

FIRST EFFORTS TOWARD A FUTURE INTEGRATION  
OF REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS  
IN SAXONY-ANHALT 1945-49

*Torsten Mehlhase*

The primary focus of the author is on the Sudeten Germans. After critically appraising the research activities in the former GDR that come within his field, he presents the results of his own research concerning the success, or otherwise, of the attempts at integrating the Sudeten Germans in Saxony-Anhalt.

Late in 1945, almost one-million refugees and displaced persons (DPs), one-third of them Sudeten Germans, were living in this area. The Sudeten Germans in Saxony-Anhalt made up 40 percent of the overall number of Sudeten Germans living in the Soviet Zone of Occupation. The author describes their living and housing conditions and the changes thereof, their situation on the labour market, and their early achievements with their own economic activities and firms. Whereas a certain part of the Sudeten Germans can be considered to have been wholly integrated at the end of the 1940s, many of them, above all those belonging to the older generation, fell within a category of refugees and DPs comprising about half of all recipients of social welfare benefits in Saxony-Anhalt.