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International and Diplomatic Studies

Managing Migration: Policies of the Obama and Trump Administrations

(Master's Thesis)

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Author's Declaration

Herewith I declare that I have written the Master's Thesis titled "Managing Migration: Policies of the Obama and Trump Administrations" independently and that I have cited all sources applied in the thesis.

Prague, 26 April 2019

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Author's Signature

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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS	2
DEFINING MIGRATION	3
1. THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION	5
1.1. NEOCLASSICAL THEORY OF MIGRATION: MACRO AND MICRO FRAMEWORK	5
1.1.1. <i>Neoclassical economics: Macro theory</i>	6
1.1.2. <i>Neoclassical economics: Micro theory</i>	6
1.2. NEW ECONOMICS OF LABOR MIGRATION	7
1.3. DUAL LABOR MARKET THEORY	8
1.4. WORLD SYSTEMS THEORY	9
1.5. THE CONTINUATION OF MIGRATION	10
1.5.1. <i>Network Theory</i>	11
1.5.2. <i>Cumulative Causation Theory</i>	12
1.5.3. <i>Migration Systems Theory</i>	13
1.6. THEORY OF LOBBYING	14
2. MIGRATION IN THE UNITED STATES	17
2.1. HISTORY OF MIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES	17
2.2. CURRENT MIGRATION TRENDS	22
2.3. SHIFTING PATTERNS OF MIGRANT NATIONALITIES AND REMITTANCES	24
2.4. THE ROLE AND POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES	28
2.4.1. <i>Authority to Issue Executive Orders</i>	30

2.4.2.	<i>Veto Power</i>	31
2.5.	MIGRATION LOBBYING	32
3.	OBAMA’S STANCE ON MIGRATION	34
3.1.	OBAMA’S FIRST PRESIDENTIAL TERM, 2009-2012	34
3.2.	OBAMA’S SECOND TERM, 2012-2016	35
3.3.	BORDER SECURITY AND IMMIGRATION INITIATIVES	35
3.4.	OBAMA’S PORTRAYAL IN MEDIA	37
4.	TRUMP’S STANCE ON MIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES	38
4.1.	PILLARS OF IMMIGRATION REFORM AND BORDER SECURITY	39
4.2.	PERSPECTIVE ON H-1B AND THE AMERICAN JOB MARKET	43
4.3.	ROLE OF MASS MEDIA AND THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION’S INFLUENCE	44
5.	COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON MIGRATION POLICIES OF THE OBAMA AND TRUMP ADMINISTRATION	47
	CONCLUSION	50

List of Abbreviations and Figures

ACA	Affordable Care Act
ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
ARRA	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
DACA	Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals
DAPA	Deferred Action for Parents of Americans
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DREAM	Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act
DV	Diversity Immigrant Visa Program
FOTLU	Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
TPS	Temporary Protected Status
UN	United Nations
USMCA	United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement
USRAP	United States Refugee Admissions Program
WB	The World Bank

Figures

FIGURE 1: ALIENS REMOVED OR RETURNED: FISCAL YEARS 2006 TO 2017	23
FIGURE 2: INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION FLOWS TO THE UNITED STATES, 2006-2012	24
FIGURE 3: REMITTANCES SENT FROM THE UNITED STATES IN 2017 (US\$ MILLION)	26
FIGURE 4: DIVERSITY IMMIGRANT VISAS ISSUED, FISCAL YEAR 2017	27
FIGURE 5: TOP TEN H-1B VISA SPONSORS, FISCAL YEAR 2018	28

Introduction

Etched into the Great Seal of the United States is the Latin phrase *E Pluribus Unum*, or “Out of many, one”. The officially adopted motto refers to the unification of the thirteen original colonies, colonies comprised of many diverse groups of people, to form what we know recognize as the United States of America. The expression, coined by the Continental Congress in 1782 (“E Pluribus Unum,” n.d.), has been endorsed by the United States Department of the Treasury on U.S. coins, as well as official documents issued by the federal government. More importantly, beyond being engraved on American currency, *E Pluribus Unum*, is a continuous reminder of the origins of the ‘Nation of Immigrants’.

Migration can be understood as a human response as a result of adverse changes in the economic, environmental, political, and social spheres. For centuries, the United States has been a channel for millions of individuals seeking higher economic and education opportunities, freedom of religion, among other motives. Despite the perception of migration being a widespread phenomenon involving a large proportion of the world, excluding refugees, migrants make up about 3% or 256 million of the global population (Goldin, Pitt, Nabarro, & Boyle, 2018). Although the proportion of migrant population in comparison to the global population is relatively modest, the issue of cross-border mobility has recently consumed a large fragment in the public policy discussion of the United States.

During its 8-year term, the Obama administration expressed a rather soft, and warm attitude towards skilled migration and undocumented immigration overall. However, during this same period, the country witnessed record-breaking deportations and detentions of unauthorized immigrants. However, the Democrat administration aimed to reform specific domestic policies in order to legitimately incorporate undocumented people whom arrived to the United States during their childhood into American society and the labor workforce. President Obama further expressed his welcoming position towards immigration by permitting the spouses of specific visa holders to join the labor force. However, the current Trump administration has taken a contrary stance on the issue of immigration. In his “America First” rhetoric, President Trump has expressed placing the interests of the American people above anything. In his attempts to “Make America Great Again”, President Trump has acted against several of the measures set forth by the previous administration of Barack Obama. The polarizing attitudes towards migration have caused a political divide among American citizens and the government of the

United States, which has resulted in immigration policies affecting certain migrant groups more than others.

This study will focus on identifying the immigrant groups affected by the migration policies proposed by the Obama and Trump administrations, and the factors that have contributed to these policies. The thesis defines and details the concept of international migration as interpreted by distinct theories of international migration. The study is designed as a comparative analysis and aims to capture the evolving attitude towards migration in the United States between the early stages in history of the country and today. The research questions are stated as follows:

- 1) What immigrant groups have been affected the most from former President Obama and President Trump's current migration policies?
- 2) What role do technology sector companies/interest groups play in influencing the migration policies set forth by both administrations?

Research Methodology and Limitations

The research methodology of the thesis will consist of qualitative research involving discourse analysis, as well as content analysis of speech and news and mass media publications which assist in identifying the specific migrant groups affected by the recent immigration policies implemented by the administration of former United States president, Barack Obama, and the measures taken by the current administration of President Donald Trump. The theoretical component aims to outline the several motivating factors that lead to international migration patterns. There does not exist a single perspective that associates the arguments for trans-border movement, diverse theories provide varied argumentations. Therefore, the thesis does not aim to fuse the theories of international migration, but rather apply fitting theoretical explanations in contemporary migration patterns to the United States. The thesis will then The final chapter of the thesis will be comprised of a comparative analysis of the legislative measures introduced by both presidential administrations, the effects of these policies on specific immigrant groups, as well as any linkages between international migration theories and the migration policies implemented by the Trump and Obama administrations.

