

DEPORTATIONS OF JEWS FROM SLOVAKIA  
TO THE MAJDANEK CONCENTRATION CAMP  
A Spatial Analysis of Transports of Jewish Men (March – April 1942)<sup>1</sup>

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From 25 March 1942 to 20 October 1942, the regime of Hlinka's Slovak People's Party deported 57,628 Jews from Slovakia to Nazi concentration and extermination camps in occupied Poland. Slovak historiography refers to this wave of deportations as the First wave of deportations of Jews from Slovakia. The vast majority of those deported during the first wave were murdered. The transports of the first wave headed in two main directions: to the Nazi concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz and to the Lublin District. The study focuses on the so-called male transports of the First wave of deportations, which were carried out from Slovakia between 27 March and 5 April 1942. All the transports analysed in this study were assembled in the concentration camps of Žilina, Sereď and Nováky and were headed for the Lublin District. An important characteristic of these transports is the fact that all the Jewish men deported in them became prisoners of the same Nazi concentration camp upon their arrival in Lublin - the Lublin Concentration Camp, commonly known as Majdanek.

The aim of this study is to provide a better understanding of the number of Slovak Jews deported to Majdanek in March and April 1942 and their geographical origin through data and spatial analysis of information obtained from transport lists, the Census of Jews and other sources.

For our analysis, we utilised data from the aforementioned sources, which were recorded in the database. Working with the data involved both checking and merging data. The result was a dataset in CSV format that was subjected to data analysis using the Python programming language, as well as spatial data analysis using QGIS 3.44 and ArcGIS Pro 3.5 software. The results of data processing and spatial analysis were then interpreted in relation to previously published scientific outputs and other sources.

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1 The study was prepared as part of the VEGA project *Migračné vlny v 20. Storočí a ich vplyv na slovenskú spoločnosť. Kontexty, aspekty a súvislosti* (Migration Waves in the 20th Century and Their Impact on Slovak Society. Contexts, Aspects and Connections), conducted at the Institute of History of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. It is also an output of the *European Holocaust Research Infrastructure* (EHRI) and the result of cooperation within the National Platform for Cooperation with EHRI in Slovakia.

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From 25 March 1942 to 20 October 1942, the regime of Hlinka Slovak People's Party (*Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana*, HSĽS) deported 57,628 Jews from Slovakia to Nazi concentration and extermination camps in occupied Poland.<sup>2</sup> Slovak historiography refers to this wave of deportations as the First wave of deportations of Jews from Slovakia. The vast majority of those deported during the first wave were murdered.

The transports of the first wave headed in two main directions: to the Nazi concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz and to the Lublin District, where, just a few days before the start of the deportations of Jews from Slovakia, the Nazis launched Operation Reinhardt (*Einsatz Reinhardt*). It aimed to exterminate all Jews living in the General Government or deported there from various parts of Nazi-occupied Europe and collaborating states.

In terms of organisation, the deportations of Jews from Slovakia in 1942 can be divided into two main stages: The stage of transports of so-called able-bodied Jews (25 March 1942 – 5 April 1942) and the stage of so-called family transports (11 April 1942 – 20 October 1942). The fundamental difference between these stages lies in the organisation of the assembly and dispatch of transports, namely that while in the first stage Jews designated as “able-bodied” (*práceschopní*) were to be deported from Slovakia by train, separated according to gender, in the second stage, deported Jews were placed on so-called family transports regardless of gender and age (including children and the elderly). Another significant difference is the fact that the transports in the first stage were dispatched exclusively from concentration camps created by the HSĽS regime. In contrast, the transports in the second stage were sometimes assembled and dispatched from district towns in various regions of what was then Slovakia.

This study focuses on the so-called male transports of the first stage of Jewish deportations in 1942, which were carried out from Slovakia between 27 March and 5 April 1942. All the transports analysed in this study were assembled in the concentration camps of Žilina, Sereď and Nováky (designated by the regime as Concentration Centre for Jews – *Koncentračné stredisko Židov*) and were headed for the Lublin District.

The Lublin District was the administrative territory of the General Government created by the Nazis. As already indicated, it played a significant role in the deportations of Slovak Jews. From 27 March 1942 to 14 June 1942, a total of

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2 Slovak National Archives (SNA), f. Ministerstvo vnútra (MV), box number (box No.) 262, 12266/42.

thirty-eight transports with Slovak Jews from a total of fifty-seven transports of the first wave, i.e. the vast majority of the first wave of deportations, were sent here from Slovakia. In other words, approximately 39,900<sup>3</sup> out of a total of 57,628 Jews were deported from Slovakia to the Lublin District. The March and April transports analysed in the study are therefore only a small part of the transports sent to the Lublin District from Slovakia. These are actually the first four transports, in which several thousand Jewish men from various regions of Slovakia were deported. An important characteristic of these transports, however, is the fact that all the Jewish men deported in them became prisoners of the same Nazi concentration camp upon their arrival in Lublin – the Lublin Concentration Camp (*Konzentrationslager Lublin*), commonly known as Majdanek. They also formed one of the first large groups of Jewish prisoners deported to this camp from outside the borders of the General Government at a time when Majdanek itself was in the initial phase of construction.<sup>4</sup> The study thus essentially maps the territorial origin of a relatively important group of Jewish prisoners in Majdanek at the beginning of Operation Reinhardt.

The issue of Slovak Jews in the Majdanek concentration camp has been addressed in particular by Polish historians Janina Kielboń, Marta Grudzińska<sup>5</sup> and Jakub Chmielewski.<sup>6</sup> Among Slovak historians, Ján Hlavinka<sup>7</sup> has also addressed this topic.

In a sense, Slovak Jews who were deported to the Majdanek camp can also be considered in the context of the chronology of deportations of Jews from Slovakia as three groups. The first group consists of Jewish men deported between 27 March 1942 and 5 April 1942, the second consists of persons selected from the so-called family transports dispatched from Slovakia between 13 April and 14 June 1942, and the third group consists of persons transported to the Majdanek concentration camp during the liquidation of the ghettos in the Lublin District (in a small number of cases).<sup>8</sup>

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3 GRUDZIŃSKA. Żydzi slowaccy v obozie koncentracyjnym na Majdanku. In *Studia Żydowskie Almanach*, 2014, Vol. IV, No. 4, pp. 53-76.

4 KIELBOŃ. Deportacje Żydów do dystryktu lubelskiego (1939–1943). In LIBIONKA, ed. *Akcja Reinhardt. Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie*. Warszawa 2004, pp. 161-181.

