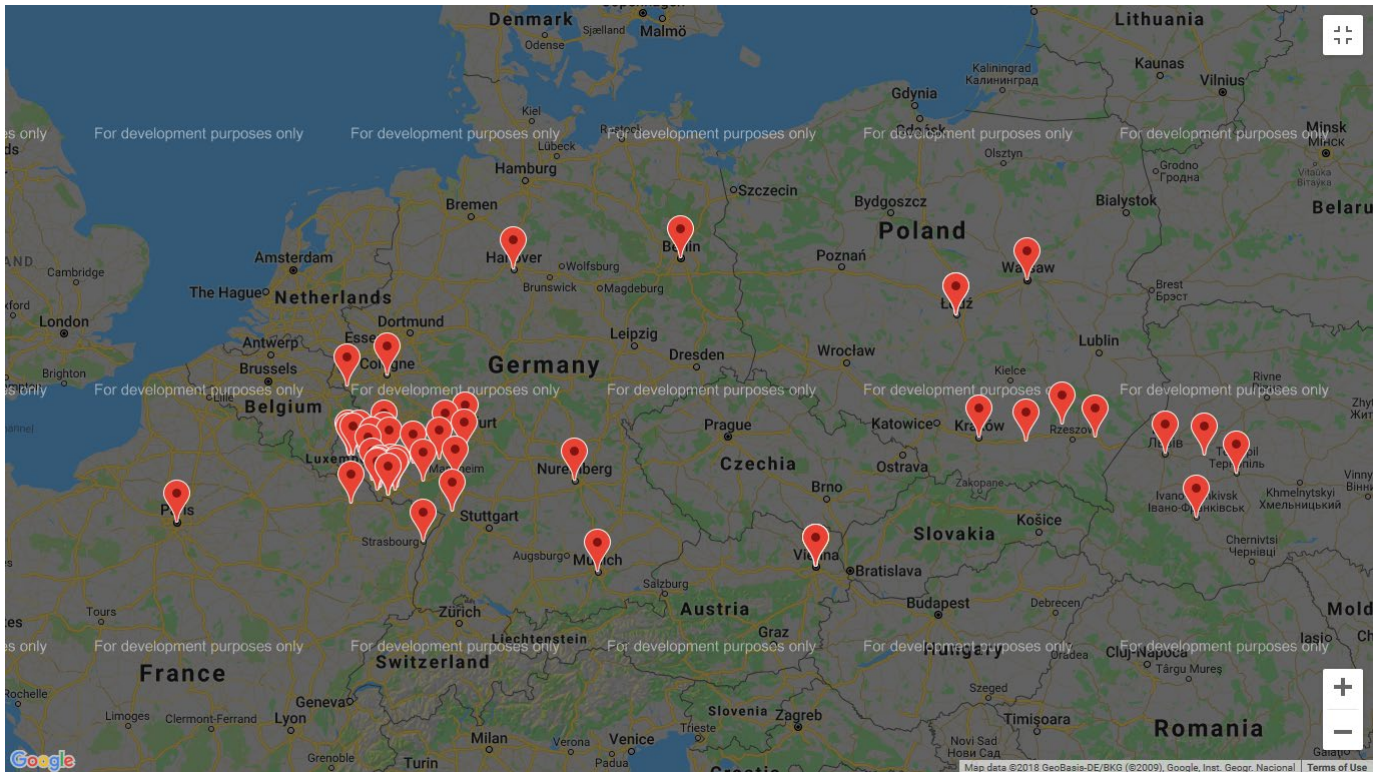


Repatriation Efforts – Luxembourg State Policy Towards Jews before and after World War II

“When we returned to Luxembourg, our native country, we got off the train and went to the school building. We had no identification and a person wrote down in our papers Jew and Polish because my parents came from Poland. They had come years ago but they had never taken Luxembourgish citizenship. [...] They did not offer us anything – no food, nothing – and my mother cried. They only offered us a sandwich and we said no thank you... then we crossed a bridge to the new town and people were staring at us. [...] I went to our neighbour Marcel and he looked at me like a ghost. Nobody thought that we would ever come back. Only in Luxembourg, where I spent my youth, did I have such a terrible experience. In Belgium, they were waiting for us with baskets of food.” – *Testimony of Lily Friedrich describing the situation in Luxembourg after World War II. It was drawn from the database of the USC Shoah Foundation.*



Places of origin from where Jews came to Luxembourg during the period 1920-30.