The research for the thesis dissertation is composed by academic literature and scholar peer-reviewed journals composed by field experts and international migration theorists. Reliable academic databases such as JSTOR and EBSCOhost were accessed to locate literature and

academic journals. Empirical data for quantitative analysis has been derived from resources such as The World Bank (WB), United Nations (UN), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and governmental agencies of the United States. For up-to-date developments, dependable news media outlets such as Reuters, BBC News, The New York Times, Politico, and The Washington Post were accessed. For specific information and publications regarding immigration in the United States, the Pew Research Center provided comprehensive and updated information.

Refugee migration policies and the contemporary situation of asylum seekers in the United States will not be thoroughly discussed in the dissertation, as commentary regarding asylum policy reform has not resulted in legislative modifications by either administrations during the time research was being conducted. The thesis will therefore focus undocumented immigration, low-skilled, and high-skilled migration to the United States, as the major policies implemented and discussed by the Obama and Trump administrations target these migrant groups.

Defining Migration

All throughout history, humans have relocated from one place to another around the globe for a multitude of reasons. When searching for an explanation for international migration, there are a series of aspects to be taken into consideration, such as economic, social, political, and environmental factors. The movement of people is documented to have begun between 70,000 to 100,000 years ago, when humans first ventured out of the African continent as a result of major climatic shifts at the time (“Map of Human Migration,” n.d.). Anthropological research (Joyce, 2012) has repeatedly pointed to environmental causes, or climate change, as the initial motivator for global migration. There is no question about the influence of environmental conditions in a given geographical location holds over the access to food available in the region. Therefore, under adverse conditions, it is of human instinct to choose to defy the circumstances and shift away home in order to secure basic sustenance. From then until now, the motive for global migration has evolved into a myriad of reasons, but one thing has remained; the purpose of international movement is done with the intention of improving the livelihood of an individual, and in many cases friends and family as well.

To properly conceive what constitutes a migration theory, one should evaluate the definition of ‘migration’. In a study attempting to provide clarification to the definition of migration, Simmons (1991, pp. 14–16) concludes that migration can be defined by three elements, the first characteristic being a change in residence. By changing residence, Simmons refers to a disruption and replacement of the establishment where one usually eats and sleeps. The mobility

can be of near or distant proximity from home, of short or longer term, and in some instances permanent. The second and third dimensions of migration explained by Simmons are a change in employment and changes in social relationships. The aforementioned changes could either be a motivation to migrate or a result of migration. Although Simmons references three dimensions of migration, he magnifies the change in residence as the main indication of migration. In short, the definition of migration under a theoretical scope tends to be open and fluid, allowing a variety of subtypes and patterns for analysis that may call for varying perspectives to adequately capture the essence of migration.

In principle, migration is the act of relocating from one place to another. Within the concept of migration, there are two subtypes, internal and international migration. Internal migration is a population redistribution force within geographical bounds, such as a nation state (Schultz, 2010, p. 4857) and tends to occur from rural areas to industrial cities. The main motives for domestic relocation tend to be due to greater economic and educational opportunities in urban areas. On the other hand, international migration refers to the movement of an individual or a group of persons across an international border notwithstanding its length, composition and causes; international migration encompasses the migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, and persons moving for other purposes, including family reunification ("Glossary on Migration," 2011). Within the subtype of international migration, migrants are then categorized as documented or undocumented. Under undocumented migration, entry into a country is done so without permission or proper documentation to enter. However, it is important to note that an undocumented person may have been of documented status prior to becoming an undocumented migrant. Some examples of this is possessing a visa for a specific country and overstaying the stay based on the terms outlined in the visa or neglecting the purpose of visit stated in the visa and engaging in other activities that extend beyond the visa agreement. A documented migrant is that who possesses legal entry into a country on an active visa, such as a permanent resident visa. A documented migrant may engage in many legal activities open to citizens, with the exception of exercising political rights such as voting or holding an elected office (Stana, 2001). Another striking difference between documented and undocumented migration is that through the possession of legal documentation granting permission for stay in the host country may eventually allow a documented migrant to apply for citizenship after a certain period of time, whereas an undocumented person lacks the legal pathway for permanent stay.

1. Theories of International Migration

Given the complexity of the patterns and trends of human movement, a comprehensive understanding of modern migratory practices may be achieved by integrating diverse degrees of interpretations and viewpoints on the subject. Although several theoretical explanations have been developed to explain international migration, the conceptual approaches tend to vary between one another. Some theories aim to provide an analytical explanation for migration on an individual or household level, while others offer a reasoning for migration on a macro level. Therefore, the development of contemporary migration theories is derived from a conglomeration of interdisciplinary assumptions grounded upon social and historical contexts.

Due to the extensive history of international migration to the United States, this thesis will discuss the four main theories of international migration, as each theory can be associated with the diverse international migration patterns to the United States at a given point in time in recent history. Moreover, contemporary adaptations of the traditional theoretical frameworks will also be addressed, as the more recent approaches may more accurately assist in the comprehension of current migration trends to the United States.

1.1. Neoclassical Theory of Migration: Macro and Micro Framework

A leading and widely-applicable theoretical framework to explain international migration, the key elements of neoclassical theory of migration are based on: utility, allocation of resources determined by the laws of supply and demand and equilibrium (Olligschlaeger, 1986, p. 20). Due to the economic nature of neoclassical theory, the concept provides an abstract explanation for the human behavior aspect of migration, and instead places an emphasis on aspects of the labour market. In broader terms, neoclassical economics highlights elements such as differences in wage levels, employment conditions between countries, as well as migration costs (Massey et al., 1993, p. 432). The macroeconomic approach aims to interpret labour migration as a step in economic development, whereas the microeconomic framework takes on migration as the choice of an individual.

