, created either during the National Socialist period or on the initiative of the Allies or humanitarian organizations in the post-war period. They also contain documents created as a by-product of the work done by the ITS and its predecessor organizations. In addition to originals, the collections include many document copies made by the ITS in connection with searches and efforts to clarify fates in the holdings of third bodies.

The ITS initially indexed its holdings in the manner best suited to its original mandate as a tracing service and contact office for survivors and the next-of-kin of victims of Nazi persecution. Because of the fact that the main focus was on the clarification of individual fates, the origins of the documents were of secondary importance. The documents were therefore not sorted by provenance (origin), but according to their pertinence to the task at hand.

There are seven main collection groups and supplementary finding aids. Collection 10 contains not only non-digitalized documents but also material in the form in which it originally entered the ITS, for example microfilms, with respective references to the main collection groups 1 to 7. The incorporation of the documents not yet digitalized is being carried out successively within the framework of the digitalization and indexing process. The general

inventory presented here is therefore a 'work in progress'. The data already available on the individual sub-collections will be successively supplemented with detailed descriptions of the collections that will allow users more in-depth access to the documents. The general inventory on the website reflects the current status of the indexing process, as the data is retrieved directly from the digital ITS archive.

Where ITS-specific titles or designations have been used that require more detailed explanation, users are advised to take a look at the glossary and the index of abbreviations by following the link on the right-hand edge of the screen. The general inventory of the ITS is available in German and English.