Most frequent places from where Jews came to Luxembourg during the period 1920-30.

Who is guilty? Germans or Luxembourgers?

As a result of statements such as the one above, as well as a number of initiatives, Luxembourgish state policy before the war has come under the scrutiny of historians in recent years. The reason for detailed research was quite simple either approve or disapprove the statements of holocaust survivors, war victims, journalists and politicians. Many similar initiatives have been launched in the Benelux states, with a variety of outcomes.

In September 2012, Belgian Prime Minister Elio di Rupo officially apologised to the Jewish community in his country for the attitude of the Belgian administration during the war. Following this gesture, the historian and former curator of the National Archives of Luxembourg (ANLux), Serge Hoffmann, published an open letter in which he asked Jean-Claude Juncker, the then Luxembourgish Prime Minister, if a similar gesture would not also have been appropriate from the Luxembourg Government. In late September 2012, Ben Fayot officially appealed to the Prime Minister to decide on this issue. In his response, Juncker noted certain misconceptions and discrepancies in Luxembourg's role in this historical period and confirmed the need to set up an independent commission of historians to examine the issue. The outcome

was a report entitled *La collaboration au Luxembourg durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale (1940-1945)*, commonly known as the Artuso report.

This report came to the conclusion that the Luxembourg state administrative deliberately supported and collaborated with the Nazi regime. In the meantime, Paul Dostert, Luxembourgish historian wrote a chapter about Luxembourgish collaborators in his dissertation, but he only repeated that they had represented only a tiny minority within the population as well as Luxembourgish resistant fighters. The persecution of Jews was also outlined in Dostert's paper, but though he notified the existence of ambiguous documents appeared in the Luxembourg administration, he did not hesitate to attribute full responsibility to the Nazis.

As a follow-up to these initiatives, historian Denis Scuto, a professor at the University of Luxembourg, launched a new project, LUXSTAPOJE, to continue the research. The aim of the project is to systematise and extend the analysis of individual records held by the Luxembourg “Foreign Police” (*Fremdenpolizei*). It endeavours to link macro-historical studies with micro-historical or prosopographic studies on the Holocaust in Luxembourg. It focuses on a specific group of people who lived in a specific territory, i.e. foreign Jews who lived in Luxembourg in the late 1930s. Having consulted individual records held by the Foreign Police, sources which were often ignored by previous Holocaust researchers, we invested a great deal of effort to trace the fates of Jewish immigrants from 1930 to 1950. The post-war period was a unique political environment for assimilation into Luxembourgish society. The project maps the destiny of Jews trying to restore their existence in Luxembourg. In September 2016, the LUXSTAPOJE project team was completed by Master’s student Paul Fonck and PhD student Jakub Bronec and researchers Marc Gloden and Marten Düring specialized in the study of the social network analysis. He was in charge of managing the excel database.

Individual records as a family chronicle

Foreign Police records are stored in the National Archives in the Ministry of Justice collection. Each record contains a memorandum indicating the significant dates in chronological order and the declaration of arrival, which was compulsory for all foreigners over 15 years old. The

records also contain many other confidential documents such as applications to renew ID cards: these forms appeared in 1936, when the first ID cards had to be renewed.

Parquet Général

Division
de la Police des Étrangers

N. 240772

Memorandum

Nom de l'expéditeur	305751 Date de la pièce	OBJET
Oppenheimer Louis	18. 10. 35	dem. cartes d'identité ✓
Heinheimer Frieda P. G.	23. 10. 35	à pol. Echternach pr, rens. ✓
P. G.	23. 10. 35	inf. Dir. Contributions
		<p>Transmis à Monsieur le Directeur Général de la Justice avec avis favorable. Luxembourg, le 9. 11. 35. Le Procureur Général d'Etat,</p>
<i>Oppenheimer Louis</i>	<i>15. 11. 35</i>	<i>Dem. renouvellement cartes d'identité ✓</i>
<i>Heinheimer Frieda</i>	<i>"</i>	<i>"</i>
<i>L. Comaross</i>	<i>29. 11. 37</i>	<p>Fr.m. Transmis à Monsieur le Ministre de la Justice avec avis favorable. Luxembourg, le 29. 12. 37. Le Procureur Général d'Etat,</p>
<i>cas. jud.</i>	<i>17. 12. 31</i>	<i>extraits pièces 6711-6716/38 aux 2 inspecteurs (pi) de l'Etat et par pour l'Etat.</i>
<i>st.</i>	<i>17. 5. 39</i>	<i>extraits pièces 1732-1734/39 aux 2 faux Oppenheimer sans occupation.</i>
<i>Oppenheimer Louis</i>	<i>13. 2. 1941</i>	dem. renouvellement cartes d'identité ✓
<i>Heinheimer Frieda</i>	<i>"</i>	<i>"</i>
		<p>Fr.m. Transmis à Monsieur le Directeur Général de la Justice avec avis favorable. Luxembourg, le 15. 2. 1941 Le Procureur Général d'Etat,</p>
<i>P. J. 19. 7. 45 Justice 20. 7. 45</i>		<p><i>donné renseignements - et après avis de l'inspecteur accorde par l'Etat et de réfournir à l'Etat Oppenheimer 1000 Francs - bon sur dépense auprès de la Banque de Luxembourg.</i></p>

