

<b>Country Name</b>	<b>BELARUS</b>
<b>Existing Projects</b>	
<b>Known Objects</b>	Yes
<i>Information taken from looted cultural property databases</i>	
<i>Information taken from publications</i>	<p>1) <u>Source</u>: <i>Jewish Documentary Sources in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus: A Preliminary List</i> (in English), edited by Dorit Sallis and Marek Web (JTS), 164 pp. 1996.</p> <p>2) <u>Source</u>: <i>Jewish Documentary Sources in Belarus Archives: A Guide</i> (in Russian), edited by Mark Kupovetsky, Eduard Savitsky, and Marek Web (RSUH, Committee on Archives and Records Management of Belarus, JTS, YIVO), 543 pp., 2003.</p> <p>3) <u>Source</u>: Grimsted, Patricia Kennedy. "The Road to Minsk for Western "Trophy" Books: Twice Plundered But Not Yet 'Home from the War'". <i>Libraries &amp; Culture</i> 39.4 (2004), pp 351-404.</p> <p>4) <u>Source</u>: Grimsted, Patricia Kennedy. <i>Documenting the Plunder of Judaica: Perspectives from Remaining Archives of the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR)</i>. Paper presented at the Holocaust Era Assets Conference (<a href="http://www.holocausteraassets.eu/">http://www.holocausteraassets.eu/</a>), Prague, 26-30 June 2009.</p> <p>In the autumn of 1945, an estimated 1,200,000 books were shipped to Minsk. As Grimsted notes "Half a million of those books had first been confiscated from 'enemies' of the Nazi regime in France, the Benelux countries, and former Yugoslavia, along with another half million plundered from libraries in Belarus and other Soviet republics. Found by Red Army trophy brigades in the spring of 1945 in warehouses in a Kattowitz (now Polish Katowice) suburb, 54 freight cars were shipped to Minsk. However, the full documentation about their retrieval and that shipment in the fall of 1945 is still classified in the Russian Ministry of Defense Central Archive (TsAMO) in Podolsk." (Grimsted, Documenting the Plunder.)</p> <p>Research on these books is still missing, with evidence of only one shipment which dates back to November 1945.</p> <p>According to librarians working at the National Library of Belarus (NBB), many of the trophy books, but in particular Hebrew and Yiddish books that reached the Library after the war, have not been identified or otherwise been catalogued. Grimsted notes that "Many</p>

	<p>more books still await identification in a NBB Reserve depository across the city from the main library, among them a still unknown quantity of Judaica from many sources that survived the Holocaust, reportedly including some from Jewish communities in Yugoslavia. Some of the still-uncatalogued Judaica reserves were deposited for several decades in an abandoned church in a village outside of Minsk, but when the building was restored to the Church after Belarus independence, the books were moved into a reserve section of the main library; many have still not been identified as to provenance.” (Grimsted, p. 362)</p> <p>Some other books, according to Grimsted, might have been transferred to the Institute of Oriental Studies in Moscow or Leningrad, while others were transferred to incineration facilities outside of Minsk. Additional rumors indicate that some of these books might have ended up in Israel, after a Jewish librarian managed to remove a number of the books in the 1970s and 1980s before he emigrated to Israel.</p> <p>Specific library collections held by NBB include the Library of Jewish Societies of France (<i>Bibliothèque “Efim Pernikof”</i>) and books that belonged to prominent French Jewish families, such as those of the Rothschild family (which are located in the NBB rare book department catalogue). Moreover, some books stemming from Yugoslav Jewish communities have also ended up in Belarus, as well as “a few books from the Jewish Sephardic Community in Salonica, a prime ERR target in Greece.” (Grimsted, p.369)</p> <p>It is important to note that it is not clear how many books are still to be found in the libraries of Belarus, or how many were brought to other archives and libraries in the years following the end of World War II.</p> <p>4) <u>Source:</u> Ketelaar, Eric. “The Return of Dutch Archives from Moscow.” <i>Returned from Russia: Nazi Archival Plunder in Western Europe and Recent Restitution Issues</i>. Grimsted, Patricia Kennedy, F.J. Hoogewoud, and Eric Ketelaar (eds.) United Kingdom: Institute of Art and Law, 2007, pp 250-255.</p> <p>Several fonds of Dutch provenance are held in archives in Minsk.</p>
<p><i>Information taken from other sources</i></p>	<p>1) <u>Source:</u> Yuri Dorn, Coordinator of Jewish Heritage (Research Group in Belarus)</p> <p>There are several Jewish religious artifacts in various archives and museums in Belarus. Among others, objects can be found in the State</p>

	<p>Museum of History and Culture of Belarus in Minsk.</p> <p>Mr. Dorn visited the museum's storage in 1996 and discovered at least four Torah scrolls, including some silver adornments for these Torah scrolls, as well as several sets of Shabbat candlesticks, Chanukiot, Tefilin and Humashim which are kept in the archive. At the time, the preservation of these Torah scrolls was less than satisfactory, resulting in the loss of several chapters or making some letters not viewable.</p> <p>Moreover, there are two Torah scrolls in the State Historical Archive of Belarus; one Torah scroll is located in the Historical Museum of Mogilev, and one is located in the Historical Museum of Vitebsk. (There is no information as to whether these scrolls are kept properly)</p>
<b>Historical Commission</b>	<p>No.</p> <p>1) <u>Source</u>: Dean, Martin. "The Plundering of Jewish Property in Europe: Five Recent Publications Documenting Property Seizure and Restitution in Germany, Belgium, Norway, and Belarus". <i>Holocaust and Genocide Studies</i> 15 (1), 2001, pp 86-97.</p> <p>According to Martin Dean, the research "<i>Nazi Gold</i>" from Belarus: <i>Documents and Materials</i> by V. I. Adamushko, G. D. Knatko, et al., (Minsk: National Archive of the Republic of Belarus, 1998) focuses on property seizure and restitution.</p>
<b>Notes</b>	<p>1) <u>Source</u>: <a href="http://www.jhrgbelarus.org/AboutBelarus_JewishHistory.php">http://www.jhrgbelarus.org/AboutBelarus_JewishHistory.php</a>, last accessed on 15 February 2007.</p> <p>The website notes that restitution of looted Jewish property is minimal.</p>
<b>Selected Bibliography</b>	<p>→ Please note that the general literature may also contain information on the specific country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kupovetsky, Mark. Savitsky, Eduard. Web, Marek. (ed.) <i>Jewish Documentary Sources in Belarus Archives: A Guide (in Russian)</i>. Moskva: Rossiiskii gos. gumanitarnyi universitet, 2003.</li> <li>▪ Dean, Martin. "The Plundering of Jewish Property in Europe: Five Recent Publications Documenting Property Seizure and Restitution in Germany, Belgium, Norway, and Belarus". <i>Holocaust and Genocide Studies</i>, 15.1 (2001), pp 86-97.</li> <li>▪ Grimsted, Patricia Kennedy. "The Road to Minsk for Western "Trophy" Books: Twice Plundered but not Yet 'Home from the War'". <i>Libraries &amp; Culture</i>, 39.4 (2004), pp 351-404.</li> </ul>
<b>List of Experts</b>	<p>→The general contact list of experts in the field may be relevant for the specific country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yuri Dorn, President of Union of Religious Jewish Congregations of the</li> </ul>

	<p>Republic of Belarus; Coordinator of Jewish Heritage Group Belarus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Dovid Katz, Professor of Yiddish Language, Literature and Culture, Vilnius University</li><li>▪ Inna Gerasimova, Director, Jewish History and Culture Museum of Belarus</li></ul>
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