



The Law of 1998 on Art Restitution and further legal authorities

After 1945 the Republic of Austria took various steps to return confiscated works of art, but complete restitution has not yet taken place. Since 1998 a number of legislative initiatives have therefore been taken to establish a larger framework for the return of seized works.

The Republic of Austria played a pioneering role in this respect through the adoption of the Art Restitution Law in 1998, which defines the conditions and procedure for the return of art objects from museums and collections of the Republic of Austria. The City of Vienna followed this example and adopted a similar city council resolution in 1999 for Viennese museums and collections. Eleven years later, the scope of application of the Art Restitution Law was extended by an amendment (Federal Law Gazette I no. 117/2009 of 23 November 2009) and adjusted to conform with the years of experience gained in the field of provenance research.

Since the Municipal Council resolution of 1999, the City of Vienna has also undertaken to carry out provenance research and restitution of art or cultural objects from the museums and collections of the City of Vienna.

Moreover, the other provincial states have passed laws or provincial government resolutions on the restitution of art objects.

Art restitution by the Republic of Austria

National Fund Law

Federal Law of 30 June 1995 on the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism, Federal Law Gazette No. 432/1995 as amended by Federal Law Gazette I No. 19/2003

Art Restitution Law

Federal Law on the Restitution of Art Objects and Other Movable Cultural Objects from Austrian Federal Museums and Collections and Other Federal Property (Art Restitution Law - KRG)
Federal Law Gazette I No. 181/1998 as amended by Federal Law Gazette I 117/2009

Art restitution by Austrian provinces and municipalities

Burgenland

Provincial Government Resolution of 12 November 2002

Carinthia

Law of 16 June 2003 on Restitution Measures for Victims of National Socialism
Provincial Gazette No. 49/2003 (Carinthian Restitution Law)

Lower Austria

Provincial Government Resolution of 28 August 2002

Salzburg

Provincial Government Resolution of 9 December 2002

Stoekerau

Council Resolution of 16 September 2004

Styria

Provincial Constitutional Law of 14 March 2000 on the Restitution or Utilisation of Art and Cultural Objects seized from their Owners during the Period of National Socialist Tyranny
Provincial Gazette No. 46/2000

Tyrol

Provincial Government Resolution of 3 July 2007 on the Restitution of Property and Cultural Assets to Victims of National Socialism

Upper Austria

Provincial Law of 10 April 2002 on Restitution Measures for Victims of National Socialism
Provincial Gazette No. 29/2002 (Upper Austrian Restitution Law)

Vorarlberg

Provincial Government Resolution of 16 December 2003

Vienna

Vienna City Council Resolution of 29 April 1999