

**The Emergence of the Kindertransport in Prague 1938-1939**  
**A Humanitarian Response to a Refugee Crisis**

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**Abstract**

Kindertransport ('children's transport' in German) is the accepted term for the large-scale scheme responsible for sending about 10,000 unaccompanied mostly Jewish children out of Nazi occupied countries to safety in Britain, between December 1938 and the outbreak of the Second World War. According to the "official" numbers published, this figure included 9,354 children reported to have arrived from Germany and Austria, and 669 were to have been sent out of Prague.

Given that the children's transports from Prague have been commonly presented as part of the centrally organized large-scale Kindertransport from Nazi occupied territory to Britain, this thesis proves that the Prague scheme originated from a different wide-scale response to the refugee crisis of unprecedented magnitude. It offers a comprehensive approach to the emergence of the Kindertransport in Prague, focusing on its unique features as a humanitarian effort involving a platform of activists from different niches of life.

In order to understand the uniqueness of the Czech Kindertransport within the wider context of the refugee crisis, a detailed historical overview is given. This is followed by a comparison of the Prague transports with those from Berlin and Vienna and a discussion of the British Policy and the Anglo-Jewry, identifying the organizational problematic issues in London and in Prague. The research further illuminates the different groups and individuals instrumental in arranging the departure of the children from Prague, focusing on the interaction and collaboration among them. Finally, a case study is presented to illustrate the unique situation in Prague.

The concluding chapter rounds off this thesis. The Czech Kindertransport was an initiative that emerged against the backdrop of the refugee crisis in Prague and against the urgent necessity to bring Jewish children to safety in Britain, independently of the transports organized from Berlin and Vienna. This research clearly proves that the Prague transports appeared to be unique in terms of their circumstances, scope and key actors.