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Association of Former Natzweiler Concentration
Camp Complex Memorial Sites

Association of memorials in the former Natzweiler concentration camp complex (Verbund der Gedenkstätten im ehemaligen KZ-Komplex Natzweiler e.V. / VGKN)

The VGKN is a network of currently (as of April 2021) 15 memorials and memorial initiatives in southwest Germany, all of which commemorate the satellite camps of the Natzweiler (Alsace) concentration camp that existed between 1943 and 1945. Founded in 2016 by twelve memorials in Baden-Württemberg, other initiatives (including those from Hesse and Rhineland-Palatinate) have joined the association since then. The consortium is dedicated to collaborative projects with scientific or pedagogical aims or which support cultural remembrance. These projects are carried out in close cooperation with the Centre Européen du Résistant Déporté (CERD) at the site of the former main camp in Natzweiler. Together with its French partners, the network advocates on both sides of the French-German border for the remembrance of Nazi crimes and for encounter and exchange in democratic Europe today. In 2018, the work to foster German–French understanding at the sites of the former Natzweiler concentration camp complex was awarded the European Heritage Label.



The French–German group which, on behalf of the other memorial sites involved, accepted the award of the European Heritage Label in Plovdiv (Bulgaria) in March 2018: Sibylle Thelen (LpB), Frédérique Neu-Dufour (CERD), Brigitta Marquart-Schad (VGKN), Dr. Denise Beilharz (Ministry of Economic Affairs Baden-Württemberg), Anja König (VGKN) - from left to right

Photo: European Commission

Receipt of the plaques with the emblem of the European Heritage Seal by the VGKN memorial site representatives in June 2018 in the Haus der Wirtschaft in Stuttgart by Katrin Schütz, State Secretary in the Ministry of Economics, Labor and Housing in Baden-Württemberg.

Photo: Franziska Kraufmann





View over part of the former Natzweiler main camp / Photo: Sören Fuß

The Natzweiler concentration camp complex

The Natzweiler concentration camp was established in May 1941 in the Alsatian Vosges. The first satellite camps in Alsace, Lorraine and southwestern Germany were set up in the winter of 1942/43. In 1944 the number of concentration camps assigned to the Natzweiler concentration camp as satellite camps rose rapidly. Even after the main camp and the satellite camps on the left bank of the Rhine were evacuated in late summer 1944, further satellite camps continued to be established in southwestern Germany. In total, there were more than 50 Natzweiler satellite camps, most of them in what is now the state of Baden-Württemberg, but also in Hesse and Rhineland-Palatinate. About 52,000 people from over 30 nations were imprisoned in the Natzweiler concentration camp complex on both sides of the Rhine, two thirds of them exclusively in the satellite camps. Most of the camps were evacuated immediately before the arrival of the Allies, and the prisoners were „transferred“ to other camps. At the beginning of April 1945, the Vaihingen concentration camp was the only camp in the Natzweiler concentration camp complex to be liberated by the French army. At least 15,000 prisoners died in the camps, on “death marches” and on evacuation transports from the Natzweiler concentration camp and its satellite camps.

German–French cooperation in cultural remembrance

Community projects since 2014 (selection)

2014/15 (before founding of the VGKN): Bilingual traveling exhibition „Freiheit - so nah, so fern / Bientôt la liberté nous reviendra“ (Freedom - so near, so far) about the „double end“ of the concentration camp complex Natzweiler 1944/45

2015 (before the founding of the VGKN): Transnational colloquium on the Natzweiler concentration camp complex at the German Historical Institute in Paris

2016: Joint application for the European Heritage Label (CERD and VGKN).

2017/18: Student photo project „The Natzweiler concentration camp and its satellite camps on both sides of the Rhine“: exhibition and catalog

2018: Art project „Fraternité / Brüderlichkeit“ (Fraternity; in cooperation with artist groups Quinz`Art and PlakatWandKunst)

2018: Learning module „Europeanness of the Natzweiler Memorials“: Material booklet „Im Lager wurde ich zum Europäer...“ / „Je suis devenu européen dans les camps...“ (In the camp I became a European...)

