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Migration History in Germany

There has never been a more opportune time to reinvestigate the historical development of our society. In 2011, Germany had 80.3 million residents. Of those residents, 15.96 million - almost 19% of the entire population – had a migration background.* In 2005, in comparison, 17.9% of the population had a migration background.

At the same time, Germany's workforce no longer meets the labor demands of today's economy. There are some important parallels to be drawn between the current situation and the era of the so-called economic miracle, which began in the mid-1950s. However, the history of migration in Germany reaches back further than that.

***According to the German Federal Statistics Office: All individuals who have immigrated to the Federal Republic of Germany since 1949, all foreign citizens born in Germany, and all children born as German citizens to at least one parent who immigrated or was born in Germany as a foreign citizen are considered to have a migration background.**

From a Land of Emigration to a Land of Immigration

Incessant wars, religious conflicts, famines, political grievances and a lack of prospects forced many people to leave Germany over the centuries. The land's relative population loss was enormous. An estimated six million emigrants left Germany between 1820 and 1920. A large portion immigrated to the USA. The tide of emigration only began to ebb, beginning in 1890, as the industrial era brought economic success to the German Empire. From that point on, the number of individuals immigrating to Germany surpassed the number of Germans who

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left. Foreign laborers found employment, above all, in the booming centers of the coal and steel industries.

The National Socialist Dictatorship and the Post-War Years

The forced employment of foreigners was one visible sign of the national-socialists' regime of injustice. The camps and the daily sight of forced laborers were simply part of everyday life for the local population. They paid little attention to the situation. The callous indifference displayed in the post-war years toward the issue of forced labor reflects how little it was considered a misdeed.

The years after 1945 were shaped by people in motion as well. The forced mobility of diverse groups of people (refugees, people expelled from their homes through territorial exchange and other so-called displaced persons) altered the structure of the German population. Tensions and conflicts with local residents arose with the influx of refugees and expellees. Socio-cultural and confessional differences, in particular, gave rise to disputes. The number of refugees and expellees only first began to decline at the end of the 1940s. Simultaneously, the growing demand for labor soon outstripped the capacity of the labor force. The labor shortage was particularly acute in the fields of agriculture and heavy industry.

"Guest Workers" as "Human Capital"

The economic recovery and subsequent boom in West Germany exceeded even the boldest forecasts. Economic growth rates of up to 12.1% left the land reeling. The unemployment rate shrank dramatically over a relatively short time span, from 11% in 1950 to less than 1% in 1961. In order to offset labor shortages, the federal government turned to a traditional model of recruiting and temporarily employing foreign workers. The first "Agreement on the Recruitment and Placement of Workers" ("Abkommen über Anwerbung und Vermittlung von Arbeitskräften") was negotiated with Italy in 1955. Further contracts soon followed: with Greece and Spain (1960), Turkey (1961), Morocco (1963), Portugal (1964), Tunisia (1965) and Yugoslavia (1968). Economic and political actors, as well as the general population, assumed that the "guest workers" would not stay long. Based on that assumption, they did not think it necessary to develop any socio-political or infrastructural concepts to account for longer term residence.

Initially, the recruitment agreement with Italy had little impact, and the number of recruited workers remained relatively low. However, after 1959, the foreign population in Germany rapidly



increased. Just a few years later, in 1964, the arrival of the millionth "guest worker," Rodrigues de Sá of Portugal, was celebrated.

During this era, foreign workers were employed primarily as unskilled and semi-skilled laborers in sectors where piece work, shift work and assembly line positions could be found. They took on jobs that German laborers

considered unattractive. This made it possible for many West Germans to move up into more favorable or more qualified positions. In this way, foreign workers massively boosted upward mobility among the core workforce, without enjoying the same level of benefit. Although foreign workers were formally considered equal to their German counterparts, lack of training, non-recognition of foreign certifications and language deficits limited the "guest workers" to the lowest wage categories.

The economic crisis of 1966-7 exacerbated the tensions over the recruitment of foreign laborers. West Germans had become accustomed to steady growth through the post-war years. This first post-war recession was a hard blow to the ego of the proud "Republic of the Economic Miracle." In the area of labor market policy, this recession-induced insecurity led to heated and critical debates about the sense in employing foreign workers.

