

## 2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY: TURKS

### ? FOCUS QUESTIONS:

- How does a nation adjust to changing demographics as the result of increased immigration?
- Can one become a naturalized citizen of a nation?

STANDARD #1 CULTURE.

STANDARD #5 INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS AND INSTITUTIONS.

STANDARD #10 CIVIC IDEALS AND PRACTICES.

### LESSON OVERVIEW:

This lesson focuses on the largest immigrant group to Germany in recent times, the Turks, and not only traces their history and settlement, but also explores the issues inherent in immigrants' integration into German society. Students will read articles and write a Document Based Question based on a wide spectrum of documents.

### TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Like other parts of Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, until the completion of German unification in 1871, more people *left* Germany than entered the region. Millions left their homeland to seek employment either in agriculture or industry in North America, South America, and Australia. Chances are that someone in your school district is connected to German immigration; after all, 51 million Americans have some German ancestry or approximately 17% of the United States population.<sup>1</sup>

But the explosion of the Industrial Revolution at the very end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century changed Germany forever. The new mines, mills, factories and towns of the unified German Empire required labor. And so, laborers came. At first, large numbers of Polish workers were imported to work in steel mills and iron mines. The next wave of foreign workers, several million, was able-bodied men from Nazi Germany's occupied territories who were forced to work in the German heavy manufacturing sector during World War II. Of course, these people never considered themselves immigrants.

Germany's loss in World War II brought two waves of true immigrants flowing into the country. The first wave (1945-1949) included Germans who had lived in territories that were previously German (such as East Prussia or Silesia) and had been annexed by other countries (such as Poland). An estimated 12 million people arrived and settled in both East and West Germany. The second wave included East Germans who fled west between 1949 and the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961. This group was approximately 3.8 million people. A new group consisted of the many people of German ancestry who had left in the centuries before and now faced persecution in some of the countries. Among these groups were so-called "Russian or Polish Germans." Between 1950 and 1987 approximately 1.4 million arrived; between 1988 and 2005 another 3 million immigrated to



<sup>1</sup> United States Census Bureau (n.d.) *S0201 Selected Population Profile in the United States 2006-2008 data*. Retrieved August 31, 2012 from: <http://www.census.gov/#1>

Germany. Another group came with the explosion in the German economy in the 1950s, which generated a huge demand for labor. Foreigners entered the country to work in mines and factories. Most significantly, many of the “Guest Workers” (*Gastarbeiter*) came from Turkey. For the first time, Germany experienced an influx of people who were Muslim.<sup>2</sup>

The German government that recruited foreign workers did not intend for them to stay in the country indefinitely. In fact, the bilateral recruitment agreements that Germany signed with Italy (1955), Spain (1960), Greece (1960), Turkey (1961), Portugal (1964), and Yugoslavia (1968), required that the “Guest Workers” were to come to Germany without their families for a period of only two years. Extensive plans were not made to assimilate the “Guest Workers,” or to make them citizens. They were called *Ausländer* (“foreigners”) and were expected to remain so.

However, things did not go as planned. In 1960, the number of foreigners was 686,000, or 1.2 percent of the total German population. The most populous of the so-called *Ausländer* were Italians. After the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, foreigners increased in terms of both numbers and their share of the labor force. The number of foreigners quickly jumped to four million, and their share of the population reached 6.7 percent of Germany’s total population. By 1973, the most important country of origin was no longer Italy but rather Turkey, which accounted for 23 percent of all foreigners. Other countries of origin included Yugoslavia (17 percent), Italy (16 percent), Greece (10 percent), and Spain (7 percent).<sup>3</sup>

More importantly, a significant change had occurred in the behavior of the workers. By the 1970s, many of the “foreigners” had sent for their wives and families. Moreover, a new generation of theoretically non-German children was born in Germany in the 1960s. The “Guest Workers” had made Germany home.

