NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR AMERICAN POLICY

NFAP POLICY BRIEF» OCTOBER 2025

AN ANALYSIS OF THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S POLICIES ON DEPORTATIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Trump administration's deportation policies have focused on achieving numerical goals, lacked concern for civil and human rights, caused economic disruption and contributed to a loss of productive labor and lower economic growth. The policies have featured four characteristics: First, a focus on numbers, not public safety threats. Second, engaging in profiling and not observing due process. Third, limited concern for human rights, including by ending deportation protections, such as Temporary Protected Status, and sending people to face potential persecution in their birth countries or to poor conditions in third countries. Fourth, economic disruption for businesses by removing productive workers from the economy in construction, hospitality, agriculture and other sectors. That disruption goes beyond the overall impact on the U.S. economy of fewer workers in the labor force.

According to an analysis by the National Foundation for American Policy, the Trump administration's policies on illegal and legal immigration would reduce the projected number of workers in the United States by 6.8 million by 2028 and by 15.7 million by 2035 and lower the annual rate of economic growth by almost one-third, harming U.S. living standards,. The analysis projects the short-term and long-term impact of the Trump administration's policies on both illegal and legal immigration.[1]

Due to fewer workers in the labor force, the Trump administration's immigration policies would lead to a potential labor loss to the U.S. economy of approximately 19 million worker years by 2028 and 102 million worker years by 2035, according to the analysis. The policies would reduce the projected cumulative goods and services produced (GDP) in America by $1.9 trillion, or $5,612 per person, from 2025 to 2028, and by $12.1 trillion, or $34,369 per person, from 2025 to 2035. The policies would also substantially increase the federal debt.

Of the 6.8 million fewer projected workers in the U.S. labor force in 2028, 2.8 million would be due to changes in legal immigration policies, and 4 million would result from policies on illegal immigration. A total of 4.7 million of the 15.7 million fewer workers in 2035 would come from policies on legal immigration. The reductions in legal immigration include suspending refugee admissions, the travel ban enacted in 2025, ending Temporary Protected Status and humanitarian parole programs, prohibiting international students from working on Optional Practical Training and STEM OPT after completing coursework and other changes, such as an expected public charge rule, to restrict legal immigration.[2] The analysis does not include the likely significant economic impact of restricting U.S.

[1] See NFAP's companion study, *The Economic Impact of the Trump Administration's Immigration Policies*, which also includes this analysis.

[2] NFAP assumed a very conservative 1.1% growth rate in the affected populations if Temporary Protected Status and humanitarian parole programs were maintained—the Trump administration has eliminated or soon will eliminate both TPS and humanitarian parole for the relevant populations—and a 4% annual growth rate for Optional Practical Training if not eliminated. The assumption of a 4% annual growth in OPT is based on the average annual growth rate from 2019 to 2024, and a 1.1% annual growth for TPS and humanitarian parole is based upon the current growth rate in the world population. TPS grew significantly more than 1.1% annually in recent years.

companies' access to high-skilled foreign nationals through regulatory and administrative action, which could affect productivity growth.[3]

The National Foundation for American Policy analyzed the impact of the Trump administration's policies by estimating the reduction in immigration, examining the fiscal and economic effects using publicly available tools from the Congressional Budget Office and assuming the policies remain in effect from 2025 to 2028 and from 2025 through 2035. The CBO tools and the NFAP analysis are based on the CBO projections produced in January 2025, as these were done prior to the implementation of the Trump administration's policies, providing the best way to assess the impact of the policies.

Among the findings in the NFAP analysis:

- The Trump administration's policies on illegal and legal immigration would decrease GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth, also referred to as economic growth, by almost one-third, from a projected average annual rate of 1.8% to a 1.3% average annual rate between FY 2025 through FY 2035.[4] For 2025, GDP growth is projected to drop from 2.1% under the CBO January baseline projections to 1.5% after estimating the impact of the Trump administration's immigration policies; for 2026, the GDP growth rate would decline from 1.8% to 1.1%; for 2027 from 1.8% to 1.3%; and for 2028, from 1.7% to 1.3%.

