

# Immigration in Germany

If you haven't done it yet, fill in the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.de/r/YGCPMD8>

Then go to the padlet about immigration in Germany via the link or QR-code. With the help of the materials, try to answer the questions. You can also find a lot additional information and interesting videos there.

<https://padlet.com/sternbea/elN3rwvyfdk4mmik>



## 1. Immigration statistics - Watch the video 'Immigrant groups in Germany'

How many immigrants were there in total in 1990? \_\_\_\_\_

The 5 largest immigrant groups in Germany in 1990 were:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

How many immigrants were there in total in 2000? \_\_\_\_\_

The 5 largest immigrant groups in Germany in 2000 were:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

In which year did the total number of immigrants reach 10,000,000 for the first time? In \_\_\_\_\_

In which year did the numbers of immigrants from Syria reach more than 500,000? In \_\_\_\_\_

In which year did the number 1 position change? In \_\_\_\_\_

In which year did the number of immigrants reach about 3 times that of 1990? \_\_\_\_\_

How many immigrants were there in total in 2020? \_\_\_\_\_

The 5 largest immigrant groups in Germany in 2020 were:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**What did you find surprising about these numbers or countries of origin of the immigrants? Is it similar in your home country or is it very different? Discuss in your group.**

Tip: Each student in your group can pick one of the topics below, read the text and answer the questions. Then you can tell the other students in your group what you have found out. If you still have time, you can have a look at the additional material on the padlet.

**2. Read the text about ‘Gastarbeiter in Germany’ and answer the questions.**

What does the term ‚Gastarbeiter‘ mean? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a similar term in your language? \_\_\_\_\_

Why did Germany need the guest workers? \_\_\_\_\_

How many guest workers came to Germany between 1955 and 1973? \_\_\_\_\_

How many stayed and brought their families to Germany? \_\_\_\_\_

Which country sent the first guest workers to Germany? \_\_\_\_\_

Which country sent most guest workers to Germany? \_\_\_\_\_

Why did many guest workers experience a culture shock?

\_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to work in a foreign country one day? Why?/Why not? Discuss in your group.

**3. Read the text ‘A brief history of refugees who escaped to Germany’ and answer the questions.**

When was the number of asylum seekers in Germany more than 100,000 for the first time? \_\_\_\_\_

When was the number of asylum seekers in Germany at its highest?

How many applications were there that year? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did these refugees mostly come from? \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Read the text about German late repatriates from Russia and Kazakhstan and answer the questions.**

What are late repatriates called in German? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do they get the German citizenship automatically? \_\_\_\_\_

How many late repatriates and their family members are there in Germany today? \_\_\_\_\_

When did most of them come to Germany? \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Read the text ‘Refugees from Ukraine in Germany – A brief overview’**

How many refugees from Ukraine have approximately arrived in Germany? \_\_\_\_\_

Is that more or less than in your home countries? Compare!

Why is it difficult to find out the exact number?

What advantages do refugees from Ukraine have in Germany in comparison to other refugees, for example from Syria? Do you think that is OK? Why?/Why not? Discuss in your group.

## Refugees from Ukraine in Germany – A brief overview

Between 24th February and 6th April 2022, more than 310,000 refugees from Ukraine have been documented in Germany. However, how many refugees have actually arrived in Germany is hard to say because they can travel without a visa to and inside the countries of the European Union, so there are probably many undocumented refugees who have found a temporary home with relatives or friends who already live in Germany.

84% of the war refugees from Ukraine are women. 58% of women have come to Germany together with their children. The average age is 38 years. 42% are staying in a big city, especially in Berlin (14%), Hamburg (3%) and Munich (5%). About ¼ live with friends, 19% with relatives and 22% in other private accommodation. 35% live in hotels, collective accommodation and the likes. 42% of the refugees want to stay where they are while 32% want to return to Ukraine as soon as possible.

Most places for arriving refugees are almost completely full by now so that emergency accommodation has to be set up.

