

JEWISH FAMILY RESEARCH IN SLOVAKIA

Vivian Kahn, Oakland, CA

E-mail: vkahn@kmort.com

and Jan Hlavinka

Institute of Historical Studies/Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS)

Klemensova 19, Bratislava 813 64

E-mail: histihla@savba.sk/www.history.sav.sk

Prior to World War I, the lands that comprise the Slovak Republic included all or part of 17 Hungarian megye (counties). Family research in Slovakia can be challenging due, in particular, to changes in national borders. At the end of World War I, the Treaty of Trianon ceded all of so-called Upper Hungary to the new nation of Czechoslovakia, including the area between the Tisza River and present-day Slovakia. The 1938 Vienna Award returned the southern part of Slovakia and Transcarpathia to Hungary, a shift that is important for Holocaust-era research. After World War II, the eastern part of Czechoslovakia, including about half of Ung megye, became part of what is now Zakarpatska oblast, the western region of Ukraine.

Determining the old Hungarian and current Slovak names of villages, districts, and counties and understanding how the national borders shifted is necessary in order to identify and locate records for family research. Resources that provide former Hungarian and current place names include:

Sebők László, Határon túli magyar helységnévszótár [Hungarian Place Name Database]
<http://sebok2.adatbank.transindex.ro/index.php?action=betu&betu=a&kat=ma>

H-SIG Cross Reference Guide <http://www.jewishgen.org/Hungary/methods.htm>

Search street maps of present-day Slovak towns by Hungarian or Slovak name at RadixHub:
http://www.radixhub.com/radixhub/sources/streetmaps_of_towns_in_slovakia_by_zoznam.sk

The Slovak Republic is divided into 8 regions (formerly called "kraj" and now Vyssi uzemny celok or vuc), 79 districts (okres), and 79 districts (okres). Each of the districts includes several municipalities (obec). These are further divided into cadastral or mapping areas (katastrálne územie). Both regions and municipalities are units of state administration and self-governing entities. The districts, usually named after the largest town in the district, are primarily statistical with no specific administrative functions but present district name may be necessary when looking for some records.

ARCHIVES:

In 1827 the Hungarian Parliament directed every religious group in the Kingdom of Hungary to keep two sets of parish registers and to periodically forward the duplicate register copy to the "törvényhatóságok levéltárába" (i.e. municipal/county archive authorities¹) In many cases, a second copy of the parish registers was created. These so-called "Druhopisy" [Bishop's Copies] were to be kept by the Hungarian government and many can be found in the Hungarian National Archives in Budapest.

All parish records prior to civil registration (1895) were supposed to be transferred to the national archives, now the Slovak Republic State Archives, after World War II. Civil registration records less than 100 years old are maintained locally, usually in the village registrar office,

which in some areas may serve several small villages. The pre-1895 records should have included all documents related to formerly-Hungarian lands now in Slovakia that became part of the new nation of Czechoslovakia after World War I. Some of these records found their way to the Slovak Archives but pre-1895 Jewish birth, marriage, and death records for several towns in former Zemplén county have been found in National Archives of Hungary in Satoraljaujhely, Hungary and records from the western part of Ung, including the Szobranc and Kaposi districts, are held in the Transcarpathia Regional Archives (Zakarpatskiy Oblast) in Uzhorod, Ukraine, formerly Ungvár, the county seat of Ung megye. (Zemplén, Ung, and Maramaros, which was split between Czechoslovakia and Romania, were among the only counties that were divided as part of the 1918 Paris Peace Treaty.)