2018: Ceremony for the European Heritage Label and exhibition „Natzweiler: Spuren/Traces“ at the Haus der Wirtschaft in Stuttgart (cooperation VGKN, CERD and Ministry of Economics, Labour and Housing Baden-Württemberg).

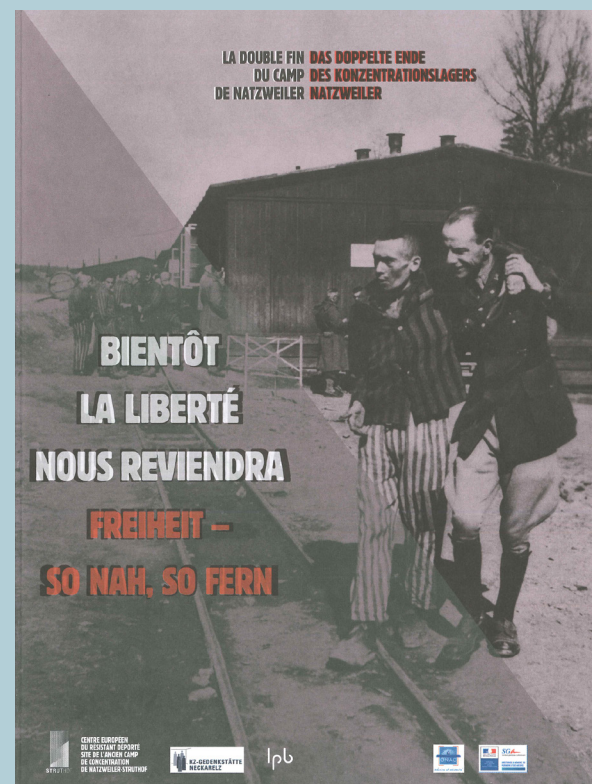
2018: Colloquium „The Former Concentration Camp Natzweiler and its Subcamps - New Views on a Complex Place“ at the Haus der Wirtschaft in Stuttgart (Cooperation VGKN, CERD and Ministry of Economics, Labour and Housing Baden-Württemberg)

Since 2018: construction of the transnational website www.natzweiler.eu

Since 2018: Establishment of a prisoner database on the Natzweiler concentration camp complex.

Since 2019: Franco-German teacher training courses on visiting the Natzweiler Memorial with school classes.

Please contact us if you are interested in material about the projects or in borrowing the exhibitions.



The Natzweiler Concentration Camp Complex and the Memorials in the VGKN



Cartography: Volker Schniepp

The map combines the historical Natzweiler concentration camp complex (main camp and all subcamps) and the memorials organized in the VGKN.

The memorials are listed chronologically by date of origin and can be located using the numbers on the map.

Memorial sites

- 1 Initiative Gedenkstätte Eckerwald e.V.
- 2 KZ-Gedenkstätte Sandhofen e.V., Mannheim
- 3 Gedenkstättenverein KZ Bisingen e.V.
- 4 KZ-Gedenkstätte Neckarelz e.V., Mosbach
- 5 Miklos-Klein-Stiftung, ehemaliges KZ Kochendorf
- 6 Initiative Gedenkstätte Vulkan, Haslach
- 7 Initiative KZ-Gedenkstätte Hessental e.V.
- 8 KZ-Gedenkstätte Vaihingen/Enz e.V.
- 9 KZ-Gedenkstätteninitiative Leonberg e.V.
- 10 Arbeitskreis „Wüste“ Balingen
- 11 Geschichtswerkstatt KZ-Gedenkstätte Echterdingen-Bernhausen
- 12 KZ-Gedenkstätte Hailfingen-Tailfingen e.V.
- 13 Gedenk- und Bildungsstätte „Margit-Horváth-Zentrum“ Mörfelden-Walldorf
- 14 Initiative KZ-Gedenken in Spaichingen e.V.
- 15 Förderverein für die Errichtung einer Gedenk- und Bildungsstätte „KZ-Katzbach“, Frankfurt/Main

Former concentration camps

- ◆ Main camp Natzweiler
- Satellite camp

Memorials of the VGKN

On the following pages, we present the memorial sites that are part of the **Verbund der Gedenkstätten im ehemaligen KZ-Komplex Natzweiler e.V.**. Opening hours, contact persons, guided tours and more detailed information about the memorials can be found on the respective memorial websites.

