Immigration in USA

I. History of American immigration:

- **Immigration was the foundation of the United States** (English settlers)
- **German immigration**: ⅓ of immigration in the 19th century, impacted the US a lot
- **Irish immigration**: the poorest immigration, due to the Great Famine in Ireland (meldew, a fungus which infected potatoes)
- Immigration was encouraged by the American dream, the Golden Rush and Homestead Act of 1862
- **From 1882 and Immigration Act**, the US wanted to control immigration.
- To control immigration, the US opened Ellis Island in 1892.

II. Immigration from 1930 to the 2000s:

- *Immigration act of 1924*: Establishment of the **National Origins Quota System** : allocated visas to each nationality based on their proportion of the U.S. population in 1890 **Limit** : 165.000 of immigrants.
- **Lowest level of immigration since the 1890s.**
- Mexican Repatriation : government deported thousands of Mexican Americans (many of whom were U.S. citizens).
- **After WWII** : **Humanitarian crisis in Europe** ⇒ Displaced Persons (DPs) Act of 1948 : allowed over 400,000 European DPs to immigrate to the U.S
- The Cold War led the U.S. to accept **refugees fleeing communist regimes.**
- Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 : created a new system based on **family reunification and skilled immigrants.**

III. Immigration from the 2000s until now

- **From 2000 to 2010** = nearly 14 million new immigrants settled in the country: **the highest decade of immigration in American history**.
- The September 11 of 2001 attacks = more repression, more control over immigrants, more violence on the border with Mexico.
- President Obama DACA program (Deferred Action for Childhood arrivals)
- **450 miles of border wall along the US- Mexico border** was built under president Trump
- Immigrants and their U.S.-born children are representing about 27 percent of U.S. inhabitants in 2022
- A recent **increase of immigration threatens Biden's immigration reform plans.**

Trump's border wall

Donald Trump's proposed wall on the US-Mexico border will be over 1,600km long, which will replace the current porous fencing of about 1,000km. The rest of the border is protected by natural obstacles.

Trump's wall*

Existing fence

United States

Mexico

Source: Al Jazeera, P2016, US Customs and Border Protection
* Assumed locations.