

Departure Date	Origin	Deportees	Arrival Date	Destination
28 th September 1944	Theresienstadt	2499	29 th September 1944	Auschwitz

In September 1944 the relative, seemingly external period of calm of "the Jewish Settlement Area" ended for the Theresienstadt Ghetto, as noted by Hans G. Adler, and the final period of "decline and dissolution" for the Camp in Bohemia set in. The beginning of this phase was marked by the last, abnormally large "Autumn Transports 1944" from Theresienstadt to the Auschwitz extermination camp – "to supply labor". The outcome of the war, by now apparent and predictable, provided the impetus for a last great effort to exterminate the Jews.

The deportation and extensive murder of Hungarian Jewry in Auschwitz during the early summer of 1944 as well as the deportation of the remaining Jews from Ghetto Litzmannstadt during that summer were followed directly by a dramatic squeeze on the inmates of Ghetto Theresienstadt by means of these "liquidation transports". In 11 mass-transports, a total of 18,402 prisoners, irrespective of age, gender or place of origin, were hauled by railroad to their next destination, the murderous site Auschwitz, where only 1,574 survived the war. After this, only 11,077 camp inmates remained in the Bohemian transit camp of Theresienstadt.

The trains left the Theresienstadt Camp between the 28th September and 28th October 1944 – a period lasting only about four weeks - and arrived in Auschwitz between the 29th September and 30th October 1944. Only a few survived the "selections" on the ramp in Birkenau. Before the gas chambers at Birkenau were dismantled after early November 1944, many weak and aged deportees from these "Autumn Transports" from Theresienstadt were still murdered there. Only younger people of sound health and numerous children were shortly thereafter hauled off in other freight cars, now westwards again, as "labor recruits" in concentration camps.

We may assume that for these last transports between Theresienstadt and Auschwitz only one or two train composites were used as a "shuttle service", each consisting of 25 to 30 freight cars. It is certain that freight cars were used for the first transports "Ek" and "El", which carried men fit for labor. Hans G. Adler, who was himself deported from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz at that time, recalls, however, that "some transports went [...] in passenger cars, which was supposed to give the impression of decent treatment." The designation of the first train, carrying almost 2500 people from Theresienstadt, was "Ek". After its arrival and at the instigation of Dr. Josef Mengele, the doctor working in Auschwitz, only 3 pairs of twins were first registered as detainees of Auschwitz. "Of the remaining deportees, about one quarter were detained in Birkenau, and the others killed in the gas-chambers." It was the function of the Birkenau "transit camp", which existed since the "Hungary Action", to detain certain prisoners without the formalities of camp registration, in order soon to send them, possibly to another camp. However after a few days, many detainees in the transit camp were still being registered as inmates of Auschwitz while others were deported further. Out of this transport 472 survivors are known. Adler gave the names of 382 survivors.

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