- The Trump administration's immigration policies would reduce the projected cumulative goods and services produced (GDP) in the United States by $1.9 trillion from 2025 to 2028, and by $12.1 trillion from 2025 to 2035.

- The combination of the Trump administration's policies on illegal and legal immigration would increase the total federal debt held by the public by $252 billion by 2028 (in 2025 dollars) and by $1.74 trillion (or $1.42 trillion in 2025 dollars) between 2025 and 2035. The rise in debt does not include billions of dollars in increased federal spending on border and immigration enforcement.

- The January 2025 Congressional Budget Office projections of debt-to-GDP—a crucial indicator of a national government's ability to manage its debts—would rise from 105.4% in 2028 under the CBO baseline to 112.4% in 2028 after implementing the Trump administration's immigration policies The debt-to-GDP would

[3] Giovanni Peri, Kevin Shih and Chad Sparber, "STEM Workers, H-1B Visas, and Productivity in U.S. Cities," *Journal of Labor Economics*, 2015, vol. 33, no. 3, pt. 2. "When we aggregate at the national level, inflows of foreign STEM workers explain between 30% and 50% of the aggregate productivity growth that took place in the United States between 1990 and 2010," concluded economists Giovanni Peri, Kevin Shih and Chad Sparber.
[4] The Congressional Budget Office projects GDP growth to be 1.7% in 2028.

increase from a projected 118.5% under the CBO baseline to 129.2% in 2035 under the Trump administration's immigration policies.

While uncertainties exist about the number of immigrants affected and the economic effects of the Trump administration's policies, the NFAP analysis is conservative in several ways. First, the CBO's model only allowed NFAP to approximate the impact by summing the effects of different policies to produce a total. However, the fiscal and economic impact would be worse in combination than the sum of the individual parts.[5] Second, NFAP did not measure the impact of economic disruption, such as employers scrambling to find workers after an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raid. Third, in estimating immigration reductions, NFAP did not attempt to calculate the indirect effects of policy changes, including how less welcoming policies will affect decisions to remain in or come to the United States. NFAP did not assume an increase in the emigration of legal immigrants directly or indirectly affected by the administration's policies. Fewer people in the country will also mean fewer marriages between U.S. citizens and immigrants, resulting in a decrease in the immigration of immediate relatives.

The 11 million projected fewer workers in 2035 and 4 million fewer workers in 2028 due to the Trump administration's policies represent a reduction from the labor force numbers that CBO assumed in its January 2025 forecast.[6] For purposes of this simulation, we are assuming that the Trump administration's policies on deportations would reduce the number of foreign-born workers by approximately 11 million over 11 years and 4 million over 4 years due to deportations, reductions in unlawful entry and voluntary emigration of unauthorized workers and family members who may be citizens or possess legal status. The administration has stated a goal of deporting one million immigrants a year. Were the Trump administration to achieve its goal of one million annual deportations, the likely effect upon the labor force would be larger than NFAP assumes in this analysis. The Trump administration claimed on September 23, 2025, "2 million illegal aliens have been removed or have self-deported since January 20."[7]

While the Trump administration's policies have been controversial, there has been less discussion of their economic impact. The analysis finds the Trump administration's immigration policies would lower economic growth, increase the federal debt and reduce the supply of productive labor available in the U.S. economy. Beyond the economic impact, Americans have seen arrests and deportations without due process and a lack of concern for civil and human rights in the administration's deportation policies.

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[5] CBO correctly notes that substantial changes would produce effects outside its model, and limits changes to the assumed labor force growth rate to plus or minus three-quarters of a percentage point each year.

[6] CBO updated its demographic forecast on September 10, 2025, to reflect lower net migration, but has not published what the effect of these changes will be on the forecast of the economy or Federal debt. https://www.cbo.gov/publication/61390.

