

Jewish Flight from Nazi Germany

An organization called HICEM was founded in 1927 to assist Jewish emigration. The name combined the acronyms of three Jewish migration agencies — HIAS (Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society) of New York, ICA (Jewish Colonization Association) of Paris, and Emigdirect of Berlin. Work of this group expanded greatly after the Nazi triumph in Germany, but Emigdirect was forced to withdraw in 1934. With the onset of war, ICA, which had registered as a British philanthropy despite its base in France, was forbidden to operate outside the Sterling currency community. Those events left the burden of assisting Jews who needed rescue to HIAS in the United States and its European affiliates. Because HIAS evaded and flouted currency regulations, it was able to help 90,000 Jews escape the Holocaust.

An envelope sent March 11, 1936, from Berlin to HIAS in Washington, D.C.

