

Occupational Breakdown of Refugee Movement in Percentages (1952–1961)

Abstract

In the 1950s, massive numbers of refugees left the GDR and headed to West Berlin and the Federal Republic. It was hard for the GDR to make up for the resulting personnel loss. According to statistics, around 2.7 million people fled to the West between the founding of the Federal Republic in 1949 and the closing of the border between the two German states in August 1961. A large percentage of these refugees had been employed in the GDR in industry and manufacturing, and a disproportionately high number of those who fled were young.

Source

Occupational Category	1952–1957	1958	1959	1960	First six months of 1961
Crop production and animal husbandry	7.6	4.5	5.0	7.4	6.1
Industry and manufacturing	20.7	19.3	20.1	21.3	22.3
Technical fields	1.9	2.1	2.4	2.6	2.9
Trade and Commerce	11.8	11.8	12.0	11.8	12.0
Household work, medical services, personal hygiene	4.9	5.8	5.3	4.8	4.7
Law and administration	2.9	4.4	3.8	3.5	3.3
Intellectual and artistic fields	1.5	2.6	2.0	1.9	1.6
Employed persons with unspecified occupations	11.0	10.0	10.1	7.4	8.9
Employed persons in total	62.3	60.5	60.7	60.7	61.8
Pensioners and Retirees	4.4	6.8	10.3	7.6	8.4
Stay-at-home wives	11.9	11.3	10.3	10.5	9.4
Children and pupils (grades K-12)	21.0	20.2	17.7	20.4	19.5
University-level students	0.4	1.2	1.0	0.8	0.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: *Der Bau der Mauer durch Berlin*, edited by the Federal Ministry for Inter-German Relations. Bonn, 1984, p. 16.

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