[7] "New Milestone: Over 2 Million Illegal Aliens Out of the United States in Less Than 250 Days," Press Release, Department of Homeland Security, September 23, 2025.

KEY FEATURES OF THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S DEPORTATION POLICIES

The Trump administration has set a goal of one million deportations a year. The policy carries economic, fiscal and other impacts. The driving force behind the Trump administration's immigration policy is achieving a high level of deportations. Due process, budget costs and economic impacts have not factored into the administration's goal of deporting millions of people during the Trump presidency.

1) A FOCUS ON NUMBERS, NOT PUBLIC SAFETY THREATS

On May 30, 2025, the *Washington Examiner* confirmed that the White House's focus is deporting 1 million or more people a year, not individuals with criminal convictions. In a "tense" meeting with ICE field officials in May, White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller complained about the number of arrests and said, "What do you mean you're going after criminals?" An ICE official at the meeting said, "Stephen Miller wants everybody arrested. 'Why aren't you at 7-Eleven?' the official recited." Miller ordered ICE to maintain a 3,000 immigrants-a-day arrest quota.[8]

The policy places achieving numerical objectives over public safety. In past administrations, limited resources led Immigration and Customs Enforcement to focus on people with criminal convictions. In FY 2024, ICE reported, "Over 81,312 (71.7%) of the 113,431 arrests were of noncitizens with criminal convictions or pending charges."[9] Even during its first weekend, when the Trump administration wanted to highlight bad actors, only 52% of the 1,179 ICE arrests were considered "criminal arrests," according to government data obtained by NBC News.[10]

The Trump administration has not focused on deporting dangerous criminals, primarily because there are not enough to reach an impressive total of deportations. "As of July 27, 2025, about 71% of those in ICE detention hadn't been convicted of a crime. Many of those with convictions had been charged with minor offenses such as traffic violations, TRAC found," reported *Axios*.[11]

2) A LACK OF CONCERN FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

Images of masked ICE agents leaping from cars and arresting international students, delivery people on mopeds, individuals in Home Depot parking lots and others have unnerved many Americans. Beyond the images, a Supreme Court ruling permitted the Trump administration to continue its practice in Los Angeles of large-scale profiling of

[8] Anna Giaritelli, "Stephen Miller 'eviscerated' ICE officials in private meeting for low deportation numbers," *Washington Examiner*, May 30, 2025.
[9] *Year in Review: ICE Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Report*, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, December 19, 2024.
[10] Gabe Gutierrez and Nicole Acevedo, "ICE makes close to 1,200 arrests in one day," NBC News, January 27, 2025.
[11] Russell Contreras, "ICE arrests decline amid backlash to June immigration raids," *Axios*, August 5, 2025.

Latinos. In Florida, attorney Magdalena Cuprys reported that her Honduran immigrant client ended up in Alligator Alcatraz, a hastily built state detention facility, after a Florida Highway Patrol officer arrested him at a weighing station. She asked the officer on the phone why immigration authorities were notified. "I was advised that the client looked Hispanic, had a Hispanic name, and now they are collaborating with Immigration and Customs Enforcement and CBP (Customs and Border Protection), and their orders are to call CBP any time they encounter anyone they suspect is an immigrant," said Cuprys. "I asked if they would have followed the same process if it had been me driving, and the response was it depends if you look Hispanic."[12]

Concerns about profiling on a larger scale emerged in Chicago and Los Angeles. According to a *Wall Street Journal* article about Border Patrol chief Greg Bovino, who has led efforts in those two cities, "Bovino's bold methods, which he said had yielded about 1,500 Chicago arrests, have come to define Trump's mass-deportation campaign. They have also drawn criticism, including for numerous arrests of citizens or people who turn out to have legal status." The article noted, "Bovino said his agents wouldn't arrest someone because of skin color alone, but could use a 'totality of factors' to make the call. 'Are you panic-stricken? Are your eyes wide? Do you look furtive?' he said. 'How are you looking different than those other 1,000 people that I've encountered on the street that day?'"[13]

