

# Pull Factors and Push-Back Factors for Argentina and Mexico

## Argentina

### Pull Factors:

- Argentina opened its doors to Jewish immigration starting in 1880, mostly to Eastern European Jews who were escaping anti-Semitism.
- With Buenos Aires often referred to as the Paris of South America, Argentina was and remains one of the most Europeanized countries in South America.
- Until the 1930s, Argentina received millions of immigrants.
- Large-scale migration to Argentina by European immigrants from German-speaking countries begins in early 1930s due to rising fascism.

### Push –Back Factors:

- The ongoing worldwide Depression
- Authoritarian rule that glorified the role of the military and the Church
- Nationalistic views; Argentina sees itself as a conservative Catholic nation
- It sees Jews as leftists, which prompts restriction on Jewish immigration starting in 1933
- By 1938, immigration by Jews to Argentina is illegal
- Admiration for Nazi policies and ongoing diplomatic relations with Germany until early 1944

## Mexico:

### Pull Factors:

- After the Mexican Revolution ended in 1920, Mexico became a haven for people persecuted for religious and political beliefs
- In 1924, Eastern European Jews are encouraged to immigrate to Mexico
- In 1934, President Lázaro Cárdenas publically announces his opposition to Nazism and its racial policies.
- Under Cárdenas, Mexico supported Spanish Republicans who opposed Francisco Franco and his supporters, Benito Mussolini and Adolph Hitler, in the Spanish Civil War.
- Mexico was the only country in the League of Nations that spoke out against the Anschluss; Kristallnacht is widely condemned, especially by leftists groups
- Mexico was the only democracy in Latin America by 1938
- Mexico secures an agreement with the Vichy government in France to hold Spanish Republican refugees in Marseilles and then transport them to Germany in 1939.

### Push-Back Factors:

- Mexico wanted to create a mestizo identity (a mestizo is a person of mixed ancestry, especially in Latin America, of mixed American Indian and European background, most notably of Spanish or Portuguese ancestry) after the Mexican Revolution.
- New immigration laws in early 1930s call for closing borders to the following nationalities: Poles, Serbians, Syrians, Lebanese, Estonians, Latvians, Czechoslovakians, Palestinians, Armenians, Arabs, Turks, Bulgarians, Romanians, Iranians, Yugoslavians, Greeks
- Rise of fascist groups in Mexico, such as the Golden Shirts who carried out physical attacks against Jews and other perceived ideological enemies
- President Cárdenas offers asylum to up to 200,000 Spanish Republicans, which leaves little resources to help other refugee groups.
- Outbreak of World War II severely limits travel to Mexico starting in late 1939
- Refugees wanting to leave through France to Mexico needed a transit visa to the US, but these visas were rarely granted