The Zemplén Archive in Satoraljaujhely has Jewish community records for some places in the part of Zemplén megye that are now in Slovakia. JewishGen's Hungarian SIG has obtained the following records and is transcribing them to include in the All Hungary Database:

<http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Hungary/>:

Michalovce 1841-1876 170 pages
Stakcin 1835-1863 25 pages
Stropkov 1833-1851 150 pages
Humenne 1830-1851 200 pages
Trebisov 1845-1871 10 pages
Vranov 1846-1868 59 pages
Secovce 1848-1869 151 pages
Kralovsky Chlmec 1840-1895 512 pages

Prior appointment is required to use the archives located on the first floor of the county offices. Researchers have been able to obtain permission to photograph these records for personal use. There is no on-line catalog of records in the collection:

Zemplén County Archives
Sátoraljaújhely városháza és levéltár
Kossuth tér 5. Sátoraljaújhely
HUNGARY
Phone: 47/321-353
Hours: Mon-Wed 8-16, Fri 8-12
Fax: 47/321-353
E-mail: <ujhelpmh@axelero.hu>

Information on the Archives of the Ukraine website states that they will respond to mail inquiries, but this may not be accurate. It is probably necessary to hire a researcher to transcribe synagogue registers for Velky Kapusany, Sobrance, and other places in former Szobranc district in Ung County. Sobrance records include births (1849-1895, Books 1709 & 1710); marriages (1860-1895, Book 1711); and deaths (1850-1895, Book 1712).

Zakarpatskiy Oblast Archive
Mynayska, and 14, Uzhgorod, 88005 (korp. 1)
UKRAINE
Phone: (0312) 2-35-49, 2-06-10 (korp. 1);
Факс: (0312) 2-58-39 Fax: (0312) 2-58-39
Тел.: (03241) 2-32-10 (кorp. 2) Tel.: (03241) 2-32-10 (korp. 2)

Director: Mikhail Delegan
E-mail: arhiv@uzh.ukrtel.net

The Slovak National Archives in Bratislava and the regional archives in Banska Bystrica, Bratislava, Bytca, Kosice, Levoca, Nitra, and Presov accept written and E-mail requests concerning extracts, copies and search from archival documents. Each of the regional archives (Statny archivy) covers several areas identified as branches [pobočka]. Inquiries directed to the National Archives will be referred to the appropriate regional archive, which will notify the researcher, typically in Slovak, whether records have been located. If the archive finds the information requested, the Slovak Embassy will notify the researcher and indicate the required fee.

Slovenský Národný Archív [Slovak National Archives]
Drotárska cesta 42, 817 01 Bratislava
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
Telephone: + 421 2 67298111, 62801178,-81,-83,-85
Fax: (00 421) 2 6280 1247
Director, Eva Varabcova, PhDr.
E-mail: archiv@sna.vs.sk www.civil.gov.sk/snarchiv/

The matriky in the regional archives include birth, baptismal, marriage and death records as well as tax records, deeds, charters and nobility records. In most cases, records can now be ordered by E-mail. The website at <http://www.civil.gov.sk/p19/p19-01.shtm> lists the regional archives and the branches covered by each regional archive. Click on Územná pôsobnosť archívu/okres for contact information for each regional archive, a map of the region, and names and contact information for the managers of the associated branches.

Requests for records less than 100 years old can be sent directly to the town or city where the event occurred. Submit inquiries in the form of a letter in Slovak or use a Slovak-English application form. The Language section of the JewishGen Hungarian SIG website <http://www.jewishgen.org/Hungary/methods.htm> has links to a Czech-Slovak letter writing guide and other tools. Many Slovak towns and cities now have websites that include postal and E-mail addresses for the municipal government, pictures, and town maps. The Mesto SK website has a map and links at: http://www.mesto.sk/index_mesto.phtml

Archív mesta Košíc [Archive of the city of Kosice]
040 01 Košice, Kováčska 20/1
Director: JUDr. Jozef Kirst
Phone: 055/622 18 25

Archív hlavného mesta SR Bratislavy [Archive of the capital city of Bratislava]
850 05 Bratislava 55, Markova 1
Director: PhDr. Anna Buzinkayová
Phone: 02/54 43 32 48
Fax: 02/54 43 08 48
E-mail: archiv@samb.vs.sk

LAND RECORDS:

Katastrálny portal [Cadastral Portal] is a searchable database that can be used to find both current owners and former owners who are identified as “undetermined”. The website replaced a previous portal "Zoznam nezistených vlastníkov" [A list of unknown land owners] that the Slovak Government established to facilitate the identification of owners of so-called unclaimed or abandoned land including lands taken from Jewish owners during the Aryanization program in as well as property appropriated during the Soviet era.