In an editorial on Venezuelan men being removed to a Salvadoran prison without due process under the Alien Enemies Act, the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page cited a concurrence to the Fourth Circuit decision by Reagan appointee Judge J. Harvie Wilkinson III. "The facts of this case thus present the potential for a disturbing loophole: namely that the government could whisk individuals to foreign prisons in violation of court orders and then contend, invoking its Article II powers, that it is no longer their custodian, and there is nothing that can be done," wrote Judge Wilkinson. "It takes no small amount of imagination to understand that this is a path of perfect lawlessness, one that courts cannot condone."[14]

The administration has been accused of subordinating First Amendment protections by arresting foreign nationals who protested on college campuses and co-authored opinion articles. In *AAUP v. Rubio*, a federal district court ruled the Trump administration, citing Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Homeland Security Secretary Krist Noem, violated the First Amendment rights of visa holders and lawful permanent resident in attempting to deport international students expressing pro-Palestinian views.

"There was no ideological deportation policy," writes Judge William G. Young in his ruling on September 30, 2025. "It was never the Secretaries' immediate intention to deport all pro-Palestinian non-citizens for that obvious First

[12] Stuart Anderson, "Attorneys Say They Can't See Immigration Clients At Alligator Alcatraz," Forbes, July 9, 2025.
[13] Joe Barrett and Michelle Hackman, "The Man Leading Trump's Urban Immigration Crackdown," *Wall Street Journal*, October 11, 2025.
[14] The Editorial Board, "The Case of Wrongful Migrant Deportation," *Wall Street Journal*, April 7, 2025.

Amendment violation, that could have raised a major outcry. Rather, the intent of the Secretaries was more invidious -- to target a few for speaking out and then use the full rigor of the Immigration and Nationality Act (in ways it had never been used before) to have them publicly deported with the goal of tamping down pro- Palestinian student protests and terrorizing similarly situated non-citizen (and other) pro-Palestinians into silence because their views were unwelcome. The Secretaries have succeeded, apparently well beyond their immediate intentions."[15]

"[T]his Court finds as fact and concludes as matter of law that Secretaries Noem and Rubio and their several agents and subordinates acted in concert to misuse the sweeping powers of their respective offices to target non-citizen pro-Palestinians for deportation primarily on account of their First Amendment protected political speech," according to Judge Young. "They did so in order to strike fear into similarly situated non-citizen pro-Palestinian individuals, pro-actively (and effectively) curbing lawful pro-Palestinian speech and intentionally denying such individuals (including the plaintiffs here) the freedom of speech that is their right. Moreover, the effect of these targeted deportation proceedings continues unconstitutionally to chill freedom of speech to this day."[16]

Judge Young also criticized DHS, DOJ and the conduct of deportations more broadly. "Even so, it drapes itself in the public's understanding of the criminal law though its 'warrants' are but unreviewed orders from an ICE superior and its 'immigration courts' are not true courts at all but hearings before officers who cannot challenge the legal interpretations they are given." He added, "To us, masks are associated with cowardly desperados and the despised Ku Klux Klan. In all our history we have never tolerated an armed masked secret police. Carrying on in this fashion, ICE brings indelible obloquy to this administration and everyone who works in it."[17]

3) Not Safeguarding Human Rights

Trump officials conducting U.S. immigration policy have not safeguarded human rights. Among the administration's actions:

- The administration ended Temporary Protected Status for nationals of numerous countries, ending deportation protections for several hundred thousand individuals, even though conditions in Afghanistan, Venezuela, Haiti and other countries do not warrant a safe return.[18]

- While apprehensions at the U.S.-Mexico border have dropped below the low levels Donald Trump inherited at the start of his second term, the administration's policies have prevented individuals from applying for asylum, even at lawful ports of entry, contrary to U.S. law.