1

Initiative Gedenkstätte Eckerwald e.V. / Initiative Memorial Site Eckerwald, registered association Baden-Wuerttemberg

Founding date of the memorial: 1989 / 2007

Duration of subcamps

KZ Schörzingen : 01 February 1944 - 17 April 1945
KZ Schömberg : 16 December 1943 – 17 April 1945
KZ Dautmergen : 28 August 1944 - 17 April 1945

History

Under the code name „Desert“, ten factories were to be built at the foot of the Swabian Alb to extract fuel from shale rock. Over 10,000 prisoners were imprisoned in seven concentration camps and used to build the industrial complex. These included the Schörzingen, Schömberg and Dautmergen concentration camps.

529 prisoners from the Schörzingen concentration camp who were exploited to build Plant 10 (now the Eckerwald Memorial Trail) fell victim to this murderous enterprise.

1,774 prisoners died at the Dautmergen and Schömberg concentration camps.

Memorial Service

Eckerwald memorial trail; Schömberg and Schömberg-Schörzingen concentration camp cemeteries; open memorial at the Schömberg concentration camp cemetery.

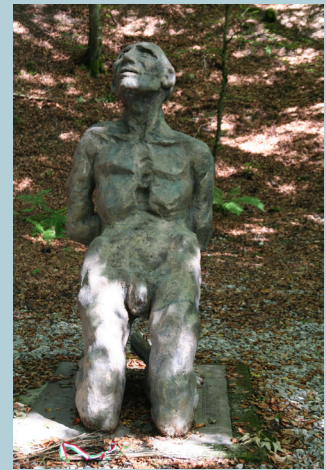


Photo: Brigitta Marquart-Schad

Website:
www.eckerwald.de

2

KZ-Gedenkstätte Sandhofen e.V. / KZ Memorial Site Sandhofen, registered association

Baden-Wuerttemberg

Founding date of the memorial: 1990

**Sandhofen
Concentration
Camp**

27 September 1944 to mid-March 1945

History

There were 1,070 prisoners in the Sandhofen concentration camp. Almost all of them were Polish boys and men who had been arrested during the Warsaw Uprising in the summer of 1944 and deported to Germany. In Mannheim-Waldhof they were forced to work manufacturing trucks for the company Daimler-Benz. The prisoners were housed in a school building in the Sandhofen district. At least 23 prisoners lost their lives.

Memorial Service

Sandhofen concentration camp memorial in the basement of the Gustav Wiederkehr School; memorial plaque on school building; Stolpersteine (memorial paving stones); plaque at the main cemetery.



Photo: Kathrin Schwab

Website:
www.kz-gedenkstaette-sandhofen.de

3

Gedenkstätte KZ Bisingen e.V./Museum KZ Bisingen / Memorial Site Association Concentration Camp Bisingen registered association

Baden-Wuerttemberg

Founding date of the memorial: 1996

**Bisingen
Concentration
Camp**

August 1944 to mid-April 1945

History

More than 4,100 men from a number of European countries were imprisoned in the Bisingen concentration camp. As part of the „Desert“ enterprise, they had to mine oil shale for fuel. By the end of the war, about 1,200 people had died here from hunger, disease, exhaustion or violence by the guards.

Memorial Service

Concentration camp memorial in the town center of Bisingen (redesigned and re-modeled in 2019); historical trail along the „authentic“ sites (camp grounds, „Kuhloch“ oil shale mining site, concentration camp cemetery, former mass grave).