5 GRUDZIŃSKA, Żydzi slowaccy v obozie koncentracyjnym na Majdanku, pp. 53-76.

6 CHMIELEWSKI. *Żydzi v KL Lublin*. In: *Wieżniowie KL Lublin 1941–1944*. Lublin 2022.

7 HLAVINKA. *The Man Who Escaped From Majdanek: Dionýz Lénard and His Testimony*. Bratislava 2023.

8 Such was the fate of Šarlota Adlerová, who was transported to the Majdanek concentration camp after the liquidation of the Końskowola ghetto in October 1942. HLAVINKA and SCHVARC. Akcia Reinhardt a deportácie slovenských Židov do Lublinskej oblasti v dokumentoch. In *Historický časopis*, 2021, Vol. 69, no. 4, pp 750-753.

The aim of this study is to provide a better understanding of the number of Slovak Jews deported to Majdanek in March and April 1942 and their geographical origin through data and spatial analysis of information obtained from transport lists and other sources.

### Sources and methods

The spatial analysis presented in this study is based on data on specific individuals deported in specific transports during the first wave of Jewish deportations. This data was recorded in specific primary sources. These include transport lists for individual transports, which were created by the organisers of the deportations shortly before the transport departed from a particular centre of concentration, and the 1942 Census of Jews (*Súpis Židov*). The Census of Jews was created by the state administration authorities of the Slovak Republic (1939–1945) just before the deportations, i.e. in February and March 1942, where individual district and notary offices and Police headquarters (*Policajné riaditeľstvo*) recorded persons falling under the official definition of the term “Jew” in accordance with the directive of the Ministry of the Interior.<sup>9</sup>

The 1942 census of Jews is one of the most important sources of information about the victims of the Holocaust from the territory of the Slovak Republic under the rule of the HSLŠ regime. In addition to the person’s first and last name, it also contains information about their date of birth, place of birth and place of residence, as well as their nationality and, in many cases, their occupation.<sup>10</sup>

Regarding the geographical origin of the deported person, the analysis is based on data from the Census of Jews, specifically on information about the last place of residence of the person in question.

The transport lists were written consistently, by typewriter, with clerical errors, with occasional indications of changes to the persons included in the transport, where the originally included person was removed from the list (indicated by a strike-through in the list) and replaced by another person, whose details were often added by hand. In the case of transport lists, it is evident that they were also created based on illegible or incomprehensible sources, where the name of the location is occasionally garbled (e.g., “Dracko” instead of “Drábsko”).

In the vast majority of districts, the census of Jews was typed, but some authorities in certain municipalities chose to write it by hand.<sup>11</sup>

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9 NIŽŇANSKÝ, ed. *Holokaust na Slovensku 6. Deportácie v roku 1942. Dokumenty*. Bratislava 2005, pp. 103-108, Document No. 8.

10 The sheets of the Census of Jews are stored in the Slovak National Archives (*Slovenský národný archív*), and in some state archives. During our research and work with the data, we used digital copies stored in the Holocaust Documentation Centre in Bratislava, Slovakia.

11 This is the case, for example, with the sheets of the Census of Jews from the town of Prešov.

We consider it necessary to point out that both the transport lists and the census of Jews are schematic sources that have their interpretative limitations. They do not reflect the complexity of the deportations or the suffering of the people who became their victims and subsequently victims of genocide. This fact must be borne in mind.

For our analysis, we utilised data from the aforementioned sources, which were recorded in the database of the Holocaust Documentation Centre (*Dokumentačné stredisko holokaustu*). Working with the data involved both checking and merging data. The result was a dataset in CSV format that can be processed by computer software. In the case of isolated deficiencies in the source (e.g., incorrectly recorded data on the municipality, where we identified inconsistencies with the contemporary names of municipalities in Slovakia, or uncertainty about which municipality was involved), other primary sources stored at in the Slovak National Archives and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives (Washington, D.C., USA) were used to refine the emerging dataset.

After the necessary data normalisation, the prisoner data stored in the created dataset were subjected to data analysis using the Python programming language, as well as spatial data analysis using QGIS 3.44 and ArcGIS Pro 3.5 software.<sup>12</sup> The results of data processing and spatial analysis were then interpreted in relation to previously published scientific outputs and other sources. The study is thus our attempt to apply digital humanities methods, which integrate computer tools and techniques with traditional humanities disciplines.

To quantify how “mixed” each district’s deportations were across the three departure camps, Shannon entropy ( $H_i$ ) at the district level was computed using QGIS Field Calculator. For every district, aggregated counts of men sent via (a) Žilina (transports #2 and #8 combined), (b) Sereď (transport #4), and (c) Nováky (transport #5) were aggregated and then converted to percentage proportions by dividing by the district total sum.

$$H_i = - \sum_i p_i \log_2 (p_i)$$

where  $p_i$  is the respective proportions. The coalesce function was applied to replace missing or zero values. Values are expressed in bits, where  $H_i = 0$  indicates that all men from a district departed via a single camp (no mixing),

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SNA, f. MV, box No. 188, File „Okres Prešov, Obec Prešov“.

12 Artificial intelligence, specifically Chat GPT-4o, was used to create the Python programming language code.

while the theoretical maximum  $H_i = \log 3 \approx 1.585$  occurs when the three camps are used equally.<sup>13</sup>

### **Deportation of Jews from Slovakia – organisation of transports of so-called able-bodied Jews**

Before presenting the results of the analysis that forms the core of this study, it is necessary to explain the broader historical context of the deportations of Jews from Slovakia in 1942 and the organisation of the transports we analysed (the transports of Jewish men in March and April 1942).

The deportations of Jews from Slovakia in 1942 were the result of several years of systematic persecution of the Jewish population, during which Jews living in the territory of the Slovak Republic (1939–1945) were subjected to a policy of “*exclusion from economic and social life in Slovakia*”. As part of this policy, during the radical Aryanisation of property, they were deprived of a large part of their property, the ability to dispose of their property and the ability to earn a living. By the end of 1941, up to 64,000 people out of a total of approximately 90,000 were unable to make a living from their property. They thus represented a social burden for the state and the ruling Hlinka Slovak People’s Party (HSLĽS) regime headed by Jozef Tiso.<sup>14</sup> At the end of 1941 and the beginning of 1942, HSLĽS representatives decided to resolve the issue of what to do with the masses of Jews who had been deprived of their property and were dependent on state social assistance by deporting this group of the population to territory under Nazi control. According to the words of the then Minister of the Interior and the Main Commander of the Hlinka Guard (*Hlinkova garda*, HG), Alexander Mach, delivered the day after the start of the deportations of Jews, on 26 March 1942, at a meeting of the State Council (*Štátna rada*), the idea of deporting Jews from Slovakia was “raised” at a meeting with *Reichsführer-SS* Heinrich Himmler in October 1941, during a visit by senior representatives of the Slovak Republic to Hitler’s headquarters in *Wolfschanze*.<sup>15</sup> On the same day, Mach also stated very clearly at a meeting of the State Council what motivated the HSLĽS regime representatives to deport Jews, when he said: “*With the help of the Germans, we want to get rid of the Jews.*”<sup>16</sup>

13 PAULOV. Entropiu maximalizujúce modely v regionálnej analýze. In *Ekonomický časopis*, 2004, Vol. 52, no. 7, pp. 901-909.

