

Eliminating all barriers to immigration worldwide would likely lead to increased global economic growth overall, though the labor market impacts across countries would vary.

On the positive side, open immigration allows labor to flow more freely to countries and sectors where workers are most in demand and can be most productive. Immigrants often take jobs that boost local economies but have trouble finding native workers to fill, such as agriculture, childcare, or technology. The influx of new workers would also help address labor shortages and aging worker problems facing some developed countries. Additionally, immigrants tend to be entrepreneurial, starting new businesses that create jobs and wealth.

However, radically open immigration could negatively impact certain segments of domestic workforces. An unprecedented influx of immigrants willing to work for lower wages could depress pay and increase competition for low and medium-skilled native workers, exacerbating income inequality. The benefits would likely accrue disproportionately to employers and highly skilled workers.

The impact would also differ across countries. Wealthy countries with robust economies would likely stand to gain the most economically from open immigration as more workers migrated there for opportunities. Poorer countries experiencing brain drain could suffer economic negatives.

Open immigration has the potential to increase global growth but could displace some native workers and lead to unequal benefits across countries. I'm interested in hearing other perspectives on how immigration impacts labor markets and economies. What examples support the benefits or drawbacks of open immigration policies?

Reference:

Greenlaw, S. A. & Shapiro, D. (2018). Principles of microeconomics, 2e. Open Stax Rice University.

<https://d3bxy9euw4e147.cloudfront.net/oscms-prodcms/media/documents/Microeconomics2e-OP.pdf>

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