The 1973 Recruitment Ban and its Consequences

The recruitment ban (Anwerbestopp), set forth in a directive on November 23, 1973, marked the end of the era of foreign labor recruitment to West Germany. The ban completely blocked the entry of "guest workers" from lands which were not members of the European Economic Community (EEC). Those seeking to legitimize the decision pointed to the "price shocks" that accompanied the 1973 oil crisis. But in truth, the oil crisis simply proved to be a convenient moment to attempt to shrink the foreign population. However, the hope that the "guest worker issue" would resolve itself, through voluntary return, proved to be very unrealistic. Fearing they would not be able to return to work in Germany, many foreign laborers chose not to leave the country at all. This necessary change in the plans on the part of many "guest workers" transformed their anticipated short-term

stay into permanent residence. Through the right to family reunification, many foreign laborers arranged the subsequent immigration of their family members to Germany.

The 1980s and 1990s

While immigration figures remained modest through the 1980s, the numbers rapidly grew again in the early 1990s. At times, they even surpassed the highest rates from the "guest worker" era. The vast geo-political changes of that era led to rising number of migrants, asylum seekers and ethnic Germans returning from former German settlements in Eastern Europe. In particular, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the wars in former Yugoslavia and the human rights crisis in the Kurdish region of Turkey spurred the influx. Simultaneously, xenophobic resentments grew over the course of German reunification. This rising wave of racism and xenophobia culminated in a string of incidences of mob violence (in Hoyerswerda, Rostock, Mölln, Solingen and elsewhere). As immigration rates began to decline again in the mid-1990s, incidences of brazen violence against residents with migration backgrounds also diminished.

One central reason for the shrinking numbers from the mid-1990s is the so-called "Asylum Compromise." Since its implementation in 1993, individuals who have fled lands deemed by the German government to be "free of persecution" and all those who have traveled through "safe third-states" on their way no longer qualify for asylum in Germany. Because it only shares its borders with "safe third-states," it has therefore become impossible for refugees to legally enter Germany overland.

2000: From Heredity to a Territorially Based Right to Citizenship



In the year 2000, dual citizenship became possible in Germany. This change enables children born in Germany to foreign-born permanent residents to hold a German passport as well. This is no small policy shift: it signifies a fundamental transformation of the understanding of German citizenship. Whereas the right to the German nationality was previously only available through hereditary links (*ius sanguinis*), it is now available to individuals born on German territory (*ius soli*) too. However, only the children of EU-citizens or parents from states with special agreements with Germany may keep their dual citizenship long-term. All others must choose one of their nationalities upon reaching legal adulthood.

Developments in the new Millennium

The legal frame

In 2005 the **new immigration law** (<http://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/migration/dossier-migration/56351/zuwanderungsgesetz-2005?p=all>) (Gesetz zur Steuerung und Begrenzung der Zuwanderung und zur Regelung des Aufenthalts und der Integration von Unionsbürgern und Ausländern) came into effect. With this Germany declared itself as a country of immigration. **Integration** (<http://virtuelles-migrationsmuseum.org/2014/10/17/integration/>) was defined as a legal duty. The law aimed to simplify the current procedure: many different *residence titles for specific purposes, which even experts described as being complicated were simplified into two: the temporary residence permit (befristete "Aufenthaltserlaubnis") and the permanent settlement permit (unbefristete "Niederlassungserlaubnis")*. Furthermore, the law aimed to simplify the corresponding processes. Moreover, it was the first time that language courses became a legal requirement.

The first Integration Summit

(http://www.bundesregierung.de/Webs/Breg/DE/Bundesregierung/BeauftragtefuerIntegration/nap/integrationsgipfel/Integrationsgipfel1/_node.html) took place in 2006. The Federal Chancellor, religious representatives and communities, media, unions, sport associations, employers, charitable organisations and migrants took part. The trigger was the results from the PISA study which said that success in the educational system is linked to the origin and the educational background of one's family. The Integration Summit led to the development of the national integration plan. Here the focus was on creating a dialog with Muslims. As a result there was the first so-called Islam Summit which also took place in 2006. The Government, Muslim associations and individuals participated.