14 NIŽŇANSKÝ and KAMENEC, eds. *Holokaust na Slovensku 2. Prezident, vláda, Snem SR a Štátna rada o židovskej otázke (1939–1945). Dokumenty*. Bratislava 2003, pp. 180-181.

15 SNA, f. Úrad predsedníctva vlády (ÚPV), box No. 242, 17/ taj. 1942, Minutes of the Third Meeting of the State Council, p. 31.

16 SNA, f. ÚPV, box No. 242, 17/ taj. 1942, Minutes of the Third Meeting of the State Council, p. 31.

After the then Slovak Prime Minister Vojtech Tuka agreed in December 1941 to the deportation of Jews who were Slovak citizens and lived in the territory of the Third Reich „to the east“,<sup>17</sup> it was only a step away from the deportation of Jews from Slovakia.

At the turn of 1941–1942, the idea of deporting Jews from Slovakia took concrete shape during Slovak – German negotiations on providing labour to the Reich.<sup>18</sup> Initially, the negotiations were about the deportation of 20,000 Jews capable of working. Later, however, the deportation plan was extended to include all Jews, apparently at the instigation of Prime Minister Tuka. The Germans agreed to this extension on condition that the Slovak side pay a „resettlement fee“ of 500 Reichsmarks for each person deported.<sup>19</sup>

The transports dispatched from Slovakia between 25 March and 5 April 1942 are therefore referred to as transports of “able-bodied” (*práceschopných*) Jews.

The deportation of Jews from Slovakia in 1942 was organised by the Ministry of the Interior, headed by the aforementioned Alexander Mach, who was also a leading radical in the ruling HŠĽS party. As part of the preparations for the deportations, the Ministry of the Interior ordered a series of organisational measures, which were carried out by subordinate state authorities and the regime’s security forces from the first half of February 1942 onwards. The first step in organising the deportations of Jews was the creation of a nationwide register of Jews. On 12 February 1942, the authorities were instructed to create the aforementioned Census of Jews throughout Slovakia.<sup>20</sup>

Within the Ministry of the Interior, deportations were the responsibility of Department 14, which was headed by Gejza Konka until 3 April 1942 and subsequently by Anton Vašek. The Ministry of Transport and Public Works (Railway department), the Ministry of National Defence, the gendarmerie, the Hlinka Guard and the *Freiwillige Schutzstaffel* played an important organisational role in organising the deportations.

This was followed by the creation of concentration camps for the organisation of transports in Slovakia, which the regime called Concentration Centres for Jews (*Koncentračné stredisko Židov*). These camps were established in Bratislava-Patrónka, Sereď, Nováky, Žilina and Poprad. Various buildings were used for this purpose. In Bratislava-Patrónka, the premises were those of the Institute for

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17 KAMENEC. *Po stopách tragédie*. Bratislava 1991, p. 56; NIŽŇANSKÝ, ed. *Holokaust na Slovensku 4. Dokumenty nemeckej proveniencie (1939 – 1945). Dokumenty*. Bratislava 2003, pp. 111-112.

18 NIŽŇANSKÝ, ed., *Holokaust na Slovensku 6*, pp. 14-15.

19 NIŽŇANSKÝ, ed., *Holokaust na Slovensku 6*, p. 16; SNA, f. ÚPV, box No. 242, 17/taj. 1942, Minutes of the Second Meeting of the State Council.

20 NIŽŇANSKÝ, ed., *Holokaust na Slovensku 6*, p. 38.

the Disabled. In Sered' and Nováky, the premises were those of a labour camp for Jews that was being built at the time, and in Žilina and Poprad, the premises were military barracks.<sup>21</sup>

The Ministry of the Interior appointed members of the Hlinka Guard with certain merits in the past as commanders of the individual concentration centres, and the HG was also entrusted with guard duty during the deportations, which was subsequently solved by recruiting volunteers from among the ranks of HG members, who were motivated by daily wages.<sup>22</sup>

The Ministry of the Interior's instructions for the organisation of deportations clearly stated that each person to be deported should stay in the concentration centre for a maximum of four days. They were then to be placed on a transport and deported from Slovakia.<sup>23</sup>

The deportations themselves were carried out by train, consisting of freight cars for the deported Jews, their luggage and provisions, and a passenger car for members of the Hlinka Guard and gendarmerie, who formed the transport guard.<sup>24</sup>

On 24 March 1942, the day before the deportations of Jews from Slovakia began, the commander of the German concentration camp Majdanek in Lublin received a telegram in which the SS Economic and Administrative Office informed him:

*“10,000 (ten thousand) Jews from Slovakia destined for the camp there will be transported to the Lublin, as already announced, by special trains from 27 March 1942. Each special train will carry 1,000 (one thousand) prisoners. All trains will pass through the border railway station in Zwardoń (Upper Silesia), where they will arrive every morning at 6:09 a.m. During a two-hour stop, they will be taken over by escort units of the Security Police under the control of the Katowice State Police Office. The commanders of the escort units will receive lists of deportees. The first four transports have been agreed with the Reich Railways according to the following timetable: DA 67 on 27 March, DA 69 on 30 March, DA 70 on 31 March, DA 72 on 5 April. On these days, arrival in Zwardoń at 6:09*

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21 FIAMOVÁ. Koncentračné stredisko Bratislava-Patrónka. In MEDVECKÝ, ed. *Fenomén Bratislava*. Bratislava 2011, pp. 230-250; NIŽŇANSKÝ, ed., *Holokaust na Slovensku* 6, pp. 42-43.

22 SNA, f. MV, box No. 179, 179/42. MV directive of 19 February 1942 on guard service remuneration.

23 NIŽŇANSKÝ, ed., *Holokaust na Slovensku* 6, pp. 138-143. Document No. 37.

24 NIŽŇANSKÝ, ed., *Holokaust na Slovensku* 6, p. 140. Document no. 37.

*a.m., departure from Zwardoń at 8:20 a.m., and arrival in Lublin at 6:30 a.m. the following day.*"<sup>25</sup>

At the time of sending the above telegram, the concentration of so-called able-bodied Jews designated for deportation from Slovakia was already in full swing. It began with the arrest of Jewish girls and women in Prešov on 21 March 1942 and quickly spread throughout Slovakia.