1.1.1. Neoclassical economics: Macro theory

When analyzing international migration from a neoclassical macroeconomic perspective, the root of international migration stems from geographic differences in the supply of and demand for labor (Massey et al., 1993, p. 433). The disparate economic situations between states leads to differing wage levels, which may push migrants away from their home country and pull them towards a more economically-developed country. According to Massey et al. (1993) countries with a large endowment of labor relative to capital have a low equilibrium market wage, while countries with a limited endowment of labor relative to capital are characterized by a high market wage, as depicted graphically by the familiar interaction of labor supply and demand curves. As a result of this, workers in a low-wage country make the decision to move to a high-wage country. Furthermore, an outmigration of labour will create upward pressure on wage levels, whereas immigration will apply downward pressure (Olligschlaeger, 1986, p. 29). While the argument brought forth by Olligschlaeger is supported by field experts, it is somewhat of a paradoxical statement. The main motivator for migrating is the availability of higher wages abroad, however an influx of migration to the high-wage countries leads to a suppression of wages.

1.1.2. Neoclassical economics: Micro theory

In most instances, the decision to migrate abroad is based upon an individual's determination. According neoclassical economics, individual rational actors make the decision to migrate due to a positive net return expectation, usually financial, based upon a cost-benefit calculation (Olligschlaeger, 1986, p. 20). When considering migrating abroad, a person takes into consideration the costs in relocating and compares that to the potential economic gains from migrating. Generally, the costs associated with migration are financial, such as the cost of traveling the country of destination, as well as the sustenance expenditures between the period of the person's arrival while looking for work, and obtaining employment (Massey et al., 1993, p. 434). However, the expenses included in the individual's cost-benefit analysis also factor in non-financial burdens. For instance, a person will take into consideration the effort involved in learning a new language and culture, the difficulty experienced in adapting to a new labour market, and the psychological costs of cutting old ties and forging new ones (Massey et al., 1993, p. 434). If, after a desired period of time, the person considers that the benefits will surpass the costs, the likelihood that a person will migrate increases.

Furthermore, a key factor in the decision-making process is analyzing the socioeconomic atmosphere in the person's home country. When determining whether to relocate abroad for the purpose of labour, the costs and benefits of migrating are compared to the costs and benefits associated with remaining. If the ratio between costs and benefits are relatively equal to that in the home country, the laborer may opt to remain a part of the local economy. However, if a person chooses to migrate and the socioeconomic conditions of the home country improve to a point of comparison of the receiving country, this may also influence a migrant to return to their home country. Moreover, according to the micro analysis of the neoclassical economic perspective, governments may also exert influence on migration flows through the implementation of policies that have an effect on labor markets (Massey et al., 1993, p. 440). Although the decision as to migrate abroad or remain in the home country is made on a micro-level, an external force such as a state government can strongly influence this decision.

1.2. New Economics of Labor Migration

Despite the Neoclassical Theory of Migration being the oldest and perhaps the most widely-recognized theory of international migration, the 'New Economics of Labour Migration' Theory has recently developed with the purpose of defying certain assumptions and conclusions generated from the former (Wickramasinghe & Wimalaratana, 2016, p. 22). In a sense, the New Economics of Labor Migration theory affixes the human behavior element to the theoretical framework that the Neoclassical Economics theory fails to capture. The theory, which takes on a meso-level analysis perspective, argues that migration decisions are not made by isolated individual actors, but by larger units of related people—generally families or households—in which people act collectively (Massey et al., 1993, p. 436). Jointly, a family or group of linked people make decisions to control and improve secure their economic situation. One of the decisions the collective group may agree upon is the diversification of family labor and income. Dependent upon the characteristics and skill sets of the composed group or family unit, certain members will remain active in the local economy, while other members may be sent to work in foreign labor markets where wages and employment conditions are negatively or weakly correlated with those in the home economy (Massey et al., 1993, p. 436). By expanding the unit's sources of income, the household alleviates a certain degree of financial risk and economic uncertainty. This is particularly important in the event of a fluctuation or decline in the native country's economy. On the grounds that the financial liability has been agreed to be split among members of the household across different economies, during an economic downturn, those whom remain in the home country may rely on remittances from

members abroad, and vice versa. According to Stark and Bloom (1985), contrary to emanating from altruistic considerations, empirical evidence seems to support, that patterns of remittances are better explained as an intertemporal contractual arrangement between the migrant and the family.

Additionally, the establishment of functioning state welfare assistance programs and insurance systems in developed states provides risk mitigation assurances for its citizens, whereas such institutions are not prevalent in migrant-sending countries. For instance, should a laborer in a developed, high-wage country experience a sudden loss of employment due to illness or employer dismissal, some form of state assistance is nearly expected if not automatically granted to the employee. On the other hand, the lack in income protection mechanisms in developing states encourage members within a household to migrate. If members within a group join a foreign labor market, as in the example of remittances, both parties are better off due to migration since an exchange of commitments to share income provides coinsurance (Stark & Bloom, 1985, p. 175). Rather than being deployed as a strategy to maximize household income, the new economics of migration theory posits that the act of migrating has the objective of minimizing risks— such as unemployment, income loss, or agricultural failures—and loosen constraints, given the shortcomings that usually plague credit and insurance markets in the sending countries (Arango, 2000, p. 288). Overall, the new economics of labor migration theory and the neoclassical approach to migration can be understood to share a common ground on several aspects, the new economic of labor migration framework mainly differs from the former when identifying the important role, the family unit or household plays in the decision-making process of migration. Additionally, another distinctive element of the new economics of labor migration theory is the accentuation of the linkage between social contexts in which migrants engage with others and the migrants themselves as individuals.

1.3. Dual Labor Market Theory

Contrary to the New Economics of Migration theory and the Neoclassical economic approach, which present relatively micro-level analyses regarding the outcome and causes for international migration, the concept of Dual Labor Market diverges from the focus on individuals and small unit groups, and instead places emphasis on the labor demands of industrialized societies (Massey et al., 1993, p. 440). In probing international migration from a macro-level context, labor economist Michael Piore (1979) identifies four main characteristics of the migration process and their implications on the hosting society, in this case the United States of America. According to Piore, the first prompting factor is related to American

employers searching for new sources of labor (1979, p. 3). A highly developed and industrialized economy, the labor market of the United States can be said to be split into two categories. The first sector primarily attracts native citizens due to the higher skill set required to fulfill the job requirements, which in turn offers higher wages, possibility for professional advancement, and job security. The secondary sector, while still accessible to the domestic workforce, is less desirable considering the jobs tend to bid lower compensation wages and demand a less intricate set of skills, thus making it easier for an employer to displace an employee. As a result of the reluctance in the native population to accept professions in the secondary sector, migrants step in and fill in the labor gap.

