

## Jewish Immigration to the U.S. –

### An Article from the Jewish Press in Berlin, November 1937

Today the US appears more than ever to be the country of destination for Jewish emigrants from Germany. Nevertheless, there is a surprisingly ubiquitous vagueness about the requirements and prospects of such immigration, that forces newcomers time and again to find these out for themselves.

It is known that it is possible to legally immigrate to the US on the strength of an affidavit, which guarantees that the immigrant will not constitute a public welfare burden...

No one can immigrate to America knowing for certain that there will be a position open for him which he will want to fill. And no one who enters the country on a tourist visa may work there.

Yet, there is the possibility of changing ones status by exchanging a tourist visa for a permanent immigration visa. But in order to do this, one must first leave the country again and then re-enter through one of the neighboring countries, such as Canada, Cuba or Mexico. But for this, too, one needs an affidavit; and furthermore, one also needs money to cover the cost of the trip and the stay in one of these countries. It is wrong, therefore, to assume that merely by being in America first, it is easy to acquire an immigration visa.

America today, despite its high unemployment, is an example of economic prosperity. Immigrants are able, in general, to find employment – and although this may sound very general, it does have a statistical truth. Of course, this depends on the kind of work. But the majority of the Jewish immigrants from Germany work in the business trade, and as an employee, there is in most cases some type of job available – providing that ones demands are not too high. In this respect, it is easier for women than for men. A girl selling in a shop will earn between 12 and 20 dollars a week, the equivalent of 40-60 Marks. The salaries for males as small employees are somewhat higher. A skilled worker, on the other hand, such as a mechanic, may earn 35 dollars a

week, if he is lucky; and an engineer or a chemical engineer, who can find a senior position or become independent, can often expect to earn substantially more.

People in Germany are unfortunately unaware of the considerable importance of the connection between job opportunities and the place in which one settles. In New York there are possibilities of finding a very good job; but these chances are small. Much greater is the chance of not finding any job in New York at all. The same applies to Chicago and to all the big cities, to the same extent more or less. Unemployment among the Jewish immigrants from Germany is the greatest by far in New York.... In the big city, the immigrant is almost always a social nothing, who is dependent for an extended period of time on relatives or friends from Germany who are in the same position. In the small Jewish communities the immigrant is often albeit not always – guaranteed an entrance to the best Jewish families in the city; and it is self-evident that the chances for advancement are considerably higher....

Doctors generally make a fine living. For dentists it is harder, because the existing standard instruments used in America are exceptionally modern and expensive, and thus to become independent entails much financial hardship.

The importance of having a command of the language cannot be over-estimated. It is the key to successful integration, in the sense that one can thereby integrate into the machinery of everyday life without causing any friction....

**Source: *Juedisches Gemeindeblatt*, Berlin, 21.11.37.**