The demand for foreign workers subsided in 1973 when Germany entered a period of economic recession as a result of the oil crisis. The government banned the recruitment of foreign workers and began to grapple with its large migrant population. In 1988, the 4.5 million foreigners in Germany accounted for 7.3 percent of the population as a whole. Some 1.6 million of them were wage- and salary-earners; another 140,000 were self-employed.<sup>4</sup> But even though recruitment subsided for a while, periods of economic growth attracted even more immigrants. Second and third generations of children added to the number of “immigrants into Germany.”

After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the demise of the Soviet Union and its satellites, Jews from this area were allowed to immigrate to Germany because of discrimination in their home countries. In addition, many *Auslandsdeutsche* or *Spätaussiedler* (emigrants) also “returned” to Germany. Some spoke German; many did not. Besides these groups, refugees from former Yugoslavia entered Germany.

Since the 1960s, East Germany also called for foreign workers, so-called *Vertragsarbeiter* (Contract Workers). For this purpose, the GDR signed agreements with other socialist countries, among them Poland (1965), Hungary (1967), Mozambique (1979) and Vietnam (1980). In the beginning, apprenticeship programs and further education were the focus. Later on, the aim of the recruitment was to deal with a labor shortage. But unlike West Germany, East Germany paid much attention to limiting the time of foreigners working in the country. Integration into society was discouraged. By the end of 1989, approximately 190,000 foreigners were living in the GDR. Among them were about 90,000 contract workers. Of these, 60,000 were from Vietnam.<sup>5</sup>

In 2003, the number of legally resident foreigners in Germany was 7.3 million, which comprised 8.9 percent of the total population. This was, by far, the greatest percentage in the history of the country. Even though Germany was not seen as a nation of immigrants, its non-citizen population was comparable to that of the United States of America. And the largest group was the 1.9 million Turkish citizens, of whom 654,000 were born in Germany. About 25 percent of the total foreign population was from countries of the European Union, and an additional 55 percent came from other western and eastern European countries like Norway, Switzerland, Russia, Ukraine, and Hungary. Overall, 80 percent of the foreigners came from Europe, while almost 12 percent were Asians. Now, Germany faced the problem of what to do with its new population.<sup>6</sup>

2 Focus Migration (n.d) Retrieved September 2012 from: <http://www.tatsachen-ueber-deutschland.de/de/gesellschaft/main-content-08/migration-und-integration.html>

3 Migration Policy Institute (n.d) Migration Information Source. Retrieved September 2012 from: <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=235>

4 Migration Policy Institute (n.d) Migration Information Source. Retrieved September 2012 from: <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=235>

5 Focus Migration (n.d) Retrieved September 2012 from: <http://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/migration/dossier-migration/56368/migrationspolitik-in-der-ddr?p=1>

6 Migration Policy Institute (n.d) Migration Information Source. Retrieved September 2012 from: <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=235>

For most of its history, Germany (or the regions that comprised it) had very different laws governing citizenship than those of the United States of America.

From the beginnings as a nation, the United States has allowed people to become citizens in two ways, by birth, or by naturalization. To become a citizen by birth, all someone had to do was be born on American soil or in an American territory and have that birth registered. In theory, a baby born on an airplane flying over the United States was eligible to claim United States citizenship.

Even for people not born on US soil, however, the path to citizenship is clear. Persons can apply to become naturalized US Citizens if they live in the country for five consecutive years, are over the age of 18, don't have a criminal record, and can pass a citizenship test that requires some knowledge of English, the U.S. Constitution, and the principles of participating in the politics of the Republic. People who serve honorably in the country's armed forces can become citizens in as little as a year. The five-year requirement can also be reduced in cases where applicants are elderly or facing political persecution in their native country.

The relative ease of becoming a US Citizen compared to the process in other nations is one reason why, over the last 20 years, an average of 500,000 people a year swear the citizenship oath.<sup>7</sup>

In contrast, until recently, Germany didn't have one single rule for how people became citizens. Because Germany was divided into separate states until 1871, the rules in different states could be quite different. Areas that wanted to increase their population made it possible for foreigners to become citizens.