[15] See: https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mad.282460/gov.uscourts.mad.282460.261.0_1.pdf.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.
[18] See NFAP reports on the administration ending TPS for Afghans, Haitians and Venezuelans.

- The administration has used harsh detention and the denial of bond to discourage individuals from continuing their asylum claims, including accusations of threatening to separate a woman from her child unless she agreed to deportation to China, where she feared for her life. The Trump administration has also returned people fearing persecution to Russia and other countries. "It seems the goal is to make people desperate enough so they decide not to fight their case, so they decide that the quickest way to see their other children or make sure they don't have to deliver their babies in shackles is to accept a voluntary deportation," said Lindsay Toczylowski, the co-founder of Immigrant Defenders Law Center. "It is particularly cruel."[19] Individuals have also been deported to countries in Africa in poor conditions where they have no ties or to countries where they may fear torture.[20]

- Immigration officials have mistakenly arrested and detained, sometimes for days, U.S. citizens, including more than 170, according to *ProPublica*. The administration was also accused of seizing a six-year-old boy undergoing cancer treatment and arresting two immigrants who were helping fight a wildfire.

- Authorities tried to deport children to Guatemala until a judge blocked the deportation. Justice Department lawyers later admitted parents of the children did not support their deportation to Guatemala.[21]

- The Trump administration has focused on videos and social media posts to rally supporters and intimidate immigrants. Encouraging other immigrants to self-deport appears one reason for the hasty deportation of Venezuelans without due process under the Alien Enemies Act, sending them to El Salvador's most notorious prison. DHS Secretary Kristi Noem filmed a video at the CECOT prison in El Salvador, standing in front of dozens of men packed into overcrowded cells.

4) Economic Disruption

Removing productive workers from the U.S. labor force disrupts the U.S. economy. That is even more so when done via law enforcement actions. Companies can take months, if ever, to recover from enforcement raids that businesses have experienced on farms and at meat packing plants and manufacturing facilities. Federal law enforcement actions also discourage other workers from going to their jobs.

[19] Maanvi Singh and Will Craft, "Plane to purgatory: how Trump's deportation program shuttles immigrants into lawless limbo," *The Guardian*, September 10, 2025.
[20] https://refugeerights.org/news-resources/trump-administrations-third-country-removals-put-migrants-in-harms-way.
[21] Kyle Cheney and Josh Gerstein, "DOJ backs off claims about Guatemalan children it sought to deport," *Politico*, September 10, 2025.

During ICE's large-scale raid on a South Korean Hyundai facility in Georgia, being built to employ U.S. workers, agents incorrectly detained many workers legally allowed to work in the United States temporarily via the ESTA program or with B-1 visas for temporary business travel. The negative publicity and images of chained Korean workers may discourage foreign investment in the United States.[22] "Immigration raids on building sites - part of an expanding crackdown by Donald on work sites across the country - are causing major disruptions to the construction industry," reports Reuters.[23]

Problems have emerged in construction and agriculture, sectors that rely on immigrant labor. "Construction workforce shortages are the leading cause of project delays as new immigration enforcement efforts have impacted nearly one-third of construction firms, according to the results of a workforce survey conducted by the Associated General Contractors of America and NCCER," reported the AGCA. "Noting that 92 percent of contractors report they are having a hard time filling open positions, construction officials called for more funding for construction education and new, lawful ways for people to enter the country to work in the industry."[24]

To justify publishing a rule on adverse effect wage rates for H-2A work visas as "interim final," which limits the impact of public comments, the Department of Labor discussed the challenges U.S. employers face finding sufficient workers. "With the historic near total cessation of illegal border crossings—the Department must take immediate action to provide agricultural employers with a viable workforce alternative while concurrently averting imminent economic harm. Labor shortages can have an immediate effect on farm operations," according to a Department of Labor Federal Register notice published on October 2, 2025.

