

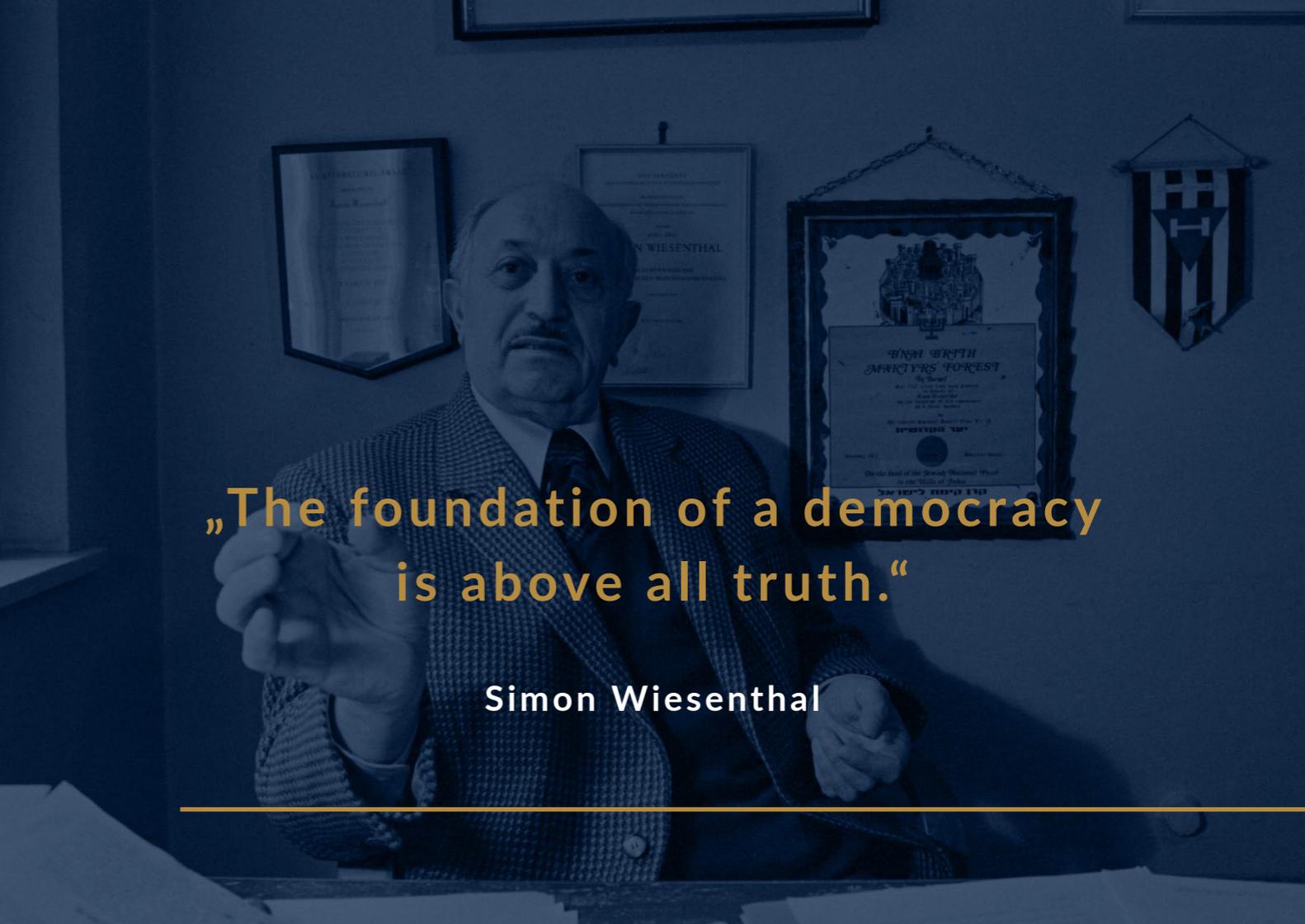
**Simon
Wiesenthal
Prize**





Simon Wiesenthal (1908–2005) has very uniquely shaped the reappraisal of the crimes of National Socialism worldwide. From the day of his liberation from the Mauthausen concentration camp, he made it his life's work to remember the victims of Nazi terror.

