

# THE LEGAL AND SOCIAL POSITION OF THE GERMANS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN THE LATE 1940s AND EARLY 1950s

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At the end of the 1940s, for political and ideological reasons the communist leadership in Czechoslovakia had to face the necessity of integrating, legally as well as socially, those Germans who remained in Czechoslovakia after the majority had been expelled in 1946. This article examines the situation of various groups of the German population, such as anti-fascists, skilled workers, and partners in mixed marriages, and the specific aspects of the process of making their legal position comparable to that enjoyed by the Czech population. From the perspective of the socialist legislation and as far as individual rights are concerned, this process, which was conducted against the wishes of part of the German as well as the Czech population, was completed in 1953. It was not, however, accompanied by a guarantee of collective minority rights, and this defect, in conjunction with other factors, led to a gradual disintegration in the status of the ethnic Germans among the population of Czechoslovakia.