



Volume 9. Two Germanies, 1961-1989

Statistics on East German Resettlers, Refugees, and Escapees (1961-1990)

The East German government played down the number of people killed at the Wall, whereas West German newspapers tended to exaggerate it. Varying accounts place the number of deaths at the Wall at less than 200 and at the inner-German border at around 1,100, with the exact count depending on who is included. By contrast, there are more accurate figures for the number of people who managed to resettle legally or escaped illegally – but both reflect the East Germans’ constant desire to escape.

Legal Resettlers and Refugees from the GDR (1961-1990)

Year	Total	Legal Resettlers	Refugees (via third countries, etc.)	Escapees (through border fortifications)	Ransomed political prisoners
1961	52,324	ca. 700	43,117	8,507	
1962	21,356	4,615	10,980	5,761	
1963	42,632	29,665	9,275	3,692	
1964	41,876	30,012	8,709	3,155	884
1965	29,552	17,666	9,557	2,329	1,555
1966	24,131	15,675	6,720	1,736	407
1967	19,573	13,188	5,182	1,203	554
1968	16,036	11,134	3,767	1,135	693
1969	16,975	11,702	4,080	1,193	880
1970	17,519	12,472	4,146	901	888
1971	17,408	11,565	5,011	832	1,375
1972	17,164	11,627	4,292	1,245	731 (Amnesty) 2,087
1973	15,189	8,667	4,680	1,842	631
1974	13,252	7,928	4,355	969	1,053
1975	16,285	10,274	5,338	673	1,158
1976	15,168	10,058	4,500	610	1,439
1977	12,078	8,041	3,316	721	1,475
1978	12,117	8,271	3,385	461	1,452
1979	12,515	9,003	1,768	463	890
1980	12,763	8,775	2,552	424	1,036
1981	15,433	11,093	2,599	298	1,584
1982	13,208	9,113	2,282	283	1,491
1983	11,343	7,729	2,259	228	1,105
1984	40,974	34,982	3,459	192	2,236
1985	24,912	18,752	3,324	160	2,669
1986	26,178	19,982	4,450	210	1,450
1987	18,958	11,459	5,964	288	1,209
1988	39,832	29,033	9,115	590	1,048
1989	343,854				1,775
1990	238,384				

Source: Hans Hermann Hertle, Konrad H. Jarausch and Christoph Kleßmann, eds., *Mauerbau und Mauerfall. Ursachen – Verlauf – Auswirkungen* [*The Building and Fall of the Wall. Causes – Course – Effects*]. Berlin, 2002, pp. 310-14.