"For example, one study found that a mere 10 percent decrease in the agricultural workforce can lead to as much as a 4.2 percent drop in fruit and vegetable production and a 5.5 percent decline in farm revenue," according to the Federal Register notice. "Given that approximately 42 percent of the U.S. crop workforce are unable to enter the country, potentially subject to removal or voluntarily leaving the labor force, these impacts will likely be dramatically higher. The study further estimated that a 21 percent shortfall in the agricultural workforce would result in an overall $5 billion loss just in terms of domestic fresh produce alone for U.S. consumers. Such significant economic impacts not only create tangible and imminent economic harms, but they structurally disrupt the ordinary operations of the U.S. agricultural sector, resulting in shortages of agricultural commodities that cannot be supplemented with imports in the near-term."[25]

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[22] Ted Hesson, "Lawyer says many immigrants detained at Hyundai US facility appeared be to working legally," Reuters, September 11, 2025.
[23] Tim Reid, "This construction project was on time and on budget. Then came ICE," Reuters, July 28, 2025.
[24] See news release here: https://www.agc.org/news/2025/08/28/construction-workforce-shortages-are-leading-cause-project-delays-immigration-enforcement-affects .
[25] See link to rule here: https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/10/02/2025-19365/adverse-effect-wage-rate-methodology-for-the-temporary-employment-of-h-2a-nonimmigrants-in-non-range#citation-53-p47920.

A South Dakota dairy farmer said her workforce was "decimated" after a DHS audit dropped the number of employees from over 50 to 16. "Without a pathway or plan to create a sustainable workforce in agriculture and by 'removing everyone working in it,' she [Dorothy Elliott] worries some agricultural operations will go out of business."[26]

LOWER ECONOMIC GROWTH DUE TO IMMIGRATION REDUCTIONS

The combination of the Trump administration's policies on illegal and legal immigration would decrease GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth, also referred to as economic growth, by almost one-third, from a projected 1.8% average annual rate to a 1.3% average annual rate between FY 2025 through FY 2035.[27] For 2025, GDP growth is projected to drop from 2.1% under the CBO January baseline projections to 1.5% after estimating the impact of the Trump administration's immigration policies; for 2026, the GDP growth rate would decline from 1.8% to 1.1%; for 2027 from 1.8% to 1.3%; and for 2028, from 1.7% to 1.3%. NFAP's findings result from estimating the loss of workers to the U.S. labor force through 2028 and 2035 under the Trump administration's immigration policies (and those of a subsequent president) using the Congressional Budget Office's publicly available tools to examine the impact.

Table 1
The Impact of Immigration Reductions on Economic Growth (GDP Growth)

YEAR	CBO GDP Growth (Baseline)	CBO GDP Growth After Immigration Reductions	Decline in Economic Growth
2025	2.1%	1.5%	-0.7%
2026	1.8%	1.1%	-0.8%
2027	1.8%	1.3%	-0.5%
2028	1.7%	1.3%	-0.5%
2029	1.8%	1.3%	-0.5%
2030	1.8%	1.3%	-0.5%
2031	1.8%	1.3%	-0.5%
2032	1.8%	1.3%	-0.5%
2033	1.8%	1.3%	-0.5%
2034	1.8%	1.3%	-0.5%
2035	1.8%	1.2%	-0.5%
Average Annual Rate	1.8%	1.3%	-0.5%

Source: National Foundation for American Policy, CBO.

[26] Makenzie Huber, "Noem's South Dakota neighbors hit with an immigration audit that decimates their workforce," *South Dakota Searchlight*, October 10, 2025.

[27] See NFAP's companion study, *The Economic Impact of the Trump Administration's Immigration Policies*, which also includes this analysis. The Congressional Budget Office projected GDP growth to be 1.7% in 2028. The CBO tools and the NFAP analysis are based on the CBO projections produced in January 2025, before the Trump administration's policies came into effect.

