

# Geography of German Settlement in the Russian Empire

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Between 1700 and 1914, the Imperial Russian Empire expanded through military conquest, diplomatic treaties, and annexation of territory. Expansion included territories west into the Baltics and Eastern Europe, south into the Black Sea and Caucasus, east into Central Asia, and eastward across Siberia to the Pacific Ocean. By 1914, the empire had grown from approximately 15.5 million square kilometers (nearly 6 million square miles) in 1700 to over 22.8 million square kilometers (8.8 million square miles).

In part, the Russian Empire's growth was driven by the need for warm-water ports, control over trade routes, and access to natural resources. Along with these strategic needs, it also wanted territory on its frontiers to act as buffer zones against neighbor and rival empires. Often foreigners were settled in those territories. Among them were Germans.

This session is an overview of the history of Imperial Russian territorial acquisitions and how it enabled German settlement and migration throughout the empire.

## Agenda

1. Expansion into the Baltics, Finland, Eastern Europe
2. Expansion into the Black Sea region
3. Expansion into the Caucasus
4. Expansion into Central Asia and Western Siberia
5. Expansion in the Far East

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