Migration Past, Migration Future

MIGRATION AND REFUGEES
Politics and Policies in the United States and Germany
General Editor: Myron Weiner

Volume 1
Migration Past, Migration Future
Germany and the United Sates
Edited by Klaus J. Bade and Myron Weiner

Volume 2
Migrants, Refugees, and Foreign Policy
U.S. and German Policies Toward Countries of Origin
Edited by Rainer Münz and Myron Weiner

Volume 3
Immigration Admissions
The Search for Workable Policies in Germany and the United States
Edited by Kay Hailbronner, David A. Martin and Hiroshi Motomura

Volume 4
Immigration Controls
The Search for Workable Policies in Germany and the United States
Edited by Kay Hailbronner, David A. Martin and Hiroshi Motomura

Volume 5
Paths to Inclusion
The Integration of Migrants in the United States and Germany
Edited by Peter Schuck and Rainer Münz

Migration Past, Migration Future

Germany and the United States

Edited by
Klaus J. Bade and Myron Weiner

Berghahn Books
Providence • Oxford

First published in 1997 by

Berghahn Books

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Migration past, migration future : Germany and the United States / edited by Klaus J. Bade and Myron Wiener.
p. cm. -- (Migration and refugees ; v. 1)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 1-57181-125-7 (alk. paper)
1. United States--Emigration and immigration--Government policy.
2. Immigrants--United States. 3. Refugees--United States.
4. Germany--Emigration and immigration--Government policy.
5. Immigrants--Germany. 6. Refugees--Germany. I. Bade, Klaus J.
II. Weiner, Myron. III. Series.
JV6483.M54 1997 vol. 1
325.43--dc21
97-7505
CIP

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed in the United States on acid-free paper.

Contents

Introduction

Klaus J. Bade and *Myron Weiner*

Among the advanced industrial countries the United States and Germany have the largest number of immigrants. In 1993 the United States had 23 million foreign-born residents, or 8.9 percent of the population. The comparable figures for Germany (in 1994) were 6.8 million foreigners (8.6 percent of the population) and 3 million ethnic German immigrants. Since 1988 the migration into Germany of asylum seekers, ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, new labor migrants, and family members of already established labor migrants has averaged more than 500,000 per year. During this same period the annual migration flows to the United States ranged from 750,000 to 1 million; another 2.6 million illegal migrants who had entered earlier were granted immigrant status, and an estimated 300,000 illegal migrants were entering and staying in the United States each year. In both countries migration issues loom large on the political agenda, partly because it is widely believed that migrants impose fiscal costs on local and national budgets, partly because of concerns over the impact of migration on the local labor market, and partly because the ethnic, racial, or religious composition of the migrants raises issues of acculturation. In both countries there are controversies over whom to admit, how many, and what benefits immigrants should receive. Political leaders have spoken out against migration, and there have been clashes between immigrants and the local population in Los Angeles, New York, and Miami and violent attacks against migrants in the German towns of Hoyerswerda, Mölln, Rostock, and Solingen.

This is the first of a series of five volumes dealing with the refugee and migration issues facing the United States and Germany sponsored by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences with financial support from the German-American Academic Council Foundation. Three working groups were convened by the Academy, each composed of participants from both countries and including lawyers, political scientists, demographers, historians, political philosophers, sociologists, economists, and government officials. A joint German-American steering committee took responsibility for structuring the initial agendas and determining the membership of the working groups. One working group addressed policies toward countries of origin; a second examined admission policies, political asylum, and the crisis of controls; and a third focused on the absorption of migrants. In addition to the five volumes of research papers written by the participants, the project has published a report, "German and American Migration and Refugee Policies: Recommendations of the Joint German-American Project of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences," prepared by the three working groups.

Three of the four papers in this volume (Reed Ueda's paper was added later) were prepared to provide the participants in the project with an understanding of the historical context within which both countries address the issues posed by a large immigrant population and to furnish demographic projections of what the two countries might look like over the next quarter of a century given the present and anticipated future migrant population.

