

**Immigration Micro-Macro Debates**

**Argument-Based Reflection Questions**

**Debatable Issue: The United States should substantially reduce immigration.**

Economic Impact Overall

1. According to Jessica Vaughn, why does recent economic data in the U.S. suggest that high levels of immigration are not good for the American economy overall?

2. According to Steven Camarota in his report for the Frazier Institute, what is the single most important factor in predicting whether an immigrant will have a positive or negative impact on the economy?

3. The article in the *City Journal* states that current levels of immigration are bad for the U.S. economy, mainly because most immigrants are not highly educated. Why is it that these immigrants hurt rather than help the economy?

4. What does the CIS study, written by Steven Camarota, show about immigrants’ use of government resources?

5. What is the American public’s view on whether immigrants bring benefits to the U.S. economy, and why do they hold this view?

6. Of the 10 ways that immigrants contribute to the American economy, list the 3 that you think are most important. Explain why you selected them.

7. What does Doug Bandow say about immigrants’ willingness and ability to start new businesses? Why is this important to the economy?

8. The Brookings Institution argues that immigration helps grow the economy by increasing the flow of goods and services. Explain this argument in your own words.

9. The *Washington Post* article reports on a study that shows that high levels of immigration will have an impact on U.S. budget deficits. What is this impact, and how does it come about?

10. According to the *Time* article, how does immigration affect innovation and efficiency in the American economy?

High Skilled Workers

1. What are the specific ways that high-skilled immigration is bad for native-born workers, according to John Miano’s first article?

2. In John Miano’s view (in his second article), what is the benefit of the H-1B visa program for employers? Name specific aspects of the program that enable employer abuse of the program.

3. According to Tom Whitehead, what type of jobs are “highly-skilled” workers taking upon entry to Britain under their highly skilled worker program?

4. Economist Tim Taylor makes the point that there are two kinds of high-skilled immigrants: one kind that is very hard-working and creates new businesses, and the other that is more average and tends not to build businesses and create jobs for the economy. How might this difference be usable as an argument for the affirmative?

5. What does the report by the New American Economy say about the difference between the current supply of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) trained employees versus American business’s need for STEM workers?

6. According to Andrew Soergel, what is the risk for American economy if domestic firms leave STEM positions unfilled, waiting for American applicants to fill these jobs, and not hiring foreign nationals to fill the positions?

7. According to Alex Nowrasteh, what effects does allowing a high level of immigration have on productivity, entrepreneurship, and technological innovation?

8. What are two reasons that the Kauffman Foundation report concludes that high-skilled immigrants are crucial to the success and expansion of the U.S. economy?

Humanitarianism/Democratic Values

1. Summarize in a single sentence Roy Beck’s main argument against taking in immigrants to

the U.S. on humanitarian grounds.

2. Paul David Miller argues that immigration policy is not a good way to go about trying to alleviate suffering in other nations. What are two ways that the U.S. could more efficiently improve the lives of foreigners living in very bad living conditions, according to Miller?

3. According to law professor Ruth Gavison, do people who are living in inhumane conditions in other countries have a legally-recognized human right to immigrate to the United States? Why or why not?

4. The CBC News interviews Charles Burrell of The Humanity Project. Why does Burrell think that focusing on the suffering of Syrian refugees is well-intentioned but wrong.

5. The CNN article discusses two important points related to the Syrian refugee crisis. One is that more than 100 countries have signed a United Nations charter saying that they will take in refugees who are in grave danger in their own countries. The other is that very few countries in the Middle East have taken in any Syrian refugees. How might one or both of these facts support the affirmative’s argument in our debate?

6. Summarize one of the counter-arguments that Vipul Naik makes against the Roy Beck video included in our Media List.

7. Identify the three arguments that Matthew Altman makes in favor of the U.S. taking in large numbers of Syrian refugees.

8. How does Europe’s response to the humanitarian crisis in Syria compare to the response so far from the United States, according to Tre Goins-Phillips?

9. In the view of the Century Foundation, are the concerns that have prevented the U.S. from taking in more Syrian refugees justified? Why or why not?

10. Do the benefits in improving the lives of immigrants outweigh the costs and risks to the U.S. of allowing in immigrants, according to Jeffrey Miron? Why is the answer to this question important in our debate?

Social Division/Diversity

1. Hugh Upton asserts that the U.S. needs “to find a way to return immigration to the effective rule of law,” making it easier for people to enter the U.S. legally and finding a path to citizenship for current undocumented immigrants.  Why does he think illegal immigration is detrimental to our society in terms of social diversity?