The gendarmerie, assisted by members of the Hlinka Guard and the Freiwillige Schutzstaffel, searched throughout Slovakia for pre-designated Jews who had been entered in lists sent to individual districts by the Ministry of the Interior.

The deportations were officially justified as deployment for work under §22 of the Jewish Code. Those designated for deportation were to be gathered at a district assembly point in the district town and from there transported under armed escort to a predetermined Jewish concentration centre. They were allowed to take luggage with them, weighing a maximum of 50 kg.<sup>26</sup>

Members of the HG performed guard duty at the individual concentration centres. From testimonies and court records of post-war trials, we know that people designated for deportation were attacked and robbed in these camps.

The first transport of Jews was dispatched from Poprad on 25 March 1942, deporting 999 Jewish women and girls, accompanied by one doctor.<sup>27</sup>

After a one-day break, it was the turn of the first Jewish men who had been gathered and placed in transport at the Jewish concentration centre in Žilina. They were deported on 27 March 1942 in the transport mentioned in the telegram and marked DA 67.<sup>28</sup>

Transports of able-bodied Jewish men to Lublin took two to three days on average. Conditions in the wagons of individual transports were very poor. The testimonies of escapee Dionýz Lénard and Holocaust survivor D. L. well illustrate this.

Dionýz Lénard, who was deported to the Majdanek concentration camp in a transport from Nováky, escaped from Majdanek in 1942 and later wrote about his experiences of the transport:

*"We set out on foot to the station, we [lined up] there until they divided us into wagons, 40 in each. The furnishings of the wagon consisted of two plank-beds and two buckets designated originally for water and for use in lieu of a toilet. We did not use the first one because we did not get any*

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25 HLAVINKA and SCHVARC, *Akcia Reinhardt a deportácie slovenských Židov do Lublinskej oblasti v dokumentoch*, pp 735-736, Document No. 1.

26 NIŽŇANSKÝ, ed., *Holokaust na Slovensku 6*, pp. 136-138. Document No. 36.

27 SNA, f. MV, box No. 227, file I.Transport Poprad.

28 SNA, f. MV, box No. 231. file 1. Transport zo Žiliny – menoslov.

water during the whole journey. The other on ewe did not use so that the stink would not be too bad and what we did was to wrap necessary movements in paper and throw them out through a narrow crack in the door. We did not get any food or provisions, so we had to rely on what we had. With our large bags it was difficult to place ourselves in such a way that that everybody got some room even during the day but it was much more complicated when sleeping! In the end there was nothing else to do so the youngest once slept while sitting or even standing. We talked very little in the wagon, each wrapped in their own thoughts. Where were we going? What would it be like there?''<sup>29</sup>

## Spatial analysis of transports

### Origin of deportees by municipality, district and county

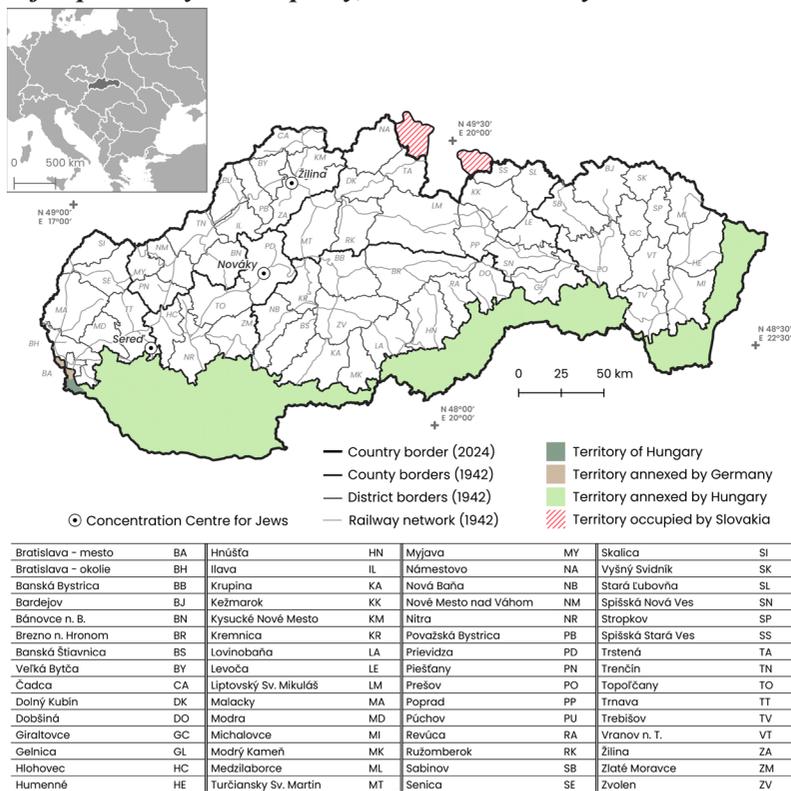


Fig. 1: Territorial and administrative boundaries of Slovakia in 1942<sup>30</sup>

29 HLA VINKA, The Man Who escaped from Majdanek, p. 64.

30 The abbreviations of districts were obtained from BAČÍK. *Historický vývoj územno-správne-*

Holocaust survivor D. L., originally from Prešov, was deported to Majdanek via the concentration centre in Žilina and described the duration of the journey and the conditions in the carriage as follows: “Two days, they didn’t give us water, people [...] were dying, we had dead people on the way to Lublin, they didn’t give us any grub, I mean food, but I say ,grub’ because it wasn’t food anymore. But they didn’t even give us that. Nothing. They didn’t even give us any containers for the toilet, nothing, nothing.”<sup>31</sup>

