

For example, every summer Potawatomi people now living in Michigan, Wisconsin, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Ontario come together to celebrate their ties to each other. The Bands rotate the honor and responsibility of hosting what is called the "Potawatomi Gathering." People have the opportunity to meet distant relatives from all over the country and to celebrate being together.



Moving to Michigan

Informational Article



The population of Michigan is made up of people from many different places. They migrated to Michigan for a variety of reasons and helped Michigan grow and develop.

The French came first in the late 1600s to work in the fur trade. There were not a lot of French people but they did start many early Michigan towns. Later in the middle 1800s, French people came from Canada to work in the lumbering business. Many settled in lumbering towns like Saginaw and Bay City.

People of African descent have lived in Michigan from the time of the fur trade. Between 1840 and 1860, many escaped slaves came to Michigan looking for freedom. During the early 1900s, many African Americans left southern states hoping to find jobs and a better life in northern states like Michigan. Many settled in cities like Detroit where they hoped to get jobs in factories. In the late 1900s, Africans from countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, and Ethiopia came to Michigan. Many settled in the metropolitan Detroit area.

Germans began to come to Michigan around 1830. Many left Germany because of shortages of food caused by crop failures. There were also political, or governmental, problems in Germany. They settled first around Ann Arbor and the Saginaw River Valley. They started towns such as Frankenmuth.

British people came to Michigan after the French. In the 1830s many people of British descent moved from the New England area to Michigan. They settled in many areas of the Lower Peninsula. Many became farmers. In the 1850s, people from the Cornwall area of Britain came to work in Michigan mines.

In Ireland in the 1840s there was a famine, which meant there was a serious shortage of food. This was caused when the potato crop failed. Many Irish people left Ireland at this time and came to states like Michigan. Here they settled in Detroit and in an area of southeastern Michigan along U.S. 12, which became known as the Irish Hills.

Food shortages were also a problem in Poland in the 1860s. Just after the Civil War, Poles began to come to Michigan looking for better jobs and farmland. They started towns like Posen in the northeastern part of the Lower Peninsula. Later many Poles moved to the Detroit area to work in car factories.

In the 1840s, the Dutch government took control of the churches in Holland. This caused many Dutch people to leave their country in search of religious freedom. Many came to Michigan and settled in the western part of our state in cities like Grand Rapids. They also started a town called Holland.

After the Civil War, Swedish people settled in the Upper Peninsula to work in mines and lumber camps. They felt the Upper Peninsula was a lot like their native Sweden. They lived in towns like Iron Mountain and Iron River.

Finnish people and Italians also came to Michigan beginning in the 1860s. They came mainly to work in mines. Later people from both these groups settled in the Detroit area to work in factories.

Hispanic people came to Michigan in the 1900s. They were mainly from Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Cuba. In the beginning, many helped pick Michigan crops. Later they settled in cities like Detroit, Pontiac, Dearborn, and Allen Park. Many Hispanic people worked in factories.

Chinese people began to settle in Detroit in the 1870s. They settled an area called "Chinatown" located near Third and Michigan streets. Many had left the western part of the United States because of anti-Chinese feelings there. There was little Chinese immigration after this until the late 1990s.

After World War II, many Japanese came to settle in Michigan mainly in the metropolitan Detroit area. There was another wave of Japanese immigration in the 1980s. During this time, many Japanese settled in Oakland County. Many were worked for Japanese car part companies.

Michigan has more people of Arab descent than most other states. They have come to Michigan mainly from the countries of Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. People came for a variety of reasons including conflict in southwestern Asia. Most Arabic people live in cities near Detroit such as Dearborn and Southfield. Many Arabic people are Muslims and follow the religion of Islam. Others, like Chaldeans, who come from Iraq, are Christians. Most Arab immigration was in the later part of the 1900s.

A few Jewish people came to Michigan as early as the times of the fur trade. Many came between 1880 and 1914. In the late 1900s Russian Jews immigrated to the Detroit area to escape discrimination in their homeland.

Now, in the 21st Century, people continue to immigrate to Michigan. Recent immigrants include the Hmong and Vietnamese from Southeast Asia and people from Central American countries like Guatemala.

Moving to Michigan Chart

Directions: Read the informational article. Choose 6 of the groups mentioned in the article and summarize what you learned about these groups by completing the chart below.

Who?	When?	Why?	Where did they settle?