



Historical Exhibit

1938–1945

Dedicated to the national-socialistic forced laborers at the Linz location of "Reichswerke Hermann Göring AG Berlin"



voestalpine Stahlwelt GmbH

www.voestalpine.com/stahlwelt

voestalpine

EINEN SCHRITT VORAUSS.

“Forced labor means having to work under humiliating conditions



against one's will and far from home."



M. Spoerer, Forced Labor in the Third Reich and Compensation





Foreword

Being one step ahead is the mission and philosophy of voestalpine. The exhibit covers the time period from 1938 and 1945 and is dedicated to the forced laborers under the national-socialistic regime at the Linz location of “Reichswerke Hermann Göring AG Berlin”. It takes a look at the beginning years of the Linz location and comprehensively explores its history.

Thousands of foreign forced laborers were used in Linz to build and operate Reichswerke Hermann Göring AG Berlin. Men and women, young people, prisoners of war and concentration camp prisoners came from more than thirty different nations.

In 1998, the largest collection of personnel files and salary slips (more than 38,000 documents of laborers forced to work in the Hermann Göring Works) found in Austria after the war served as the basis for a research project carried out by independent researchers. The appraisal and comprehensive assessment of these documents led to a repositioning of our historical corporate understanding.

It is a priority of voestalpine to create an exhibit in remembrance of this period of time and to make it permanently available to the public. The people and their fates in the years from 1938 to 1945 are placed in the foreground. Such an exhibit is in response to the company's own responsibility toward its history. voestalpine is fully aware that we can truly face the future only when we have dealt adequately with the past.

Gerhard Kürner

Director of Corporate Communications




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The exhibit is based on the largest collection of national-socialistic personnel and salary documents found by an Austrian company.



"This exhibit is concerned with uncovering the concrete living and working conditions of the forced laborers, preserving the individual fates of individuals who should never become anonymous as well as promoting further understanding of contemporary history in general and this subject in particular."



Michaela Schober
Corporate History and Documentation
voestalpine AG



Exhibit background

It is the sincere desire of voestalpine that the historical exhibit covering the time period between 1938 and 1945 will adequately remember the forced laborers under the Nazi regime and Reichswerke Hermann Göring in Linz.

An iron and steel works was erected here beginning in 1938 and from the beginning of the war in 1939 was an important constituent of the national-socialist arms industry. It successively went into production beginning in 1941. Tens of thousands of forced laborers (men, women, youth and children) as well as prisoners of war and concentration camp prisoners were used in the erection and operation of Reichswerke Hermann Göring in Linz.

The exhibit is dedicated to these people. Our focus is on them and their frequently very precarious living and working environment. The forced laborers worked under inhuman conditions, and it was in these adverse circumstances that the foundation was laid for an internationally successful group of companies.

Being one step ahead is the mission and philosophy of voestalpine. However, this exhibit takes a look back at the company's history. It carefully and comprehensively explores the dark history of the beginning years. Such an exhibit is in response to the company's own responsibility toward its history.

voestalpine is fully aware that the company can truly face the future only when it has come to grips with the past.

1_Groundbreaking at the Linz location of Reichswerke Hermann Göring AG Berlin on 13 May 1938.

2_Logo of Reichswerke Hermann Göring AG Berlin on the wall of a company building.

3_The personnel files and salary slips of forced laborers are stored in the archives of the Documentation Center of voestalpine AG.



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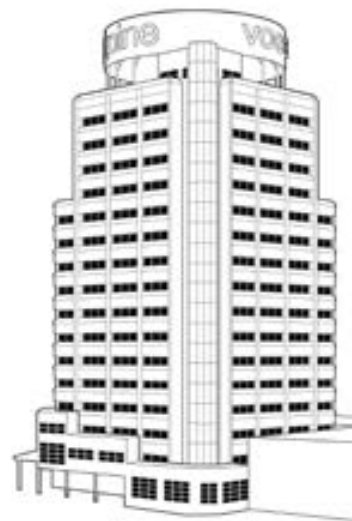
Overview of the exhibit