His weapon was the rule of law. Wiesenthal's method was to track down Nazi criminals and bring them to justice. Wiesenthal was an unwavering admonisher and fighter against antisemitism at a time when the crimes of National Socialism were often suppressed. This earned him significant international recognition. In post-war Austria, however, he experienced political resistance and rejection of his efforts to clarify the Nazi crimes of violence and to have those responsible prosecuted.



„The foundation of a democracy
is above all truth.“

Simon Wiesenthal

Simon-Wiesenthal-Prize

Part of Austria's special historical responsibility is the fight against antisemitism, which today has many faces and comes not only from the fringes but also is perceptible in the centre of society. Our attention to antisemitic tendencies must not be diminished and the commitment against them must not be ended. This is precisely where the Simon-Wiesenthal-Prize comes in: The prize is going to be awarded to people who have shown special civil society commitment to combating

antisemitism and/or raising awareness about the Holocaust. The National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism, established at the Austrian Parliament, invites persons and groups of persons from civil society to apply for the Simon-Wiesenthal-Prize. The work of the proposed prize winners must demonstrate a special civil society commitment against antisemitism and/or for education about the Holocaust.

Against the backdrop of the darkest chapter in history, Austria has a special historical responsibility.

Special criteria for the award include:

- active participation in a civil society project against antisemitism;
- active critical engagement with antisemitism;
- special commitment to education about the Holocaust and its consequences;
- commitment to measures that counteract antisemitism.

The aim of the work of the possible award winners is to communicate actively, strengthen and disseminate knowledge about the Holocaust, sharpen society's understanding of the mechanisms and consequences of antisemitism, and raise awareness about contemporary dangers of antisemitism. In particular, sensitivity and understanding should be created where a critical attitude towards antisemitism is to be particularly promoted.

Origin of the prize

The idea of establishing a prize for special civil society commitment against antisemitism and/or for education about the Holocaust arose during a trip to Israel in July 2018, during which National Council President Wolfgang Sobotka met the granddaughter of Simon Wiesenthal, Rachel Kreisberg.



Taking a clear position and standing up against antisemitism are more important today than ever before.

In subsequent discussions, the idea of this prize took on more and more concrete form. The proposal to name this prize after Simon Wiesenthal, whose life was dedicated to exposing the Holocaust, was followed in November 2018 by the support of the Wiesenthal family: "Particularly in today's times, in which racism and antisemitism are on the rise, in which the Holocaust is increasingly denied, Austria's decision to establish a Simon-Wiesenthal-Prize is of great importance," said Paulinka Kreisberg, daughter of Simon Wiesenthal.

The prize is entirely in the spirit of her father. He had always fought against antisemitism and for the memory of the victims of the Holocaust. Simon Wiesenthal would have considered it an honour that the prize should bear his name, said his daughter.

A bill to this effect was introduced by the ÖVP, SPÖ, Greens and NEOS on 17 June 2020 and passed in the National Council on 7 July 2020. The foundation stone for the Simon-Wiesenthal-Prize was thus laid.

Submission

Do you know someone who is campaigning against antisemitism and for education about the Holocaust and think this commitment should be recognised?

Individuals or groups can apply for the Simon Wiesenthal Award. However, individuals or groups of individuals can also be nominated for the Simon-Wiesenthal-Prize. What kind of civil society commitment can be honoured?

The possible award winners have - through projects, initiatives or other appropriate ways - rendered outstanding services against antisemitism and/or for education about the Holocaust because they, for example:

- actively communicate, strengthen and disseminate knowledge about the Holocaust;
- raise awareness in society about contemporary dangers of antisemitism
- sharpen the understanding of the functioning and consequences of antisemitism and thereby strengthen a democratic everyday culture;

Are you committed to combating antisemitism and raising awareness about the Holocaust?

