

# PREPARATION MODULE 2



Associative Introduction  
with three introductory  
videos Bildungsportal

## OVERALL DURATION

45 minutes

## AIMS

The workshop provides an initial introduction to the subject of Nazi forced labour and aims to stimulate interest in the subject. It can be used to prepare a visit to a place of learning and remembrance. Through cartoon videos based on historical photographs, participants gain a first insight into the subject of Nazi forced labour. Making links with terms they know from the present creates an opportunity for an analytical categorisation of the subject. The terms are to be critically examined, thus also stimulating the creation of a critical awareness of history.

## MATERIALS

Pens, presentation cards, laptop, possibly mobile devices.

## WORKING MATERIALS

- ① Poster: "Mercedes-Benz: Design, Performance, Slave Labor", October 1999
- ② [Website of the Education Platform Nazi Forced Labour](#)

## COURSE

- Orientation – 5 minutes
- Introduction newspaper advertisement Mercedes-Benz "Slave Labor" – 10 minutes
- Deeper look at forced labour with introductory videos Education Platform – 20 minutes
- Questions and research on the Place of Learning and Remembrance – 10 minutes

### Orientation – 5 minutes

Begin your workshop with an orientation session, putting the work you'll be doing together into the context of the trip to a place of learning and remembrance. Give a short presentation of the place you and the participants are going to. State the aims of the preparatory workshop and begin the introduction.

### Introduction newspaper advertisement Mercedes-Benz "Slave Labor" – 10 minutes

In Working Materials, you can find the illustration of a newspaper advertisement which reads "Mercedes-Benz: Design, Performance, Slave Labor." ①

Give each small group a copy of figure ①, pens and presentation cards. You could also project the advertisement on the wall and discuss what can be seen and read on it. Participants can express their first impressions to the whole group. Write down words, ideas and thoughts in the form of a word cloud on the whiteboard. Gradually introduce input questions to the participants.

The exercise is intended to create an associative approach to the topic by establishing a link between Nazi forced labour and the everyday lives of the participants via the Mercedes-Benz brand. The newspaper advertisement from 1999 also makes it clear that forced labour did not “only” play a role in the Nazi era, which seems to be a long time ago, but also had social relevance beyond that time.

### **Deeper look at forced labour with introductory videos Education Platform – 20 minutes**

Stay in small groups and visit the website [bildung-ns-zwangsarbeit.de/informieren](http://bildung-ns-zwangsarbeit.de/informieren) ②. There you will find three introductory videos on the subject of Nazi forced labour. Ask each small group to watch one of the videos. Then return to the whole class and ask each group to report on the video they have seen.

#### **Possible input questions include:**

- What do you learn about Nazi forced labour?
- Did you already know anything about Nazi forced labour?
- What drawings and graphics stuck out for you? What did you see there?  
What do the people depicted there look like? What are they doing?
- Was there anything that surprised you?
- Is there anything you're not clear about? What questions do you have?
- Do you find the terms convincing? What other terms would you choose?
- What connections are there between the videos and the terms “migration and deportation”, “racism”, “labour and exploitation” and Nazi forced labour?

#### **Background information:**

##### **Introductory videos Education Platform and terms as way into the subject of Nazi forced labour**

The videos are an introduction to the related texts in the Information section of the Education Platform. They use contemporary terms, shed light on the Nazi era and refer to aspects covered in the Essays under the headings of colonialism, labour migration and forced labour today. The illustrations in the historical section are based on slightly distorted photographs. They stand out visually from the other illustrations, which are freely drawn to illustrate a term at the beginning of the video.

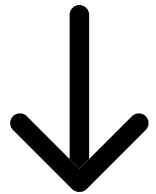
#### **Presentation and discussion in the whole group (10 minutes)**

Encourage participants to report their findings to the whole group. Participants discuss their small group work in a facilitated discussion. Key facts about Nazi forced labour and any questions can be noted on a flipchart or the whiteboard. The questions can be taken with them on the visit to the place of learning and remembrance or sent to the team there before the visit.

Optionally, the small groups and the terms they have worked on, racism, migration & deportation and labour & exploitation, can be kept for the visit to the place of learning and remembrance. Participants are then asked to pay particular attention to content related to “their” themes during the visit. However, they should not lose sight of the connections with other themes.

Tip: If you have more time, even better! Visit the [Education Platform website](#) and research the place of learning and remembrance and the history of the site there.

# APPENDIX



Material for printing out



Mercedes-Benz

# DESIGN. PERFORMANCE. SLAVE LABOR.

*"I was 15 when Daimler-Benz selected me from a concentration camp to work in its factory. My father, mother, two brothers and sister had all already been murdered."*

Irving Kempler

When Daimler-Benz purchased Chrysler in 1998 for \$36 billion, the company could point to a long history of efficient craftsmanship. What the company does not want to talk about is its equally efficient exploitation of tens of thousands of forced and slave laborers during World War II. Leased from the Nazis, these concentration camp inmates and abductees have never been

compensated by Daimler-Benz for their labor, suffering and inhuman treatment.

Daimler-Benz owned or supervised factories throughout occupied Europe, including motor vehicle and tank facilities for the Nazi army, with many of the plants relying on slave labor for at least half their labor force, sometimes more.

German companies were not required to use these people. They chose to use them. And to obtain workers from concentration camps, companies had to initiate formal

bids. Many companies declined. But Daimler-Benz aggressively sought and received as much "disposable" forced and slave labor as possible. Daimler-Benz supervisors, in league with members of the SS, committed ongoing atrocities against these people, including imprisonment, torture and murder. Many were put to

work digging out tunnels for underground facilities designed to protect Daimler-Benz equipment from Allied bombs. The death rate at Daimler-Benz was staggering.

Today, survivors of slave or forced labor at such companies as Daimler-Benz, BMW, Ford and Bayer await compensation for their work and suffering. Meanwhile, Nazi overseers received, and continue to receive, their salaries and pensions. Even some convicted war criminals collect their payments in prison.

No meaningful proposal to compensate these victims has yet been put forward. Time is running out. The survivors are dying. On October 6, negotiations between German companies and representatives of their victims will take place in Washington, D.C. Germany and those companies that used slave labor have a moral and legal obligation to pay these victims for their work, suffering and inhuman treatment. Surely, DaimlerChrysler, with \$145 billion in assets, can afford to pay its debt to those it so brutally exploited.

From the makers of Mercedes-Benz, that's the level of performance we expect.



**JUSTICE. COMPENSATION. NOW.**