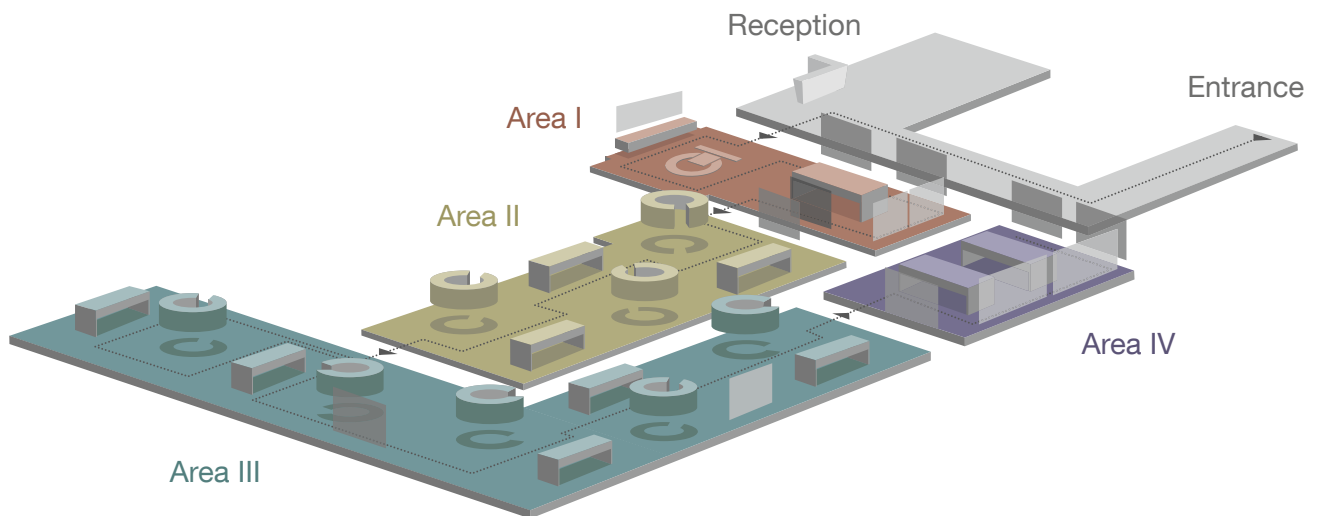
The exhibit was created to be permanently located in the voestalpine corporate offices in Linz. Four different areas provide insights into the inhuman system of forced labor under the Nazi regime at the Linz location.

The space formerly occupied by the visitors' center on the ground floor of corporate headquarters (Works Building 41) was adapted for the exhibit. A new entrance was also installed for the exhibit. The newly designed space is a clear message that we place the topic of forced labor at the heart of voestalpine. The exhibit is designed to be permanent, an inviting and encouraging place dedicated to remembrance of the past.

The people and their fates are at the heart of the exhibit and are remembered in four different areas that have been coordinated with each other to tell a consecutive story of the people's lives and their sorrows. The victims of the national-socialist regime's forced labor are given a voice by means of audio documentation that is accompanied by a comprehensive series of explanations, visual materials and multi-media stations. 38,000 personnel files and salary slips from the Linz operations of Reichswerke Hermann Göring in the years from 1938 to 1945 form the basis of the comprehensive exhibit, the largest collection of national-socialistic personnel and salary documents found by an Austrian company.

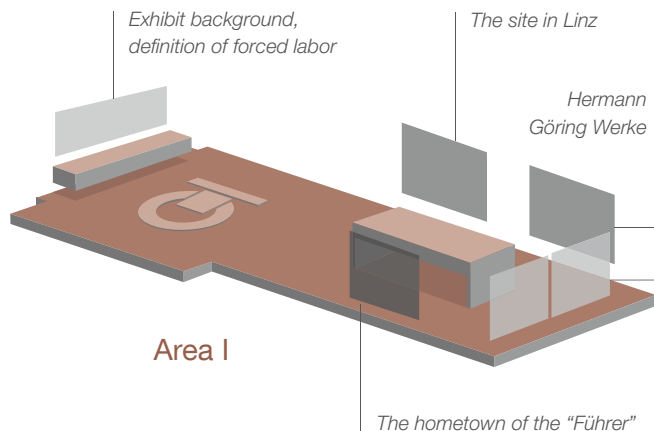
voestalpine is the first company in Austria to make public as part of a permanent exhibit materials documenting forced labor under the national-socialist regime. voestalpine Stahlwelt is responsible for management of the permanent exhibit.