Before reviewing the major themes of this volume it is of interest to note that the migration histories of the two countries have been closely linked. According to the first U.S. census in 1790, about a twelfth of the U.S. population was of German descent. About 90 percent of the Germans who emigrated in the nineteenth century went to the United States and nearly one-sixth of all immigrants who came to the United States between 1820 and 1945 were from Germany, making Germany the largest single source of immigrants during this period. Beyond the numbers, German immigrants had a considerable impact on the creation of industrial, financial, and commercial establishments in the United States. Germans built Bausch and Lomb, Hershey, Heinz, Berlitz, Anheuser-Busch, Miller, Coors, Pabst, Schlitz, Steinway pianos, and Wurlitzer organs. German immigrants and ethnic Germans also influenced the structure of the U.S. university system, medical education, and even the organization of the military (Generals Pershing and Eisenhower were of German descent). With the rise of the Nazi regime many German and German-speaking intellectuals, mostly but not entirely Jewish, fled to the United States. Their influence on American intellectual life—on science, mathematics, literature, music, philosophy, architecture, linguistics, art history, and the social sciences—is incalculable.

It is not, however, the influence of German immigrants on the United States that is the subject of this book but rather the impact that migration has had and is having on the two societies. Migration assumed an important new role in both countries after the Second World War, and for similar reasons. A labor shortage during the Second World War led the United States to recruit workers from Mexico to meet the growing demand for agricultural laborers. The guest-worker program continued after the war and was not terminated until 1964, by which time a chain migration was in place that led to a continuous influx of legal and illegal migrants. By 1994 Mexican Americans constituted the largest single immigrant group in the country: 6.3 million Mexican-born residents. A second development in U.S. migration policy was the ending of the long-standing racial restrictions on migration. The transformation of American attitudes and policies during the civil rights movement facilitated the passage of the 1965 immigration act that opened the door to migrants from Asia. Migrants from Asia—China, Korea, India, and Southeast Asia—soon outnumbered the legal flows from Europe and even from Latin America. A third development was the adoption of refugee policies that enabled individuals from Communist countries to come to the United States: from Cuba, Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam.

To a certain extent similar factors were at work in Germany, where the employment of foreign workers had a tradition dating back to the decades before the First World War. During the Second World War Germany met its labor shortages by employing forced foreign laborers, especially from German-occupied Eastern Europe. After the war these workers were returned home, while the redrawing of the borders in Central Europe, flight, and expulsion led to a massive movement of an estimated 12 million Germans into Germany from East Central and Eastern Europe. In the mid-1950s, however, Germany again began to recruit foreign workers, the so-called guest workers, this time mainly from Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Yugoslavia, and Turkey, to meet the labor shortages of its high-growth economy. The flow of guest workers was accelerated when the German Democratic Republic sealed its borders with the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961. The guest-worker program was terminated in 1973, but millions of workers chose to remain in Germany, where they were joined by their families. By 1979, therefore, Germany had more immigrants than in 1973, and through family unification and marriages (what has been characterized as "reproductive migration") the flow continues. Klaus J. Bade writes that "more than in any other Western industrial state during the second half of this century, the population, economy, and society in West Germany have been characterized by mass migration movements."

West Germany also accepted refugees from Communist countries. There were flows across the borders when Soviet forces crushed the political uprisings in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and a limited but continuous flow of citizens occurred from the German Democratic Republic to West Germany. When the government of Hungary opened its borders to Austria in July and August 1989, hundreds of thousands of East Germans exited into West Germany. Forced to choose between closing its borders to the east or opening them to the west, the German Democratic Republic opened its western borders. The result was a massive migration westward followed by the fall of the GDR and the absorption of East Germany by the Federal Republic of Germany.

In somewhat different ways ethnic considerations played a role in both the U.S. and German postwar migration and refugee policies. Under German law ethnic Germans from the eastern part of the European continent whose ancestors had emigrated generations and even centuries earlier had the legal right to return and reclaim their citizenship on the assumption that they had been suffering from repression caused by the war. For several decades only a limited number of ethnic Germans in

Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union could avail themselves of the opportunity, but much larger numbers could do so by the late 1980s. In the 1990s they were coming at the rate of more than 200,000 per year. In the United States, though ethnic criteria were officially eliminated from immigration law, ethnic considerations played a role in the decision to classify Jews from the Soviet Union as refugees (Germany adopted this same position) and to continue to treat all Cubans as refugees. Ethnic considerations also entered into a congressional decision to introduce a "diversity" category into migration law that enabled more citizens from Ireland to migrate to the United States.