Memorandum with the stamps of the Public Prosecutor's Office indicating that the individual's ID card has been renewed

Researchers can also find valuable information in the Foreign Police reports on those who wanted to extend their stay in Luxembourg and apply for a new ID card. These reports were the first stage in the bureaucratic process to obtain the coveted permission from Luxembourgish authorities. People who intended to apply for repatriation after the war then had to complete a long and detailed questionnaire about their relationship with Luxembourg, their physical and mental health and lastly but importantly their financial situation.

The third stage was at the Ministry of Justice, which had the task of examining all applications submitted by both individuals and state authorities. In the event of a positive decision, the applicant received an official letter signed by a Government Adviser, then a Luxembourgish ID card. Negative decisions issued by the Ministry of Justice indicated that the identity card had been rejected. These decisions involved consulting the Public Prosecutor's Office to determine the deadline granted to each immigrant for leaving Luxembourgish territory. From 1938 onward, the Ministry of Justice often dealt with urgent applications from Jews wanting to unite their families stranded in Germany or in Austria. Before the conflict, mainly young men

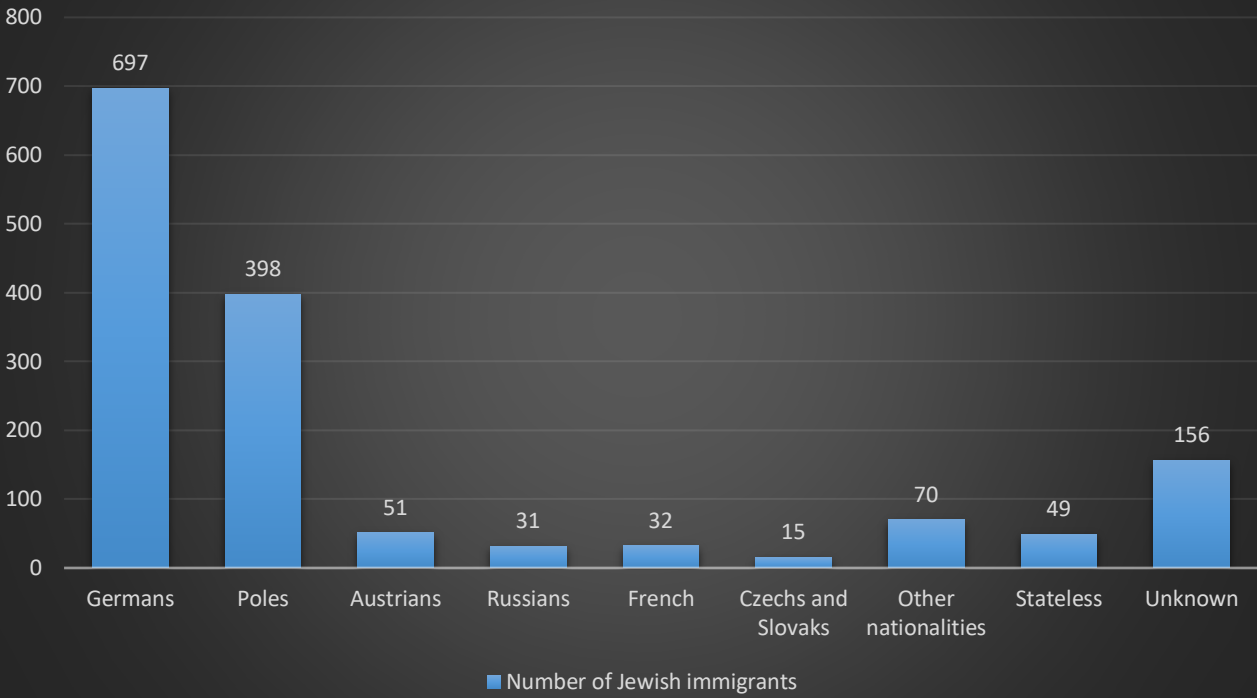
Population ratio (LUX)	1930	1935	Variations (%)
Foreign Jews	1,526	2,274	+ 49.0%
Luxembourgish Jews	716	870	+ 21.5%
Jews	2,242	3,144	+ 40.2%
Foreign population	55,831	38,369	- 31.3%
Luxembourgish population	244,162	258,544	+ 5.9%
Total population	299,993	296,913	- 1.0%