In other words, immigration is not caused by push factors in sending countries such as low wages or high unemployment, but are attributed to pull factors in the receiving countries, somewhat of persistent need for foreign laborers (Massey et al., 1993, p. 440). A third principle highlighted by Piore (1979) is the temporary stay mindset migrants bring with themselves, which many times transforms upon arrival to the host country. Though the initial intentions of a labor migrant may not include permanent settlement plans, many do not return to their respective countries, while others unofficially merge into the permanent workforce of the country. Finally, the fourth defining element of international migration as argued by Piore is the unskilled nature of migrants themselves. In many instances migrants are not fluent in the language of the host country, often lack basic primary education and literacy, and migrate from rural and undeveloped areas that starkly contrast the industrial environment where they work and live (1979, p. 3). In conclusion, under the dual labor market theory, the international migration process in developed societies is a direct result of the established economic structures, which demand low-skilled and low-cost labor.

1.4. World Systems Theory

Though the development of the World Systems Theory only emerged in the 1970s after Wallerstein's (1974) analysis of the world's capitalist system, Wallerstein contends that the origins of international migration can be traced back to the expansion of the capitalist system during the sixteenth century. In concurrence with Wallerstein's argument, Massey et al. (1993, p. 445) agree that migration is a natural outgrowth of disruptions and dislocations that inevitably occur in the process of capitalist development, which expanded outward from its core in Western Europe, North America, Oceania, and Japan to peripheral regions rich in land and raw materials. According to the theoretical framework, it is the linkage between neo-colonizing

and capitalist societies and the developing world that has led to a perpetuation in the movement of labor and raw materials, as well as the exploitation of land resources in the peripheral regions.

The concept of “globalization” is widespread, however, similarly to attempting to define a set of causes for international migration, there is also no consensus on the interpretation of the term. An acceptable definition for globalization can be delineated as an increased interconnectedness and interdependence between people and countries which allows the flow of goods, services, finance, people, and ideas across international borders (“Globalization,” n.d.). Despite the divergence as to what constitutes globalization and its origins, in his theory, Wallerstein (2004) signals to the capitalist era of globalization as the breeding ground of the world-systems analysis, as the endless accumulation of capital generated a need for constant technological change, a constant expansion of frontiers— geographical, psychological, intellectual, and scientific (p. 2). The series of economic and industrial advancements that emanated from this period subsequently created systematic differences within the ecosystem, in which system forces, processes, and structures themselves have induced migration from one part of the system to another (Kardulias & Hall, 2006, p. 24). Therefore, contemporary migration from periphery areas to core countries is viewed as a consequence of the domination of capitalist activities exerted by the core states themselves, as well as multinational corporations onto the peripheral countries (Arango, 2000, p. 290). When such agents impose capitalist and mass-producing techniques in different sectors of the peripheral areas, this leads to a disruption and displacement of small-scale agricultural farmers and manufacturers, as they are forced out of their respective markets. No longer able to compete with larger cooperatives, people opt to migrate to core-countries to search for employment in certain sectors which rely on cheap labour to maintain a high rate of profit (Arango, 2000, p. 291). It is this circular rhythm that leads to a perpetuation in migration flows from peripheral regions to core-countries and continued capitalist expansion practices in the developing countries.

1.5. The Continuation of Migration

Given the extensive history and wide range of motivating forces, once the process of migration has begun, it is highly unlikely to come to a halt, and will presumably even increase in pace and intensity for at least periods at a time. Therefore, several contemporary theories have been developed to discuss the perpetuation of international migration in the current realm. Rather than attempting to rediscover the triggers which lead individuals to pursue specific interests abroad, the more recent set of theories build upon those that came before.

1.5.1. Network Theory

A contemporary approach to explain the international movement of people, the network theory analyzes global migration from a social perspective. Contrary to previously mentioned theories of international migration, the migration network theory emphasizes the sociological dimension that arises from earlier migration processes as a further motivating force that naturally leads the movement operations to persist. Building upon the mechanical and economistic “push and pull” conceptions that prevailed earlier, including the world systems analysis (Light, Bhachu, & Karageorgis, 1989), the theory expands on the factors associated with physical shifting across geographical locations. Simply put, it is the interpersonal ties between families, communities, and kin that increase the likelihood of international movement. Furthermore, Massey et al. (1993) detail two main effects of the establishment of networks between migrants and non-migrant which encourages non-migrants to consider the possibility of migration— a decline in risk and a decline in cost.

Lower Risk In many instances, especially in developing countries, the issue of international migration of individuals, or certain members within a unit to developed economies, is practiced as a risk aversion mechanism. According to the economic risk-diversifying model (Light et al., 1989, p. 2), families allocate member labor within the constraint of their own needs and aspirations in a cost-efficient and risk-minimizing way. In a sense, the division of sources of income between separate economies increases the financial safety and well-being of the families, putting them in a better position than if none of the family member migrated. Further, when migrant networks are well-developed, they put a destination job within easy reach of most community members, thus making emigration a reliable and secure source of income (Massey et al., 1993, p. 449). Given the reduction in risk is largely dependent upon the movement of people within a family or group and the social networks derived from migrating, the larger the network created, the lower the risk of movement for those within the unit whom have not yet migrated. Hence, the lower the risk, the higher the probability of international movement occurring.

Downturning Costs As explained by the micro-level dimension of the neoclassical economic theory, there is an array of costs associated with migrating internationally. For instance, there are financial costs pertaining to travel and obtaining legal documents, such as a visa, for the intended country. In the situation that a person may pursue an

undocumented route to their destination, the economic costs could even surpass that of documented migration. In addition to the monetary investment required, there is the non-financial aspect of migrating, which consists of leaving social ties behind and having to forge new social networks in the new destination. All these factors make the undertaking of migration a materially and socially costly decision for initial migrant groups. However, the potential costs of migration are substantially lowered for friends and relatives left behind, mainly due to the new set of social ties formed by the new migrant (Massey et al., 1993, p. 449). Once the initial migrants have established a set of social and professional networks abroad, this alleviates some of the costs associated with relocation for the friends and families of those who have already migrated. This is due to the fact that the established migrants are familiar with the process and are able to connect the newcomers with potential employers. The enlargement of the social and professional networks further encourages migration, while simultaneously reducing the financial burden on future migrants.

An intriguing and presently-relevant perspective, the network theory steers away from the generalized concept that international migration is motivated or caused by a specific factor and persists as a result of the initial reason for migration. On the contrary, the network theory views international migration as a product of cumulative causation (Massey et al., 1993, p. 448), in which the reasons for migration evolve and diversify with time, and become independent from the initial stimulus for movement.

