

| | Current System | Problems | Solutions? |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|
| LEGAL IMMIGRATION | <u>Family unification</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spouse, child, parent, or sibling of US citizen Spouse, minor or single adult child of lawful permanent resident U.S. relative must take financial responsibility for immigrant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quotas (for other than “immediate relatives” of U.S. citizens) leave 4 million people in backlog, some for more than 20 years American citizens and legal residents separated from family members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase quotas Modernize and simplify immigration process Expand “immediate family” classification |
| | <u>Employer sponsorship of workers</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May apply for temporary or permanent status Must prove that no U.S. worker can fill position Strong preference for skilled workers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per-country limits and low quotas for unskilled workers create backlogs up to 10 years Expensive, time-consuming, complex process for employers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase quotas Streamline application system |
| | <u>Refugee or asylum seeker</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must prove past persecution or reasonable fear of persecution if they return to home country Economic, environmental refugees not recognized | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very limited number admitted Lack of legal and other support Spend 18 months in detention, on average | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase quotas More support for asylum seekers Have alternatives to detention Address root causes of migration |
| UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRATION | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persons may cross U.S. border illegally, or overstay their visa Illegal immigration is a civil, not criminal, offense Driven by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Push factors: poverty, oppression, violence, insecurity Pull factors: employment, opportunity, safety, family unity Employers’ demand for workers Limited opportunity to gain legal status | <u>Community Concerns</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fear of crime and terrorism Displacement of US workers Use of tax-funded social services <u>Undocumented Immigrants’ Concerns</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vulnerable to exploitation at work Lack non-emergency medical care Children ineligible for financial aid for college Can’t get driver’s license or ID | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More enforcement (<i>see below</i>) Dispel misinformation with facts about undocumented workers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most are law-abiding Take “undesirable” jobs Contribute to economy, pay taxes Ineligible for most public assistance Provide a path to legal status Expand opportunities to work legally “Dream Act” would allow qualified students to apply for financial aid Allow driver ID’s for noncitizens |
| ENFORCEMENT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Border security: Preventing unauthorized border crossings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People die attempting to cross border Costly and ineffective | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More barriers, surveillance technology, and personnel at border |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criminal justice system: Arresting, detaining, and deporting undocumented persons | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detention is costly, separates families, and conditions may be harsh and abusive Communities less safe because immigrants are reluctant to deal with local law enforcement Impractical to deport all undocumented | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require or allow local law enforcement to demand documentation when someone is arrested that they suspect of being present illegally |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer sanctions: Penalizing employers for knowingly hiring undocumented workers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult for employers to verify workers’ status Errors in records of immigration status | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require workers to have special ID’s that cannot be falsified |