managed to escape from occupied Luxembourg. German male Jews fled to Belgium and France in most cases, so the deportations primarily affected the female Jewish population. German and Luxembourgish Jews were lucky in a way since they were deported to the Litzmannstadt and Theresienstadt ghettos, which slightly increased their chances of survival in comparison

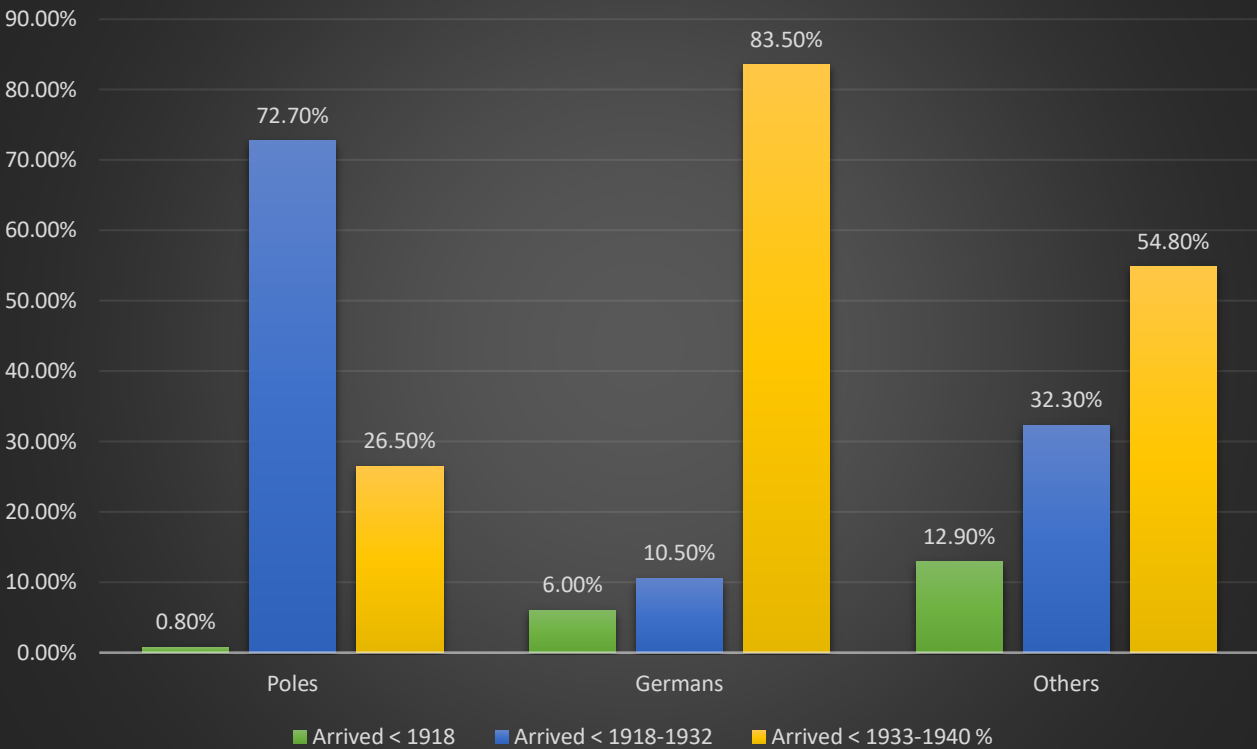
with those (mostly Polish Jews) who were deported to extermination camps in Poland. We can make two observations: first, deportation affected all Jews, regardless of when they arrived in Luxembourg. Second, the Jews who arrived in the 1920s and late 1930s became more often the target of deportations than other foreigners 46.7% (39.8%) who arrived within the same time.

