

HISTORY OF MIGRATION IN GERMANY



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The thirty Year's War (1618-1646) led to serious destruction and reduction in population in some German regions. The sovereigns therefore recruited people from other overpopulated countries to the war-ravaged areas. As a result, they transformed into a central European immigration regions. Also, religious refugees from other parts of Europe were drawn to early modern Germany. The largest and the most important economically, culturally, and politically group of immigration were the Huguenots. After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1598) in 1685, thirty to forty thousand Huguenots immigrated to the German areas north of the Main (mainly to Brandenburg-Prussia, Hessen-Kassel, the Duchies of Guelph and the Hanseatic cities).

After these immigration flows, which ruled until the middle of the 18th century, Europe ruled until the 1830s, while until the end of the 19th century transatlantic emigration, especially to the USA, was dominant. There, German immigrants from 1820 to 1860 made up the second largest group of all immigrants after the Irish with around 30 percent; from 1861 to 1890 they were even the largest. The extensive expansion of economic opportunities through high industrialization and agricultural modernization in Germany as well as the economic crisis in the USA ultimately led to a significant reduction in transatlantic migration flows. From the 1680s to 1800, more than 740,000 people emigrated from German-speaking countries to Eastern, Central Eastern and Southern Europe. And from 1816 to 1914 more than 5.5 million German emigrants moved to the USA.

Flight and forced labour during and between the Wars

The so called „refugees“ had to go through a lot of tough times in the time of World War I. Thousands of them escaped from the Russian Revolution (1917), the civil war and the Soviet system and the Weimar Republic became the destination for a lot of them. The Jews had to make the same experiences because of racism from the National Socialism, these people had to go through a hard time to survive. The rise of power from Germany caused a lot of traumata to these people because they used their huge position against them. Some of these Jews had the chance to escape but about 195.000 German Jews couldn't escape. Because of the Wars, the need for labour force raised really fast. This caused a lot of immigration from various countries. The time after World War II was kind of muddled in Germany, because a lot of Germans wanted to escape from the Eastern side of Germany to the West, because of the bad conditions and the government there. At the time of both World Wars, a lot of terrible things had happened and things like this should never happen again.

“Guest worker” recruitment, the labour recruitment ban and family reunification

Between the 1950s and the 1960s, Germany experienced an economic boom while the expansion of the labour happened in the same timeline. As domestic workforce didn't work in Germany anymore, they agreed to recruit workers outside Germany. Italy started in 1955, followed by Spain and Greece in 1960, Turkey in 1962, Morocco in 1963, Portugal in 1964, Tunisia in 1965 and Yugoslavia in 1968. The workers who came outside from Germany had to do the hard work which contains many difficult work conditions like high physical stress that the workers in Germany don't want to do anymore. While the recruitment stopped in year 1973 because of the oil price crisis, 14 million foreign workers came to Germany. 11 million stayed temporarily and returned eventually to their own countries. The other people were staying in Germany plus their own family joined them there. Because of that the number of foreign workers in Germany decreased at the end of the recruitment period. From 2.6 million in year 1973 to 1.6 million in 1989 while in the same timeline the foreign population increased there from 3.97 to 4.9 million.

Immigration in unified Germany: asylum migration and the influx of ethnic German resettlers in the 1980s and 1990s

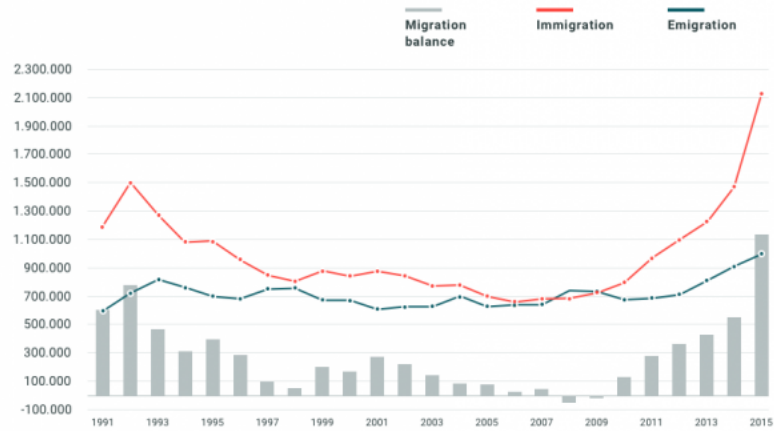
In Germany, the number of asylum applications rose significantly, especially from Eastern and Southern Europe. It surpassed 100,000 in 1988, with the opening of the Iron Curtain, the transformation of the political systems in the former states of the Eastern Bloc and finally soared to almost 440,000 by 1992. After the end of refuge and displacement caused by World War II, approximately 4 million ethnic Germans still lived in Eastern, Central Eastern and Southeastern Europe in 1950, according to official numbers.

Current developments

The immigration started to reach his first climax in reunified Germany in 1992. During that year, more than 1.5 million people immigrated to Germany, while 720.000 left the country. The result is net migration of approximately 782.000. In the following years, immigration significantly decreased. Statistically speaking, Germany was an emigration country in 2008 and 2009: The numbers of people leaving the country was higher than those arriving from abroad. Since 2010, the influx of migrants has been increasing again. In 2015, immigration was at the highest in the history especially due to the large influx of asylum seekers.

In 2015, a total of 2.14 million people immigrated to Germany, while 998.000 people left the country during the same period. This results in a migration surplus of approximately 1.14 million people. Over the past few years, the majority of immigrants arrived from European countries, especially from EU member states. One exception was 2015 when immigrants from the EU represented only around 40 percent, while Syria was the main country of origin of new immigrants, ahead of Romania and Poland.

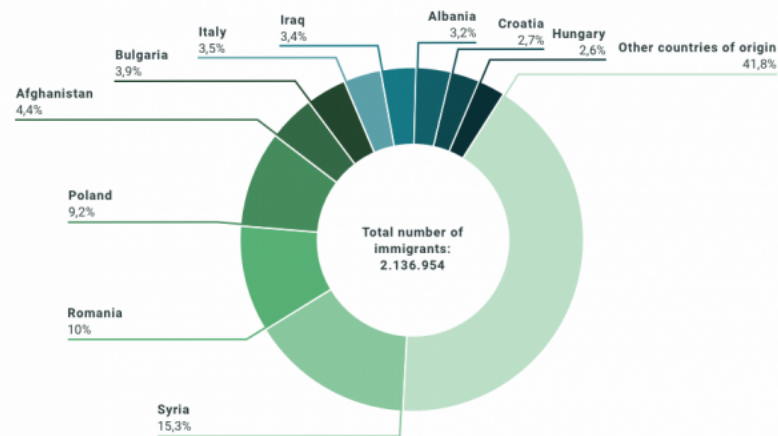
■ **Migration across Germany's Borders**
btw. 1991 - 2015



Source: Authors' own graph based on data from the Federal Statistics Office: Statistisches Bundesamt (2017): Bevölkerung und Erwerbstätigkeit. Wanderungen 2015. Fachserie 1 Reihe 1.2. Wiesbaden.
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■ **Immigration in 2015 by the Ten Most Frequent Countries of Origin**
in Percent



Source: Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (2017): Migrationsbericht des Bundesamtes für Migration und Flüchtlinge im Auftrag der Bundesregierung. Migrationsbericht 2015. Nuremberg.
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