2. According to the Federalist article, why might Islamic immigrants have trouble assimilating?

3. What has research from the Migration Observatory shown about the relationship between diversity and trust in the U.S.?  How would this research support the affirmative argumentative claim about social diversity?

4. What evidence does this article from “The Economist” give to support the claim that Latino immigrants are causing tension and creating social division in predominantly African-American communities?

5. According to this HuffPost article, what do immigrants bring to our country that strengthens the American population?

6. In this overview from Political Research Associates, what are the counterarguments for the claims that immigrants are hurting our society by creating ethnic conflicts and not assimilating quickly enough?

7. Choose one immigrant or child of immigrants mentioned in “The Contributions of Immigrants to American Culture.”  How did he/she contribute positively to American culture?

8. This HuffPost article outlines four ways that immigrants are adding to America’s cultural diversity.  Which one do you think is most valuable and why?

Terrorism

1. In the YouTube video what does Senator Rand Paul say about the current level of scrutiny [definition: close attention paid to someone by an authority figure, like an immigration officer or a police officer] that our immigration service applies to Muslim immigrants from the Middle East?

2. In the *National Review* article, what is meant by the threat of terrorism in the United States is a “numbers game”? What numbers is the author talking about? What do the “numbers” have to do with immigration?

3. Why does Asra Nomani argue that the West [definition: countries in Western Europe, such as Great Britain and France, and in North America, especially the United States] does not have a moral responsibility to take in Syrian refugees (aside from the point that they might pose a terrorist threat)?

4. According to the CNS News article, what does FBI Director James Comey admit about the United States’ ability to vet [definition: investigate the background of] Syrian refugees? How does he distinguish Syrian refugees from Iraqi refugees in this context?

5. Identify the two most important facts or data points (to you) in the Center for Immigration Studies article connecting immigration to domestic terrorism in the United States.

6. What claim made by Republicans about terrorism and immigration does Abigail Abrams refute? What evidence does she cite to refute this argument? Also, what does the infographic her article includes say about the trend line of terrorist attacks and threats in the U.S. since 1970?

7. What does PolitiFact say about the United States’ system to vet incoming refugees from the Middle East?

8. Why does the *Fiscal Times* say that immigration restrictions or regulations that target Muslims from the Middle East might make a terrorist attack in the United States **more likely** rather than less likely?

9. Why does *The Atlantic Magazine* article state that Muslim immigrants in the U.S. are much less likely to become terrorists than Muslim immigrants to Western European countries?

10. Muzafarr Chishti, professor of law at New York University, refers to the 2002 Homeland Security Act, passed shortly after 9/11, to restrict immigration of potential terrorists. Did this law work? What relevance does this have for our debate?

Wages/Unemployment

1. According to Howard Foster, in *National Interest*, how does immigration affect the wages of the current U.S. workforce? What examples does he provide to support his claim?

2. As explained by the article in *Politico*, how does immigration affect employers and employees differently?

3. The research study published in *Economica* concludes that immigration between 1960 and 2000 increased the number of prospective employees in the U.S. by what percentage, which had what numerical effect on unemployment and incarceration [imprisonment] rates for black men?

4. In his introduction, Dr. Camarota states, “Immigration does not confer significant economic benefits on the native-born.” Explain what he means by that in your own words. Provide an example from the text to support your response.

5. According to George Borjas, what *should* happen, in line with economic theory, when more workers enter the U.S. economy through immigration. Does his research conclude that this actually *does* happen?

6. What evidence does Garrett Jones use to suggest that richer countries benefit from having “high human capital immigration policies”?

7. Daniel Griswold feels that “the best approach to immigration would be to expand legal entry for immigrants.” How does he think America and native-born Americans would benefit from increased immigration?

8. In its article “The Economic Blame Game: Immigration and Employment,” the American Immigration Council attempts to dispel what it calls immigration myths. Which of the sub-sections do you consider to be the strongest argument in support of immigration? Explain why you chose your answer.

9. Jon Talton has two concerns about immigration: 1) At what point must a country cut off immigration to ensure it has enough resources for its inhabitants, and 2) How will higher immigration affect the quickly changing job market. Does any of his bulleted findings help to address either concern? Explain your response.

10. In the view of Adam Davidson, writing in the *New York Times*, how does the labor provided by undocumented immigrants, like Pedro Chan, *complement* the labor of skilled workers?