As reported in the graphs below, the highest number of immigrants came to Luxembourg from Germany, especially after the Nazis came into power. Luxembourg also became the final destinations for Polish economic refugees who sought to find occupations and save space for their families in Western Europe. Jews arrived to Luxembourg from different reasons and various motivations but their aim was the same – to find a new homeland to restart their lives. However, in most cases they only found “tolerance to be tolerated” and life in uncertainty.

Immigration to Lux by Nationality before WWII



Period of Arriving in Luxembourg before WWII



Fremdenpolizei zur Erneuerung der Fremdenkarte Nr. 24670

BEMERKUNG: Für über 18 Jahre alte Kinder und für Dienstboten sind besondere Anträge aufzustellen.

Antragsteller { Namen und Vornamen Reinheimer Frieda,
 Ort und Datum der Geburt Zweibrücken/Saar, am 28.8.1881

Vater { Namen und Vornamen Wolfgang,
 Ort und Datum der Geburt Oberhausen, Datum unbekannt,

Mutter { Namen und Vornamen August Fanny,
 Ort und Datum der Geburt Dahn, Datum unbekannt,

Nationalität des Antragstellers Deutsche,

Stand oder Gewerbe ohne Stand,

Verheiratet, verwitwet, geschieden oder ledig verheiratet,

Ort und Datum der Eheschliessung Saarbrücken, am 11.9.1922,

Ehehälfte { Namen und Vornamen Oppenheimer Ludwig,
 Geburtsort- und Datum Neuhaus, am 3.4.1874,

Wohnort- und Strasse des Antragstellers Bohternach, Luxemburgerstrasse

Nummer und Datum der { zu erneuernden Fremdenkarte 24670, vom 17.1.1938
 Frontkämpferkarte

Nummer, Datum und Gültigkeitsdauer der { Arbeitsgenehmigung
 Handelsermächtigung

Datum der Ausstellung und Betrag der bezahlten Fremdentaxe 50 Fr. vom 12.2.1940

Werden die Steuern regelmässig bezahlt? (Die Quittungen sind vorzulegen) Die Steuern...
wurden regelmässig entrichtet,

Wie lange ununterbrochen im Lande wohnhaft? seit dem 18.10.1935 ununter-
brochen.

Existenzmittel: Einkommen aus Vermögen, das sich auf circa 545.000
Franken beläuft.

Kinder

Namen und Vornamen	Geburtsort	Geburtsdatum	Bemerkungen
1			
2			
3			



RICHTIG BESCHEINIGT

Bohternach den 13ten 2. 1940

Der Interessent Frieda Oppenheimer Der Bürgermeister Handenscheid
 Polizeikommissar
 Bez. Dienststellenvorsteher

Polizeibericht umsichtig niederschreiben.

Application form to renew a Luxembourg ID card

The application for the ID card (*Erneuerung der Fremdenkarte*) contains detailed information about individual applicants as well as personal data about their family members, e.g. parents, spouse and children. One section which is particularly useful for social network analysis is the information about the applicant's previous stays and movements. There are also details about the applicant's tax paying morality, occupation and salary, as well as data concerning children under the age of 15.

Foreign Police records provide a great deal of information about foreigners who used to live in Luxembourg, enabling us to examine a number of intriguing questions. These documents shed light on the socio-economic and social profiles of Jewish refugees over time and compare them with other groups of immigrants seeking asylum in Luxembourg. They also provide information about the attitude of the authorities towards a particular group of immigrants and the decision-making process with regard to individuals. By combining various angles, we can study the impact of this approach on the composition of the immigrant population. Last but not least, we were able to find out about the role of other associations defending Jewish refugees (such as the ESRA Jewish social welfare organisation).

Memos for exceptional cases

Based on archival sources, we made a number of detailed portraits to reflect the specific situations of newcomers. Detailed information was taken primarily from Foreign Police reports and the memorandums containing the schedule and timeframe of each administrative process. Here are a few examples illustrating the desperate situation of some newcomers.

