

## Press Statement

# Historical Review

## Bauer Media Group shares findings of research into business activities during the National Socialism era

**Hamburg, 3 June 2025** – Bauer Media Group presents the results of an independent investigation into its business activities during the National Socialism era. After several years of research, reviewing over 300 sources, historians Dr Claudia Bade, Dr Imke Johannsen, Dr Holger Martens and Dr Christian Zech concluded that Heinrich and Alfred Bauer, as the company's owners, "adapted to the political conditions in the years 1933 to 1945 in order to continue their business activities." Based on current knowledge and available sources, there is no indication that the company or the Bauer family engaged in any form of ideological activity.

Speaking on behalf of the family, Yvonne Bauer, Owner & Chair of the Board of the Bauer Media Group, and granddaughter of Alfred Bauer, said, "While we have never denied the National Socialism era, we did wait too long to carry out the study of our company's history. This has made us even more determined to do this now. We acknowledge the findings of this independent study and have engaged in deep reflection, both as a family and within our company. As a media group with a 150-year legacy, we recognise the weight of our history, including the period under the National Socialism regime. It is therefore all the more our responsibility to actively contribute to an open and democratic society, both now and in the future."

In 2020, the Bauer Media Group initiated a historical study of Heinrich Bauer Verlag's company history during the National Socialism era. The comprehensive study focused on three aspects: "land purchases and investments", "magazine business" and "housing of Italian military internees". In light of the sources available and current knowledge, historians concluded that the Heinrich Bauer Publishing House and its owners were "primarily motivated by economic considerations" in their actions after 1933.

Amongst others, this applies to the acquisition of ten properties between 1933 and 1939. The historians noted that Heinrich and Alfred Bauer's motives for the purchase were primarily economic; they were unable to determine any ideological motivations. Nevertheless, Heinrich and Alfred Bauer benefited from the financial authorities' persecution of Jews when making the acquisitions. It can be assumed that the properties

“under other circumstances would probably not have been sold at all or not at that asking price.”

The historians went on to explain that the radio magazine “Funk-Wacht” adapted its editorial content to align with National Socialism propaganda from 1933 onwards, something which was primarily tactically and economically motivated. While political debates were largely omitted from the reporting of Heinrich Bauer Verlag before 1933, after 1933 the publisher and editorial staff responded to Nationalist media control and censorship with editorial adjustments. As a result, Heinrich Bauer Verlag benefited from growing circulation figures until 1941, particularly for the radio magazine “Funk-Wacht”. At the same time, like all media companies, the publishing house was inevitably shaped by the Nationalist regime’s efforts to standardise and control the media.

The study also examined the presence of Italian military internees housed in company-owned buildings from 1943 onwards. The historians noted that these were forced labourers for the war economy in Hamburg, and therefore did not work for Heinrich Bauer Verlag. Their placement took place under the Reich Performance Law, which allowed the State to requisition rooms and buildings without the consent of the owners. The owners were entitled to compensation or ongoing rent payments, but there was no possibility of appealing against confiscation. According to the study, Heinrich Bauer received the rental income to which he was entitled, but “according to what is known so far, he was not a beneficiary of forced labour.”

Further information on the study and a summary of the historians' research report can be found [here](#).

### **About Bauer Media Group**

We are a media business focused on creating content that matters to millions of people across Europe. Our offer covers print and online publishing, audio broadcasting and entertainment, Out of Home advertising, and investments in other media related sectors. We are one of Europe’s largest Publishers, with almost 500 million copies sold each year. From women’s and celebrities’ magazines and TV listings to food and special interest, we own some of Europe’s most popular digital and print publishing brands. Our Audio business operates more than 150 radio and podcast brands, reaching over 61 million listeners every week. Bauer Media Outdoor is one of Europe’s leading Out of Home advertising businesses, with more than 100,000 advertising panels. Family-owned in the 5th generation, Bauer Media focuses on the long-term with a consumer first mindset. Our workforce of over 12,000 shares a common purpose: to deliver content and services that enrich people’s everyday lives. For more information go to [www.bauermedia.com](http://www.bauermedia.com).

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