Refugees from Ukraine will receive as much money (basic allowance) from the German government as acknowledged asylum seekers and are treated like them without having to apply for asylum. They can stay in the country for one year which can be extended to three years. What is also different for refugees from Ukraine in comparison to other refugees: They are allowed to work in Germany from day one and can use the services of the German job centres and receive better healthcare.



## Migration to Germany after World War II – A brief overview

Following World War II northern Europe did not have enough workers for their fast growing economies while there was high unemployment in southern European countries including Turkey. That is why northern European countries like Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Belgium and Germany introduced programs so that unemployed workers from southern European countries could get a job there.

The German word ‚Gastarbeiter‘ literally means ‚guest worker‘. It’s a term used for foreign or migrant workers who moved to West Germany between 1955 and 1973, seeking work as part of one of these guest worker programs. Often it was not easy for those guest workers. Many did not know anything about life in Germany or the German language and suffered from culture shock and homesickness. Most lived in poor conditions and had to work hard to be able to save money for their families at home. Between 1960 and 1973 the number of foreign workers rose from about 43,000 to 706,000. Until the guest worker program was stopped in 1973, about 14 million migrant workers came to Germany. 11 million returned to their home countries.

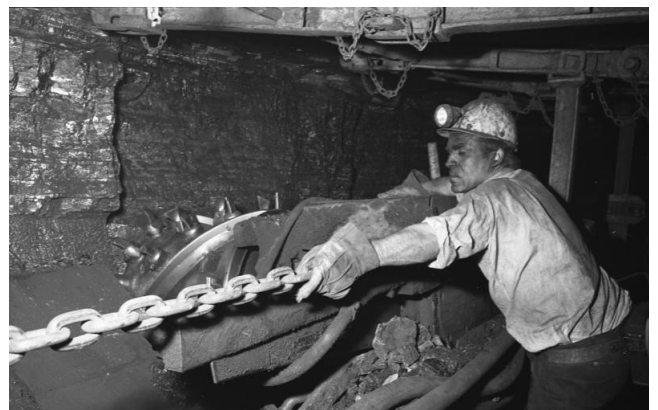
The first guest workers came from Italy in the 1950s. In the early 1960s there was also a guest worker program with Spain, Greece, Turkey and some other countries. At first, Germany did not want such a program with Turkey as many were of the opinion that the cultural gap between Germany and Turkey would be too large and because there were enough unemployed people living in the poorer regions of Germany who could do the jobs. But the United States of America put some political pressure on Germany to accept guest workers from Turkey.

After 1961 Turkish citizens, mostly from rural areas, soon became the largest group of guest workers in West Germany. The expectation at that time was that working in Germany would be only for one or two years before returning to their home country. Long-term integration was not planned for. However, many Gastarbeiter decided to stay and bring their families to Germany because there were little job opportunities in their home countries. By 2010 there were about 4 million people of Turkish descent in Germany. The generation born in Germany attended German schools, but some had a poor command of either German or Turkish, and thus had either low-skilled jobs or were unemployed. Most are Muslims and are often reluctant to become German citizens.

The German citizenship law does not automatically give a person born in Germany the German citizenship, but only people who have German ancestors. Accordingly, children born in Germany of a guest worker were not automatically citizens, but might choose to apply for German citizenship later in their lives, which was given to persons who had lived in Germany for at least 15 years, worked for their living and did not have a criminal record. Today, children of foreigners born on German soil are granted German citizenship automatically if the parent has been in Germany for at least eight years as a legal immigrant. As a rule those children may also have the citizenship of the parents' home country. Those between 18 and 23 years of age must choose to keep either the German citizenship or their parents' citizenship.

