

An interview with Auschwitz survivor Esther Bejarano

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Seventy-five years ago, on 27 January, 1945, the Red Army liberated the Auschwitz concentration camp in German-occupied Poland. The name has become synonymous with the greatest crimes against humanity in history. In the gas chambers and crematoriums of Auschwitz alone, the Nazis murdered some 1.5 million people between 1940 and 1945.

One of the few people to survive this living hell is the 95-year-old Esther Bejarano. Born on 15 December 1924 as the daughter of the church musician and teacher Rudolf Loewy, she grew up in the Saarland. The family moved to Ulm in southern Germany in 1936. A planned emigration to Palestine in 1941 failed following the outbreak of war. The Nazis murdered her parents in modern-day Lithuania in 1941, and her sisters in Auschwitz in 1942. Esther was deported to Auschwitz in April 1943, where she survived the death camp as a member of the girls' orchestra.

Despite her old age, Esther Bejarano remains very active. She talks about her experiences at meetings and in schools, performs with her band "Microphone Mafia" as a singer, and engages in the struggle against the rise of the far-right and in defence of refugees. She also opposes the right-wing policy of the government of Israel, where she lived between 1945 and 1960.

On 10 February, 2018, the WSWWS interviewed Esther Bejarano in Hamburg and recorded one of her public appearances. Sven Wurm, spokesman for the IYSSE in Germany, spoke with her extensively about her experiences and their significance for our contemporary period. The one-hour video resulting from this discussion is now available with English subtitles to make it accessible to an international audience.





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