

Departure Date	Origin	Deportees	Arrival Date	Destination
1 <sup>st</sup> March 1943	Berlin	1722	2 <sup>nd</sup> March 1943	Auschwitz

One week later, the "Factory Action" was set in motion, on the basis of RSHA guidelines of the 20<sup>th</sup> February 1943, which, for the first time, did not contain regulations for exempting forced laborers from deportation. W. Scheffler has commented on special features of the "Factory Action" in the State Capital Berlin as follows. "Meanwhile, Jewish forced laborers employed in the armaments industry had been deferred from deportation, but this "privilege" was ended on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 1943. On that day all Jews were arrested in the factories and sent on their way to death in Auschwitz. The simultaneous extensive arrests of the Jewish mixed-marriage partners, whose deportation to the East had been deferred along with all Jews working in the war industries, aroused considerable disquiet among the population in Berlin. The "Arian" spouses gathered outside the assembly camp on Rosenstrasse and demonstrated for the immediate release of their spouses."

Looking back on the events of the "Factory Action" of 27<sup>th</sup> February 1943 Hildegard Henschel later reported: "Between 9 and 10 o'clock, the telephones were ringing, with reports from Oranienburgerstrasse that the total Jewish labor force had been arrested at their workplaces and that the people had been brought in SS-vehicles to four new assembly points (the Clou Concert Hall, two barracks and no. 2, Rosenstrasse").

The aim of the "Factory Action" was to exclude the Jews from industry throughout the State. Accordingly, the Jews were registered in several assembly points and deported to Auschwitz. However, "fully Jewish" partners of a mixed marriage as well as part-Jews – and, in Berlin, many employees of the Jewish Community and of the State Union of Jews in Germany - were released again.

There is great difficulty in describing the transports of the "Factory Action", for the following reason. According to the document from Capital, only one transport was dispatched from Berlin for Auschwitz on each of the three days 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of March 1943. By contrast, in Birkenau, data from the "Kalendarium der Ereignisse" by Danuta Czech

indicate that on each of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of March, 2 special trains arrived each day from Berlin with the marking "RSHA Transports out of Berlin". We must assume that on each day a transport from Berlin arrived and a further transport from some further transport ordered by the RSHA. In order to address these questions clearly, the eight transports being examined have been given their own numbering with Roman numerals.

The identifier "I" has been given to the first large transport out of the Reich after the "Factory Action". On the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1943 the arrival of two transports in Auschwitz was even recorded – according to the "Kalendarium" of Danuta Czech. The "31<sup>st</sup> Transport to the East" out of Berlin on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1943 marks the beginning of the last great wave of Jewish transports out of the German Reich. This transport included also 10 persons from Eberswalde, 10 of Strausberg near Berlin, and 2 from Prenzlau. In addition numerous inhabitants of the former Jewish training farms and Hachschara camps were deported, among them 13 persons the Skaby Estate near Fredersdorf and 7 from the forest lodge Schneeberg near Beeskow as well as 20 from Neuvorwek near Werneuchen. When counted in Auschwitz there were roughly 1500 people on the first transport. As a result of the "selection" 142 men and 385 women were detained in the camp as prisoners. The remainders were killed in the gas chambers. Also on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March, 11 persons departed from Frankfurt on the Main, who were sent to Auschwitz with this or the next transport.

A. Gottwaldt and D. Schulle, *Die "Judendeportationen" aus dem Deutschen Reich 1941-1945*