

The Categories of Prisoners

Around the 100,000 people from all over Europe were imprisoned in the Neuengamme concentration camp and its satellite camps. The majority were men, but there were also women and, towards the end of the war, children and teenagers as well.

Read the statements by former prisoners. What do you think could have been other reasons for being arrested and imprisoned in the concentration camp?

"The Gestapo [Secret State Police] constantly in our house. My father imprisoned for months because of us. Eight sons; six of them actively involved in the antifascist resistance, three of them managed to flee Germany and the other three imprisoned in jails and concentration camps for ten or more years. The remaining two captured as prisoners of war."

Fritz Bringmann: Memories of an Antifascist 1924–2004, Hamburg 2004, p. 129.



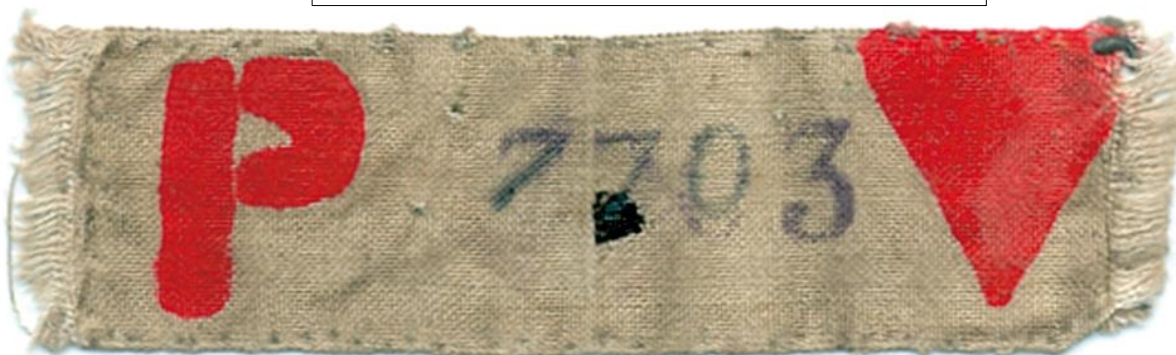
Photos: KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme



"I worked at a farm in Wernigerode.[...] The fact that I had listened to the radio wasn't the worst; it was because I passed on the news to a group of Polish fellow workers. Then the Gestapo [Secret State Police] came and asked for my cupboard. They didn't find anything bad, in my opinion. But they came across a copy of Hitler's Mein Kampf which contained certain notes I had made. That didn't please them. They took me with them."

Andrzej Chorzewski, interview, undated (Neuengamme Concentration Camp Memorial, Archives)

What do you think was the background of the vast majority of the prisoners at the Neuengamme concentration camp? Look for the answer on the website.



Look at the photo on the left. Are you familiar with these markings? What do you think they stood for?

Write down the questions about the prisoners which you would like to look into during your visit to the Memorial.