- demonstrate civil courage in an exemplary manner and thereby underline the value and importance of the commitment of each and every individual;
- advocate measures counteracting antisemitism and relativisation of the Holocaust in all its forms;
- create understanding and sensitivity where a critical attitude towards antisemitism should be particularly promoted;
- contribute to the development of a shared awareness against antisemitism;

- contribute to an innovative, sustainable and enlightened culture of remembrance.

Special consideration will be given to projects, initiatives and achievements that create fresh impetus and place new accents, that set an example for others and appear capable of having a lasting impact on the present and the future.

The Simon-Wiesenthal-Prize is endowed annually with a total of € 30,000 and is awarded in two categories:

- civil society engagement against antisemitism (€ 7,500)
- civil society commitment to education about the Holocaust (€ 7,500)

In addition, a main prize of € 15,000 will be awarded for special civil society engagement against antisemitism and/or for Holocaust education.

The National Fund of the Republic of Austria is responsible for awarding the prize, with the Board of Trustees, chaired by the President of the National Council, deciding on the basis of a proposal from a six-member jury.

In addition to a chairperson, the jury shall consist of five other members; among them shall be a representative person appointed by the Wiesenthal family. The President of the Jewish Religious Society in Austria as well as recognised personalities from public or cultural life in Austria or abroad or persons with an academic reputation in the field of contemporary history or in another relevant academic field are appointed as other members.

Further details, all conditions of participation and the online application form are available on the Simon-Wiesenthal-Prize website at: www.wiesenthalprize.at.

Jury

Barbara Stelzl-Marx



University Professor of Contemporary European History at the Karl Franzens University in Graz, Director of the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Research on the Consequences of War, Graz - Vienna - Raabs, and Vice President of the Austrian Unesco Commission. After studying history, English and Slavic studies in Graz, Oxford, Wolgograd and Stanford University, she spent a year in Moscow on an Erwin Schrödinger Fellowship from the FWF. The Austrian Academy of Sciences awarded her a doctorate and an Apart scholarship. In 2020, she was named Scientist of the Year.

"The traces of war and violence are often invisible at first glance, but they are present subcutaneously, burned into biographies and landscapes. Simon Wiesenthal made it his life's work to uncover these traces – by coming to terms with the Holocaust and punishing Nazi crimes. In accordance with his motto 'Enlightenment is Defence', the prize named in honour of Simon Wiesenthal is intended to contribute to the commemoration of the victims of the Nazi regime as well as to the preservation of democracy and human rights."

Brigitte Bailer



Lecturer in Contemporary History at the University of Vienna. Doctorate in History at the University of Vienna in 1992. Since 1979 research assistant, 2004–2014 Scientific Director of the Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance, 1998–2003 Deputy Chair of the Historical Commission of the Republic of Austria for research on property seizures during the Nazi era and on restitution and compensation since 1945. Research focus: resistance and persecution 1938–1945, right-wing extremism after 1945, especially Nazi apologetics and Holocaust denial.

"Simon Wiesenthal dedicated his life's work to coming to terms with the crimes of the Nazi era and to justice for the victims, and in later years also to combating neo-Nazism and Holocaust denial. For many years, he was the object of hostility in Austria because of his commitment, and it was far too late that he received the recognition he deserved. May this award help to remember Simon Wiesenthal's commitment and struggle and not let it have been in vain."

Monika Schwarz-Friesel



Since 2010, full Professor at the Institute for Language and Communication at the TU Berlin. Research interests: current Jew hatred, antisemitism and language, verbal violence and digital communication. In 2014, she received a Doctor honoris causa from the University of Debrecen for her research. From 2004 to 2010, she led the project *Current Antisemitism in Germany* in cooperation with Brandeis University (Boston, USA) and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and from 2014 to 2020 the DFG-funded pilot project *Antisemitisms on the World Wide Web*.

"The Simon-Wiesenthal-Prize sends an important signal to society as a whole in the fight against antisemitism and for the culture of remembrance. It also honours the memory of an impressive person who worked tirelessly against forgetting the Shoah's break with civilisation."