There is now a considerable demographic convergence in the two countries with respect to their immigrant populations. Both countries have new immigrant populations that are different from those that earlier settled in the two countries. In the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century migrants to the United States were predominantly from Europe, and to Germany (especially Prussia) the foreign workers were largely Poles from the Russian and Austrian parts of Poland and Italians. The new migrants to the United States come from Asia and Latin America, and the German guest workers, forming the great bulk of the foreign population, mainly came from southeastern Europe and Turkey. In both countries there are also large numbers of migrants who have ethnic ties with the local population: ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union in Germany, and in the United States Mexicans and Jews from the former Soviet Union. Both countries admitted substantial numbers of refugees from Communist countries, and to a limited extent both have been admitting refugees from the so-called third world. And both countries now have a substantial working-class immigrant community from low-income emigration countries. The percentage of immigrants as a proportion of the population, as we have already indicated, is remarkably similar.

The two countries have responded to these demographic changes quite differently, however, influenced by their divergent histories and conceptions of citizenship and nationality. Germany has historically been mainly a country of emigration, although in the early modern history of Germany there were several streams of immigrants, including refugees from religious persecution. Throughout the nineteenth century emigration from Germany provided an outlet for a growing population that was displaced as the country made the transition from an agricultural to an industrial society, accompanied by a disproportionate growth of population and the economy. Emigration was regarded by many Germans as a sociopolitical necessity, a way of reducing the dangers of a social revolution by providing an outlet for the underemployed. At the same time it was hoped that the migrants would retain their "Germanness." In 1913 a citizenship law based on the jus sanguinis principle was passed that enabled Germans living abroad to maintain and inherit German citizenship. Germany's efforts to protect and maintain ties with its emigrants has its parallels in the present efforts of the governments of Turkey and Mexico to protect and maintain ties with their migrants to Germany and the United States.

While Germans were emigrating to the West, Poles were migrating into Germany, where they were recruited especially by Prussian employers. Although their labor was welcomed, the Prussian state feared "polonization" and took measures to ensure that Polish workers from abroad would not be incorporated as citizens. Even as the citizenship law of 1913 sought to extend the rights to citizenship of ethnic Germans living abroad, it limited the acquisition of German citizenship by foreigners. The ethnic conception of the nation-state and the separation of territory from citizenship was then and continues to be at the core of the idea of German nationality. Thus ethnic Germans from the East can continue to return to Germany to reclaim their citizenship, while the native-born children of foreigners have no automatic entitlement to citizenship. There are foreigners with German passports, that is, ethnic Germans, and Germans with foreign passports, that is, the second- or even third-generation descendants of former guest workers. Indeed, under a new "residence permit requirement" order promulgated in January 1997, the German-born children of former guest workers who are not from European Union countries must apply for separate visas.

In the United States, writes Reed Ueda, citizenship and nationality were equivalent. "All citizens were members of the nation and all members of the nation were equal citizens," although, one should note, blacks and Native Americans were for much of U.S. history excluded from this universal benefit.

The United States developed a civic culture that emphasized the free expression of ideas, the rights of groups to organize for political action, and the separation of church and state and drew a clear distinction between the public and the private realm. "Americanism" in a cultural and political sense was inculcated in the schools, but individuals and the groups with which they identified were free to express their own ethnic identities, create their own religious institutions, publish newspapers in their own languages, and use politics to pursue their own interests. Even apart from blacks and Native Americans, in practice the system of assimilative ethnic pluralism had many flaws—Asians had been excluded from citizenship and many Japanese Americans were interned during the Second World War—but overall the effect was a vibrancy in U.S. society and an economy opened to millions of newcomers.