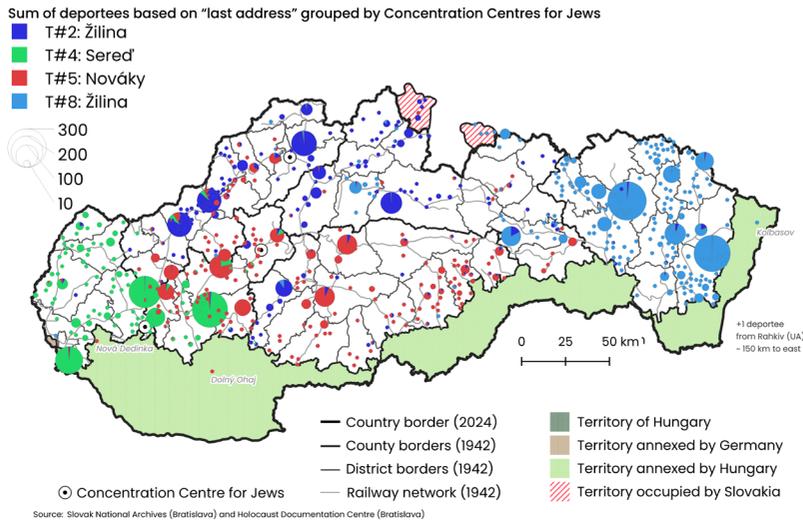


Fig. 2: Transports No. 2, No. 4, No. 5, No. 8 to Lublin (municipality level)

A total of 4,482 people were deported from the territory of the Slovak State (and partly from beyond its borders) in the four transports examined. These persons were geolocated to 590 coordinates/municipalities (Fig. 2), of which 4 municipalities were located outside the territory of the Slovak Republic (1939 – 1945) at that time (the municipalities of Nová Dedinka (then Šap), Dolný Ohaj, Kolbasov, Rakhiv (formerly Subcarpathian Ruthenia). This represents a wide geographical coverage and shows that Jewish men designated for deportation in the first transports were deported from almost all parts of what was then Slovakia. The highest numbers of deportees were recorded from major urban centres: Prešov (302), Michalovce (269), Nitra (256), Trnava (205), Bratislava (152), Žilina (129) and Nové Mesto nad Váhom (123), Trenčín (118), Topoľčany

*ho usporiadania Slovenska* [online].

31 Oral history archive of the Milan Šimečka Foundation (*Nadácia Milana Šimečku*), 1995–1997, man, D. L., Testimony No. 147.

(107). There were large Jewish communities in these towns. At the same time, however, it is clear that the transports of so-called able-bodied men had relatively little impact on the city of Bratislava.

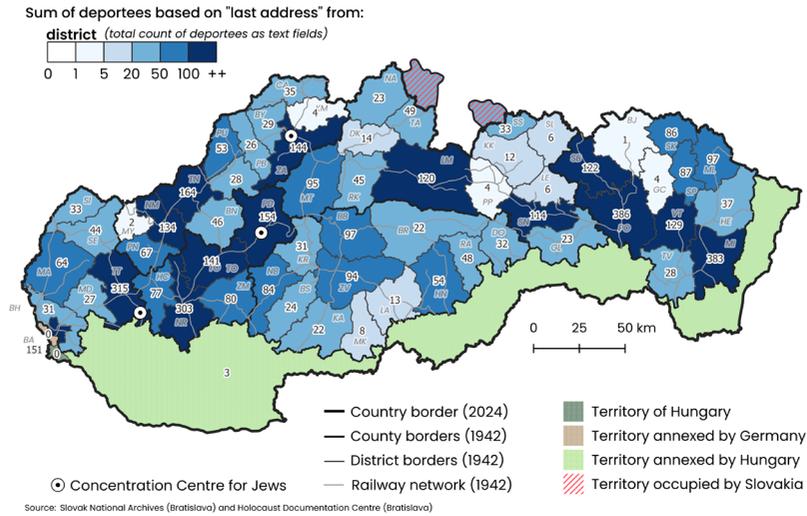


Fig. 3: Transports No. 2, No. 4, No. 5, No. 8 to Lublin (district level)

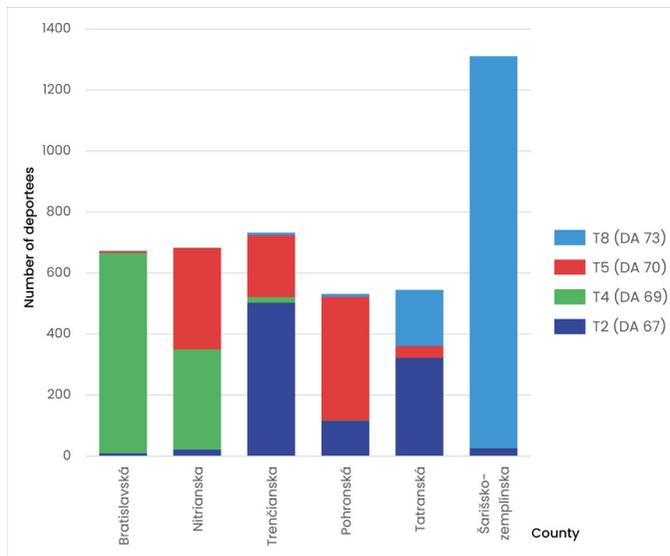


Fig. 4: Transports No. 2, No. 4, No. 5, No. 8 to Lublin (county level)

Suppose we group the data on deportees by district (Fig. 3). In that case, the analysis reveals that the individuals deported in the four transports to Majdanek under investigation originated from all 60 districts of what was then Slovakia. However, the transports examined from March and April 1942 had only a minimal impact on Jews from the districts of Bardejov (1 person), Giraltovce (4 persons), Poprad (4), Kysucké Nové Mesto (4) and Myjava (2). On the contrary, most of the deportees came from districts in eastern Slovakia in the Šariš-Zemplín county (see Fig. 4). Higher numbers of people deported to the Majdanek camp in March and April 1942 were also recorded in districts in western Slovakia, especially in regional centres – the districts of Trnava (315), Nitra (303), Trenčín (164), Prievidza (154), Žilina (144) and Topoľčany (141).

The first of the analysed transports departed on 27 March 1942 and was the second transport of Jews from Slovakia. It is also referred to in documents as transport DA 67. It departed from Žilina in the early hours of 27 March so that, given the distance, it could cross the state border via the border crossing and arrive in Zwardoń at the scheduled time of 6:09 a.m. The transport list includes Jewish boys and men from various locations in Slovakia. This very first transport of men included almost 1,000 deportees (997). However, Figure 5, which visualises the analysis, clearly shows that the Jewish men deported in the transport came mainly from north-western Slovakia, from the regions of Považie, Turiec, Orava and Liptov. Therefore, the districts of Žilina (141), Turčiansky Svätý Martin (91), Liptovský Svätý Mikuláš (117), Trenčín (142), Nové Mesto nad Váhom (111), Púchov (52), and the Orava districts of Trstená (48), Námestovo (20) and Dolný Kubín (13). The district of Nová Baňa (77) stands out from the above regional context. On the contrary, eastern Slovakia figures only marginally in this transport – most of the districts there had a low number of deportees (the highest number was from the districts of Spišská Nová Ves (13) and Prešov (8)). The analysis thus showed that most of the Jews deported in this first transport were brought to Žilina from the former Tatranská and Trenčianská counties and, to a lesser extent, from the Pohronská county before their deportation from Slovakia.

