2A Evidence: Open Immigration

By "Coach Vance" Trefethen

***Resolved:* *The United States federal government should substantially reduce its restrictions on legal immigration to the United States.***

Open immigration, that is, abolishing the general system of visas and quotas and letting just about everyone in, used to be America's policy up until the late 1800s. Since then, restrictions have taken many forms, but it remains firmly entrenched policy that you have to qualify for a visa somehow to live in this country legally. Reverting back to something like our nation's traditional open immigration policy would bring numerous benefits.

There's no moral justification for refusing people the human right to migrate. And this country would reap numerous economic and social benefits from the influx of new workers. In addition, opening up legal immigration allows refugees at risk of death to come easily and eliminates the risk of immigrants dying in the desert trying to sneak in.

This is the 2A extension evidence of the original case.

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ADVANTAGES

Attracting Talent

Refugees and migrants bring talent and make society far wealthier

Vladimir Vinukurov 2017 (Australian attorney) 9 Dec 2017 Open Immigration Is Good for the Health of People and the Economy <https://fee.org/articles/open-immigration-is-good-for-the-health-of-people-and-the-economy/>

What do Albert Einstein, Salvador Dali, Google co-founder Sergey Brin and Freddie Mercury have in common? They were all refugees who made extraordinary contributions to their fields. Societies who welcome refugees and migrants benefit from their contributions and the jobs they create. Opening our doors to migrants, rather than detaining them on Manus Island or elsewhere, would make us far wealthier.

Talented immigrants benefit America

The Economist 2017. The progressive case for immigration 18 Mar 2017 <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2017/03/18/the-progressive-case-for-immigration>

Natives enjoy other benefits, too. As migrants to rich countries prosper and have children, they become better able to contribute to science, the arts and entrepreneurial activity. This is the Steve Jobs case for immigration: the child of a Muslim man from Syria might create a world-changing company in his new home.

Moral Imperative

We're not more deserving of higher incomes than people in poor countries

The Economist 2017. The progressive case for immigration 18 Mar 2017 <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2017/03/18/the-progressive-case-for-immigration>

Americans and Europeans are not more deserving of high incomes than Ethiopians or Haitians. And the discomfort some feel at the strange dress or speech of a passer-by does not remotely justify trillions in economic losses foisted on the world’s poorest people. No one should be timid about saying so, loud and clear.

Economic Growth & New Jobs

Immigrants create jobs by starting new businesses at a high rate

Vladimir Vinukurov 2017 (Australian attorney) 9 Dec 2017 Open Immigration Is Good for the Health of People and the Economy <https://fee.org/articles/open-immigration-is-good-for-the-health-of-people-and-the-economy/>

Immigrants also create local jobs by opening businesses. One [American](https://hbr.org/2016/10/why-are-immigrants-more-entrepreneurial) study finds that immigrants are twice as likely to open businesses. 27.5% of American businesspeople are immigrants, whereas they make up only 13% of its population. Google is now a multi-billion dollar company with [72,000](https://www.statista.com/statistics/273744/number-of-full-time-google-employees/) employees thanks to its refugee co-founder, Sergey Brin.

Fights Poverty

Immigrants benefit from much higher incomes

The Economist 2017. The progressive case for immigration 18 Mar 2017 <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2017/03/18/the-progressive-case-for-immigration>

Among economists, there is near-universal acceptance that immigration generates huge benefits. Inconveniently, from a rhetorical perspective, most go to the migrants themselves. Workers who migrate from poor countries to rich ones typically earn vastly more than they could have in their country of origin. In a paper published in 2009, economists estimated the “place premium” a foreign worker could earn in America relative to the income of an identical worker in his native country. The figures are eye-popping. A Mexican worker can expect to earn more than 2.5 times her Mexican wage, in PPP-adjusted dollars, in America. The multiple for Haitian workers is over 10; for Yemenis it is 15 (see chart).

Open immigration could raise millions out of poverty

The Economist 2017. The progressive case for immigration 18 Mar 2017 <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2017/03/18/the-progressive-case-for-immigration>

No matter how hard a Haitian worker labours, he cannot create around him the institutions, infrastructure and skilled population within which American workers do their jobs. By moving, he gains access to all that at a stroke, which massively boosts the value of his work, whether he is a software engineer or a plumber. Defenders of open borders reckon that restrictions on migration represent a “trillion dollar bills left on the pavement”: a missed opportunity to raise the output of hundreds of millions of people, and, in so doing, to boost their quality of life.