"Samuel Schwarzmacher and Esther Rywka arrived in Luxembourg from Belgium in 1926. Upon arrival, neither of them presented a passport. Esther had a family record book and Schwarzmacher had his ID card. While Esther took care of the housework, her husband made a living in unstable occupations. He first worked as a steelworker before being dismissed in the early 1930s. Then he found a job as a furrier in Grünstein and the couple moved to Luxembourg City. After 1938 Schwarzmacher ended up in a situation of virtual unemployment. During the summer season, he sold sweets at city markets. Despite these efforts, the authorities stated that the couple was not eligible for state social support and assistance. Eventually they were granted funding from ESRA."

“Mr Bloch married Zelenka on 15 July 1938, hoping to bring her to his homeland (France). Since Zelenka’s application for immigration was rejected because only a religious marriage ceremony had been held, the couple came to Luxembourg, where they contracted a civil marriage. After that, they tried to emigrate either to France or to Czechoslovakia. According to Zelenka, the marriage would have allowed them to obtain Czech citizenship. Both were able to prove the endorsement by the Jewish association ESRA.”¹The fate of these couples indicates the desperate situation of long-term immigrants who had no guarantee of staying in the country until they had acquired Luxembourg nationality. Any travel incidents, economic issues or family problems could thwart their permission to stay in Luxembourg.

The standardised questionnaire included some very personal questions, especially section V (Nähere Angaben über Lohn oder sonstiges Einkommen) about the applicant’s financial situation. Applicants had to declare all direct or indirect income and family fortune occupied in

Standard questionnaire submitted to returnees after the war.

Fragebogen
zum Antrag NO auf Erneuerung der Fremdenkarte von
Reinhold Frieda

Der Antragsteller ist vor der Vernehmung darauf hinzuweisen, dass Nicht- oder falsche Beantwortung oder Verschweigen wichtiger Angaben, abgesehen von der Anwendung strafrechtlicher Bestimmungen, fremdenpolizeiliche Massnahmen zur Folge haben.

I. Sind die im Antrag enthaltenen Angaben überprüft? Entsprechen dieselben den vorgelegten Ausweispapieren oder sind sie sonstwie glaubhaft gemacht worden?
(Falls nicht bereits geschehen, sind Ausstellungsbehörde, Datum und Gültigkeitsdauer anzugeben. Fehlende Angaben sind zu begründen, bzw. zu ergänzen).

Die im Erneuerungsantrag enthaltenen Angaben wurden auf Grund der abgelaufenen Fremdenkarte getätigt. Dieselben entsprechen der Richtigkeit.

II. Gesundheitszustand:
Macht Interessent den Eindruck einer geistig und körperlich normalen Person?
Interessentin ist körperlich gesund. Sie ist gesund anzu ehern.
Angaben über eventuelle ansteckende oder vererbliche Krankheiten:
Von einer solcher ist und an die selbe noch nicht befallen.
Liegen keine sonstigen Körperchäden vor?

III. Militärdienst:
Ist körperlich teil wise gelähmt.
Jetzige Verpflichtungen:

IV. Unterstützungspflichten:
Bestehen solche, bzw. gegenüber wem? Kommt Interessent diesen nach? (In welcher Form?)
Die selbe auch für niemand zu so gen.

V. Nähere Angaben über Lohn oder sonstiges Einkommen:
Dieselbe verfügt über ein Kapitaleinkommen in Höhe von 40 000 Frank.
Verfügt Interessent im In- oder Ausland über Mobil- oder Immobilienwerte?
Verfügt über Aktien im Werte von 7-800 000 Franken.
Verfügt über sonstiges steuerbares Vermögen.
Verfügt Interessent über eine den jeweiligen Umständen angemessene Vermögenswertigkeit?
ja (1500 Fr. Miete)