1.5.2. Cumulative Causation Theory

The concept of cumulative causation, or principle of cumulation, as initially referenced by Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal (1944), was applied to the dynamics between the white majority and ‘negro’ minority in the United States in the early 20th century. According to Myrdal, the interrelation between the two groups is partially determined by a specific degree of ‘race prejudice’ on the side of the whites, directed against the Negroes (1944, p. 1066). The perceived lower standard of living of African descendants is maintained by continued discrimination from Caucasians, which perpetuates the prejudicial relationship between the groups. Furthermore, if for some reason, the Negro plane of living decline further, this would increase mutual prejudice, and vice versa. As a result, a cumulative process is set in motion, and even if the initial push, in this case prejudice, is withdrawn, a permanent change will

remain, or the process of change will continue without a balance in sight. When applied to the topic of international migration, the general idea remains the same.

The theory of cumulative causation was further expanded upon by Massey et al. (1993), whom assert that causation is cumulative in the sense that each act of migration transforms the social context within which subsequent migration decisions are made, typically in ways that make additional movement more likely (p. 451). In their study aimed to examine the effects and distribution of remittances from the United States to Mexican villages, Stark, Taylor and Yitzhaki (1986) discovered that the distributional impact of migration is not the same for all types of migration, and that there also exists an unequal distribution of remittances during the initial stages of a village's migration history when only a few households have established contacts at a migration destination abroad (p. 723). When members of a community, a community which encompasses remittance-receiving households, observe the overall increase in income within the household, this persuades other community members to migrate and also improve their household income relative to the others. Other socioeconomic factors, such as culture, distribution of land, the organization of agriculture, and regional distribution of human capital have also been discussed as elements that are affected in a cumulative manner as a result of international migration (Massey et al., 1993, p. 451). In essence, the cumulative causation theory indicates that as international migration progresses, this alters the motivations of individuals for migration, which lead to a perpetuation of the movement cycle.

1.5.3. Migration Systems Theory

Similarly to migration network theory, migration systems theory also acknowledges that rather than being a linear process, migration tends to cluster, can be circular, and take shape within wider contexts and system (O'Reilly, 2015, p. 4). Consequently, the theoretical structure incorporates micro-, meso-, and macro-level elements of international movement that furnish a much more comprehensive perception of present-day migration from rural to urban areas. An expert and founder in this approach, Mabogunje (1970, p. 2) argues that international migration also consists of a socioeconomic element which involves a permanent transformation of skills, attitudes, motivations, and behavioral patterns that are broken and modified when a migrant departs from his rural background and pledges to becoming a part of an urban society. Furthermore, according to the migration systems framework, movement systems are also characterized by the incorporated socioeconomic relationships between the elements of the rural area, such as family, and the opportunity found in urban systems. In a multidimensional

manner, the migration systems theory illustrates the transforming social, economic, cultural effects international migration generates in both the sending and receiving countries.

1.6. Theory of Lobbying

The practice of interest groups lobbying across varied sectors of American internal affairs can be observed at all levels of legislature. In order to understand the objectives of interest organizations in the United States, one should interpret why these groups actively join efforts to openly promote their concerns. In order to identify the role of lobbyist groups in the United States, Political theorist Robert A. Dahl (1961) conducted an observational sample study in New Haven, Connecticut in the mid-twentieth century. Dahl selected the city of New Haven to carry out his empirical research to determine who shapes and governs the politics of the United States of America, for he believed the city of New Haven is comparable to other cities around the country. Moreover, one of the oldest populated areas in the region, New Haven carries an extensive history in which a competitive two-party system persists, making it an analogous sample of the general national politics of the United States. Finally, the political system within the city has undergone a series of structural adjustments, which provides an opportunity to examine the factors that brought about stability and change (Dahl, 1961). In his study, to be discussed below, Dahl identifies interest groups, the democratic government, and the voting population as the main influencers for the legislative development of the country.

The initial issue debated by Dahl (1961, p. 1), is determining who *actually* governs the country when a large population of the state is legally entitled and encouraged to vote, but resources such as wealth, knowledge, social position, and access to officials are unequally distributed among the people. Within the political sphere, Dahl (1961) exemplifies the presence of a narrow collection of professionals, which is a characteristic of virtually all pluralistic systems and liberal societies, such as that of the United States. Regardless of their moral principles or socioeconomic background, the members of these small associations of professionals they are easily distinguished by the rate and skill with which they use their resources and the resulting degree of direct influence they exert on government decisions (p. 306). The reason for this being is due to their recreational time when compared with other citizens whose occupations demand a much larger portion of their labor time. When making a decision based upon trade-offs, the average citizen determines it too costly to devote more than a couple hours to political activities (Dahl, 1961, p. 306). On the other hand, the professional gives greater priority to bureaucratic exercises by dedicating more time and incorporating political activities into their routine.

Given the willing effort expressed by the professional in the partaking of political activities, the more skilled he or she will be in participating in bureaucratic affairs. The professional is increasingly likely to actively engage in the decision-making process of regional bureaucracy, such as reforms in the public education system, local political elections, and local urban development projects. In brief, it is mainly a combination of interest, profession, and willingness to invest additional time and effort into political affairs that create a narrow agglomeration of professionals whom find a common set of beliefs and interests and jointly pursue these concerns within a political backdrop.

Due to the rationale brought forward by Dahl (1961), within the political sphere, citizens lack the technical expertise and are often unfamiliar with bureaucratic routines. As opposed to the professionals, whom display emotional detachment and rationality, citizens demonstrate an sentimental adherence to issues (Grisez Kweit & Kweit, 1984, p. 236) which may lead to inefficiency and increasing discord in the policy-making process. Although lacking the gubernatorial skill and knowledge possessed by the professionals, the role and importance of the average citizen in the bureaucratic process should not be diminished. After all, in a democratic system it is ultimately up to the citizens of the state to determine the direction of the country; however, it is the duty of the representatives and legislative officials to perform as the vehicle of action to carry out the petitions of the people in shape the public policy of the country. Although in essence, the goals of a state should be chosen democratically, the means are chosen technocratically (Grisez Kweit & Kweit, 1984, p. 236). The concentration of decision-making power shared between a selected faction is not intended to be of undemocratic nature; it simply allows for heightened adequacy in addressing the interests of the citizenry.