Area I: National socialism and Linz

Here visitors are introduced to the topic and background of the permanent exhibit. The area focuses on the system of forced labor and the establishment of Hermann Göring Works in Linz, a subsidiary of Reichswerke Hermann Göring AG Berlin. The works was the largest industrial project of the Nazi regime in Austria and an important location for the arms industry in the German Reich. Its establishment and operation were only possible as a result of the forced labor performed by tens of thousands of workers.



1_Budget of Gau capital Linz with the projected construction activities for 1938

2_View of future Blast Furnace 1, former school of St. Peter in foreground

3_Linzer Volksblatt (newspaper) dated 13 May 1938

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Zinzer Volksblatt

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Das Wert in begeben

Indirizzo: Spazio di lavoro pubblico in 45-260000000 - 000000000

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1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the problem.

74249 Steel - a 2L flow

1. The first step is to identify the problem. This involves understanding the current situation and the goals that need to be achieved.

1. The first step is to identify the problem. In this case, the problem is that the system is not working properly.

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1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem. This involves gathering information about the situation and the people involved. It is important to understand the context and the stakes of the problem.

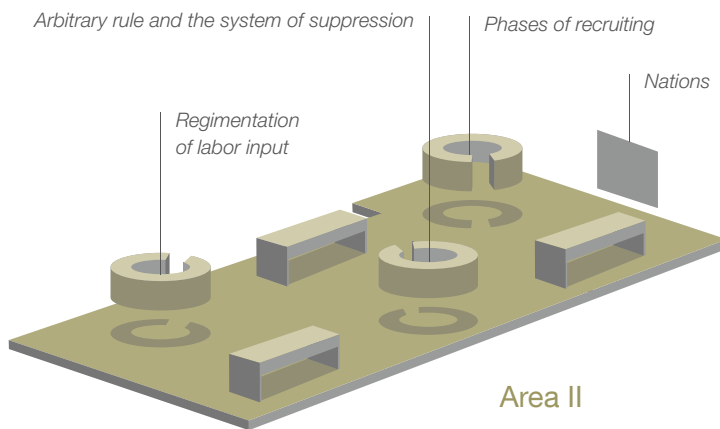
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1. The first step is to identify the problem. In this case, the problem is that the company is not meeting its sales targets. The second step is to analyze the data. The third step is to develop a plan. The fourth step is to implement the plan. The fifth step is to evaluate the results.

3

Area II: Forced labor and its many faces

The inhuman system of forced labor under the Nazi regime is depicted here in an example taken from Reichswerke Hermann Göring Linz Area II provides an overview of foreign labor recruits. As the war began and continued, the labor assumed more and more the character of force. Different facets and instruments of despotism as well as suppression and regimentation of the work force are also emphasized.



1_Propaganda document of General Labor Manager Fritz Sauckel, 1942

2_Arrival of 300 Italian workers at the Linz main train station, 2 September 1940

