

GERMAN COMMUNITY IN NORTH TEXAS

QUICK OBSERVATIONS

Country/region of origin	Germany
Population (community leaders)	50,000
Population (Census 2000)	7,479
Main reasons for migration	Economic hardship, political oppression, refugees from war, international marriage
Years in this region	Since the early 1800s
Primary areas of residence	Scattered throughout the region
General level of education	Technical school, some college
Employment	Technical, management, wholesale trade, scientific, education, professional
Principal religions	Lutheran and Reformed (Presbyterian), Roman Catholic, Jewish
Languages	Germans
Media (newspaper or radio)	None
Community newsletter	None
Cultural organizations	About 10

Germans were one of the first immigrant groups to move to America, arriving in Jamestown in 1608. More recently, between 1919 and 1930, 430,000 war refugees from Germany immigrated to the United States. Between 1933 and 1945 a subsequent exodus of 130,000 fled, primarily German Jews and political dissidents, among them Albert Einstein. During World War II, 1.8 million Germans died, the Germany economy was devastated, and the Soviet annexation of East Germany led to political oppression. Consequently, emigration from Germany was not for economic advantage but rather survival. In addition, a significant number of German women moved to the U.S.A. as war brides after marrying American soldiers serving in military bases in Germany.

For many years, German was the principal foreign language offered in United States schools. Nevertheless, until 1938 in Texas the teaching of German was banned.

German immigrants have lived in North Texas since before the establishment of the Republic of Texas. In fact, more German descendants here are third and fourth generation Americans. Most of these New Americans selected North Texas as a site for secondary migration after arriving in the U.S.A. They are very well assimilated into the overall community, to the point that few maintain contact with other members of the German community and many have little desire to do so. Nevertheless, the accessibility of cheap flights from DFW Airport to their country allows them to stay in touch with their relatives and/or cultural roots.

The 1990 Census lists Americans of German ancestry as the largest ethnic group, with 57.9 million, whereas the Americans of Irish ancestry numbered 38.7 million and the English were 32.7 million.

The German community is generally well educated, with most immigrants having at least some college education. They hold jobs as engineers, automobile mechanics, financial and real estate managers, wholesale food suppliers, as well as college professors and experienced bio-medical researchers. Their technical expertise in such areas as rocket science and airplane design is beneficial to the defense industry.

Culturally, German immigrants were involved in the foundation of many highly regarded art and music associations, such as the Dallas Symphony and the Art Department at the University of Texas. The Dallas Goethe Center organizes more the 50 cultural events every year in which German, Austrian and Swiss artists come to the region.

One of the main concerns of the German community is its children's education

OTHER SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Age Distribution	The original immigrants are mostly elderly
Percentage of men and women	40% men, 60% women
Ties to country of origin	Distant and close relatives, business partners remain, phone relatives weekly, some don't have close ties
Frequency of travel to country of origin	Once a year or every two years
Estimate of undocumented	Less than 5%

Material Source: DFW International
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OUTREACH STRATEGIES

This is an extremely well established assimilation. Building relationships one on one through cultural organizations is a good start.

HOW DO YOU OPEN THE DOOR TO CONVERSATIONS ABOUT FAITH?

Share your everyday relationship with God...answered prayers, Scriptures that comfort
Ask about how needs are met through their faith...loneliness, courage, direction
Offer to pray for their needs
Give books/videos that tell a faith story
Discover their interests and find Christians in that field to share their story
Look for Bible stories or principles that teach a value they respect