Katharina von Schnurbein



Coordinator on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life of the EU Commission since December 2015, previously Advisor to Commission President José Manuel Barroso on Dialogue with Churches, Religions and Non-Faith Communities. Press spokesperson for the Czech EU Commissioner Vladimír Špidla (2004–2010); press spokesperson for the EU Delegation in Prague (2002–2004). Pursued Political Science and Slavonic Studies in Prague, Bonn (MES) and Oxford (M.St). EU Fellowships at the European University Institute in Florence 2017/18. Awarded the European Human Rights Award from B'nai B'rith 2018.

"Jews are directly affected by antisemitism, but ultimately it threatens all of us, our values and our community. Democracy needs to be defended. This requires civil courage. The Simon-Wiesenthal-Prize shines a spotlight on courageous civil society commitment and hopefully inspires many citizens in Austria and Europe to stand up against hatred and work for respectful coexistence."

Oskar Deutsch



President of the Jewish Community Vienna and the Jewish Religious Society Austria since 2012, previously Vice President from 1999. He studied at the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration and for a lengthy time was the Managing Director of Alvorada, which he steadily expanded until it was sold. Since his youth, Oskar Deutsch has been active in various community organisations on a voluntary basis. He is a founding member of the Maccabi Vienna Sports Club and was Vice President of Maccabi Europe. Since 1993, he has been head of the IKG's cultural affairs and head of various commissions in the areas of real estate, youth, etc.

"The Simon-Wiesenthal-Prize is an important signal and incentive for people and organisations that follow his example and work for civic engagement, education about the Shoah and against antisemitism - and thus contribute to the further development and strengthening of Austria and all of Europe according to humanistic principles."

Ariel Muzicant



Studied medicine in Vienna, where he obtained his doctorate in 1976. From 1977, he worked as a certified real estate agent and entrepreneur. To date, he is Vice-President of the European Jewish Congress (EJC) and a Board Member of the World Jewish Congress (WJC). In addition, he was President of the Jewish Community Vienna (IKG) from 1998 to 2012 and founder and President of the Zwi Perez Chajes School in Vienna from 1980 to 1994. Between 1978 and 2012, he was also responsible for rebuilding the infrastructure of the Jewish Community, including kindergartens and synagogues in Austria. Ariel Muzicant was appointed by Simon Wiesenthal's family as a representative.

"The 'second generation' knew the Shoah only from their parents' stories. Simon Wiesenthal was our mentor; he taught us young people how to deal with this difficult subject. His saying 'justice, not revenge' has left its mark on many people."

Austrian Parliament

Out of its historical responsibility, Austria has the mandate to keep alive the memory of the darkest chapter of Austrian history and to deal very specifically with antisemitic tendencies in our society.

In this context, the Austrian Parliament plays a special role in the effort to advance the reappraisal of history and to take up the fight against antisemitism, which is gaining strength all over Europe. In addition to celebrating annual days of remembrance, pupils and apprentices actively deal with the topic of antisemitism within the

framework of the Democracy Workshop initiated by the Parliament.

Since 2018, an empirical data collection on the topic of antisemitism in Austria has been conducted every two years on behalf of the Austrian Parliament. The results of this regularly conducted study on antisemitism, which are available to the public and to researchers, make it possible to develop targeted measures in the further fight against antisemitic stereotypes.

 www.parlament.gv.at

National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism

The National Fund was established in 1995 to express the special responsibility of the Republic of Austria towards the victims of National Socialism. It provides benefits to victims of National Socialism, in particular to persons who received no benefit or a completely inadequate benefit, who are in particular need of assistance, or for whom support appears justified due to their living situation.

Another essential task of the National Fund is the financial support of projects that serve the

scientific research of National Socialism and the fates of its victims, that commemorate National Socialist injustice or preserve the memory of the victims.

As of 2021, the National Fund for Victims of National Socialism established at the Parliament awards the Simon-Wiesenthal-Prize annually, honouring special civil society commitment against antisemitism and education about the Holocaust.

 www.nationalfonds.org



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