Save Lives

Thousands die in the desert on the US-Mexico border, and migrants are abused

Prof. [David K. Androff](https://asu.pure.elsevier.com/en/persons/david-androff), Kyoko Y. Tavassoli 2012 (Androff - PhD; professor of social work, Arizona State U. Tavassoli – doctoral candidate at Ariz. State Univ. ) Deaths in the desert: The human rights crisis on the U.S.-Mexico border <https://asu.pure.elsevier.com/en/publications/deaths-in-the-desert-the-human-rights-crisis-on-the-us-mexico-bor>

Many would acknowledge that immigration is a major issue in the United States and that immigration reform should be a priority. However, there is little attention to the human rights crisis on the U.S.-Mexican border. As a result of tightened border security since 1994, it is estimated that over 5,000 migrants have died in the Sonoran desert. The criminalization of immigration has resulted in a human rights crisis in three areas: (1) the rise of deaths and injuries of migrants crossing the border in harsh and remote locations, (2) the use of mass hearings to prosecute apprehended migrants, and (3) abuses of migrants in immigration detention. These policies and practices have serious repercussions for the affected vulnerable population.

DISADVANTAGES

A/T " 'Too many' immigrants" – There is no "right" number. People will figure it out on their own

*Prof.* [John H. Cochrane](http://review.chicagobooth.edu/experts/john-h-cochrane)*2014 (AQR Capital Management Distinguished Service Professor of Finance and a senior fellow of the Hoover Institution) 5 Nov 2014* <http://review.chicagobooth.edu/magazine/fall-2014/why-the-us-should-free-its-immigration-policies>

What is the optimal number of imported tomatoes? Soviet central-planners tried to figure things out this way. Americans shouldn’t. We should decide on the optimal terms on which tomatoes can be imported, and then let the market decide the number. Similarly, we should debate what the optimal terms for immigration are—How will we let people immigrate? What kind of people?—so that the vast majority of such immigrants are a net benefit to the US. Then, let as many come as want to. On the right terms, the number will self-regulate.

A/T "Welfare" - $5000 bond solves, and they're coming here to work anyway, not for welfare

*Prof.* [John H. Cochrane](http://review.chicagobooth.edu/experts/john-h-cochrane)*2014 (AQR Capital Management Distinguished Service Professor of Finance and a senior fellow of the Hoover Institution) 5 Nov 2014* <http://review.chicagobooth.edu/magazine/fall-2014/why-the-us-should-free-its-immigration-policies>

Why fear immigrants? You might fear they will overuse social services. Morally, just why your taxes should support an unfortunate who happened to be born in Maine and not one who happened to be born in Guadalajara is an interesting question, but leave that aside for now. It’s easy enough to structure a deal that protects the finances of the welfare state. Immigrants would pay a bond at the border, say $5,000. If they run out of money, are convicted of a crime, don’t have health insurance, or whatever, the bond pays for their ticket home. Alternatively, the government could establish an asset and income test: immigrants must show $10,000 in assets and either a job within six months or visible business or asset income. In any case, welfare is a red herring. Immigrants might go to France for a welfare state. The vast majority of immigrants to the US come to work, and pay taxes. Overuse of social services is simply not a problem.

A/T "Welfare costs" – Immigrants use welfare less than native citizens

Leighton Ku & Brian Bruen 2013 (Ku - PhD, MPH, is a Professor of Health Policy and Director of the Center for Health Policy Research at George Washington University. Bruen, MS, is a Lead Research Scientist and Lecturer in the Department of Health Policy at George Washington Univ ) " The Use of Public Assistance Benefits by Citizens and Non-citizen Immigrants in the United States" 19 Feb 2013 <https://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/workingpaper-13_1.pdf>

Claims are sometimes made that immigrants use public benefits, such as Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families programs, more often than those who are born in the United States. This report provides analyses, using the most recent data from the Census Bureau, that counter these claims. In reality, low-income non-citizen immigrants, including adults and children, are generally less likely to receive public benefits than those who are native-born. Moreover, when non-citizen immigrants receive benefits, the value of benefits they receive is usually lower than the value of benefits received by those born in the United States. The combination of lower average utilization and smaller average benefits indicates that the overall cost of public benefits is substantially less for low-income non-citizen immigrants than for comparable native-born adults and children. The report also explains that the lower use of public benefits by non-citizen immigrants is not surprising, since federal rules restrict immigrants’ eligibility for these public benefit programs.

