

ATMOSPHERICS

04.21.23

U.S. IMMIGRATION



Bottom Line Up Front:

- Immigration has played a pivotal role in the development of the United States, with diverse groups of people contributing to its cultural, economic, and social fabric. Family-based, employment-based, refugee, and diversity visa programs have brought individuals from various regions, enriching American society and driving innovation across industries.
- Over the past century, U.S. immigration has shifted from predominantly European to Latin American and Asian sources. Since the mid-2000s, the number of Mexican immigrants has declined, while Asian immigrants have steadily increased, reflecting evolving demographics.
- U.S. immigration policies, such as the Immigration Act of 1924, the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, and the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, have played crucial roles in shaping immigration patterns, transforming the nation's ethnic composition, and addressing challenges like undocumented immigration.
- Despite common misconceptions, the majority of the undocumented immigrant population in the U.S. does not consist of people who crossed the border illegally. In fact, roughly two-thirds of undocumented immigrants are individuals who entered the country legally but overstayed their visas.

INFORMATION



Blue terms are connected to the word of the week via news outlets and searches, whereas black and gray terms are not directly related, but still dominate the social space.

U.S. Immigration defined: U.S. immigration refers to the process of individuals moving to the United States with the intention of residing permanently or temporarily. The U.S. immigration system is divided into several categories, but the two largest are family-based immigration and employment-based immigration, both of which can be lengthy and complex in terms of process. As of 2022, there were over 45 million immigrants living in the United States, accounting for ~14% % of the total U.S. population. A majority of immigrants come from Latin America and Asia (Mexico #1, China #2). Interestingly, though the absolute number of immigrants in the U.S. has increased over the past 100 years, as a percentage it's gone relatively unchanged.

Why this topic is important right now: the timing of this topic is interesting for several reasons, but two specific factors include the U.S.' upcoming transition away from Title 42 (and return to Title 8) and recent trends in immigration, which can have both near- and long-term economic implications (particularly as the U.S. grapples with an overly tight labor market in an inflationary environment). The former, Title 42, is scheduled to end on May 11, sparking debates at federal, state, and local levels, to include the expected surge of illegal immigrants. As for the latter, legal immigration (particularly among working-age immigrants) has increased over the past couple of years, contributing to a larger workforce. This is likely to impact economic growth (with immigrants starting a quarter of all new businesses in the U.S.) and potentially help keep wages and prices in check, thereby influencing inflation.

TECHNOLOGY



AI Generated Image

"U.S. public opinion on immigration is often polarized along political lines, with Democrats generally favoring more lenient policies and Republicans advocating for stricter enforcement. However, there is common ground across the spectrum, such as recognizing the value of skilled workers and immigrants' economic contributions, as well as supporting refugees and asylum seekers in certain cases."

-ChatGPT, 2023

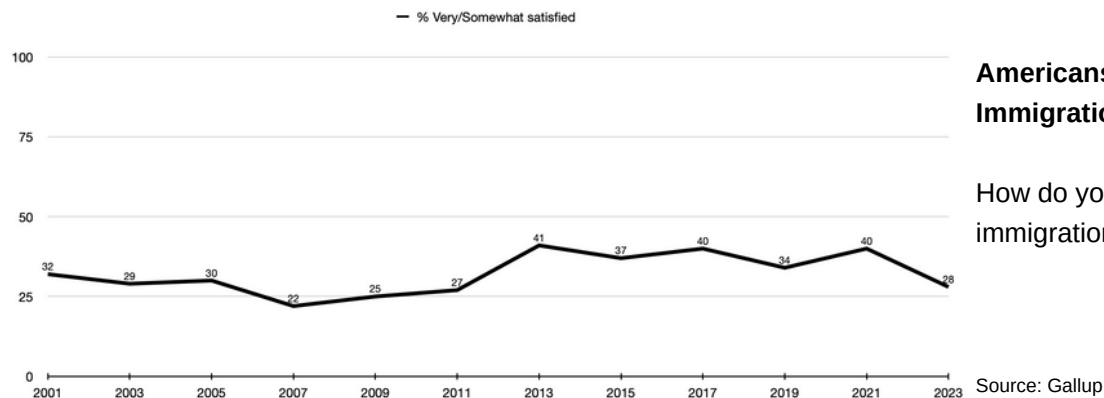
Over the past 100 years, U.S. immigration has evolved through various types and policies. Family-based, employment-based, refugee and asylum, diversity visa lottery, and undocumented immigration are the primary types, with family-based immigration accounting for the majority of legal immigration. Accurate statistics for documented immigrants come from government records, while estimates for undocumented immigrants rely on demographic models. The Immigration Act of 1924, Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) have significantly shaped immigration in the U.S.

Immigration has both positive and negative economic implications. Immigrants contribute to the labor market, drive innovation, and help maintain demographic balance. However, they can also increase competition for low-skilled jobs and potentially burden local governments with fiscal impact. Trends over the past century reveal a shift in the origins of immigrants from European countries in the early 20th century to Latin America and Asia in the early 21st century. Moreover, immigrants have consistently exhibited higher rates of entrepreneurship compared to native-born Americans.

ChatGPT's take on a lesser-known U.S. immigration success story:

Jan Koum, the co-founder of WhatsApp, exemplifies the potential of U.S. immigration. Born in Ukraine, Koum immigrated to the U.S. at 16, settling in California and facing financial hardships. Despite these challenges, he pursued computer science, eventually working at Yahoo as an engineer. In 2009, Koum and his colleague Brian Acton co-founded the game-changing mobile messaging app WhatsApp. The app's massive success culminated in its \$19 billion acquisition by Facebook in 2014, transforming Koum into a billionaire and highlighting the opportunities the U.S. can offer to immigrants.

SENTIMENT



Americans' Satisfaction With U.S. Immigration

How do you feel about the level of immigration into the country today?

Public sentiment around U.S. immigration is complex and varies depending on a variety of factors, including demographics, political affiliation, and personal experiences. However, some recent surveys and polls provide a snapshot of current attitudes towards immigration in the United States:

- According to a Gallup poll conducted in June 2021, 34% of Americans believe that the level of immigration to the United States should be decreased, while 27% believe it should be increased and 38% believe it should be kept at its current level.
- A Pew Research Center survey conducted in April 2021 found that 76% of Americans believe that undocumented immigrants should be allowed to stay in the United States if they meet certain requirements, such as paying a fine or back taxes.
- Another Pew Research Center survey conducted in July 2021 found that a majority of Americans (57%) believe that immigrants strengthen the country because of their hard work and talents.
- According to a survey by the Public Religion Research Institute in June 2021, a majority of Americans (65%) support creating a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants.
- A survey by the Cato Institute in 2021 found that a majority of Americans (61%) believe that immigration is generally good for the country.

Overall, while there is certainly a diverse set of opinions on the topic of U.S. immigration, recent surveys suggest that a majority of Americans support policies that offer a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants and view immigrants as a positive force for the country.

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SENTIMENT:

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