

**Immigration Micro-Macro Debates**

**Vocabulary Terms**

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

**Budget Deficit (n.)** In this context, the amount by which governmental expenditure (spending) exceeds revenue (generally, taxes) in a given year. Expenditures for immigrants are typically social services, such as public health care, education, law enforcement, etc. A deficit is a yearly measure, whereas a “budget debt” is an accumulated amount of money owed to creditors over time. In 2016, for instance, the U.S. federal budget deficit is $590 billion, whereas the U.S. federal debt is about $14.5 trillion.

**Demographics (n.)** Statistical data relating to the population and groups within it. In this context, demographics often refers to how immigration is changing the ethnic make-up of the U.S. population, and sometimes to its average age and income.

**Diversity (n.)** In this context, diversity refers to the range of racial, ethnic, religious, cultural, and social identities that immigration adds to the U.S. population and society. Diversity generally has a positive connotation, whereas “division” or “fracturing” have negative connotations, though they can also refer to the increasing in these identities.

**Economic Competitiveness (n.)** The World Economic Forum defines economic

competitiveness as "the set of institutions, policies, and factors that determine the level of productivity of a country" compared to other countries. In this context, economic competitiveness is raised when examining how immigrants, particularly high-skilled immigrants, affect the U.S. ability to compete with other advanced economies around the world, particularly in innovation (think Apple, Google, etc.) and trade (whether other nations and their consumers are buying U.S. goods and services as much as we’re buying other nations’ goods and services).

**Economic Growth (n.)** An increase in the amount of goods and services produced by a nation over a period of time. Economic growth is often measured in something called the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). American GDP refers to the to the total economic output of the U.S. in a given year. In 2016 the U.S. GDP is $18.6 trillion.

**Economic Impact (n.)** The [effect](http://www.investorwords.com/9552/effect.html) that an event, [policy](http://www.investorwords.com/3728/policy.html) change, or [market](http://www.investorwords.com/2962/market.html) [trend](http://www.investorwords.com/5067/trend.html) will have

on [economic](http://www.investorwords.com/1639/economic.html) [factors](http://www.investorwords.com/1872/factor.html) such as [interest rates](http://www.investorwords.com/2539/interest_rate.html), [consumer confidence](http://www.investorwords.com/5472/consumer_confidence.html), [stock market](http://www.investorwords.com/4743/stock_market.html) [activity](http://www.investorwords.com/92/activity.html), or [unemployment](http://www.investorwords.com/5838/unemployment.html). In this context, economic impact usually refers to the overall or specific consequences that immigration has on the U.S. economy.

**Entrepreneurial (adj.)** Characterized by the taking of financial risks in the hope of profit;

enterprising.

**Goods and Services (n.)** In economics, products can be classified into goods and services. Goods are items that are tangible, such as cars, pens, corn, and computers. Services are activities provided by people, such as doctors, financial advisers, engineers, auto mechanics, and lawyers.

**(High-)Skilled Workers (n.)** A skilled worker is any worker who has special skill, training, knowledge, and (usually acquired) ability in their work. A skilled worker may have attended a college, university or technical school. Or, a skilled worker may have learned their skills on the job. A highly skilled worker is one who is capable of working efficiently and supervises efficiently the work of skilled employees.

**Humanitarianism (n.)** The promotion of human welfare. In this context,

humanitarianism refers to the American values of democracy, inclusion, and compassion (for example, the Statue of Liberty’s inscription, “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free”) and whether they obligate the U.S. to maintain (or even increase) current levels of immigration.

**Immigration (n.)** The action of coming to live permanently in a foreign country.

**Islamophobia (n.)** Dislike or prejudice against Islam (the religion) or Muslims (individual people, or the people who practice Islam as a whole), especially within the political realm.

**Refugee (n.)** A person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster.

**Screening/Vetting (n.)** In this context, the process of checking on the criminal and social background of a prospective immigrant in order to ensure that they are not a national security threat to the U.S.

**Social Cohesion (n.)** The willingness of members of a society to cooperate with each other and get along harmoniously, in order to survive and prosper.

**Social Safety Net (n.)** A collection of services provided by the state or other institutions such as friendly societies, including welfare, unemployment benefit, universal healthcare, homeless shelters, and sometimes subsidized services such as public transport, which prevent individuals from falling into poverty (see Welfare State).

**Sovereignty (n.)** In this context, the authority of a country to govern itself.

**Terrorism (n.)** The unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims.

**Unemployment (n.)** The number or percentage of employable adults in the U.S. who do not have a job.

**Wages (n.)** A fixed regular payment earned for work or services, typically paid on a daily or weekly basis.

**Welfare State (n.)** A system whereby the government undertakes to protect the health and well-being of its citizens, especially those in financial or social need, by means of grants, pensions, and other benefits. The foundations for the modern welfare state in the US were laid by the New Deal programs of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1930s and 1940s. (See Social Safety Net.)