Labor force and productivity growth determine U.S. economic growth, which is crucial for achieving higher standards of living in the United States. Immigrants play key roles in the growth of the labor force and productivity growth. In sum, it is difficult to achieve higher levels of economic growth, also known as GDP or Gross Domestic Product Growth, without a growing supply of labor. Trump officials in charge of immigration policy, including White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller, believe that having fewer immigrants will lead to better outcomes for U.S. workers.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION POLICIES WILL RESULT IN FEWER WORKERS

The Trump administration's policies on legal immigration alone are projected to reduce the number of workers in the United States by 2.8 million by 2028 and by 4.7 million by 2035, if the policies continue, according to an NFAP analysis. Whether the policies persist after 2028 will depend on future elections and administrations. However, reversing immigration policies, such as refugee reductions, can take years, as seen after Joe Biden became president following Donald Trump's first term. A Republican president may be under pressure to maintain the Trump administration's immigration policies. NFAP's estimates on legal immigration calculate the number of workers lost, not all immigrants.

The Trump administration's immigration policies would reduce the projected number of workers in the United States by 6.8 million by 2028 and by 15.7 million by 2035. As explained in the executive summary, for purposes of this simulation, we are assuming that the Trump administration's policies on illegal immigration would reduce the number of foreign-born workers by approximately 11 million over 11 years and 4 million over 4 years due to deportations, reductions in unlawful entry and voluntary emigration of unauthorized workers and family members who may be citizens or possess legal status.

The Trump administration has enacted or is expected to enact that will reduce the projected number of lawful workers in the United States by 2.8 million by 2028 and by 4.7 million by 2035.[28] Fewer workers will result in a reduction in the goods and services the U.S. economy produces. The policies would reduce the projected cumulative goods and services produced (GDP) in America by $1.9 trillion, or $5,612 per person, from 2025 to 2028, and by $12.1 trillion, or $34,369 per person, from 2025 to 2035.

The Trump administration's immigration policies would result in a potential labor loss of approximately 19 million worker years from 2025 to 2028 and 102 million worker years from 2025 to 2035 for the U.S. economy. That is why the policies are projected to lead to a substantial decline in goods and services produced in America.

[28] See NFAP's companion study, *The Economic Impact of the Trump Administration's Immigration Policies*.

Table 2
The Impact of Immigration Reductions on Gross Domestic Product (2025 to 2035)

Impact Measured	Total Change in Goods and Services Produced: 2025 to 2028 (in 2025 Dollars)	Total Change in Goods and Services Produced: 2025 to 2035 (in 2025 Dollars)
Trump Administration's Legal Immigration Policies	-$882 billion	-$4.2 trillion
Trump Administration's Illegal Immigration Policies	-$1.0 trillion	-$7.8 trillion
TOTAL	-$1.9 trillion	-$12.1 trillion
Per Capita Loss in Goods and Services	-$5,612	-$34,369

Source: National Foundation for American Policy, CBO.

Increase in Federal Debt

The combination of the Trump administration's policies on illegal and legal immigration would increase the total federal debt held by the public by $252 billion by 2028 (in 2025 dollars) and by $1.74 trillion (or $1.42 trillion in 2025 dollars) between 2025 and 2035. The January 2025 Congressional Budget Office projections of debt-to-GDP—a crucial indicator of a national government's ability to manage its debts—would rise from 105.4% in 2028 under the CBO baseline to 112.4% in 2028 after implementing the Trump administration's immigration policies The debt-to-GDP would increase from a projected 118.5% under the CBO baseline to 129.2% in 2035 under the Trump administration's immigration policies.

The rise in debt does not include $171 billion in new federal spending for border and immigration enforcement, including $45 billion to increase ICE detention capacity, under H.R. 1, which became law in July 2025. High budget deficits will become increasingly problematic for the U.S. economy. "Investors are paying much more attention to the long-term implications of budget deficits. Right now, there is no concrete solution in any major economy to address these high deficits," said economist Emre Tiftik, lead author of the IIF's Global Debt Monitor, reported the *Washington Post*.[29] Increasing the federal debt will reduce living standards in the United States by leading to higher levels of taxation, inflation and interest rates than without such debt.

