

## Vulnerable Workers

Immigration policy chooses “winners” and “losers”. These are some of the groups who are more vulnerable to the negative effects of mass immigration, and stand to gain the most from a more sensible policy.

### Teenagers

- Increases in immigration have greater employment impacts on teenagers than adult workers, with a 10% increase in the number of employed immigrants with less than a college degree reducing work hours for teens by 3%.<sup>1</sup>
- Between 1980 and 2009, the number of adult immigrants with no more than a high school degree increased by over 130% and the employment of high-school aged youth declined by 20%.<sup>2</sup>
- Since the 1990s, teen employment declined more rapidly in states with the largest increase in competing (older) immigrant workers than in states with more modest increases.<sup>3</sup>
- Less-educated immigration has greater displacement impacts for in-school youth and for native-born black and Hispanic males.<sup>4</sup>
- Employers prefer older, experienced workers - including immigrants - over teenagers.<sup>5</sup>
- But Employers who offer competitive wages and flexible hours to teens have found a willing workforce.<sup>6</sup>

### High school dropouts

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, C. L. (2012). The Impact of Low-Skilled Immigration on the Youth Labor Market. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 30(1), 55–89. <https://doi.org/10.1086/662073>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Camarota, Steven A. and Karen Zeigler, 2018. 2018 Shaping Up to Be Another Bad Summer for Teen Employment. Center for Immigration Studies. <https://cis.org/Report/2018-Shaping-Be-Another-Bad-Summer-Teen-Employment>

<sup>4</sup> Paul Harrington, Andrew Sum, and Ishwar Khatiwada, 2006. The Impact of New Immigrants on Young Native-Born Workers, 2000-2005. Center for Immigration Studies. <https://cis.org/Report/Impact-New-Immigrants-Young-NativeBorn-Workers-20002005>

<sup>5</sup> Katie Johnston, 2018. Now hiring: teenagers (and anyone else willing to work). *The Boston Globe*. <https://www.bostonglobe.com/business/2018/08/09/now-hiring-teenagers-and-anyone-else-willing-work/ZTQXufD2yIK01ElyLvZSGI/story.html>

<sup>6</sup> Andrew Van Dam, 2022. How Gen Z teens accidentally blew up the myth of the lazy millennial. *The Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2022/07/22/millennials-genz-teen-jobs/>

- The increase in low-skilled immigration between 1980-1994 accounted for about 44 percent of the total decline in wages of high school dropouts during that period.<sup>7</sup>

### Americans with disabilities

- There is a nearly 40 percent gap in the labor force participation rate between Americans with disabilities and those without.<sup>8</sup>
- Employers who offer innovative and inclusive practices to Americans with disabilities have found a willing workforce.<sup>9</sup>

### Formerly Incarcerated

- As many as one-third of non-working, prime-age males have a criminal record.<sup>10</sup>
- A criminal record reduces employment callbacks by 60 percent for Blacks and 30 percent for whites.<sup>11</sup>
- But Employers who extend their recruitment pipelines have found a willing workforce.<sup>12</sup>

### Black Americans

- Between 1960–2000, a 10% immigration-induced increase in the supply of workers in a particular skill group reduced the black wage of that group by 2.5%, lowered the employment rate by 5.9 percentage points, and increased the incarceration rate by 1.3 percentage points.<sup>13</sup>
- The 1980-2000 increase in immigration was a significant factor in the declining wages and opportunities of Black Americans with less than a college education during that period, but by no means the only factor.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> National Research Council. 1997. *The New Americans: Economic, Demographic, and Fiscal Effects of Immigration*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/5779>

<sup>8</sup> Kessler Foundation, 2023. August 2023 Jobs Report: Record-breaking employment trend continues for people with disabilities. <https://www.eurekaalert.org/news-releases/1000358>

<sup>9</sup> Danielle Paquette, 2018. She cleaned for \$3.49 an hour. A gas station just offered her \$11.25. *The Washington Post*. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/she-landed-her-dream-job-at-a-gas-station--and-1125-an-hour/2018/06/21/0cb8a760-5558-11e8-a551-5b648abe29ef\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/she-landed-her-dream-job-at-a-gas-station--and-1125-an-hour/2018/06/21/0cb8a760-5558-11e8-a551-5b648abe29ef_story.html)

<sup>10</sup> Benjamin Appelbaum, "The vanishing male worker: How America fell behind," *The New York Times*, December 11, 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/12/upshot/unemployment-thevanishing-male-worker-how-america-fell-behind.html>.

<sup>11</sup> Devah Pager, Bruce Western, and Naomi Sugie, "Sequencing disadvantage: Barriers to employment facing young black and white men with criminal records," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 623 (2009): 195-213. <https://scholar.harvard.edu/pager/publications/sequencing-disadvantage-barriers-employment-facing-young-black-and-white-men>

<sup>12</sup> Ben Casselman. As Labor Pool Shrinks, Prison Time Is Less of a Hiring Hurdle. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/13/business/economy/labor-market-inmates.html>

<sup>13</sup> Borjas, G.J., Grogger, J. and Hanson, G.H. (2010), Immigration and the Economic Status of African-American Men. *Economica*, 77: 255-282. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0335.2009.00803.x>

<sup>14</sup> Laurent Belsie, 2007. Effects of Immigration on African-American Employment and Incarceration. NBER. <https://www.nber.org/digest/may07/effects-immigration-african-american-employment-and-incarceration>

- Black males are disproportionately employed in the low-skilled labor market in likely competition with immigrants. There are significant negative effects in occupations such as meatpacking and construction.<sup>15</sup>
- Black Americans have had jobless rates of roughly twice that of whites since 1972.<sup>16</sup>
- Immigration restrictions between 1920-1930 contributed to increased manufacturing wages and to The Great Migration of southern Black populations to the North.<sup>17</sup>

### Recent Immigrants

- Prior immigrants are most likely to experience negative wage effects of new immigration, as they are often the closest substitutes in the labor force.<sup>18</sup>

### Unauthorized workers

- Turning a blind eye to immigration and workplace laws creates a class of workers susceptible to exploitation and abuse.

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<sup>15</sup> U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2010. The Impact of Illegal Immigration on the Wages and Employment Opportunities of Black Workers. [https://www.usccr.gov/files/pubs/docs/IllegImmig\\_10-14-10\\_430pm.pdf](https://www.usccr.gov/files/pubs/docs/IllegImmig_10-14-10_430pm.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Valerie Wilson and William Darity Jr., 2022. Understanding black-white disparities in labor market outcomes requires models that account for persistent discrimination and unequal bargaining power. Economic Policy Institute. <https://www.epi.org/unequalpower/publications/understanding-black-white-disparities-in-labor-market-outcomes/>

<sup>17</sup> Bin Xie, 2017. The Effects of Immigration Quotas on Wages, the Great Black Migration, and Industrial Development. IZA Discussion Paper No. 11214, December 2017. <https://docs.iza.org/dp11214.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2017. *The Economic and Fiscal Consequences of Immigration*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/23550>.