A/T "Social costs" – Turn: Saves taxpayer money by eliminating deportation and enforcement costs

Michael Nicholson and the Center for American Progress Immigration Team 2017. (doctoral candidate in political science at the University of California, San Diego) "The Facts on Immigration Today: 2017 Edition" 20 Apr 2017 <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/reports/2017/04/20/430736/facts-immigration-today-2017-edition/>

Nevertheless, despite the positive impacts of immigrants on the United States’ economy and society, the tenor of the new administration threatens to move the United States to a more restrictionist policy environment. Increased immigration enforcement—as well as potential restrictions on legal immigration and refugee resettlement—will impose fiscal costs on taxpayers and threaten immigrants, their families, and their communities across the country. Stepping up detentions and deportations will not only cost taxpayers billions of dollars but will also break apart families and place vulnerable individuals—such as survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault in the United States, as well as women and children fleeing violence in their homelands—in peril.

A/T "Immigrants = poverty" – They start out poor but work their way up

Leighton Ku & Brian Bruen 2013 (Ku - PhD, MPH, is a Professor of Health Policy and Director of the Center for Health Policy Research at George Washington University. Bruen, MS, is a Lead Research Scientist and Lecturer in the Department of Health Policy at George Washington Univ ) " The Use of Public Assistance Benefits by Citizens and Non-citizen Immigrants in the United States" 19 Feb 2013 <https://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/workingpaper-13_1.pdf>

Immigrants are more likely to have incomes below the poverty line than the native-born.7 While most immigrants speak English, about 30% report they do not speak English well or at all. Longitudinal studies have shown that when they first arrive, immigrants’ earnings are lower than native citizens’, but they invest more in education and training than natives and over time their earnings converge with those of native citizens.8 That is, while immigrants begin with lower earnings, their incomes improve as they remain in the United States for longer periods. As immigrants remain longer in the United States, their English proficiency and other job skills improve, which heightens their earning potential.

A/T "Take jobs from Americans" – Not a problem

*Prof.* [John H. Cochrane](http://review.chicagobooth.edu/experts/john-h-cochrane)*2014 (AQR Capital Management Distinguished Service Professor of Finance and a senior fellow of the Hoover Institution) 5 Nov 2014* <http://review.chicagobooth.edu/magazine/fall-2014/why-the-us-should-free-its-immigration-policies>

You might fear that immigrants will compete for jobs, and drive down American wages. Again, this is not demonstrably a serious problem. If labor does not move in, capital—factories and farms—moves out and wages go down anyway. Immigrants come to work in wide-open industries with lots of jobs, not those where there are few jobs and many workers. Thus, restrictions on immigration do little, in the long run of an open economy such as the US, to “protect” wages.

A/T "Immigration takes jobs / reduces wages" – No unemployment or wage effects. Jobs increase as immigration increases

Vladimir Vinukurov 2017 (Australian attorney) 9 Dec 2017 Open Immigration Is Good for the Health of People and the Economy <https://fee.org/articles/open-immigration-is-good-for-the-health-of-people-and-the-economy/>

[Studies](https://theconversation.com/new-research-shows-immigration-has-only-a-minor-effect-on-wages-74546) have also shown that immigration does not generally affect local unemployment, job security or wages. That’s because the economy does not have a fixed amount of jobs for people to compete for. Immigration increases the number of jobs available because immigrants are new customers for local businesses. This helps businesses grow to meet increased demand for their services.

A/T "Immigrants steal jobs" – High immigrant communities have more industry and higher wages than low-immigrant communities

Prof. [Richard Florida](https://www.citylab.com/authors/richard-florida/) 2017 (co-founder and editor at large of CityLab and a senior editor at *The Atlantic.*He is a University Professor and Director of Cities at the University of Toronto’s Martin Prosperity Institute, and a Distinguished Fellow at New York University’s Schack Institute of Real Estate) 19 Jan 2017 The High Cost of Closed Borders <https://www.citylab.com/equity/2017/01/the-high-cost-of-closed-borders/510197/>

Back in 2015, I traced the [geography of immigration](https://www.citylab.com/politics/2015/09/americas-leading-immigrant-cities/406438/) for CityLab and found that the top ten large metros for immigrants list reads like a who’s who of America’s most economically vibrant and dynamic metros: Miami, San Jose (the heart of Silicon Valley), Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, Houston (America’s energy capital), Washington, D.C., and New York City. The bottom ten feature harder-hit Rust Belt metros like Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Buffalo. Metros with higher levels of immigrants have higher concentrations of high-tech industry, more startups, and higher incomes and wages overall.