Photo: Museum KZ Bisingen

Website:
www.museum-bisingen.de

4

KZ-Gedenkstätte Neckarelz e.V. / KZ Memorial Site Neckarelz

Baden-Wuerttemberg

Founding date of the memorial: 1998 / 2011

**Neckarelz
Concentration
Camp** 15/16 March 1944 to 30 March 1945 (Neckarelz I)
April/July/Sept. 1944 to 29 March 1945 (other „Neckar“ camps)

History The grade school Neckarelz (now the Clemens Brentano School) served as a concentration camp in 1944/45 and became the center of the six „Neckar camps“ Neckarelz I, Neckargerach, Neckarelz II, Neckarbischofsheim, Asbach and Bad Rappenau.
Under the code name „Goldfish“, the Daimler-Benz aircraft engine plant in Genshagen (near Berlin) was to be relocated to a gypsum mine near Obrigheim. More than 5,000 concentration camp prisoners had to excavate the underground tunnels and construct housing for Daimler-Benz.

**Memorial
Service** Neckarelz memorial; „Goldfish“ historical trail (Obrigheim), Binau concentration camp cemetery.



Photo: Dorothee Roos

Website:
www.kz-denk-neckarelz.de

5

Miklos-Klein-Stiftung, KZ-Gedenkstätte Kochendorf / Miklos-Klein-Foundation, Former KZ Kochendorf

Baden-Wuerttemberg

Founding date of the memorial: 1999

**Kochendorf
Concentration
Camp** September 1944 to March 1945

History In seven months, 2,000 prisoners from various European countries were imprisoned in Kochendorf concentration camp. Under the direction of the “Organisation Todt”, they were forced to convert the salt mine there into an underground armaments factory for Ernst Heinkel AG and other armaments companies (code name: Eisbär (polar bear)). From January/February 1945, the prisoners were also used to produce weapons, aircraft and submarine parts in the mine. About 450 prisoners died in the Kochendorf concentration camp or on the death march to Dachau in spring 1945.

**Memorial
Service** Permanent exhibition in the salt mine; concentration camp cemetery with memorial plaques, memorial stone and information sign on the former camp grounds.



Foto: Miklos-Klein-Stiftung

Website:
www.kz-kochendorf.de

6

Initiative Gedenkstätte Vulkan / KZ Memorial Site Vulkan

Baden-Wuerttemberg

Founding date of the memorial: 1998

**Haslach
Concentration
Camp (Camp
„Sportplatz“)**

16 September 1944 to 15 February 1945

History

In addition to the Natzweiler subcamp „KZ Sportplatz“, there were two „security camps“ in Haslach from December 1944 to April 1945, which were subcamps within the Schirmeck security camp complex. A total of 1700 prisoners (assigned to different camps) from 21 nations had to perform forced labor in the tunnels of the Urenkopf for the Daimler-Benz company. At least 223 prisoners did not survive.

Memorial Service

Vulkan concentration camp memorial; memorial plaque at the former camp site; path of remembrance.



Photo: Sören Fuß

Website:
www.gedenkstaette-vulkan.de

7

Initiative KZ-Gedenkstätte Hessental e.V. / KZ Memorial Site Hessental, registered association Baden-Wuerttemberg

Founding date of the memorial: 2001

**Hessental
Concentration
Camp**

14 October 1944 to 05 April 1945

History

The 800 prisoners of the Hessental concentration camp were almost all from Poland. They were used for forced labor in many places: at the Luftwaffe air base, in quarries, at the railroad, in the forest, at factories, by farmers, and by the city of Schwäbisch Hall in removing rubble. The prisoners had to build equipment for the final assembly of Messerschmitt aircraft (ME 262). At least 182 men perished in the Hessental subcamp.

In addition, the „Hessental Death March“ to Dachau was one of the most sacrificial evacuation marches in southern Germany.

Memorial Service

Hessental concentration camp memorial; memorial at Steinbach Jewish cemetery.