It is important to note that the transport also included several men who came from the territory annexed to Slovakia after the Slovak army's attack on Poland (in September 1939), and it is therefore possible to assert that the Slovak authorities also deported several former Polish Jews to the General Government (in this case to Lublin). It is also worth noting that while those deported from the districts of Nové Mesto nad Váhom, Trenčín, Žilina and Liptovský Svätý Mikuláš came from district centres, in the districts of Púchov, Trstená and Nová Baňa, they were individuals "selected" from individual communities across several smaller municipalities.

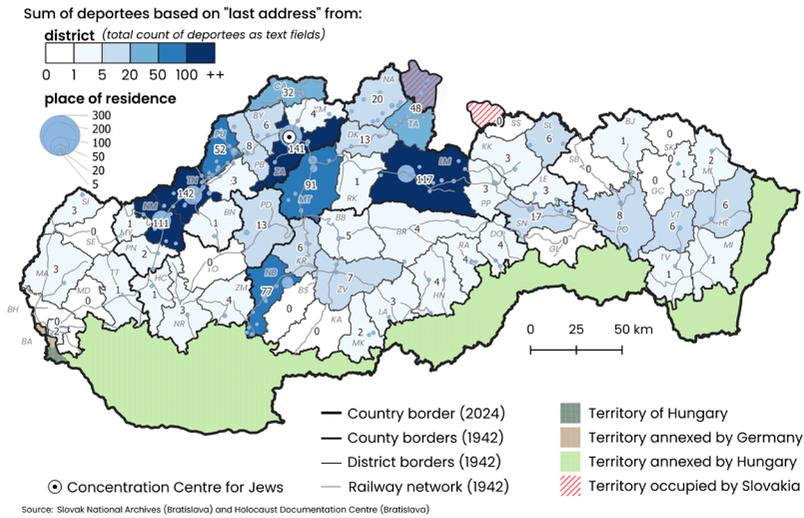


Fig. 5: Transport No. 2 (27 March 1942) from Žilina to Lublin

After a one-day break in the deportations of Jewish men, during which the HSEŠ regime deported Jewish women and girls from Slovakia to the Auschwitz concentration camp in the third transport on 28 March 1942, this was followed on 29 March 1942 by transport No. 4 (also referred to as DA 69 in the documents) from the Concentration Centre for Jews in Sered', commanded by Jozef Vozár.

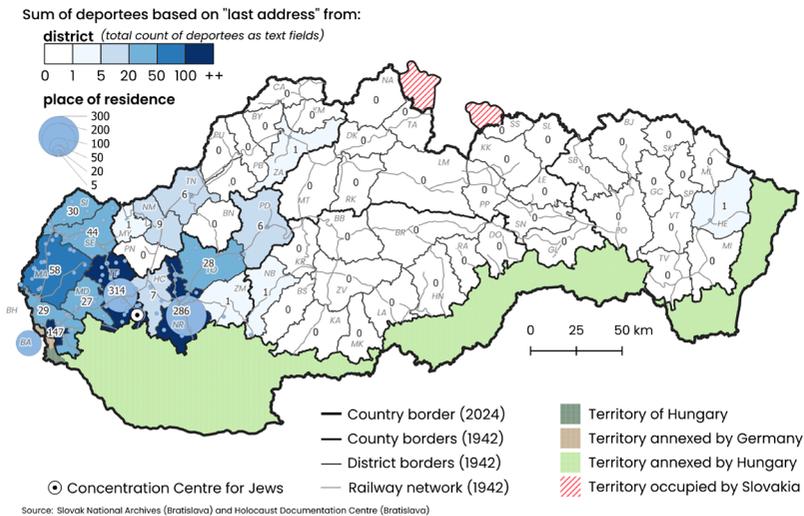


Fig. 6: Transport No. 4 (29 March 1942) from Sered' to Lublin

By analysing the transport list and the Census of Jews, we found that this transport from Sered' consisted of persons (1,006 people) whose main place of origin was in western and south-western Slovakia (Fig. 6). Most of the deportees came from the district of Trnava (314), followed by the district of Nitra (286), Bratislava city (147), Malacky (58) and Senec (44). Several districts in the Záhorie region (Malacky (58), Senica (44), Skalica (30), and the Little Carpathian districts of Bratislava-okolie (29) and Modra (27) show dozens of deportees in this transport. Figure 6 also clearly demonstrates that there are practically no people from the north-western territory, with the absolute majority residing in central and eastern Slovakia. This also clearly shows the territory covered by the concentration camp in Sered' at that time.

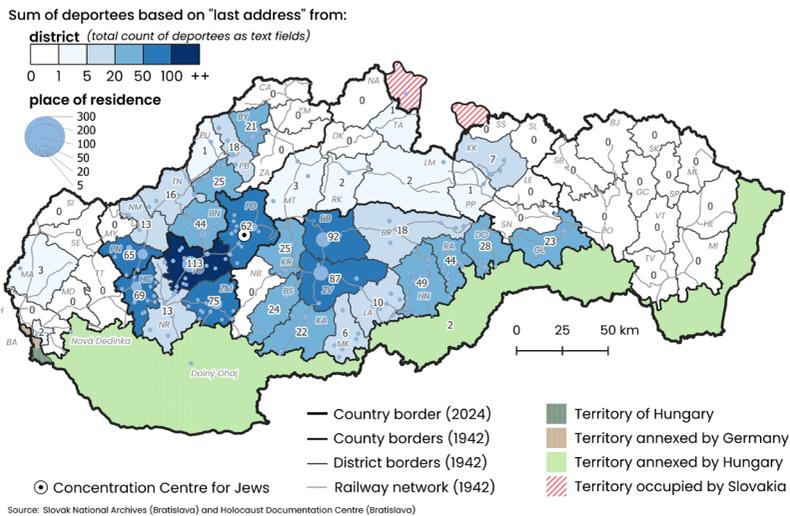


Fig. 7: Transport No. 5 (30 March 1942) from Nováky to Lublin

The third transport of so-called able-bodied Jews was dispatched from the concentration centre in Nováky on 30 March 1942, the day after the transport from Sered' left. It crossed the state border via Skalité – Zwardoń on 31 March 1942. In the Slovak context, it is referred to as Transport No. 5, and in documents, it is also referred to as Transport DA 70 from 31 March 1942.