In many cases guest workers integrated neatly into German society, in particular those from other European countries with a Christian background, even if they started out poor. For example, while many Spanish that came to Germany were poor farmers, who could not read or write, their children were successful at school and university and do well in the job market. Today the term *Gastarbeiter* is no longer accurate, as the former guest worker communities have become permanent residents or citizens, and therefore are no "guests".

total guest workers (in 1000)	from Italy	from Greece	from Spain	from Turkey	from Portugal	from Jugoslavia
1955	80	8	0,6	0,5	–	–
1960	329	144	21	16	3	0,3
1965	1,217	372	187	183	133	64
1970	1,949	382	242	172	354	45
1971	2,241	408	269	187	453	58
1972	2,352	426	270	184	511	66
1973	2,595	450	250	190	605	85
1974	2,287	332	229	150	607	78
1975	2,039	292	196	125	543	68
1980	2,016	308	130	85	588	58



Italian Gastarbeiter working in a German coal mine

# A brief history of refugees who escaped to Germany

A person is defined as a refugee if they have to flee their home country because of a well-founded fear of persecution or violence. The persecution may occur due to race, religion, nationality or political opinion. The violence may be ethnic, tribal or religious, but it can also peak as war. For these reasons, refugees cannot return home. International refugee law is governed by the 1951 Geneva Convention.

Germany - compared to other large European countries such as France and the United Kingdom - is a relatively young country. It wasn't until 1871 that the "German Empire" emerged from many smaller kingdoms. The country saw the first large influx of refugees during and after the first World War, for example Russians escaping the Russian revolution (1917-1920s) and Eastern European Jews escaping persecution (until 1920s).

After World War II up until today, there have been many different groups of people fleeing from their home countries because of war or persecution and seeking refuge in Germany. Here are some examples:

- people escaping communist Soviet regimes to West Germany (1950s-1991)
- 'boat people' from Vietnam (late 1970s)
- people fleeing from coups in Poland (1981-83), Turkey (1980), the Islamic revolution in Iran (1979), the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990), the conflict between the Turkish government and the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK)

In 1980, the number of asylum applications per year in Germany was more than 100,000 for the first time. The Yugoslav Wars led to millions of displaced people in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and led to asylum requests in Germany of almost half a million in 1992. Back then, 80% of all asylum requests filed in Europe were filed in Germany.

During the early 1990s, anti-refugee and anti-migrant sentiments surged in Germany. Violent far-right attacks shocked the country. In 1991, two Lebanese girls were injured severely when their refugee home was set on fire by neo-nazi youths in Hünxe. In Mölln (1992) and Solingen (1993), right-wing extremists set the homes of Turkish migrants on fire, leaving three and five people dead.

In 1993, the parliament changed the German constitution and imposed stricter requirements for asylum seekers in Germany. This caused the number of asylum applications to drop drastically in the following years. Since then, people are technically only allowed to file for asylum if they did not travel through another country considered to be safe to get to Germany.

The so far highest number of asylum seekers per year was reached in 2016 with almost 750,000 applications after Angela Merkel, the then chancellor of Germany, opened the German borders for refugees mostly from Syria. Many Germans welcomed those refugees. However, the enormous amount of people from a different cultural and religious background caused many problems and also fuelled anti-refugee sentiment. In 2021 74.7% of asylum applicants in Germany were Muslims.



# German late repatriates from Russia and Kazakhstan

Late repatriates of German origin (Spätaussiedler) are persons from the countries of the former Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact who faced persecution and discrimination because they had German ancestors. These German ancestors had migrated to Eastern Europe in earlier migration movements, some dating back several hundred years. For this reason they have been allowed to settle in Germany, along with non-German family members if they could prove that they had German ancestors. They automatically got the German citizenship because of their 'German blood'. Today 3.9 million repatriates and their relatives live in Germany, thereby building not only the biggest group with a migratory background in Germany but in the whole of Europe.

Most late repatriates came to Germany directly after the fall of the Iron Curtain at the end of the 1980s/beginning of the 1990s with a peak in 1990 of 400,000 people migrating from Poland, the former Soviet Union and Romania to Germany. By 2007 the number had dropped to about 6000.

Although late repatriates have German citizenship and all the political and legal rights that come with citizenship, the social and economic integration is far from being satisfying. One reason is the sheer number of people who all needed new homes and jobs. Also, many late repatriates did not speak any German and knew nothing about German culture and traditions and preferred to stay within their own community of 'Russian' culture and language. The number of unemployed late repatriates is higher (nearly one out of three) than in any other group of foreigners (one out of five). And many of those who are employed have a low-paid job. Only 60% are more or less satisfied with their life in Germany.