A/T "Not enough jobs, housing" – Markets solve

*Prof.* [John H. Cochrane](http://review.chicagobooth.edu/experts/john-h-cochrane)*2014 (AQR Capital Management Distinguished Service Professor of Finance and a senior fellow of the Hoover Institution) 5 Nov 2014* <http://review.chicagobooth.edu/magazine/fall-2014/why-the-us-should-free-its-immigration-policies>

Maybe you worry, how will we build homes and find jobs for all these people? “We” don’t. They will. Markets, not the government, already provide homes and jobs for citizens. And anyway, aren’t we supposed to be worried about our stagnant economy? Everyone wants more housing construction in the US, yet there are only so many people who need only so many houses. Imagine the construction boom from millions of additional immigrants each year. Our ancestors did not need the American Indian federal government to provide them jobs or build them houses. Neither do new immigrants.

A/T "Racism, riots or backlash" – Doesn't morally justify restricting the right to immigrate

Prof. Joseph H. Carens 1987. (professor at the Department of Political *Science* of the University of Toronto, Canada) Aliens and Citizens: The Case for Open Borders <http://web.archive.org/web/20140409153341/http://www.mrrena.com/misc/carens_borders.php>

Rawls warns against any attempt to use this sort of public order argument in an expansive fashion or as an excuse for restrictions on liberty undertaken for other reasons. The hypothetical possibility of a threat to public order is not enough. Restrictions would be justified only if there were a “reasonable expectation” that unlimited immigration would damage the public order and this expectation would have to be based on “evidence and ways of reasoning acceptable to all.” Moreover, restrictions would be justified only to the extent necessary to preserve public order. A need for some restrictions would not justify any level of restrictions whatsoever. Finally, the threat to public order posed by unlimited immigration could not be the product of antagonistic reactions (*e.g.*, riots) from current citizens. This discussion takes place in the context of ideal theory and in this context it is assumed that people try to act justly. Rioting to prevent others from exercising legitimate freedoms would not be just. So, the threat to public order would have to be one that emerged as the unintended cumulative effect of individually just actions.

A/T "Too different from us / Won't assimilate" – Said the same about Catholics and Jews long ago. It's absurd

The Economist 2017. The progressive case for immigration 18 Mar 2017 <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2017/03/18/the-progressive-case-for-immigration>

An argument sometimes cited by critics of immigration is that migrants might taint their new homes with a residue of the culture of their countries of origin. If they come in great enough numbers, this argument runs, the accumulated toxins could undermine the institutions that make high incomes possible, leaving everyone worse off. Michael Anton, a national-security adviser to Donald Trump, for example, has warned that the culture of “third-world foreigners” is antithetical to the liberal, Western values that support high incomes and a high quality of life. This argument, too, fails to convince. At times in history Catholics and Jews faced similar slurs, which in hindsight look simply absurd.

A/T "They're too different from us, threaten social fabric" – Disproven by history, ignorant and bigoted

Prof. Joseph H. Carens 1987. (professor at the Department of Political *Science* of the University of Toronto, Canada) Aliens and Citizens: The Case for Open Borders <http://web.archive.org/web/20140409153341/http://www.mrrena.com/misc/carens_borders.php>

A related concern is the claim that immigrants from societies where liberal democratic values are weak or absent would pose a threat to the maintenance of a just public order. Again the distinction between reasonable expectations and hypothetical speculations is crucial. These sorts of arguments were used during the nineteenth century against Catholics and Jews from Europe and against all Asians and Africans. If we judge those arguments to have been proven wrong (not to say ignorant and bigoted) by history, we should be wary of resurrecting them in another guise.

A/T "It's Amnesty!!" – Doesn't matter

Prof. Joseph H. Carens 2013. (professor at the Department of Political Science of the University of Toronto, Canada) WASHINGTON POST " What gives us a right to deport people? Joseph Carens on the ethics of immigration" 29 Nov 2013 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/11/29/what-gives-us-a-right-to-deport-people-joseph-carens-on-the-ethics-of-immigration/?utm_term=.77f248c63f25>

Here is another parallel. For every crime except very serious felonies, there's a statute of limitations. It varies from state to state and from crime to crime. There's an understanding that, after a while, it doesn't matter anymore. You shouldn't be forever vulnerable for some minor wrong that you did in the past. There's a direct analogy here. If people have have lived here peacefully for a number of years, the fact that they violated some law in coming is not as important as their ongoing social membership. That's the main argument for why they should be able to stay. The initial violation of the law is just not as important morally as the reality of their membership.

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