This transport (number of deportees 986 ) extended further into central Slovakia and partly to the east of the country (see Fig. 7). A spatial analysis of the places of residence of the persons deported in this transport showed significant numbers of deportees in Ponitrie and nearby districts – Topoľčany (113), Prievidza (62), Bánovce nad Bebravou (44), Zlaté Moravce (75), Piešťany (65)

and Hlohovec (69) – but there were also significant numbers of deportees from districts and essentially the entire Pohronská County – Banská Bystrica (92), Zvolen (87), as well as Banská Štiavnica, Krupina, Kremnica, Hnúšťa, Revúca, Dobšiná, and from the Gemer district of Gelnica. It is interesting that Jews from villages on the left bank of the Váh River (Ilava and Hlohovec districts) are also represented in the transport. It is also interesting that some districts are represented only minimally – for example, the district of Nitra (13), from which a large part of the deported men in the previous transport No. 4 dispatched from Sered' came, or the district of Trenčín (16), from which many men were deported in transport No. 2 dispatched from Žilina. This points to the fact that the Slovak authorities and bodies responsible for organising the deportations transported people designated for deportation to various concentration centres. The coverage of the concentration centre in Nováky was regionally broader in the case of this transport than in the previous transport, which was dispatched from the concentration centre in Sered'. Overall, Transport No. 5 covered not only the west of the country but also its centre, and only marginally affected the eastern regions. Transports No. 6 and No. 7 from Slovakia were transports of women to the Auschwitz camp.

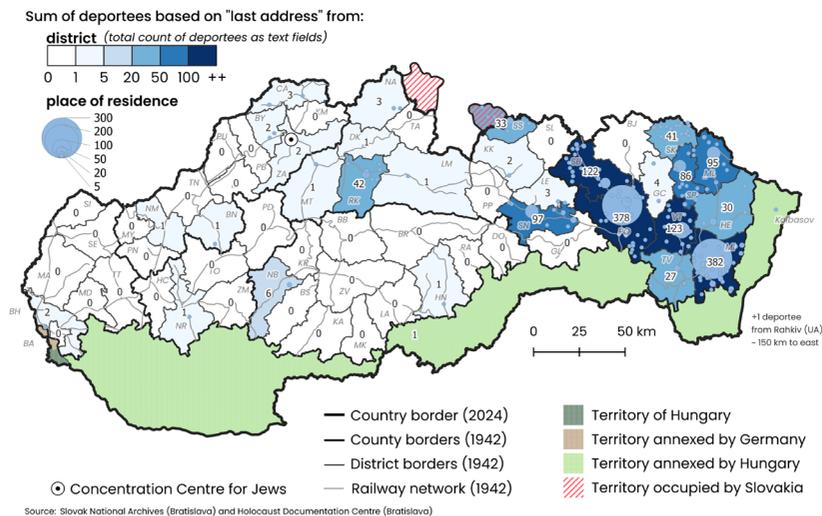


Fig. 8: Transport No. 8 (5 April 1942) from Žilina to Lublin

They were followed by the last transport of so-called able-bodied Jews, which was again dispatched from Žilina on 5 April 1942. This was the eighth transport from Slovakia, which atypically included 1493 men, significantly exceeding the

quota of 1,000 people per transport agreed with Nazi Germany. The reason for this excess is unknown to us, but such a case did not recur during the entire course of the so-called first wave of deportations of Jews from Slovakia (March – October 1942). However, this largest of the analysed transports was significant in terms of its territorial coverage, with a strong representation of deportees from eastern Slovakia.

Figure 8 clearly shows that the transport consisted of men and boys who came mainly from the territory of the former Šariš-Zemplín county and partly from the eastern districts of the former Tatranská county. The highest number, 382 deportees, came from the former district of Michalovce, followed by 378 people from the district of Prešov, 123 from the district of Vranov nad Topľou, and 122 from the district of Sabinov. As many as 97 Jews in this transport were from Spišská Nová Ves, 95 from the Medzilaborce district and 86 from the Stropkov district. A total of 41 Jews in this transport came from the then district of Vyšný Svidník. One of the deportees was listed as residing in Rachiv, a village that was part of Subcarpathian Ruthenia (Podkarpatská Rus) from 1918 to 1939, i.e. part of the First Czechoslovak Republic (today in Ukraine). It cannot be ruled out that this was a clerical error made at the concentration centre, where they may have entered the place of birth instead of the place of residence. Among the deportees was also a person from Kolbasov, a village located at that time in the territory annexed by Hungary in 1939. The only district in eastern Slovakia that was not represented in the transport is the district of Bardejov. This is likely related to the postponement of deportations in this district due to suspected cases of typhus infection. This transport also includes a significant number of deportees from the district of Ružomberok (42) for the first time. From a regional perspective, however, Transport No. 8 can be described as an “eastern Slovak” transport, which at that time affected large Jewish communities in Prešov, Sabinov, Vranov nad Topľou, and other towns in the east.

### ***Territorial coverage of the concentration centres in Žilina, Sereď and Nováky***

The above findings show that certain regions played a dominant role in individual transports. It is possible that this is related to the territory covered by the individual concentration centres where the transports were assembled, as well as to the individual round-ups in the districts, which were followed by the deportation of people to specific concentration centres. However, this hypothesis still needs to be verified through research that would correlate the dates of arrest and escort of individuals from district centres to specific concentration camps (so-called local transports) with the classification of these people in transports.

A prerequisite for its confirmation is also a quantitative evaluation using Shannon spatial entropy, i.e. an analysis of the origin of deportees from individual regions and their distribution among individual concentration centres (see Fig. 9).

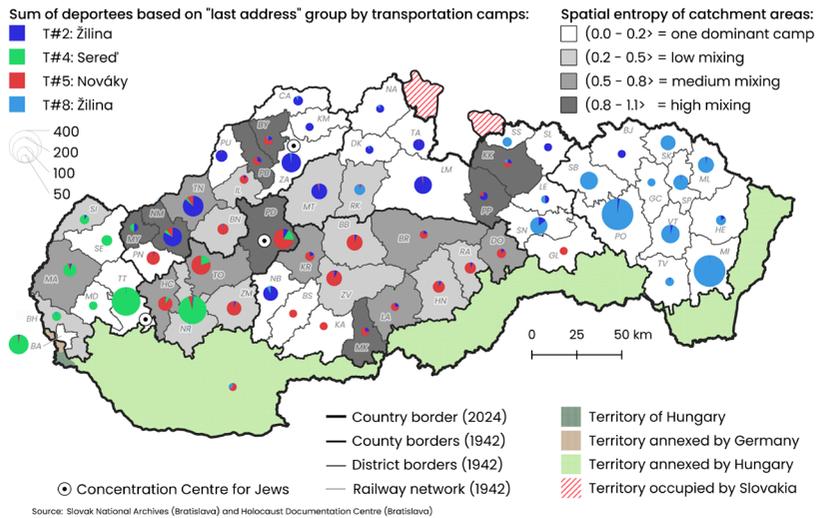


Fig. 9: Spatial entropy of catchment areas for concentration centres for Jews (Shannon entropy)

