

HISTORY OF IMMIGRATION

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France



belges 1900

France has known 3 long periods of immigration during its history.

- the second half of the nineteenth century, from 1850 to 1900.
- the first World War and the period between the two World Wars
- the period after the second World War until today

To begin with the second half of the nineteenth century.

Between 1850 and 1900, immigrants came exclusively from bordering countries. The second industrial revolution needed labour. During 50 years, the foreign population tripled.

(Photo des belges)

In this photo, taken in 1900; we can see a crowd of Belgian immigrants.

These people have just come out of La Gare du Nord in Paris where Belgian trains arrived.

It shows that they were enthusiastic in this period. They came to France to look for a job.

France needed labour so they were welcome.

They were also Italian immigrants. Until 1960 Italians were the largest immigrant community.

To continue, the period just after the First World War and the period between the two wars.

During the first World War, there was selective immigration from countries that were part of the "Alliance", and the French colonial empire.

After the second World War France needed labour to rebuild the country. In fact 10% of the French labour needs were supplied by immigrants.

At the end of the 1920's; there were 3 million foreigners in France.

For 10 years; Poles and their families were recruited to work in France.

(photo des polonais)

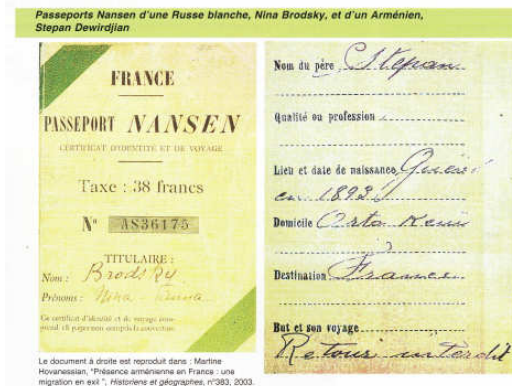
This photo shows the children of Polish immigrants in 1926.

In addition there were refugees from countries subjected to harsh regimes.

Refugees settled in France during this period despite the economic crisis

For the most, they came from:

Russia, Germany, Italy



(photos des passeports)

You can see the passport of a Russian woman, Nina Brodsky, and next to it the passport of an Armenian refugee. This man was not allowed to return to his country.

The period just after the Second World War

The resumption of economic activity needed labour, so the French government reverted back to massive immigration

We can say that this period brought a diversification of the foreign population in France. Two groups of immigrants in France emerged: immigrants from the Iberian Peninsula and immigrants from the former colonial empire.

(photo des portugais) This photo shows us Portuguese immigrants who lived in shanty towns.

Immigration until 1973

After 1973, legal immigration was limited to 100 000 foreigners per year.

During this period France closed its borders and struggled against illegal immigration. However the French government still accepted refugees.

The foreign labour participated in developing the country by working in the building industry.

(photo des algériens)

We can see Algerian immigrants who worked to build “La Tour Montparnasse” in Paris in 1971. They have been one of the most important immigrant communities in France since the first World War.

By 1975, the female immigration was increasing thanks to the family entry and settlements.

In 2004, there were 4.9million immigrants in France out a total population of 60 million French. Immigrants represented 8% of the French population. 2 million immigrants have acquired French citizenship.

Also immigrants from Eastern Europe have increased. Today they represent 40% of the immigrant population in France.

To conclude we can speak about French attitudes towards immigrants:

There is a paradox because in the period between 1980-2000 the number of immigrants was the most stable in the History of immigration, but never was the debate around immigration so intense

The government struggle against illegal immigration has prompted France to help developing countries create more employment opportunities to encourage potential immigrants to stay in their countries.



classe d'immigrés polonais 1926