

Novaky

Labor camp in central Slovakia. The first Jews were brought to Novaky in late 1941, but the camp began operating in earnest in mid-1942, when the Germans began the mass deportation of Slovak Jewry. Novaky was created due to the efforts of the Slovak Jewish Center, which had asked the Slovak government to establish camps where the Jews could work and thus be spared from deportation.

Novaky, one of the largest labor camps in Slovakia, held 1,600 Jewish prisoners. Most were skilled craftsmen and carpenters who worked in workshops. The products they produced were high-quality and made the camp an economic success. Novaky was run by a *Judenrat* that managed to manipulate the Slovak camp commandant, who was a drunk. The conditions at the camp were not bad: food rations were adequate, the prisoners ran their own school, medical clinics, and welfare institutions, and cultural activities such as drama, religious studies, and sports were allowed. In fact, the camp even had a swimming pool. An underground was also in existence at Novaky.

Novaky was liberated in August 1944 during the Slovak National Uprising. Over 200 men from the camp joined the rebels, and 35 were killed in the fighting. (see also Jewish Center, Slovakia.)