

## 1876 Law of Immigration

The Immigration and Settlement Act of 1876 also created the Department of Lands and Colonies to promote colonization of the provinces administered by the central government. The land would be sub divided for settlers in parcels of 100 hectares. Each one of the first hundred families will be awarded a free lot and the rest could be bought at two pesos per hectare with easy payment terms.

The national government was authorized to establish agreements with private companies to deliver the settlers houses, tools, animals and food at convenient prices. However, the "Law Avellaneda (1876," model of the provincial legislation in the areas of public lands, could not avoid the speculation that hindered the settler's access to land ownership. Despite the supposed advantages offered at the interior of the country, most newcomers chose to settle in Buenos Aires.

### The mass immigration

Argentina agricultural activity constituted an attractive opportunity for European immigrants, especially farmers. In their home countries the plots were deeply divided and soil eroded by the work of so many centuries.

There was then an alluvial nature of immigration, mostly Italians and Spaniards, allegedly covered in the Act enacted during the presidency of Avellaneda (1876).

The difficulties of access to land ownership has contributed to many foreigners locating on the coast and especially in the cities, exacerbating the process of urbanization. (Urbanization rate in 1869: 39% in 1914: 62%).

In the field, the real colonization (property divided into parcels and handed free of charge) was replaced by lease or tenancy. The Latifundio [ big extensions owned by one person generally living in the Capital ] was incompatible with colonization.

Lured by good pay and because in Europe in winter there was nothing to do, contingents of workers arrived into the country to gather the summer crops.

Companies that brought these workers paid their trip expenses and returned them to their country of origin.

From 1870 to 1890, 1,500,000 people entered the country. The process was growing, until the First World War halted the influx of foreigners. Many returned to enlist, so the 1914 net migration was negative.