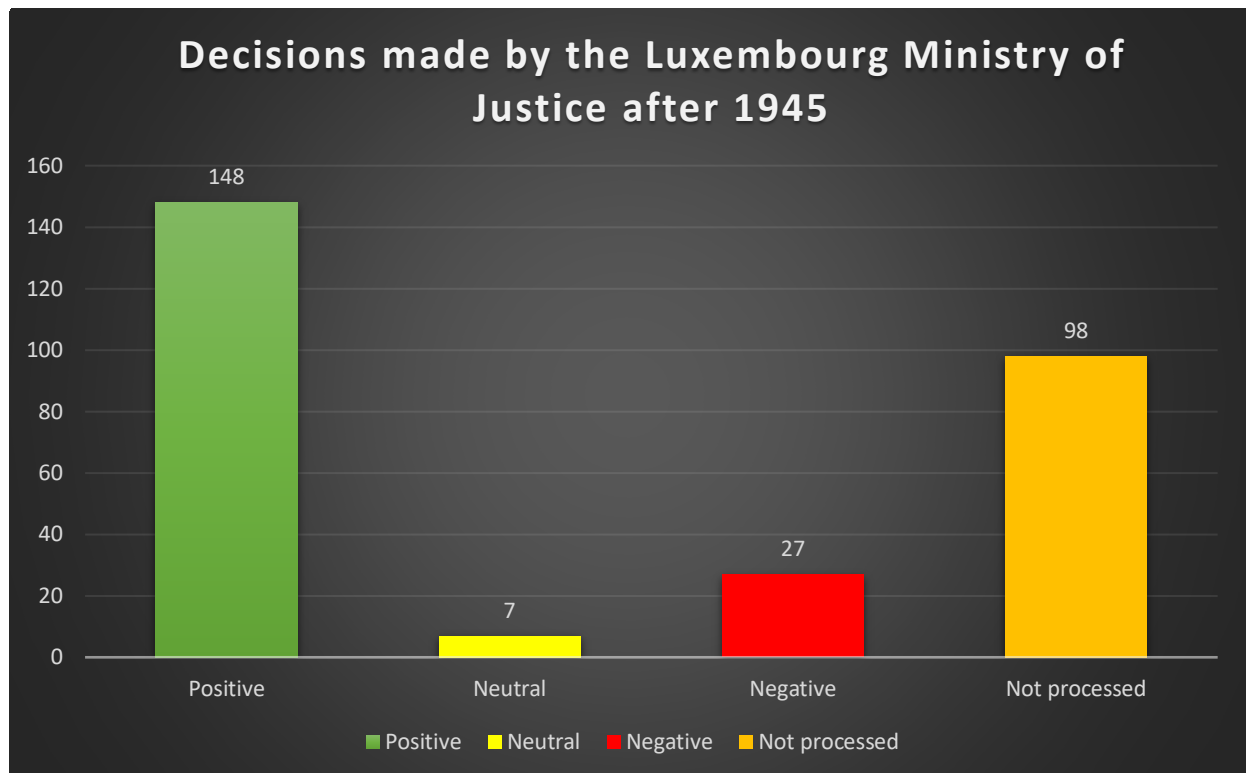
VII. Bisherige Führung im Lande:
Deren Führung ist gut.
Eignet sich Interessent für die von ihm ausgeübte Tätigkeit?
nein
Besteht auf Grund des Benehmens des Interessenten Anlass, anzunehmen, dass derselbe eine politische Tätigkeit entfaltet?
nein
Wurde derselbe erneut darauf hingewiesen, dass grundsätzlich jeder Ausländer sich einer politischen Tätigkeit, gleich welcher Art und welcher Richtung, unter Strafe der Ausweisung zu enthalten hat?
ja

VIII. Sonstige Bemerkungen und gutachtliche Äusserung zum Antrag:
Gegen die Erneuerung ihrer Fremdenkarte ist nichts einzuwenden.
Bohternach, den 1.12.1955.
Der Polizeikommissar,
Frieda

¹ ANLux, MJ-Pet 84893.

commercial papers. Moreover, people were asked to provide proof of their mental and physical ability to request permanent residency or repatriation.

