

# The New Challenges of American Immigration: What Should We Do?

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## **Personal Stake:**

- My father immigrated from Sweden. My mother's family immigrated.
- I've lived in different places and have seen the effects of immigration.
- The country will change due to fewer children being born to citizens, many to immigrants. We don't want little Mexicos. Everyone should have to read, write, and understand English. We can become a minority. It costs us money also (government forms printed in various languages)
- Someone I knew from Cuba said she appreciates being here.
- A (European) country I recently visited – a woman was worried about immigrant birth rate.
- In Scandinavia, everyone under 40 can speak English.

## **Approach #1 America's Changing Face:**

### **Pros**

- ⊕ Our birth rate is low
- ⊕ (English) would relieve the taxpayer (government forms, etc.)
- ⊕ My father realized he wouldn't get anywhere if he didn't learn English
- ⊕ American Indians did not assimilate
- ⊕ The main strength of America is the common language of English
- ⊕ Less chance of being cheated if you know English
- ⊕ Different languages dilutes the "melting pot"

### **Cons**

- ⊕ We should limit the number to what it is now

## **Approach #2 A Nation of Immigrants:**

### **Benefits**

- ⊕ Increasing the professional field
- ⊕ They take jobs Americans do not want
- ⊕ People who do not burden the system seem to be welcome
- ⊕ We are all ancestors of immigrants
- ⊕ U.S. sells itself as a welcoming community – a land of opportunity

### **Drawbacks**

- ⊕ Political clout plays a factor in who gets in
- ⊕ Preferences come into play
- ⊕ Urban concentration – where do you put more people? The population is a factor
- ⊕ People don't want to wait for visas

- ⊕ Work visas – their lack creates illegal immigration
- ⊕ In the last ten years, there have been more mixed marriages

**Approach #3 A Matter of Priorities:**

**Advantages**

- ⊕ More economic stability
- ⊕ Workers to fill jobs
- ⊕ Illegal immigrants pay sales tax
- ⊕ The emergency room has to treat people
- ⊕ Don't illegal immigrants cost the taxpayer?

**Disadvantages**

- ⊕ The ones with high pay send money home
- ⊕ Money goes out of U.S. to other countries
- ⊕ Women come across the border to bear a child
- ⊕ Illegal immigrants paid in cash do not pay Social Security tax
- ⊕ We need to keep our population up (like Japan and Europe – low birth rate)
- ⊕ Renters indirectly pay taxes
- ⊕ Many illegal immigrants share housing and they barter

**Comments**

- India has the largest middle class
- Exceptions in China for replacement child (if child dies)
- You will have "haves and have nots"

**Reflections:**

- We are unsure about immigration. It looks different in different parts of the U.S. A national policy may not work due to its complexity.
- I perceive there is not that much resentment toward people but there is about their burden, we were talking about this ten years ago.
- The law has not been effective if we are talking about employer sanctions (enforcement) still.
- They do not do anything to the employers (who hire illegal immigrants)
- I cannot see a "Just ya'll come" policy. Let's make it legal, keep it manageable and organized. We don't even know who has an expired visa. In Europe, they do. We have the technology to do it.