In 1913, however, a united Germany adopted a very different vision of citizenship from that of the United States. In the United States, as explained above, geography and desire were the keys to citizenship. Behind the laws was a clear message that, especially when the United States was a new country with a comparatively small population and a lot of land, immigrants were desired. In Germany, it wasn't geography that mattered but "blood," and culture. That is to say, Germany granted citizenship to people who could prove they had German parents, grandparents or any kind of ethnic German roots. However, *it did not create provisions for naturalization*. To put this in concrete terms, a 16-year-old girl born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1910 whose grandparents had emigrated from Germany 60 years before could apply and get German citizenship. On the other hand, a Polish steelworker who had been working in German mines for 30 years could not.

During the many decades when few large groups of foreigners moved to Germany and millions of former Germans lived elsewhere, this ancestry-based rule did not become a major issue in the country. But by 2000, Germany had become a very different place. More than seven million people now lived in Germany who had not been born there. But the situation was even more complex for those born in Germany of foreigners; these people had been born in Germany, grown up in Germany, never lived anywhere but Germany, spoke German as their first language and had no plans to leave Germany. And yet, by law, they could not become German citizens. No matter the degree of their "German-ness," they were still officially *Ausländer*.

In 1999, the German Government, led by Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, a member of the Social Democratic political party, rewrote the terms of German citizenship. Declaring, "Germany is an immigrant nation," Schroeder made it possible for foreigners and the children of foreigners living in Germany to become citizens.



For a full discussion of the history of modern German immigration, teachers may wish to check the Migration Policy Institute (<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/>). A parallel German resource (bilingual) is Focus Migration, and can be found at <http://www.focus-migration.de/>



<sup>7</sup> Migration Policy Institute. (2009). Number of Immigrants Who Became US Citizens, 1907 and 2009. Retrieved September 2012 from: <http://www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/charts/historic.2.shtml>



**(4-5) 45 minute class periods**

## INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES:

- Immigration and Citizenship Requirements (**Handout 2.1.1 on the Instructional Resource Disc**)
- Statistics Review (**Handout 2.1.2 on the Instructional Resource Disc**)
- Kate Backman Articles (*No Place to Call Home*) and (*Seeking Acceptance*) (**Handout 2.1.3 on the Instructional Resource Disc**)
- Document Based Question (DBQ) (**Handout 2.1.4 on the Instructional Resource Disc**)
- Extension Activity: German-Turkish Rappers (**Handout 2.1.5 on the Instructional Resource Disc**)

## PROCEDURE:



### DAY 1:

**Anticipatory Set:** The teacher should present the following statement for the students to evaluate: “All religions are just as good as each other, as long as the people who practice them are honest, and even if Turks . . . came and wanted to populate this country, then we would build mosques . . . for them” — Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, 1740, written as part of a proclamation welcoming Catholics to Prussia and guaranteeing them religious tolerance.<sup>8</sup> This might lead to a discussion of immigration to the United States and some of the issues that result from growing pluralism in any society. Lesson 3.3 on the film *Schwarzfahrer* addresses the same theme.

After introducing the Anticipatory Set and having a discussion on the challenges of increased pluralism, the teacher should distribute Immigration and Citizenship Requirements (**Handout 2.1.1 on Instructional Resource Disc**) which consists of three documents: A description of the requirements for becoming a US Citizen, a description of the old requirements for becoming a German Citizen, and a description of the new requirements for becoming a German Citizen, passed in late 1999. The teacher should instruct the students to work with a partner and compare and contrast the three documents. Why are German requirements for citizenship stricter than US requirements? Why did they become less strict in 2000? The teacher should ask the students to speculate on what requirements they would include if they were going to draft their own set of requirements for citizenship in a nation. What would they include and why?

<sup>8</sup> Clark, C. (2006). *The Iron Kingdom*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

### DAY 2:

The teacher should distribute the Statistics Review (**Handout 2.1.2 on Instructional Resource Disc**) for students to use to answer the following questions:

1. What is the most significant difference between German immigration between 1850-1950 and 1950-2010?
2. How has immigration in Germany become more like immigration in the United States over time?
3. In what ways does it remain different?