Peter Nagy, a Slovak-based professional genealogist, and Bill Tarkulich, developer of the Eastern Slovakia Research Strategies website <http://www.iabsi.com/gen/public/> have an on-line guide to searching Slovak Land Records at: <http://www.centroconsult.sk/genealogy/land.html>

Searching for “undetermined owners” by region and district (e.g. Kosický, Sobrance) will bring up a list of owners for the entire district. If you know the region and district where your ancestors lived you may be able to find a record of ownership by searching for the owner by name, region, and district. Searching for undetermined owners in the Sobrance district of Kosický, for example, brings up a list of properties with “unnamed owners” in ten cadastral districts including Remetske Hamre, Tibava, Benatina, Podhorod, and Jenkovce. Once you have identified a specific property you can view a map using Autodesk Map Guide, which you can use your Internet Explorer browser to download from the website or another location. At present, the maps can only be downloaded to PC systems.

CENSUS RECORDS:

The Kingdom of Hungary and the Austro-Hungarian government conducted a number of special censuses of the Jewish population. Conscriptio Judaerum 1848 is the best known of these lists, which were used to determine the Tolerance Tax levied against Jewish residents.

The Hungarian National Archives has records from most of the counties and some towns now in Slovakia for years 1781-1850. JewishGen’s Hungarian SIG has been acquiring and transcribing these records to add to JewishGen’s All Hungary Database. See list at: <http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Hungary/CensusOther.htm#Records> The Zemplén Archive in Satoraljaujhely has Jewish census records from Zemplén megye dating from as far back as 1755 to 1845 for more than 400 different places. Most of the census records before 1848 only list the head of household.

1930 and 1940 Czechoslovak Population Census

The Slovak National Archives in Bratislava accepts written requests to search records from the 1930 and 1940 Czechoslovak censuses. The request must include the full name, date and place of birth, and exact address of the person being searched. Requests need to specify the researcher’s relationship to the searched person or provide verified authorization to conduct the search. The charge for research is 150 Sk (Slovak koruna) or about \$7 US for each person and each year being searched. An additional administrative fee of 50 Sk is charged for a certificate of verification. Because some Jewish households tried to hide their Jewish identity, information in the 1940 records may not be accurate. *Zidovska Komunita V Bratislave V Roku 1940* [Census of Bratislava Jewish Community 1940], published in Bratislava in 2000 includes names, addresses, birth dates and places that Petra Larisova extracted from the 1940 Census. This book is in the library of the US Holocaust Museum and a number of university libraries.

DIRECTORIES:

Magyarország iparosainak és kereskedőinek cím- és lakjegyzéke [Directory of craftsmen and merchants in Hungary] Search names listed in this 1892 Directory at RadixIndex <http://www.radixindex.com/databases/pv001001.shtml> includes names of all of the craftsmen and merchants living in the country. Directory is divided alphabetically by occupation and by town. Names of persons are sorted alphabetically within each town. Subscription required.

Gazdaczimtár szerk. és kiadja a Magyar Kir. [Landowners and Leaseholders in the Kingdom of Hungary] http://www.radixhub.com/radixhub/sources/landowners_and_leaseholders_in_hungary_1895 This 1897 Directory is based on an 1895 government agricultural survey and includes information about land holdings of about 142 acres or more. The volume is organized by counties, districts, and settlements and includes an alphabetical index of owners (not leaseholders). RadixHub has instructions for searching and provides links to counties by their Hungarian name.

