

ROMANIA

Volume I – Moldavia
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Pungesti

Map Coordinates: 46° 42' North – 27° 20' East

Author: Author: Theodore Lavi, Ph.D., Coordinator of Pinkas ha-Kehilot in Yad
Vashem - Transnistria, Hargat

English translation researched and edited by:
Robert S. Sherins, M.D.

Translation: Ziva Yavin, Ph.D.
Rabbi Jack H. Bloom, Ph.D.

Donation was made to the Yizkor Book Project by
Robert S. Sherins, M.D., Richard J. Sherins, M.D., and Beryle Solomon Buchman

N.B. Kehillah will be used where reference is to the organized Jewish community. Kehillah is the name given to Jewish communal organizations in Eastern Europe. The role and authority of the Kehillah varied greatly, depending on location and historical period. At times a Kehillah would have quasi-governmental authority over both the Jewish community and its relationship with the Gentile community.

Pungesti, a village in the province of Moldavia, county of Vaslui.

Jewish population

Year	No.	Percentage in the general population
1838	20 (families)	
1859	429 (persons)	30.7
1899	538	
1910	348	
1930	255	20.7
1941	107	12.7
1947	50	

Pungesti was founded during the reign of Mihail Sturza (1834-1849). At the end of the 19th century, it had a population of over 500 Jews. A majority were craftsmen, 12 were merchants.

During the peasant's rebellion of 1907, 87 Jewish families were burglarized, and the rioters destroyed many Jewish homes.

In 1910, the Jews of Pungesti included 46 merchants, 45 tailors, 12 shoemakers, 11 tinsmiths, 2 carpenters and 25 in various occupations. At that time there were 11 students in the government schools.

During the Holocaust

On November 22, 1940, members of the "Iron Guard" forced a few well-off Jewish merchants to turn over their merchandise and to "willingly" leave the village. At the same time, all the Jews were taken - men, women, old and young - for forced labor. They swept streets, cleaned chimneys, paved roads, and some worked on the lands of the provincial landlords, the chiefs of the local "Iron Guard."

In July 1941, all the Jews of Pungesti were exiled to the city of Vaslui, capital of Vaslui County.

Following the war only a portion of the Jews returned to the village.

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The General Archive of The History of The Jewish People RM 160.

Yad Vashem Archive IM 1220: 0—11/7—1 (53): 0—11/6—5.

W. Filderman Archive 18 (84-84); 19 (45).

P. Karp Archive I, p. 23; III, p.421; VI, p. 126.