Decisions by Luxembourgish authorities about postwar repatriation

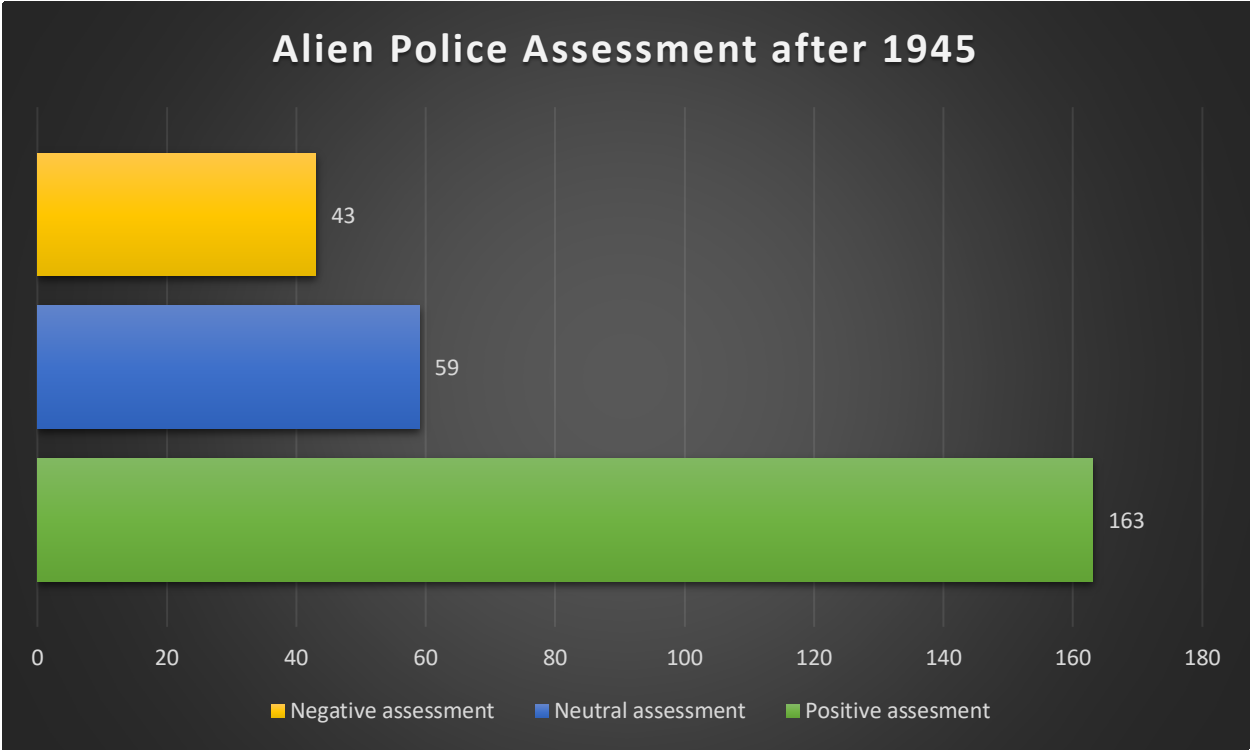


Once the Nazis had been expelled from Luxembourg by the Allied forces, more than 300 surviving Jews made an official request to return to their homeland, where they had left behind most of their belongings and friends.

Despite living in often impoverished and indigent conditions, all applicants had to undergo a lengthy bureaucratic process that often lasted a few years. During that time, many people decided to withdraw their applications once they found out that they would not be processed. Those who were patient enough had to complete forms similar to those requested in the 1930-40s and their application moved up to a special committee established by Ministry of Justice which considered submitted reasons of returnees. Despite the fact that most applications were approved, we stumbled upon a few that were unfairly rejected by the Ministry of Justice (see statistics below). We investigated the Government Advisers that signed these rejections but were unable to reveal any particular motives or patterns in

their decisions. Sometimes applications were rejected without any particular reasons. It seems that the double citizenship or stateless were big obstacles in the bureaucratic process to obtain the Luxembourgish citizenship after the war. However the Ministry of Justice appeared to be less stern than the Alien Police. It often occurred it issued the residence permit for applicants regardless of recommendations received from other state administration (Alien Police, Public Prosecutor's Office). The problem is the countless number of the officially submitted applications that either have never been processed or the results of which are no longer kept in the folders.

Foreign Police reports were as detailed as those requested before the war. They included information about living conditions, citizenship, physical and mental health, and finally yet importantly they informed civil servants about taxes and rent. We were also able to uncover the destinations where people settled after leaving Luxembourg, a further useful source of information for social network analysis.



It is also essential to point out that the entire research is proceeding at the moment and the

results are not final yet, but the aim is to show a methodology employed on more than 3900 people² who went through Luxembourg.

² Dans la publication de 2009, la banque de données est dénommée ‘CDRR : Popjuive 1939-1945’: COMMISSION SPECIALE POUR L’ETUDE DES SPOLIATIONS DES BIENS JUIFS AU Luxembourg PENDANT LES ANNEES DE GUERRE 1940-1945, *La spoliation des biens juifs au Luxembourg 1940-1945. Rapport final*, Luxembourg, 19 juin 2009. Le rapport n’a jamais été publié en version papier, URL : https://gouvernement.lu/dam-assets/fr/actualites/communiques/2009/07-juillet/06-biens-juifs/rapport_final.pdf, (consulté le 9.8.2018).