

## **Economic Consequences of Migration**

Often, the positive economic consequences of immigration outweigh its negative socioeconomic consequences for unskilled immigrants, which are directly observable through the driving force that brings unskilled laborers to the United States. When unskilled laborers migrate to the United States, it is because they are often in search of a better life or the need to support their families who remain in their home country; although we view their work as difficult and unrewarding compared to many jobs that the typical American holds, the unskilled laborers are thankful for this work because it helps them achieve their goals.

“Many immigrants do unskilled, low paid, dead-end, dirty, dangerous, and difficult jobs” (Economics of Migration). It is important to consider, however, that these unskilled laborers come to the United States for more than just the wage benefits; once they are here, they are entitled to public services and social welfare like Medicaid and food stamps. Since these people appear to be poorer than the average American citizens, many people argue that the negative socioeconomic consequences for unskilled immigrants outweigh the positives. However, instead, we must consider the lives that these people had before coming to this country; almost none had health insurance, many were starving, and most were politically oppressed. In this country, we ensure that people are given homes, food, and healthcare if they are unable to provide these necessities for themselves. Therefore, in this situation, the positive socioeconomic consequences for these immigrants outweigh the negatives.

On top of this, economists have shown that although immigrants are afforded rights to welfare and other government programs, they are not dependent on it; instead, welfare acts as a

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fall back for the bottom percentage who are unable to support themselves. Supporting economic data shows that immigrants pay more in taxes annually than they take away in terms of social welfare/public services at the federal level. We can assume that since these people are paying a high level of taxes, they are not suffering financially as greatly as many of us assume. Since they are able to pay for the government services they use when they pay taxes, we should be unconcerned with their use of our welfare system.

Although unskilled immigrants appear to be doing better in this country than they would do in their country of origin, several factors prohibit them from being able to do as well as the average American citizen. One of the most pressing issues in this situation is that the socioeconomic mobility for immigrants has been shifting over the past ten years. Despite this, it is important to consider that while the immigrants themselves are unable to achieve the middle-class status that they dream of, their children are typically able to as a result of many opportunities they are afforded as citizens.

In “Reinventing the Melting Pot”, the author argues that assimilation into the American culture has been increasingly more difficult over the past few years (Borjas, 2004). Although this is true, it is important to consider that this is the popular opinion of American citizens rather than the immigrants themselves; immigrants continue to leave their home countries due to economic pressures and often risk their lives in the process. They are aware that their lives will not be easy when they come here, but they know that they will be much better off in the United States than where they are from. In “Immigrants and the Economy” we see examples of the dangerous, dirty, and dead-end jobs that immigrants work, including agriculture and manufacturing; however, we see that a majority of immigrants actually work in the business industry as business

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professionals. Therefore, many immigrants are actually doing better in this country than we had thought; clearly, the positive economic consequences of immigration outweigh the negatives as you can observe in this economic consequences of immigration essay.

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**References**

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