

## Sixth Slovak Brigade

Brigade in the Slovak army that included special companies of Jewish laborers during World War II. Based on a law issued in Slovakia in January 1940, Slovak Jews, Gypsies, and others were taken out of their regular army units and placed in special labor units. The Jews were transferred to the Twenty-first, Twenty-second, and Twenty-third companies of the Sixth Brigade. These men built roads, regulated rivers, and did excavations. For a while, the Twenty-first Company was moved to Poland, where its men repaired roads.

The Nazis launched large-scale deportations from Slovakia in March 1942. At that time, many of the men serving in the Sixth Brigade deserted the army; some returned to their families in order to be deported together with them, while others escaped to Hungary or obtained forged "Aryan" identity papers. Despite pressure on the army from the Slovak Ministry of the Interior to deport the Jews of the brigade to Poland, the army refused, saving the lives of hundreds of Jewish soldiers.

In May 1943 the brigade was dissolved; its soldiers were either moved to labor camps or formed into work gangs employed by private builders. Many of the Sixth Brigade's men participated in the Slovak National Uprising of August 1944; 52 perished in battle.