

# Immigration — Donald Trump vs. the Facts

More than a quarter of Americans are children or grandchildren of immigrants, and they make up about 14% of our population and 19% of our civilian labor force.<sup>1</sup>

- **“Illegal immigration...burdens American taxpayers.”<sup>2</sup>**
  - Immigrants spend \$1.6 trillion yearly, growing our economy, and in 2022 they paid over \$579 billion in taxes.<sup>3</sup>
- **“We have more people working... than at any time in the history of our country. And people want to come in, and in some cases, they want to take advantage of that...”<sup>4</sup>**
  - Our immigrant labor force is not growing rapidly. Between 2019 and 2023 it grew yearly an average of 2.3%. No evidence suggests it harms native-born Americans, as our unemployment rates remain low, and our economy continues to grow.<sup>5</sup>
  - Almost half of U.S. agricultural workers are undocumented due to shortage of native workers. They contribute to a sector adding over \$1 trillion to the U.S. GDP.<sup>6</sup>
- **“A lawless, open borders, crime-ridden, filthy, communist nightmare.”<sup>7</sup>**
  - While immigrant numbers tripled from 3.5 million to 11.2 million between 1990 and 2013, our violent crime rate dropped by almost half, and our property-crime rate fell 41%.<sup>8</sup> Crime rates continue to plunge.<sup>9</sup>
  - Over 150 years, immigrants have consistently been less likely to be incarcerated than native-born citizens, and since 1960, this gap has widened.<sup>10</sup>
  - In 2010, the incarceration rate of young immigrant males was half that of the native-born — 1.6% compared to 3.3%. Over four decades, incarceration rates of native-born have been consistently two to five times higher than that of immigrants.<sup>11</sup>
- **“Your Social Security will be destroyed by the people coming in. There's too many of them. It's not sustainable.”<sup>12</sup> “[Biden] is destroying it because millions of people are pouring into our country and they are putting them onto Social Security.”<sup>13</sup>**
  - By law, undocumented immigrants are not qualified to receive most federally funded benefits. Some states allow undocumented immigrants to receive select benefits such as healthcare and schooling. While legal immigrants are eligible for certain federal means-tested public benefits, such as Medicaid, most must have been US residents for five years before they qualify.<sup>14</sup>
  - Undocumented immigrants paid almost \$100 billion in federal, state, and local taxes in 2022.<sup>15</sup>
  - Mass deportation would cut our cumulative GDP by \$4.7 trillion over 10 years.<sup>16</sup>

**So, let us all fight disinformation to strengthen democracy that thrives on mutual respect.**

Please see our blog [Immigration: The Dangerous Distraction](#) and our report [Crisis of Trust: How Can Democracies Protect Against Dangerous Lies?](#)

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- <sup>1</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/forbrn.pdf> , <https://www.pewresearch.org/race-and-ethnicity/2020/08/20/facts-on-u-s-immigrants/>
- <sup>2</sup> <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-illegal-immigration-crisis-border-security/>
- <sup>3</sup> <https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/national/#:~:text=the%20United%20States&text=The%20United%20States%20was%20built,of%20whom%20are%20naturalized%20citizens>
- <sup>4</sup> <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-illegal-immigration-crisis-border-security/#:~:text=We%20have%20more%20people%20working,to%20come%20in%20through%20merit.>
- <sup>5</sup> <https://www.epi.org/blog/immigrants-are-not-hurting-u-s-born-workers-six-facts-to-set-the-record-straight/> ; <https://www.bls.gov/charts/employment-situation/civilian-unemployment-rate.htm>
- <sup>6</sup> <https://cmsny.org/importance-of-immigrant-labor-to-us-economy/> ; <https://cmsny.org/agricultural-workers-rosenbloom-083022/>
- <sup>7</sup> <https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/trump-speaks-at-cpac-2023-transcript>
- <sup>8</sup> <https://asistahelp.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/AIC-Crime-One-Page.pdf>
- <sup>9</sup> <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/04/24/what-the-data-says-about-crime-in-the-us/>
- <sup>10</sup> <https://www.nber.org/papers/w31440>
- <sup>11</sup> <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/criminalization-immigration-united-states>
- <sup>12</sup> <https://www.wral.com/story/fact-check-trump-says-immigrants-will-destroy-social-security/21428810/>
- <sup>13</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2024/06/27/us/biden-trump-debate-fact-check>
- <sup>14</sup> <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R47318> Restrictions for immigrants to receive federally funded benefits are defined under the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act; <https://www.nilc.org/resources/overview-immeligfedprograms/>
- <sup>15</sup> <https://itrep.org/undocumented-immigrants-taxes-2024/>
- <sup>16</sup> <https://cmsny.org/publications/mass-deportations-impoverish-us-families-create-immense-costs/>