Similarly to the role of professionals and interest groups within society, the government is also responsible for representing its people and undertaking the obligation of generating public policies that cater to the interests of the citizens, and at the same time uphold the national interest. Bearing in mind that one of the main commitments of an elected official is to collaborate with other bureaucratic experts in the development of legislative measures, we can assume that a considerable amount of influence on behalf of political officials is projected onto government legislation. However, prior to being elected, political candidates also aim to exert their influence onto the citizens in a persuasive manner in order to attempt to morph and align the concerns of the people with the political objectives of the candidate. Therefore, despite a legislator's obligation to propose and design democratic regulations in representation of the citizens of the state, the political beliefs of elected officials also have a function in the decision-making process of public policy. Given the diverse population found in the United States,

political leaders often attempt to capture the support and votes of minority groups within their locality regardless of their stance towards the approval of minorities. Appealing to ethnic groups has an effect on the speed of assimilation of these groups into society, transmits political skills, and gains acceptance from the people through the display of American belief of democracy and equality (Dahl, 1961, p. 220). Simultaneously, the inclusion of minority immigrant groups in political discussions is another element that has the potential to have leverage over the policies that are discussed upon and ultimately implemented.

When answering the burning question “Who governs?”, Dahl (1961) firmly asserts that it is not the mass nor its leaders but both together; the leaders cater to mass tastes and in return use the strength provided by the loyalty and obedience of the masses to weaken and perhaps even to annihilate all opposition to their rule (p. 7). Nonetheless, it is also important to bear in mind the role of each agent within the development of public policy, in particular that of the professionals that constitute the interest groups whom apply their political knowledge and skills to actively project their ideals to legislators.

2. Migration in the United States

The phenomenon of migration is deeply rooted in the founding principles of the United States of America as we know it today. Since the early 17th century, up until present times, the United States has been sculpted by a series of immigration waves from human beings from all around the world. In some way or another, the historical and contemporary migratory ebbs and flows of documented and undocumented immigration to the country have had an impact in the current migration policies of the United States. Furthermore, interest groups on opposing sides of the subject have invested a vast amount of effort and lobbying resources to advance their interests and ultimately influence Congress in reforming the immigration system.

2.1. History of Migration to the United States

The first major migration movement to the United States can be said to have begun in the early 17th century, when the initial European settlements emerged on the eastern coast of colonial America. The primary English settlement in North America was established in the Colony of Virginia, by an envoy sent by King James I of England in 1607. Faced by colonist expansion from Spanish, French, and Dutch explorers the purpose of the voyage was to establish a permanent and profitable colonial settlement for the Kingdom of England. Despite several attempts to form a financially-rewarding establishment, the Virginia Company of London encountered a series of setbacks which resulted in an economic loss for investors and disconcerted colonists whose promises of wealth and land ownership made by the Virginia Company fell short. Nonetheless, England's territory was increased vastly, its natural resources harvested, and England's laws, language and religion were transplanted to a new place, laying the foundations for what would become the United States of America (U.S. National Park Service, 2015). The unexplored and natural resource rich land of the New World would eventually further attract waves of migrants in centuries to come.

With time, European settlements from the exploring colonies sprawled across the Eastern seaboard, all bearing diverse justifications for their journey. Early 17th century America witnessed an influx of religious affiliates seeking refuge from religious persecution stemming primarily from the recently reformed Church of England. Attached to their religious convictions, theological groups such as Protestants, Catholics, and Quakers all alike set sail to the American continent in search of religious freedom. The religious dissidents conceived and established the New England colonies of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland as 'plantations of religion' (U.S. Library of Congress, n.d.). While religion served as the

fundamental motive for thousands of migrants to the American colonies, many others from all over Europe traveled in search of higher economic opportunity. The voyage, however, came at a steep price, and those unable to cover the passage fee did so under the condition of indentured servitude. The idea of indentured servitude stemmed from a need for cheap labor when settlers realized the vast amount of land to be maintained, and the lack of manpower to care for it. As a result, the Virginia Company developed the system of indentured servitude to attract workers. In return for their labor which typically ranged from four to seven years, servants would receive passage, room, board, lodging and freedom dues (“Indentured Servants In The U.S.,” n.d.). This, of course, attracted multitudes, many of whom considered this an opportunity of a lifetime, an opportunity that would allow for economic progression.

At the same time, the largest movement of forced migration from Africa to the “New World” took place. Initially, black Africans received similar treatment to that of fellow white European indentured servants. However, faced with the increase in demand for servitude and higher costs in acquiring European laborers, as well as the demand for land from newly freed servants, colonialists and landowners turned to African slaves as a more economically advantageous alternative. By the end of the slave trade in the 1860s, over half a million Africans had been forcibly taken to the Americas by European settlers, composing nearly 25% of the population (Mintz, n.d.). Fearing a similar response action from African slaves as that of the servants with European descent, colonists took several restrictive measures to suppress African laborers and remain in a dominant position. The control efforts resulted in slave codes which were meant to negate the personality of the slave, and subsequently restrict the personal liberties of the blacks (Mecklin, 1917, p. 246). Thus, the slave codes granted plantation owners complete control over nearly every aspect of a slave’s life—from basic elements such as food and clothing to punishment and the selling of the slave’s labor.

It was not until tensions between the industrialized North and agricultural Southern states broke into conflict over the enslavement of African people in 1861, which led into a Civil War that would carry on for four years. The industrial revolution in the late 18th century through mid-19th century represented a period of immense prosperity for the United States, which conceived an economic development disparity between the northern and southern regions. The manufacturing industry flourished in the Union North, in which agriculture played a minimal role in supporting the economy, while the economic system of the Confederate South was largely dependent upon large-scale crop farming of mainly tobacco and cotton, labored by African slaves. The conflict was triggered when Republican presidential candidate Abraham Lincoln was elected into office in 1860. A Kentucky state native, President Lincoln strongly

expressed his support in banning slavery in all territories throughout the United States, including the western territory expansion. The South, which heavily relied on slavery, viewed this as a vile threat to their economy, and opted to secede from the United States shortly after President Lincoln's electoral victory and form the Confederate States of America. Signaled as the deadliest conflict in American history, the Civil War amounted around 620,000 deaths, around two-percent of the population at the time ("The Cost of War: Killed, Wounded, Captured, and Missing," 2012). Halfway into the Civil War, President Lincoln issued the *Emancipation Proclamation* (1863) announcing:

"... All persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom."

Although the *Emancipation Proclamation* failed to bring an end to slavery and the war, Americans embraced the outlined freedom principles brought forth by President Lincoln, leading to a transformation in the perception of the war. The Proclamation announced the acceptance of black men into the Union Army and Navy, enabling the liberated to become liberators. By the end of the war, almost 200,000 black soldiers and sailors had fought for the Union and freedom ("The Emancipation Proclamation," 2015). War conflict further ensued for two more years, until the Confederate forces surrendered to the Union states, resulting in the abolishment of slavery and the dissolution of the Confederate South.