How the system of assimilative pluralism shaped the lives of immigrants has been the subject of extensive research. In his essay Reed Ueda provides an informative case study of how German immigrants to the United States—seven million came from 1820 to 1990—contributed to U.S. agriculture, industry, artisanship, education, cuisine, and religion and also of how their distinctive communal identity was eventually eroded in large part as a consequence of the two world wars.

The controversies over migration that presently engulf U.S. politics have as much to do with the future as with the present. Will the Asian and Latin American immigrants in the United States become as integrated into U.S. culture and civic life as previous generations of immigrants? Will low-skilled migrants from the Caribbean and Mexico become socially mobile and acculturated or will they become part of an underclass, contributing to crime, drug addiction, and teenage pregnancies? Will highly educated immigrants significantly contribute to scientific creativity, economic productivity, and international competitiveness, but will they also take jobs away from the native population? Will immigrants impose financial burdens on the welfare state and on the educational system, or in the course of their lifetimes will they financially contribute more than they take out?

The study by Frank Bean, Robert Cushing, and Charles Haynes of the University of Texas at Austin starts with the central question: Are recent concerns about levels of immigration in the United States a reflection more of anxieties about changes in the size of racial/ethnic groups or of worries about economic competition and job opportunities? They report that the United States is being transformed from a society with a white majority and small black and smaller Native American minority into a very diverse multiethnic, multiracial society. This transformation is the result of three factors: (1) the changing ethnic and racial composition of legal and illegal migration to the United States since 1965; (2) a migration flow equal to the highest in any period of U.S. history; and (3) a significantly higher number of births among immigrants than among the native born. One consequence is the increasing pressure on urban school enrollments. In New York City, for example, four in every ten births are to immigrants. In 1990 29 percent of the women in the city were foreign-born, but they had 43 percent of the children. A second consequence is that an increasing proportion of the population is Hispanic, Asian, or black, projected to increase from 24.8 percent of the total population in 1990 to 37.5 percent in 2020, with most of the increase among Asians and Hispanics. A third consequence is that more than one-third of the U.S. population growth (which increased by 2.3 million in 1996) can be attributed to annual immigration. The proportion is substantially higher if one includes births to immigrant families.

Critics of immigration are concerned that the result will be interracial and interethnic conflict, growing competition for jobs as population increases faster than the rate of labor force growth, and increased costs for the welfare and education systems. In addressing these issues Bean, Cushing, and Haynes report a high and growing intermarriage rate between the Asian and Latin American immigrant population and the native white population. As the boundaries between groups become blurred, projections of the country's racial and ethnic composition become uncertain. Moreover, as acculturation by immigrants takes place, the central question is, acculturation to what? Some immigrants will follow the well-trodden path of social mobility, while others may become acculturated to the economically least successful and most alienated social classes. As to the impact of immigrants on the labor market (both on wages and employment of native workers) and on fiscal matters (the balance of taxes paid to federal, state, and local government and what immigrants and their children receive in turn) they conclude that the effects are not particularly large, whether positive or negative, but that a slow growth in the labor force and wage stagnation do affect public attitudes toward immigration and immigrants. They also point to the failure of the government to control undocumented immigration, the inclusion of legal immigrants in affirmative action policies, and the heavy burden that immigration imposes on many local government budgets as factors affecting public attitudes toward migration. Many Americans are also concerned that the emphasis on multiculturalism and bilingualism does not encourage new immigrants to take pride in U.S. history and civic values or even to speak English.

Some of the widely held concerns stem from a lack of understanding of the historical experiences with migrants earlier in this century. Prior to the First World War many immigrant families also received public assistance and were dependent on public hospitals for their medical care. Their children were a heavy financial burden on the school systems of Chicago, New York, and other major cities, and in the 1870s and 1880s several state governments filed suit against the central government seeking to recover some of the immigrant-related costs. The new arrivals also lived in ethnic enclaves where they continued to speak their mother tongues. Recent studies show that mobility rates for the second generation were not particularly high and it often took three or four generations before the descendants of immigrants reached educational and economic parity with natives. The United States is, of course, now very different from what it was earlier in the century. There are fewer opportunities for advancement by unskilled workers; public schools have deteriorated and are less likely to provide the children of uneducated migrants (and uneducated Americans) with the kind of education that would furnish them with the skills they need for job mobility; and there are legitimate concerns that in some parts of the country where there are high concentrations of immigrants bilingual education may slow English language acquisition. For these and other reasons educational reform is high on the political agenda.