The aforementioned national integration plan was implemented in 2007. In the same year amendments were made to the **immigration law (<http://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/migration/dossier-migration/56351/zuwanderungsgesetz-2005?p=all>)** because of EU guidelines. A third residence title was introduced: the permission for permanent residence (“Erlaubnis zum Daueraufhalt-EG”). Since then those people that had been tolerated (“Geduldete”) could receive a permanent residence permit, if they fulfilled certain criteria. There were also changes made to the conditions for spouses to follow their partners. The spouses must be of age and be able to prove basic German language skills.

A **naturalisation test (<http://www.bamf.de/DE/Einbuengerung/WasEinbuengerungstest/waseinbuengerungstest-node.html>)** was introduced on the 1st September 2008. In order to receive German citizenship 17 out of 33 questions must be answered correctly. The test aims to aid integration because it forces the person to occupy themselves with the German language, history, laws, society and culture. Furthermore, a high language level than before is required.

Figures and Structure of Immigration

In the past years the number of people with a **migration background (<http://www.destatis.de/DE/ZahlenFakten/GesellschaftStaat/Bevoelkerung/MigrationIntegration/Migrationshintergrund/Aktuell.html>)** has risen. In 2013 there were roughly 16.5 million people, so 20.5% of the population who had a migration background. In 2011 this was 19.5%, whilst in cities 46% of children had a migration background. In 2005 it was 15.3 million people which was 19% of the population. The term “migration background” is disputed. The Statistical Federal Office defines people with a migration background as people “who moved to the present territory of the Federal Republic of Germany after 1949, all foreigners born in Germany and all people born in Germany with German nationality who have at least one parent who immigrated to Germany or is a foreigner who was born in Germany”. The term has been used since 2005. Away from the official definition the question arises of how the person feels; what is the self-perception of the people who fall under this definition?

In 2013 1.2 million people came to Germany. Simultaneously 797,000 people left Germany. This resulted in a plus of 403,000 people. This was the highest plus since 1993. Of the 1.2 million immigrants 755,000 (62%) **came from within the EU (<http://mediendienst-integration.de/migration/wer-kommt-wer-geht.html>)**. The largest country of origin was Poland.

The Blue Card was introduced in 2012. The aim was to simplify the process of receiving a work and residence permit within the EU for highly qualified professionals from outside of the EU. Among other reasons the Blue Card is criticised for having a high minimum wage requirement (66,000 Euros per annum).

A further immigration trend is high potentials coming to Germany from the **south of Europe** (<http://www.handwerk-bw.de/das-handwerk-in-bw/handwerkstag-bwht/veranstaltungsueckblick/fachkraefte-aus-suedeuropa-chance-oder-risiko/>). Due to high unemployment, especially amongst younger people, more and more qualified professionals are coming to Germany. For example in 2011 the number of Greek immigrants rose by 78% and the number of Spanish and Portuguese immigrants by over 50%. Of these immigrants 50-70% have a degree.

Furthermore, Germany is a popular country for studying. In total there are 86,000 students in Germany who have earned their higher education entrance qualification outside of Germany.

The number of asylum applicants has also risen steeply in the last years. Between 2012 and 2013 there was a 70% increase. In total there were 109,580 applications in 2013. Between 2013 and 2014 the figure increased by a further 60%. In 2014 23% of the applicants came from Syria, 10% from Serbia and 8% from Eritrea. In January 2015 24.6% applicants came from Syria, 14% from Kosovo and 9.4% from Serbia. In comparison to other countries such as Lebanon or Turkey Germany offers very few people asylum. Moreover, the cities and communities are often not prepared for the arrival of refugees. The temporary accommodations are overcrowded and turn into semi-permanent solutions.

Prejudices and Stereotypes

De facto Germany is a country of immigration; however, it is not a society of immigration. There are still many prejudices and stereotypes that have a negative impact on living together in society.

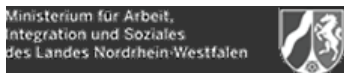
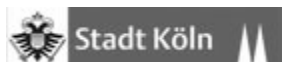
One example of a prejudice is that people come to Germany to exploit the welfare system. However the facts paint a different picture: Germany profits from the immigrants. They boost the economy, contribute towards the welfare system and help reduce the lack of professionals.

Photos: The Portuguese guest worker Armando Rodrigues de Sá with his gift. Köln-Deutz, 1964, Helmut Koch.



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