In our case, most districts are close to  $H = 0$ , which confirms that most regions clearly fell under a specific concentration centre. For example, the districts of eastern Slovakia (the entire Šarišsko-Zemplínska county, as well as the districts of Spišská Stará Ves, Stará Ľubovňa, Levoča, and Spišská Nová Ves) exclusively escorted the deportees to the concentration centre in Žilina. This was probably also related to the relatively complicated transport of deportees from districts in eastern Slovakia, which were formally „cut off“ from the former Czechoslovak railway network after the changes in state borders in 1938-1939. Later family transports from the Šarišsko-Zemplínska county, therefore, also had to pass through territory annexed by Hungary.<sup>32</sup>

Jewish men and boys from the Kysuce districts (Čadca, Kysucké Nové Mesto), the Považie district (Žilina), the Orava districts (Námestovo, Dolný Kubín and Trstená), the Liptov districts (Liptovský Svätý Mikuláš, Ružomberok), and the Turiec district (Turčiansky Svätý Martin) were also predominantly deported through Žilina. In the case of the Liptov districts, however, there was also a

32 NIŽŇANSKÝ, ed., *Holokaust na Slovensku* 6, pp. 289-290.

mixing of deportation centres, as it was significantly easier to reach Nováky via the railway line in Turiec (Martin ~ entropy 0.2, Ružomberok ~ entropy 0.26). However, the case of the Nová Baňa district is particularly noteworthy, from where Jews were deported in the transports via the camp in Žilina (~entropy 0.09).

On the other hand, the western Slovak districts of Bratislava-City, Modra, Trnava and Senica sent more than 95% of deportees via Sereď (entropy max. 0.05). The concentration centre in Nováky, in turn, significantly deported Jewish men from the Pohronská county (e.g. Banská Bystrica and Zvolen sent the overwhelming majority of Jews via Nováky). In the case of the districts in Pohronská county, however, the difficult railway line from Banská Bystrica to Dolná Štubňa, which was opened in 1940, probably also played a more essential role.

However, Figure 9 clearly shows which districts were located in border catchment areas where the “competences” of individual camps overlapped. These districts clearly show higher entropy, indicating that their deportees were more widely distributed among several camps. Specifically, approximately 80% of able-bodied men from the Topoľčany district were deported in the first transports via the Nováky centre and 20% via Sereď (~ entropy 0.72). Similarly, the district of Nové Mesto nad Váhom divided the deportees between Žilina (~85%) and the rest between Sereď and Nováky (~entropy 0.80). An interesting fact is the high entropy in the district of Prievidza, where, given the proximity of the concentration centre in Nováky, one would expect deportations from this camp to dominate – the opposite is true – a significant number of people were also deported from the district of Prievidza via other concentration centres (~entropy 1.07).

Overall, however, the low entropy values indicate that the catchment areas of the camps were relatively clearly defined and that most districts were covered by separate transports, without the need to gather people from one region and distribute them to several camps. Higher entropy values in the districts of Kežmarok (~ entropy 0.98), Poprad (~ entropy 0.81), Bytča (~ entropy 0.85), and Považská Bystrica (~ entropy 0.89) are not statistically significant in view of the total number of deportees. However, from the point of view of deportations organisation, the spatial entropy of transports indicates a geographically structured procedure, which was largely adhered to by local authorities.

## **Conclusion**

In this study, we analysed data on persons deported from Slovakia to the Majdanek concentration camp in March and April 1942, i.e. at the very beginning of the first wave of deportations of Jews from Slovakia. The analysis is based

on information obtained from the 1942 Census of Jews and from transport lists compiled in the individual concentration centres in Slovakia when the transports were organised. Using these sources and additional archival records, we created a normalised dataset and subjected it to data and spatial analysis with digital tools, which were then interpreted in the light of existing historiography and other sources. In this way, the study represents an attempt to apply digital humanities methods to a key episode of the Holocaust in Slovakia.

The spatial analysis shows that four transports of so-called able-bodied Jewish men, assembled in the concentration centres in Žilina, Sered' and Nováky, departed for the Majdanek camp from virtually the whole territory of what was then Slovakia, and even included individuals from beyond its borders. In total, 4,482 deportees were identified and geolocated to 590 municipalities in all 60 districts of the Slovak Republic (1939–1945), including persons originating from former Polish territory occupied by Slovakia after September 1939 and from municipalities in areas annexed by Hungary. At the same time, the analysis documents that the transports affected large Jewish communities in major urban centres.

By examining the territorial coverage of individual transports and the distribution of deportees among the three concentration centres, the study reveals a systematic geographical organisation of the deportations. Each concentration centre served a clearly defined catchment area, and the deportations of Jewish men in March and April 1942 proceeded in stages from west to east. This is confirmed by the calculated values of Shannon entropy at the district level, which in most cases approach zero and thus indicate a strong predominance of a single concentration centre per district. From the organisational point of view, the spatial entropy of transports thus points to a geographically structured procedure that local authorities largely followed.

At the same time, the results highlight questions for further research. The hypothesis that the observed spatial patterns of deportations were directly linked to the timing of arrests and the routing of so-called local transports from district centres to particular concentration camps still needs to be verified by correlating dates of arrest and escort with the composition of individual transports. Finally, it is important to recall that both the transport lists and the Census of Jews are schematic administrative sources with interpretative limits. They do not reflect the full complexity of the deportation process or the suffering of the individuals who became its victims and, ultimately, victims of genocide. Any quantitative and spatial reconstruction of deportations must therefore be read against this background and understood as a tool that can help to better grasp the scale, structure and organisation of the crime, but can never replace the human dimension of the events it describes.

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During the preparation of this work, the authors utilised Grammarly and ChatGPT to verify grammar and correct misspellings, as well as to restructure sentences. After using this tool/service, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and took full responsibility for the content of the publication. Artificial intelligence tools did not have access to the source data and did not process it. All data layers were processed on the local infrastructure created with the support of the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI) in Slovakia (EHRI-SK node). The authors are aware of possible statistical errors, which, however, do not affect the interpretation of the presented results. The maps are also available via a web application at [geoportal.sav.sk](http://geoportal.sav.sk).

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