

Neuengamme

Concentration camp located right outside Hamburg, Germany. Altogether, about 106,000 prisoners were sent to Neuengamme, and 55,000 perished there.

Originally, Neuengamme was a satellite of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The first prisoners arrived in December 1938 in order to build the camp. They lived in an old brick factory. In fact, it was because of that factory that a concentration camp was established in Hamburg in the first place: the SS wanted to reopen the brick factory and use its products for construction of the new public buildings planned for the city.

In April 1940 the German Earth and Stone Works, an SS-owned corporation, signed a contract with the city of Hamburg regarding various construction works, including the expansion of the brick factory, making a canal that would connect the factory to the river, and building a connection for the factory to the railroad. All this work was to be done by prisoners at Neuengamme. Barracks were set up and more prisoners were brought to the camp. By June 1940 Neuengamme achieved independent concentration camp status, and in the fall of 1941, thousands of Soviet prisoners of war were brought there. Eventually, there were 34,500 Soviet citizens at Neuengamme, making them the largest national group at the camp.

In 1942 private German firms set up subdivisions at Neuengamme. Many satellite camps were established at armament production sites, such as in the Bremen and Hamburg machine and shipbuilding works, in Hanover, and in the industrial zone in Brunswick. By 1945, Neuengamme had 70 satellite camps; most of the new prisoners who arrived at the camp were interned in those sub-camps. In 1944 the main camp held 12,000 prisoners while the satellites had more than 25,000. In the summer of 1944 large groups of Jews were brought to Neuengamme, mostly from HUNGARY and POLAND. From 1944--1945 approximately 13,000 Jewish prisoners passed through the main camp or satellites.

The main camp at Neuengamme was evacuated in late April 1945, soon after most of the satellite camps were evacuated.

