

OVERVIEW OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY RESTITUION/COMPENSATION REGIME – REPUBLIC OF IRELAND (AS OF 13 DECEMBER 2016)

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A. OVERVIEW

The Republic of Ireland – after gaining independence from Britain in 1921 – maintained a policy of neutrality during World War II. Despite its neutral stance, the country was considered to be more in the sphere of influence of the Allied powers than the Axis powers. The country implemented a very restrictive refugee policy on the eve of and during World War II. It is estimated that Ireland accepted at most 100 Jewish refugees prior to and during World War II. (See Dermot Keogh, *Jews in Twentieth-Century Ireland: Refugees, Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust* (Cork University Press, 1st ed., 1998).)

No immovable property was confiscated from Jews or other targeted groups in Ireland during World War II by the Irish government or Nazi Germany. In 2012, the Director of Human Rights and United Nations at the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade stated that, “As you are aware, Ireland was a neutral country during World War II and was not a participant in the conflict. As such the Government of Ireland understands that there are no specific issues with regards [to] Immovable Property Confiscated or Otherwise related to Ireland.” (Green Paper on the Immovable Property Review Conference 2012, p. 49 (Ireland).)

As best as we are aware, Ireland is not a party to any treaties or agreements with other countries that address restitution and/or compensation for immovable property confiscated or wrongfully taken during the Holocaust.

As best as we are aware, there are no laws in Ireland that permit Irish citizens to file claims in domestic courts for the return of immovable property, which is located in another country.

In 1926, the Jewish population in Ireland was **3,686**. In 1945, the population was **3,907**. Since World War II, emigration to larger Jewish communities in England and Israel has resulted in a great decrease in the Irish Jewish population. According to the 2011 census, there are **1,984** Jews living in Ireland. Most live around Dublin. The Holocaust Education Trust Ireland reports that, as of 2016, there are four (4) Holocaust survivors living in Ireland (three (3) in the Republic and one (1) in Northern Ireland).

We are not aware of the estimated number of Roma who were living in Ireland at the time of World War II. According to the 2011 census, there are **29,573** Roma living in Ireland.

The Irish Jewish community is represented by the [Jewish Representative Council of Ireland](#). The **Council** brings together Ireland’s various women’s, youth and Zionist organizations.

Ireland became a founding member of the Council of Europe in 1949 and ratified the European Convention on Human Rights in 1953. As a result, suits against Ireland claiming violations of the Convention are subject to appeal to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). Ireland became a member of the European Union in 1973.

Ireland endorsed the Terezin Declaration in 2009 and the Guidelines and Best Practices in 2010.

As part of the European Shoah Legacy Institute's Immoveable Property Restitution Study, a Questionnaire covering past and present restitution regimes for private, communal, and heirless property was sent to all 47 Terezin Declaration governments in 2015. As of 13 December 2016, no response from the Republic of Ireland has been received.

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