Following the end of the Civil War, Congress took strides in ensuring the repudiation of slavery was emulated in the country's national statutes. The Congressional reconstruction of the U.S. Constitution included the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth amendments which expanded civil and legal protections to include former enslaved people. The first out of the three reforms formally addressed the abolishment of slavery and involuntary servitude throughout the United States, as well as any territory subject to U.S. jurisdiction. Furthermore, the Fourteenth Amendment granted citizenship to all persons "born or naturalized in the United States," including former enslaved persons, and provided all citizens with "equal protection under the laws," extending the provisions of the Bill of Rights to the states ("Landmark Legislation: Thirteenth, Fourteenth, & Fifteenth Amendments," n.d.). Lastly, the final modification during this period stated that race, color or history of servitude should not infringe upon a United States citizen's right to vote. The inclusion of non-white, non-European migrant groups, such as the

African diaspora, in federal legislation signaled a triumph for the minority populations in the country and was viewed as setting a precedent for future immigration flows to the United States.

The early 19th century was also marked with a second major immigrant wave, this time consisting primarily of Europeans ("U.S. Immigration Before 1965," n.d.), largely due to the devastating effects of the First World War across Europe. Between 1900 and 1920, the Immigration Service of the United States admitted over 14.5 million immigrants ("Mass Immigration and WWI," 2016), raising concerns among Americans about the issue of mass immigration. In order to alleviate the apprehensive position of American citizens towards current and future newcomers, the Congress of the United States, under the administration of Theodore Roosevelt passed the Immigration Act of 1907 (Ciment & Radzilowski, 2013, pp. 525–526). The new immigration regulation, also known as "An act to regulate the immigration of aliens into the United States", would be based upon the principle that the United States has a use for every able-bodied man of good character and good principles, whom may apply for admission and be welcome ("The New Immigration Law," 1907); however, those not fitting the aforementioned description should refrain from applying, as it is the purpose of the law of the United States to keep out those whom do not fulfill the desired criteria. Besides explicitly renouncing the acceptance to any immigrants bringing with them 'inferior' morals, the outlined stipulations also aimed to deflect rising anti-Japanese nativism in California (Glass, 2019). Faced with new and growing immigration from diverse regions of the world, the country responded in different ways. Many Americans embraced having access to a low-wage, hard-working labor force, while others sought restrictions on immigration (Martin, 2010, p. 123). Large influxes of immigration to the United States during the early 20th century gradually began altering the previously immigrant-friendly climate in the United States, triggering a series of restrictive migration reforms that would later be enforced in the decades to come.

During the early to mid-20th century, migration flows to the United States leveled off, partially due to the poor economic conditions in the United States as a result of the Great Depression in the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s. However, immigration levels began to elevate once again during and after the Second World War. For a variety of reasons, since 1945, the most important source of migration to the United States stems from Mexico (Zhao, 2016, p. 2). The neighboring countries bear extensive political and economic ties, which eventually led to the establishment of the 'Bracero' temporary-worker program in 1942 (Passel, Cohn, & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2012). Between the years 1942 and 1964, the government of the United States sponsored the Bracero program, which admitted around 4.5 million Mexican workers,

primarily to carry out seasonal agricultural labor, into the United States throughout the program's extent, making this the largest temporary worker program in the history of the United States (Massey & Liang, 1989, p. 200). Although intended to serve as a provisional remedy to alleviate the agricultural labor shortage at the time, the defunct program is considered to have induced further migration on a larger scale, which has subsequently resulted in permanent shifts to the northern neighbor state. Additionally, many Mexican nationals whom were unable to obtain a temporary working permit opted to enter the United States without proper documentation. With the eventual expansion of mechanization in the agricultural industry, as well as a rebound in the American workforce, the need for temporary laborers began to decline, thus bringing the program to an end in 1964 (McElroy & Gavett, 1965). The discontinuing of the Bracero Program, did not however, cut off the undocumented migration flow from Mexico to the United States.

The immigration system of the United States underwent a dramatic reform in 1965, with the passing of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which implemented a preference system that focused on immigrants' skills and family relationships with citizens or residents of the U.S. ("U.S. Immigration Legislation: 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act," n.d.). The modification in immigration legislation outlined in the Hart-Celler Act would now permit naturalized U.S. citizens to petition for their family members to join them in the United States, which would then allow those relatives to petition for other relatives. The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 rapidly transformed the ethnic portrait of the United States, due to the ever-lengthening migratory process referred to as 'chain migration' (Kammer, 2005). However, the new immigration reform was not well-received by the entire American public. When questioned about his stance on the Hart-Celler Act, Historian Otis Graham asserted that allowing family reunification puts the decision of who comes to America in the hands of foreigners, and out of the hands of the Congress. Instead, Congress has set up a formula of kinship which could be called nepotism (Ludden, 2006). Although the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 was instituted over half of a century ago, the legal framework continues to characterize the current legal immigration system deployed in the United States.

2.2. Current Migration Trends

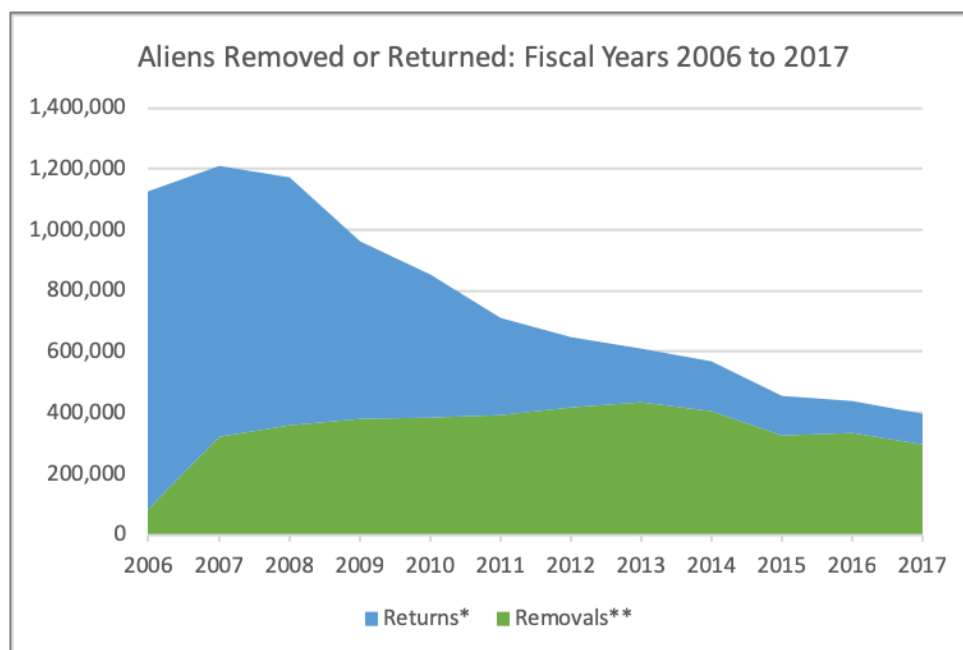
Although the episodes of migration to the United States has been officially recorded since the inception of the country in 1776, the practice of managing migration flows to the state by means of legislative measures is relatively recent. For the most part, in the situation of the United States, rather than experiencing a steady flow of diverse immigration throughout its history, the territory experienced large waves of analogous groups of immigrants. It was not until the mid-20th century that masses of diverse groups of people immigrated to the country, for employment purposes, family reunification, among several other reasons. In particular, between the years 2000 and 2010, the United States of America experienced the largest influx of immigration in its history, consisting of 14 million newcomers of both documented and undocumented statuses (Camarota, 2011). Despite the security measures taken after the September 11 attacks, as well as the severe economic downturn in 2008, an unprecedented amount of people continued to make their way to the United States during this time, many of which have brought with them permanent plans to remain in the country, while several others have opted to return to their home countries.

