

Immigration by the Numbers

## Immigrants by Nationality and Gender, 1899-1910

Between 1880 and 1930, an estimated 27 million people immigrated to the United States; 20 million came through Ellis Island. This chart shows the arrival of the ten largest immigrant groups compared to overall immigration during the first decade of the twentieth century. In general, more men than women arrived during this period.

## Immigrants by Nationality, 1899-1910



- German
- Irish
- Italian
- Polish
- Jewish

Croatian and Slovenian
English

- Hungarian
-Scandinavian
- Slovakian
- All Others


Immigration officials asked each new immigrant to report how much money they had. The purpose of the question was to determine whether the immigrant had enough money to reach his or her destination. Officials also wanted to deny admission to anyone who might become a "public charge," a person unable to work who would have to be supported by local governments or public charities. Immigrants who did not have sufficient funds were sent back to their home countries.

| Immigrant Group | Percentage Who <br> Had More than <br> $\$ 50$ | Percentage Who Had <br> Less than $\$ 50$ | Per Capita Amount |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| German | 30.7 | 69.3 | $\$ 60.32$ |
| Irish | 16.9 | 83.1 | $\$ 33.76$ |
| Italian | 5.0 | 95.0 | $\$ 18.04$ |
| Polish | 2.7 | 97.3 | $\$ 14.60$ |

## Immigrants' Connections in the United States, 1908-1909

Immigrants entering the United States told officials whether they were coming to join friends, relatives, or neither. If "neither", it probably indicated that the person did not know anyone in the United States when he or she arrived. Friends and relatives helped new arrivals find housing and jobs. One study reported that $50 \%$ of immigrants found their first jobs through a friend or relative, compared to about $10 \%$ finding a first job through an advertisement or "help wanted" ad.

## Immigrants' Connections in the United States, 1908



Immigrants Coming to Join Relatives or Friends by Ethnicity, 1908-1909

| Immigrant Group | Percentage Going to Join <br> Relatives or Friends |
| :---: | :---: |
| German | 93.7 |
| Irish | 94.5 |
| Italian | 98.7 |
| Polish | 98.8 |
| Jewish | 98.3 |

## Immigrant Household Relationships by Gender and Ethnicity, 1910

Ellis Island immigrants lived in all sorts of arrangements. If people immigrated by themselves, it was common for them to live as boarders, paying rent, to someone else. Taking in boarders was an important source of income for other immigrant households, especially women whose husbands had died or were absent. Among some immigrant groups, it was common for women to work and live in someone else's house as a servant.



## Chart of First Generation Immigrant Men's Occupations, 1900

In 1907, Congress formed the Dillingham Commission to investigate the origins and effects of the massive wave of immigration then underway. The Commission compiled a variety of data about immigrants and their children. This chart shows the percentage of immigrant men ages 10 and older who worked in different kinds of jobs. Although the Commission gathered statistics on many ethnic groups, only six are shown here. Sometimes the Commission's reports included Jews as a separate category, while at other times it grouped Jews with Russians, since most immigrants from Russia during this period were Jewish.


In 1907, Congress formed the Dillingham Commission to investigate the origins and effects of the massive wave of immigration then underway. The Commission compiled a variety of data about immigrants and their children. This chart shows the percentage of working immigrant women ages 10 and older in different kinds of jobs. Not all immigrant women worked, however. For example, Irish immigrant women were twice as likely to be breadwinners as Italian women.

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## Vocabulary

Compiled: gathe
and published toge

## Breadwinners:

People who earn
income to support their families most immigrants from Russia during this era were Jewish.


## Comparison of School Enrollment by Age, Gender, and Immigrant Group, 1910

The 1910 census counted how many children were enrolled in school (both public and parochial). Studies show that second generation American children (children of immigrants) were more likely to be enrolled in school than immigrant children. Whether immigrants came from urban or rural societies also mattered; peasants from rural societies (like Italy or Poland) were less likely to enroll their children in schools once they arrived in the United States. This chart combines foreign-born and children of foreign-born parents for each immigrant group. Because some lines overlap and are hard to read, the percentage enrolled at each age for each ethnic group is also provided.

Male School Enroliment by Immigrant Group, 1910



