

Does immigration cause problems?

The basic pitch for immigration having a negative effect on society is that it changes the character of the society that existed before.

Examples include:

A high trust society where the newcomers are from a place where there is very low trust. It doesn't take too many free-riders to shift the trust dynamic to a low one. High ticket items behind glass at the convenience store. Public transit fares need to be enforced.

It brings low wage workers into society. This reduces the wage of the existing people that were performing the job already.

Certain religious doctrine clash more than others. Fundamentalists don't do well in modern societies where there are strong civil liberties.

Enclaves of immigrants can form blocks of the city where their culture predominates. This can be considered good or bad.

Can be a potential strain on the social safety net if there isn't productive worker on the other side of the basic assistance.

The positives are as follows:

Boosts economic growth by providing low and high skill labour. Typically low skill labour that the economy needs.

They can also provide population growth to a rich country that typically has a low birth rate. This is important as most social programs aren't structured to be financial sustainable on their own terms but require continued population growth to sustain current expenditures.

Cultural diversity is often lauded as a plus. It tends to mean a variety of different restaurants, places of worship and other "third" places in society. Variety is the spice of life.

Immigration happened with the Italians, the Irish, the Germans in the late 1800s. The English residents who had been in America for a number of generations didn't welcome them and were very vocal about these new neighbours changing the character of the neighbourhood.

Which you can easily compare to a situation in say Minnesota where there is a large influx of Somali newcomers.

I suppose the differences would be that the Somalis have a different skin colour. And that they don't share the same religion. Someone might be able to use these two points to make the claim that the differences are larger. Someone might say this person is racist.

Part of this whole conversation is that the immigration is changing the "character" of the society. But what critics of immigrants often fail to understand is that culture and society are not static. The country is always changing and yes immigration brings a certain kind of change but their neighbourhood was always going to change. If the Somali's didn't fill in the the gaps perhaps the neighbourhood would just have been quieter and filled with old people.

Providing a large safety net to newcomers when they first enter Canada seems like it could be a problem. If we let new people come and we don't make them work to improve their condition and instead provide them with a stipend and social housing there is going to be no incentive to work a low skill job.

This kind of situation breeds a human behaviour that doesn't want to grow.

White people are confused by this. They don't want to be racist and make the brown people work their hard labour jobs for them. So they insist on these social programs. What they fail to understand is that in our society there is a very simple path from low skill labour and hard work to high skill jobs and more economic security. This path is one of personal growth that makes humans flourish and find meaning in their labour.

Simply landing on new soil and being ushered into a social housing neighbourhood where everyone is from your home country and given a weekly stipend is a soul destroying program for the human psyche and should be avoided. Although it does seem to explain Europes integration problems as this has primarily what has been done there.

