

The Kindertransport

The Kindertransport was a humanitarian rescue mission that took place between 1938 and 1940, prior to the outbreak of World War II. As anti-Semitic laws and violence escalated after Kristallnacht, also known as the Night of Broken Glass, the British government agreed to permit the temporary admission of unaccompanied Jewish children from Nazi Germany and its annexed territories. Over 10,000 children, primarily Jewish, were transported to the United Kingdom from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. These children were placed in British foster homes, hostels, and farms. While the program undoubtedly saved many lives, it also marked painful separations as most of these children never saw their parents again, many of whom perished in the Holocaust.

This rescue effort was characterised by remarkable acts of kindness and bravery from various organisations and individuals who coordinated the transports. The children travelled by train and boat, often carrying nothing more than a small suitcase and a label around their necks with their names. Despite the safe refuge they found, the trauma of separation and adaptation to a new life in a foreign land were profound challenges that many of the Kindertransport children faced throughout their lives.

1. What was the Kindertransport?

The Kindertransport was a rescue mission that transported over 10,000 primarily Jewish children to safety in the United Kingdom from Nazi-occupied territories.

2. When did the Kindertransport take place?

The Kindertransport occurred between 1938 and 1940, just before the start of World War II.

3. From which countries were the children transported?

The children were transported from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland.

4. How were the children accommodated upon their arrival in the UK?

Upon arrival, the children were placed in British foster homes, hostels, and farms.

5. What were some of the major challenges faced by the Kindertransport children?

Major challenges included the traumatic separation from their families, many of whom they never saw again, and adapting to a new life in a foreign country.

Uses comprehension strategies to expand content knowledge.