3_Notice of Obligation issued to Forced Laborer Franz Trnka, 25 October 1942

1 **EUROPA** *arbeitet* *in Deutschland*



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Verpflichtungsbescheid

Von der Wehrmacht

Verpflichtungsnummer: 123456789

Verpflichtungsdatum: 1.1.1942

Verpflichtungsart: Wehrdienst

Verpflichtungszeitraum: 1.1.1942 bis 31.12.1945

Verpflichtungsstelle: Wehrkreis I

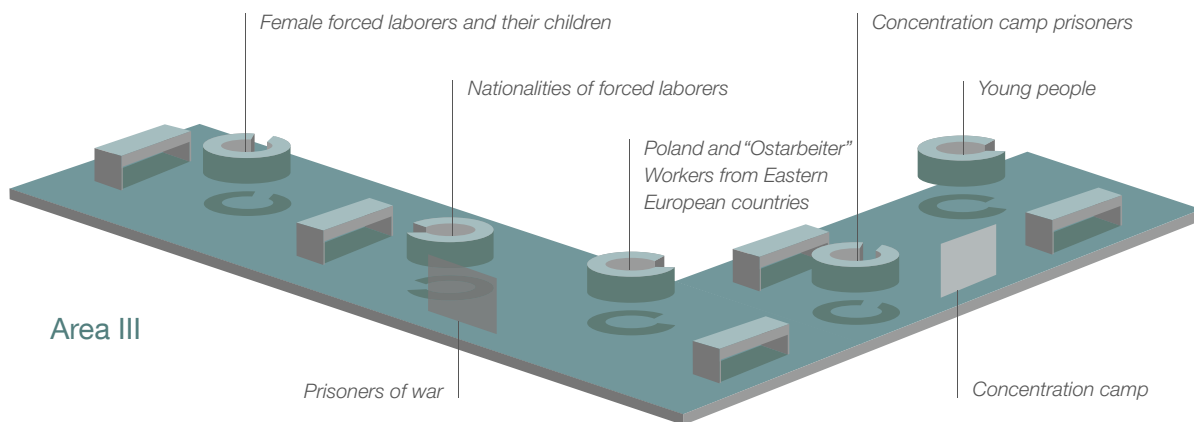
Verpflichtungsbeamter: Wehrkreis I

Verpflichtungsbeamter: Wehrkreis I

SAUCKEL MOBILISIERT
DIE LEISTUNGSRESERVEN

Area III: Human fate

The human fate of individual forced laborer groups is shown here to an appropriate extent. Audio documents give these people a voice. Their memories come to life again. The area clearly shows how different the living and working conditions of the various groups were in the hierarchy of forced labor.



1_Polish forced laborer in the custody of the Nazi authorities

2_Brick is laid on the substructure of Battery 1 of the coking plant, 1939

3_Concentration camp prisoners during clean-up operations following an air raid

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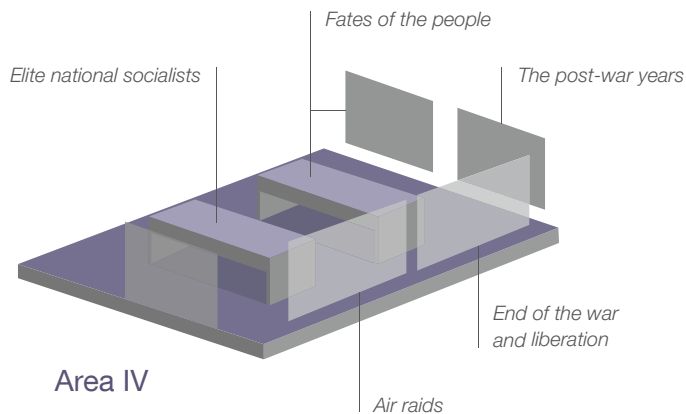


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Area IV: Destruction and reconstruction

Area IV chronologically completes the series. It sheds light on the victims, and tells the story of what became of the perpetrators after 1945. It tells the story of how the Hermann Göring Works became VÖEST, a flagship enterprise of the Austrian post-war industrial landscape. This area also deals with the issue of compensation for victims and how forced laborers dealt with recovery.



1_B-24 bomber of the US Air Force fly over Linz works in toward the south

2_Bomb hits in the Linz works in 1944

3_Flier distributed from the air by the allies in 1944 over Linz

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Educational opportunities

The permanent exhibit is a place in the corporate headquarters of voestalpine to remember, commemorate and learn. The educational resources are directed primarily at schools.

It is our sincere desire that younger generations are provided with meaningful insights into the system of Nazi forced labor in the Hermann Göring Works of Linz. For this reason, the accompanying educational resources have been directed primarily at school classes and can be used as part of a school course in history, social studies and political science.

The exhibit is a place to remember, to adopt important values and to learn how to avoid prejudices. It is intended to provide youth with an opportunity for political discourse and critical thinking. In the course of project tours, students can actively discuss and analyze the content of the exhibit.

A visit to the exhibit is recommended for those who are at least 14 years old. For organization reasons, we recommend a group size of approximately 25 persons. Larger groups must be split.