Adresář republiky Československé pro průmysl, živnosti, obchod a zemědělství [Czechoslovak Republic Directories for industry, trade, commerce and agriculture] The Czech National Library in Prague has business directories published by Rudolf Mosse for areas in Slovakia for the years 1928-39. JewishGen's Hungarian SIG has proposed to digitize these records to make them searchable using Optical Character Recognition (OCR)

A visszacsatolt Felvidék és Ruténföld címtára; a visszacsatolt területek közigazgatási térképével. Szerk.: A M. Kir. Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, Budapest: Stud/Statisztikai Tudósíto, 1939. H-SIG is also proposing to digitize this 1939 Directory for Upper Hungary and Carpathian Ruthenia that is in the collection of the Hungarian National Szechenyi Library, Budapest, and is also in the Yale University Library.

LDS MICROFILMS:

The Family History Library has microfilmed Jewish records in the Bytca, Kosice, Levoca, Presov, Nitra, and Bratislava archives. For inventory see <http://feefhs.org/mf/sk/sk-jew1.html>. Enter keywords "Slovakia" and "Jewish" to obtain a complete list. JewishGen has a searchable database of Jewish Records in the FHL Catalog that was published in 2001 and doesn't include more recent films. <http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/FHLC/>

BOOKS AND ARTICLES:

Zidovske Nabozenske Obce na Slovensku [Jewish Communities in Slovakia], Eugen Barkany and Ludovit Dojc, Bratislava, 1991. ISBN 80-85128-56-X Includes an alphabetical list of all of the communities included in the book at:

<http://www.geocities.com/danpolak/data/barkany/list.html>

Jewish Vital Statistics Holdings in the Archives of Slovakia, Jordan Auslander, Microfiche list of 4000 towns, showing the location and scope of holdings of Jewish birth, marriage and death records.

Cirkevne Matriky na Slovensku Zo 16.-19. (Odbor Archivnictva Ministerstva Vnutra SR, 1991). , Jane Saramanyova. Includes list of Jewish parish registers.

"Jewish Cemeteries in Slovakia", Eugen Barkany, *The Jews of Czechoslovakia*, [Abridged English language version of book listed above.]

"Jewish Genealogical Research in Slovakia", Meyer Denn. *Avotaynu* VII:1 (Spring 1991), pp. 8-9.

"Slovakian Jewish Research", Jordan Auslander. *Avotaynu* IX:4 (Winter 1993), pp. 14-16.

"Slovakian State Archives", Edward David Luft. *Avotaynu* XII:3 (Fall 1996), pp. 20-22. {Address list}.

The Jews of Czechoslovakia, 2 vols., Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1968 and 1971.

INTERNET SITES:

Szlovákiai Magyar Adatbank: Fórum Kisebbségkutató Intézet [Forum Minority Research Institute] Includes postcard images of Hungarian settlements in Slovakia
<http://tinyurl.com/d28yyo>

A (cseh)szlovákiai magyarok lexikona 1918-tól napjainkig [Lexikon of Hungarians in Slovakia 1918-Present] <http://tinyurl.com/d4rs9x>

Bill Tarkulich's Eastern Slovakia (Východoslovenský) & Environs Genealogy Research Strategies
<http://www.iabsi.com/gen/public/>

The Carpathian Connection <http://www.tccweb.org/>
Includes information on areas in present-day Slovakia, Poland, the Ukraine, and Romania formerly in the western part of Galicia and the old Hungarian counties of Saros, Zemplen, Szepes, Abauj, Ung, Ugocsa, Bereg, and Maramaros.

Forum of the Jewish Communities of the Former State of Czechoslovakia
<http://www.zchor.org/CZEDATA.HTM>
Names and contacts for 544 Jewish communities (kehilot) in Slovakia and other areas formerly part of Czechoslovakia.

Federation of East European Family History Societies-Slovakia Genealogy Resources
<http://www.feefhs.org/links/slovakia.html>

Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Washington D.C. <http://www.slovakembassy-us.org/contact.html>

Slovak Republic Consulates and Embassies outside of US
<http://slovak-republic.visahq.com/embassy/United-States/>

Slovenska Posta [Slovak Postal Service] <http://www.posta.sk/> Search for addresses in Slovak Republic. Includes English language version.