

# Rebooting the American Dream: The Role of Immigration in a 21st Century Economy



[1] There is plenty of evidence that immigration helps to fuel the U.S. economy, just as it has throughout our history. Immigrants continue to play an important role in the economy as workers, entrepreneurs, taxpayers, and consumers. However, most observers agree that our current immigration system is outdated and dysfunctional, making it more difficult for the U.S. to compete in the global marketplace. The last time Congress made significant changes to the employment-based immigration system was 1990, when the Immigration Act of 1990 created the five-tiered employment-based immigration system and the numerical limits used today.

Our immigration system needs to be updated and overhauled, but inflamed rhetoric often obscures reform efforts. The first step in reforming our immigration system is to understand the basic facts surrounding the debate. This report seeks to answer some basic questions about the role of immigration in today's economy.

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