[29] David J. Lynch, "Trump tariffs help U.S. avoid bond market rout," *Washington Post*, September 6, 2025.

Table 3
The Impact of Immigration Reductions on Debt Held By the Public (2025 to 2035)

Impact Measured	Increased Debt Held by Public in 2028 (in 2025 Dollars)	Increased Debt Held by Public in 2035 (in 2025 Dollars)
Trump Administration's Legal Immigration Policies	$128 billion	$510 billion
Trump Administration's Illegal Immigration Policies	$124 billion	$906 billion
TOTAL	$252 billion	$1.4 trillion

Source: National Foundation for American Policy, CBO.

FOREIGN-BORN WORKERS ESSENTIAL FOR U.S. LABOR FORCE GROWTH

Labor force growth is a crucial part of the economic growth that advances a country's living standards and facilitates the financing of existing debts and obligations. With the U.S.-born population aging and growing at a slower rate, immigrants have become an essential part of American labor force growth.

In each of the three decades since the Bureau of Labor Statistics started keeping separate labor force statistics for immigrants, the foreign born accounted for more than half of American labor force growth. Over the past 30 years, the number of immigrants in the labor force increased by 19.3 million, while the U.S. born grew by only 17 million.

Immigrant workers were responsible for 84.7% of the labor force growth in America between 2019 and 2024, according to a National Foundation for American Policy analysis of government data.[30]

Table 4
Greater Growth in Immigrants Than U.S. Born in U.S. Labor Force: 1994 to 2024

Period	Growth in the Number of U.S. Citizens at Birth in the U.S. Labor Force	Growth in the Number of Immigrants in the U.S. Labor Force	Percentage of Labor Force Growth Due to Immigrants
1994-2004	7,090,608	8,527,082	54.6%
2004-2014	4,240,922	4,279,809	50.2%
2014 to 2024	5,661,000	6,522,866	53.5%
30 Years (1994-2024)	16,992,001	19,329,757	53.2%

Source: National Foundation for American Policy tabulation and analysis of the Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Population Survey. Note: Based upon average labor force numbers over the 12 months of each calendar year. U.S. citizens at birth include both those born inside the United States and those born abroad to U.S. citizens.

[30] The 84.7% figure, based on the full-year data for 2024, updates the calculation from NFAP's October 2024 report using a full year of BLS data.

A Decline in Foreign-Born Workers Since Trump's Second Term

The Bureau of Labor Statistics household survey shows a decline of 1.1 million foreign-born workers since the start of the Trump administration in January through August 2025, and a drop of 1.5 million since a peak in March 2025. For comparison, from 2014 to 2024, the average annual growth in the foreign-born labor force was 652,000 a year, or an increase of more than 400,000 over eight months.

The unemployment rate among U.S. workers increased from 4.3% to 4.6% between January and August 2025. The seasonally adjusted U.S. unemployment rate rose from July to August 2025. The total nonfarm payroll employment rose by only 22,000 in August, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. It does not appear that U.S.-born workers are entering the U.S. labor force in large numbers as foreign-born workers exit. While the labor force participation rate for the U.S.-born aged 16 and older is slightly higher since January, it has declined from 61.7% in August 2024 to 61.6% in August 2025.

"It is wrong to assume that shrinking immigration helps U.S. workers when job growth slows," said labor economist Mark Regets, a senior fellow at the National Foundation for American Policy. "Immigrants both create demand for the goods and services produced by U.S.-born workers and work alongside them in ways that increase productivity for both groups. While it is just one factor, we shouldn't be surprised that opportunities for U.S.-born workers are falling at the same time an estimated one million fewer immigrants may be in the labor force."[31]

[31] Stuart Anderson, "Immigration Has Declined, But No Evidence U.S. Workers Are Better Off," *Forbes*, September 7, 2025.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR AMERICAN POLICY

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