KZ Gedenkstätte
Schwäbisch Hall-Hessental



Photo: Marion Urbitsch

Website:
www.kz-hessental.de

8

KZ-Gedenkstätte Vaihingen/Enz e.V. / KZ Memorial Site Vaihingen-Enz, registered association Baden-Wuerttemberg

Opening date of the memorial: 2002

Vaihingen Concentration Camp

Labor camp: March 1944 - October 1944
Infirmary and death camp: November 1944 - April 1945

History

From March to October 1944, Vaihingen concentration camp was a labor camp for the „Stoffel“ bunker factory, which was to be put at the disposal of the Messerschmitt company. In November 1944, it was converted into the central „infirmary and convalescence camp“ of the Natzweiler concentration camp complex. In fact, it was a death camp, which about 1,500 prisoners did not survive. Vaihingen Concentration Camp was the only Natzweiler camp that was not completely emptied before the Allies arrived. On April 7, 1945, the last 600 prisoners were liberated by French troops.

Memorial Service

Concentration camp memorial; concentration camp cemetery



Photo: Jörg Becker

Website:
www.gedenkstaette-vaihingen.de

9

KZ-Gedenkstätteninitiative Leonberg e.V. / KZ Memorial Sites Initiative Leonberg, registered association Baden-Wuerttemberg

Opening date of the memorial: 2008

Leonberg Concentration Camp

April 1944 to mid April 1945

History

More than 5,000 people from 24 nations were imprisoned in Leonberg concentration camp, one third of them Jews from Eastern Europe. Under murderous conditions, the prisoners had to convert parts of the old Engelberg tunnel, the first German Reich highway tunnel, into a bomb-proof armaments factory and perform forced labor for Messerschmitt AG (manufacturing wings for the „Wunderwaffe“, the ME 262 jet fighter). At least 389 prisoners died.

Memorial Service

Concentration camp memorial and documentation center in the old Engelberg tunnel; „Weg der Erinnerung“ (path of remembrance), including memorial on the Blosenbergr (former mass grave) and gravesite in the Seestraße cemetery.



Photo: Marei Drassdo

Website:
www.kz-gedenkstaette-leonberg.de

10

Arbeitskreis „Wüste“ /

Initiative Memorial Site Eckerwald, registered association Baden-Wuerttemberg

Founded in 2009

Erzingen and Frommern Concentration Camps

May 1944 - April 1945 (Erzingen Concentration Camp)
March 1944 - April 1945 (Frommern Concentration Camp)

History

Under the code name „Desert“, ten factories were to be built at the foot of the Swabian Alb for the extraction of fuel from slate rock. More than 10,000 prisoners were imprisoned in seven concentration camps and used to build the industrial complexes, which were completely unprofitable from an economic point of view. At least 3,480 did not survive the barbaric working and living conditions. The working group Desert (AK Wüste) conducts research focusing on the Erzingen and Frommern camps (now districts of Balingen) as well as plants 3 to 5.

Memorial Service

Four memorial and information sites in the Balingen districts of Erzingen, Frommern and Engstlatt.



Photo: Petra Penz

Website:
www.akwueste.de

11

Geschichtswerkstatt KZ-Gedenkstätte Echterdingen-Bernhausen /

History Workshop KZ Satellite Camp Echterdingen Baden-Wuerttemberg

Founding date of the memorial: 2010

Echterdingen Concentration Camp

22 November 1945 to 21 January 1945

History

The 600 prisoners of the Echterdingen concentration camp were deployed under the supervision of the Organisation Todt (OT) for repair and improvement work on the runway of the militarily important Stuttgart Airport. They were housed in a hangar in the Bernhausen area (now part of Filderstadt). Although the camp existed for only a few months, at least 119 prisoners lost their lives in the Echterdingen concentration camp.

Memorial Service

Memorial „Paths of Remembrance“ designed by Dagmar Pachtner in front of the US Airfield. Hangar and burial grounds are visible but not accessible. Collective grave with large Star of David at Ebershalden Cemetery Esslingen.



Photo: Silke Köhler

Website:
www.gedenkstaette-echterdingen-bernhausen.de

**12 KZ-Gedenkstätte Hailfingen/Tailfingen e.V. /
KZ Memorial Site Hailfingen-Tailfingen**
Baden-Wuerttemberg

Founding date of the memorial: 2010

**Hailfingen
Concentration
Camp**

18 November 1944 to 14 February 1945

History

The Hailfingen concentration camp was established in November 1944 near a military airfield. The 600 Jewish prisoners were housed in a hangar. They were used for construction work on the night fighter airfield. Almost a third of them died.