The teacher should introduce the immigration of the Turks to Germany and provide historical background so that the students fully comprehend the impact on Germany society. As a basis for comparison and contrast the teacher should ask the students which group in American society would demographically be similar. The teacher should then ask the students to examine the remaining data and answer the following questions:

1. In your opinion, is the following statement fair: “*In the United States, the face of the newcomer looks Latino and in Germany the face of the newcomer looks Turkish?*” Support your answer with an explanation.
2. Based on your study of immigration so far, why do you think a greater percentage of immigrants became naturalized citizens in the United States than in Germany?

The teacher should assign two articles by Kate Backman on Turks in Germany, “No Place to Call Home” and “Seeking Acceptance” (**Handout 2.1.3 on the Instructional Resource Disc**). The students should take notes on the readings, which can be used in the assignment for the next day.

**DAYS 3-4:**

The focus of this lesson is a Document Based Question (DBQ) (**Handout 2.1.4 on the Instructional Resource Disc**) on whether Germany has become a genuine “immigrant nation” for Turkish-Germans. The teacher might want to review the key points of the assigned articles as a way of summarizing the information from the previous two classes and as a segue into the DBQ essay. The teacher should introduce the concept of an immigrant nation by using the poem, “The New Colossus” by Emma Lazarus, which is at the base of the Statue of Liberty. The teacher should solicit from students their ideas before providing a definition of immigrant nation *meaning more than foreigners coming to a country. It implies that newcomers will be able to make a home in their country. It suggests that natives will accept them, laws and officials will be fair, and that talent and hard work will be rewarded.*

The teacher should distribute the Document Based Question assignment and have the students read the documents and prepare the answer to the question: Has Germany become a genuine “nation of immigrants” for its largest ethnic minority, the Turks? The teacher may want the students to write the essay in class or as a homework exercise.

**WHOLE GROUP REFLECTION:**

- The teacher should facilitate a discussion on the experience of the Turks in Germany and how German society has accommodated the large number over the past fifty plus years. In the course of discussion, comparisons to the experience of Latin Americans to the United States could be usefully included.

**MODIFICATION:**

- In each segment of this lesson, the teacher may wish to substitute group for individual assignments. Rather than a DBQ essay, students could create PowerPoint presentations or video programs to demonstrate their understanding of the issues.

**EXTENSIONS:**

- Over the past 20 years, German-Turkish musicians, filmmakers, artists, actors, and performers have gained increasing audiences, recognition and respect both in Germany and internationally. Many of these successful artists base their creations around the hardships, prejudice, and confusion over identity faced by Turkish-Germans. The stories they tell are often not happy ones. This creates a paradox. The teacher may distribute the Extension Activity: German-Turkish Rappers (**Handout 2.1.5 on the Instructional Resource Disc**). What do the lyrics of Turkish rappers tell you about how they see themselves and their status in Germany? How is the social experience of people of Turkish descent in Germany similar to the experiences of immigrants to the United States (for example, those from Mexico and Central or South America)? How is it different? How, if at all, is the social experience of people of Turkish descent in Germany changing over time?
- “Breaking Down Barriers” is a documentary comparing and contrasting the experiences of a Mexican-American family in Lincoln, Nebraska with a Turkish-German family in Berlin. It is an award-winning film produced in 2007 by students in the College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. Teachers may wish to show this film to stimulate a discussion of different immigrant experiences in the United States and Germany. In order to obtain the film, contact Tim Anderson, University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Journalism and Mass Communications, Anderson Hall 147, Lincoln NE 68588-0443
- Films by Turkish-German directors often focus on the experiences of the Turkish immigrant experience. Students may wish to research the films of these directors, especially Fatih Akin.
- Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Germany has experienced the immigration of many people from Eastern and Southeastern Europe. The teacher may assign the students to research and report on these groups. Where are they from? Where in Germany have they settled? Have these groups encountered special issues?

**Sources:**

*This lesson was written by Curriculum Consultant and teacher, Neal Shultz and adopted by the authors for use in this text.*

United States Census Bureau (n.d) *S0201 Selected Population Profile in the United States 2006-2008 data*. Retrieved August 31, 2012 from: <http://www.census.gov/#>

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