The demographic study of German migration by Rainer Münz and Ralf Ulrich disaggregates the different flows into postwar Germany: ethnic Germans *(Aussiedler)* from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union; citizens of the GDR *(übersiedler)* moving to the FRG; the return to Germany of some of its overseas migrants; foreign workers recruited mainly from Italy, Greece, Spain, Yugoslavia and Turkey, and the de facto settlement of large numbers of guest workers after recruitment was halted in 1973; and since 1988 a substantial rise in the number of asylum seekers and refugees from former Yugoslavia and the so-called third world. As a result of the rise in public opposition to migration and the violent attacks against foreigners, the German government adopted measures to make entry more difficult by restricting asylum seekers. In 1994, write Münz and Ulrich, half of all foreigners had been in Germany for over ten years, one in four for more than twenty, and of the 7 million foreign nationals 1.2 million were born in Germany but did not have German citizenship. In 1994 13 percent of all children born in Germany were born to foreigners and, given current citizenship law, automatically became foreigners. Since most of the foreigners live in large cities, the percentage of foreigners in some cities is considerably higher than the national average: well over 20 percent in Frankfurt, Stuttgart, and Munich. “It is,” they write, “a characteristic of Germany as a self-declared nonimmigration country that the naturalization of foreign immigrants and their children is still the exception, not the rule.”

What will be the ethnic composition of Germany in the early part of the twenty-first century? Münz and Ulrich suggest three alternative scenarios, taking into account the population growth rates of both the German and foreign populations as well as migration and naturalization rates. For each scenario they derive estimates as to the future growth of the foreign population in Germany to the year 2030. Their striking finding is that “even if there were a quasi-standstill in the immigration of foreigners, their share among total population would still almost double within the next thirty-four years,” in part because of the growing excess of deaths over births among native Germans. The foreign minority will increase from an estimated 7 million in 1995 to 11.9 million in 2015 to 14.2 million in 2030. (In the absence of the contribution of migrants to population growth, Germany’s population would decline. Indeed, it is estimated that immigration accounts for three-quarters of the European Union’s annual population growth of 1.1 million.) In several of West Germany’s largest cities the foreign population will range from 30 to 45 percent with comparable proportions or more in the schools. Without a reconceptualization of Germany from an ethnonational society in which citizenship is based on ethnic identity to a society in which membership in the political system is acquired by birth and choice, Germany will not be able to integrate its immigrant population and their children. It is in danger of becoming a society deeply divided between those who have full membership and those who are excluded.

In both countries the integration of immigrants is also likely to be influenced by developments within the source countries. A deterioration of the economy or political system of Mexico, Central America, or the countries of the Caribbean could precipitate a flow that could adversely affect the migrants from these countries already in the United States. Similarly, if Islamic fundamentalism should increase or clashes with Kurdish insurgents intensify within Turkey, there could be spillover effects within Germany; the incorporation of Poland into the European Union could also generate a new substantial movement of workers from Poland. In both countries—and indeed in any country that receives significant numbers of migrants from other cultures—tensions and even conflicts between migrants and sections of the local population are likely. It is at these moments that politicians respond. The response can be a focus on law and order, tightening of borders, and restrictions on the migrant population, or it can be an effort to find a common ground among individuals from different cultures who must live and work together. How the two countries deal with these conflicts has implications for their societies and polities that go well beyond the question of how they deal with their migrant populations.

We are grateful to the German-American Academic Council Foundation for its financial support for the project and to its director, Dr. Joseph Rembser; the Gottlieb Daimler- and Karl Benz-Foundation for its support for a meeting of the participants in Ladenburg, Germany; our editor Sarah St. Onge; Lois Malone, administrative assistant to Myron Weiner; and Corinne Schelling of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, who has had principal responsibility for the management of the project since its inception.