Main topics

Work documents have been specially tailored to the specific objectives and needs of each school type and scholastic level. The following main subjects have been elaborated:

- Forced labor recruits (transportation, arrival in Linz)
- Political and economic efficiency background (Nazi racist ideology, arms buildup, preparation for war)
- Every-day life of forced laborers (work in production plants, daily schedule, room and board, hygiene conditions, medical care, free time)
- Nationalities of forced laborers (hierarchical structure, interpersonal relationships, relationships with local people and guard units)
- Despotism and signs of conscious repression by surveillance personnel (SS, Gestapo, works security)
- Women (sexuality, pregnancy)
- Children and youth
- Bomb raids and freedom (consequences for forced laborers)
- Compensation for forced labor

This topics are dealt with in original written sources, audio stations and film excerpts for visitors to learn from.



Educational opportunities

Project tours

Tours specifically tailored to the objectives of school projects are offered to school classes and other youth groups. Each project tour begins with an film and a short introduction, after which participants are allowed to walk through the exhibit and consider the key points (total of approximately 40 minutes).

The students are then divided into up to six work groups, where they discuss and present important topics and their own experiences in the exhibit entrance area.

We recommend that the work groups are selected prior to coming to the exhibit.

For organizational reasons, school classes with more than 30 participants will be provided with a station tour that contains elements of the project tour.

Preparatory material

Teachers will find educational resources to download at www.voestalpine.com/zeitgeschichte. The complex topic of forced labor will become more understandable through adequate pedagogical preparation, which is why we recommend going through the material in class prior to visiting the exhibit.

Exhibit web site

Visit www.voestalpine.com/zeitgeschichte for a good overview of the exhibit and for summarized content, images and archive materials. There you will find all the organizational information you need for your school or visitor group and can register your group as well.



Your contact persons

Do you have a question or other concern?
Please contact us. We are here for you.

Group bookings:

Visitor service of voestalpine Stahlwelt

Karin Leibetseder and Christina Pisoni

T. 050304/15-8900

Online registration at www.voestalpine.com/zeitgeschichte

Historical inquiries:

Corporate History and Documentation, voestalpine AG

Michaela Schober

historie@voestalpine.com

Opening Hours

Monday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for registered groups

Friday from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

for individuals

Literature:

- Oliver Rathkolb (Publisher): **NS-Zwangsarbeit: Der Standort Linz der Reichswerke Hermann Göring AG Berlin, 1938–1945**, 2 volumes, Böhlau Verlag, Wien, 2001
- Fiereder, Helmut: **Reichswerke „Hermann Göring“ in Österreich (1938–1945)**, Geyer Verlag, Wien-Salzburg 1983
- Hauch, Gabriella: **Frauen.Leben.Linz: Eine Frauen- und Geschlechtergeschichte im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert: Historisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Linz 2013**, Linz 2013
- Spoerer, Mark: **Zwangsarbeit unter dem Hakenkreuz: Ausländische Zivilarbeiter, Kriegsgefangene und Häftlinge im Deutschen Reich und im besetzten Europa 1938–1945**, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt (DVA), Stuttgart-München 2001
- Hauch, Gabriella (Publisher): **Industrie und Zwangsarbeit im Nationalsozialismus**, Studien Verlag, Innsbruck-Wien-München-Bozen, 2003
- Bacher, Dieter; Karner, Stefan (Publisher): **Zwangsarbeiter in Österreich 1939–1945 und ihre Nachkriegsschicksale**, Studien Verlag, Innsbruck-Wien-Bozen 2013

Documents and pictures

- Documentation Center of voestalpine AG
- Upper-Austrian Provincial Archive
- Archives of the City of Linz
- Archives of the Mauthausen Concentration Camp (AMM)
- Lentia Publishing House
- History Club

Title Picture:

Incoming forced laborers on their way to Barracks 44 of Hermann Göring Works in Niedernhart. Bindermichl-Stadlerstraße residential block in the background.

Bildnachweis:

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About Us

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"Of five million laborers who came to Germany, 200,000



of them came voluntarily."

Fritz Sauckel, General Representative for Labor Assignment, 1944



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