**Memorial
Service**

Concentration camp memorial in the Tailfingen town hall; memorial and plaques at the former airport, collective grave with commemorative memorials at Tailfingen cemetery, memorial trail.



Photo: Johannes Kuhn

Website:
www.kz-gedenkstaette-hailfingen-tailfingen.de

**13 „Horváth-Zentrum“ der Margit Horváth-Stiftung /
„Horváth-Centre“ of the Foundation Margit-Horváth**
Hesse

Opening of the historical trail / Horváth center: 2000 / 2016

**Walldorf
Concentration
Camp**

22 August 1944 to 25 November 1944

History

In August 1944, 1,700 Hungarian Jewish women were selected at Auschwitz-Birkenau to build the first concrete runways for Frankfurt Airport, which was then under military command. The young women and girls were housed in barracks on the outskirts of Walldorf. Under the supervision of the Züblin company, they had to perform extremely difficult construction work. They were starved, completely inadequately clothed and exposed to the brutality of the guards. Approximately 50 young women were killed during their imprisonment in the Walldorf camp.

**Memorial
Service**

Horváth Center (memorial and educational site); historical trail around the former camp grounds.



Photo: Bernd Steinbring

Website:
www.margit-horvath.de
www.kz-walldorf.de

14

Initiative KZ-Gedenken in Spaichingen e.V. / Initiative KZ Remembrance in Spaichingen, registered association Baden-Wuerttemberg

Founding date of the initiative: 2017

**Spaichingen
Concentration
Camp**

September 1944 to 17/18 April 1945

History

With the help of the inmates, various companies produced airborne weapons under the name „Metallwerke Spaichingen“. A factory building to be erected by the prisoners outside the town had not been completed by the end of the war. 508 concentration camp inmates from various European countries (the last of whom were Jews) are known by name. At least 106 prisoners died in the camp or on the death march.

Memorial Service

Memorial trail (in three languages(freely accessible) to concentration camp memorial at former mass grave; memorial plaques (some in the ground) mark historic sites.

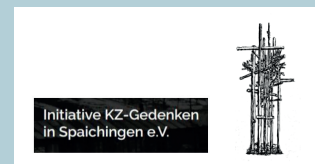


Photo: A. und I. Dapp

Website:
www.KZ-Gedenken-Spaichingen.de

15

Förderverein für die Errichtung einer Gedenk- und Bildungsstätte KZ-Katzbach in den Adlerwerken und zur Zwangsarbeit in Frankfurt am Main e.V.

(Association for the Promotion of the Establishment of a Memorial and Educational Site KZ-Katzbach in the Adlerwerke and on Forced Labour in Frankfurt am Main e.V.)

Hesse

Founding date of the memorial: 2015; 2021/2022

**“Katzbach“ Con-
centration Camp
(Adlerwerke)**

22 August 1944 to 24 March 1945

History

Mostly Polish men who had participated in the Warsaw Uprising were deported to the camp with the code name „Katzbach“ - later there were also Soviet prisoners. In the Adlerwerke in Frankfurt, they had to produce almost exclusively chassis and engines for armored vehicles for the Wehrmacht. A total of about 1,600 men were interned at the Katzbach concentration camp. At least 528 lost their lives there.

Memorial Service

Gravesite with memorials at the main cemetery; Golub-Lebedenko Square in the Gallus Quarter; memorial plaque on the building of the former Adlerwerke; memorial in planning.

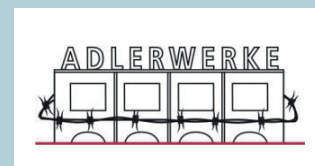


Photo: Horst Koch-Panzer

Website:
www.kz-katzbach-adlerwerke.de

Partner



Supporter



Contact

Verbund der Gedenkstätten im ehemaligen KZ-Komplex Natzweiler e.V.
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