

# Vietnamese Guest Laborers Leaving the GDR (May 31, 1990)

## Abstract

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With the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of many East German enterprises, most guest workers [*Gastarbeiter*] in the GDR lost their jobs. At the same time, they also lost their lodgings in company-owned housing. Suddenly, their legal resident status was no longer guaranteed – unlike West German guest workers, they were not recognized as regular employees with an unlimited right of residence. Guest workers who were willing to return to their home countries were given a free flight as well as 3,000 East German marks. In this photo, Vietnamese guest workers from Cottbus wait to board a departing flight at Schönefeld Airport in May 1990. Vietnamese migrants constituted the largest group of guest workers in the GDR. After the collapse of the SED regime, approximately 45,000 to 50,000 of East Germany's Vietnamese guest workers left the country.

## Source

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