

## **Jewish Records Indexing - Poland – Computer Workshop**

Hadassah Lipsius  
www.jri-poland.org

The goal of Jewish Records Indexing - Poland (JRI-Poland) is to create searchable on-line indices of Jewish records from current and former territories of Poland. Where such records are available, they may include towns that are now part of Ukraine, Lithuania, and Belarus.

The workshop is geared for beginner researchers and will provide hints, tips and a strategy to help find that elusive family member hidden in the JRI-Poland database. With actual images of millions of Polish Jewish records now available online from multiple sources and linked from the JRI-Poland search results, the workshop will also focus on how a search of the JRI-Poland online database can connect a researcher with digital images of the record.

### **Searching the Database**

The JRI-Poland database was conceived as a FIRST step in finding clues to locating family records. The database search provides vital record index entries with surname, given name, record ("Akt") numbers and years of the registration, as well as information on the data source.

Searches can be performed using one to four parameters . Surname, Given Name, Town, Any Field (any text in any data field). By selecting the %Sounds Like+[Daitch-Mokotoff Soundex] Surname search option, the program can remove some of the guesswork when the exact spelling of the ancestor's surname is unknown. Combining search parameters is helpful in narrowing your search. In a %Soundex+search by placing a square bracket around a letter, especially a first letter of a name, you will get only results beginning with that letter. The search option %Phonetically Like+will still allow for some spelling variants but with a narrower focus. A %Geographical Region+search can be made by selecting a Gubernia/ Wojewodztwa. Also useful is %Search by Distance from Town+in which you can obtain all the results for your surname in a particular town and towns within a set radius of a specified longitude and latitude. This allows a search in more than one Gubernia/ Wojewodztwa.

### **Images of Vital Records**

The actual record usually contains more information than is found in the JRI-Poland index. Many researchers will want to acquire a copy of the original record, both in order to verify the information and to examine the record for additional information. In the past, this involved the complicated, slow and expensive process of ordering photocopies from the applicable Archive in Poland.

In 2013, the Polish State Archive began a major project to scan documents and vital records and make them available on the internet. Today there are over 18 million pages scanned covering vital records from all religions as well as other archival documents. Amongst these millions of scans are many Jewish vital records, and JRI-Poland has undertaken the project of creating links in its Database Search results, to the available images. As more information is obtained and then entered into the system these will appear in three different forms:

- a list of folders containing the appropriate collection of images.
- an image that is approximately the one containing the record but may require advancing or backing up by a few images, or

- the exact image containing the record.

In the first case there will be one link to the collection in the header block of each town collection search results, while in the second case the words %View Nearby Image+will appear alongside each search result that has an associated image, and in the last case the words %View Image+will appear alongside each search result. Keep in mind that not all records have yet been digitized and placed online. If your search using <http://jri-poland.org> does not yet provide any links, you can use the National Digital Archive (NDA) web site at <http://szukajwarchiwach.pl> to try to find records on your own. You will need the town, year and type of record for each event (from JRI-Poland search results) and then try to determine if Jewish records exist, and are available online at this time. If you are successful in finding the correct collection, you will then need to browse through the appropriate images to find your record of interest.

Besides the Polish State Archives, the Polish Genealogical Society or Polskie Towarzystwo Genealogiczne (PTG) has also been scanning registers from the branch archives. The images are available on their website <http://genealodzy.pl/>. The Polskie Towarzystwo Genealogiczne has indexed records, and the database can be found on their website. Though most of the indexing they have completed has been Church records, their indexing has also included the Pre-1826 records which are commonly known as %Patronymic+ records, and within those databases are many Jewish family records. When the image is not available on the National Digital Archive (NDA) web site, JRI-Poland has also linked to the PGS website.

### **Images of Non-Vital Records**

The National Digital Archive (NDA) has also scanned notary documents, census lists, homeowner lists, Registration cards (*Karta Meldunkowa*), Books of Residents (*Księgi Ludności*) and Ghetto records.

Of special interest, is the *ýód* Personenblatt or registration cards which was documented during World War I. From 1916. 1918, *ýód* was controlled by the Germans, and they began registering all residents of the city, not only those who had their legal residence there. The NDA contains a collection of these cards, which exist for the years 1916. 21. JRI-Poland has created a finding aide to help users find family information: <http://jri-poland.org/psa/lodz-registration-card-scans.htm>. The session will review examples from this collection and show participants how to find family information.

The JRI-Poland database has united families, uncovered long lost branches from family trees and brought small miracles to life. Through this session perhaps you will learn to discover your family mysteries too.

## **Research in Poland – Some Key Websites**

### **Archival Inventories:**

<http://archiwalna.archiwa.gov.pl/en/news.html> Polish State Archives English Homepage

<http://archiwalna.archiwa.gov.pl/en/state-archives/381-list-of-archives.html> PSA List of Archives

<http://archiwalna.archiwa.gov.pl/en/data-bases.html> PSA Databases of Holdings

<http://baza.archiwa.gov.pl/sezam/pradziad.php?l=en> PSA PRADZIAD Vital Records Database

<http://baza.archiwa.gov.pl/sezam/ela.php?l=en> PSA ELA Population Registers Database:

<http://www.jri-poland.org/jri-lds.htm> JRI-Poland List of Mormon Polish Jewish Microfilms

<http://szukajwarchiwach.pl> National Digital Archives

### **Record Headings and Translation Aids**

<http://translate.google.com/#> Google Translate

<http://www.jri-poland.org/frazin.htm> Congress Poland . Polish Language Documents

<http://www.jri-poland.org/techniq.htm> Indexing Techniques

[http://www.jri-poland.org/help/polish\\_family\\_terms.htm](http://www.jri-poland.org/help/polish_family_terms.htm) Polish Family Terms

<http://www.jri-poland.org/jriplfaq.htm> JRI-Poland FAQ

### **Other image and indexing databases**

<http://genealodzy.pl/> Polskie Towarzystwo Genealogiczne

<http://www.basia.famula.pl/en/> BASI Database of Archival Indexing System

<http://www.ptg.gda.pl/> Pomeranian Genealogical Association

<http://poznan-project.psnc.pl/> Poznan Region Marriage Project