In spite of the overall growth in the immigrant composition of the United States, recent data indicates receding measures for undocumented migration to the country. According to a recent study conducted by the Pew Research Center, a non-partisan think tank focusing on U.S. politics and policy based in Washington, D.C., the number of unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. fell to its lowest level in more than a decade from a peak in 2007 of 12.2 million unauthorized immigrants living in the United States to 10.7 million undocumented migrants in 2016 (Passel & Cohn, 2018). Within the past ten years, the United States has experienced a considerable decline in unauthorized Mexican migration, which has contributed to an overall decline in unauthorized immigration figures, as Mexican nationals have consistently been the leading group of undocumented immigrants in the country for decades. Although the proportion of Mexican migration in the United States has declined, Mexico continues to be a heavily trafficked pathway for Central and Southern American migrants headed up North. Ongoing gang and drug-related violence, in conjunction with substandard economic conditions in the Central and Southern American region have pressured nationals out of their home countries towards the United States. Between 2007 and 2016, the number of unauthorized immigrants from Central America increased by 375,000, mainly originating from the Central American Northern Triangle nations of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras (Passel & Cohn, 2018). Referring to the precarious situation in the region, a large fraction of the people that have

departed from these countries have applied for asylum protection in the United States when they arrive at the U.S.-Mexico border points of entry. The asylum process is not a simple nor swift one, as the applicant must provide reliable and credible proof of the risk they carry, should they be forced to return to their home countries. As a result, thousands of Central and South American nationals have been ordered to remain on the Mexican side of the border until their asylum or family reunification applications have been reviewed by U.S. Immigration authorities. However, due to the extensive asylum procedure, groups of asylum-seekers have refused to remain in Mexico until a decision has been made on their case, and thus opted to attempt unauthorized entry to the United States.

In the course of these events, the amount of unauthorized migrant apprehensions on the U.S.-Mexico border have increased, yet figures still remain well below those of the previous decade. As can be observed in *Figure 1* below, the total measure of aliens removed or returned to their home countries has been sharply on the decline since 2008.

Figure 1: Aliens Removed or Returned: Fiscal Years 2006 to 2017



Note: Data retrieved from U.S. Department of Homeland Security 2017 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics <https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2017/table39>

* Returns are the confirmed movement of an inadmissible or deportable alien out of the United States not based on an order of removal.

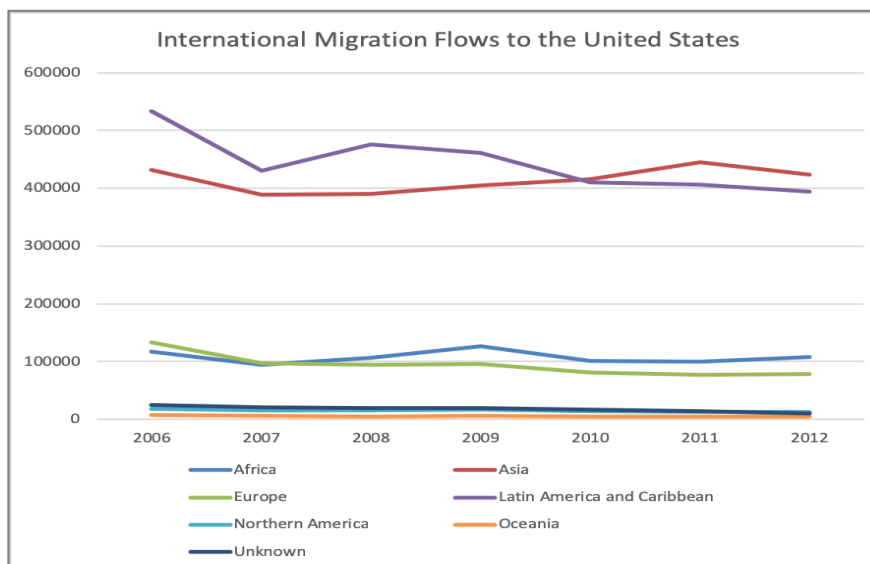
** Removals are the compulsory and confirmed movement of an inadmissible or deportable alien out of the United States based on an order of removal. An alien who is removed has administrative or criminal consequences placed on subsequent reentry owing to the fact of the removal.

Though still an overwhelming situation with hundreds of thousands of livelihoods on the line, the immigration situation in the United States has considerably cooled off since President Obama's presidency. This is not to say that the Obama administration's immigration policies were effective in deterring unauthorized migration; however, over the years, data has demonstrated that less and less people are attempting the undocumented trajectory to the country.

2.3. Shifting Patterns of Migrant Nationalities and Remittances

Overall, the United States has experienced a continuous growth in its immigrant population in recent years. However, within the migrant populace of the country, there have been a series of evolutionary developments that have gradually transformed the composition of the migrant diaspora in the United States. Some of the transformations may be attributed to regional conflicts abroad that have led migrants to leave their home countries, pursuit of higher education or employment in the United States, as well as stabilizing situations in migrant-sending countries which have led to migrants returning to their native states of origin. As illustrated in Figure 2, the shifts in migrant populations became apparent in 2009, with a decrease in Latin American, Caribbean, and European population, and upturning patterns of immigration from the African and Asian continents.

Figure 2: International Migration Flows to the United States, 2006-2012

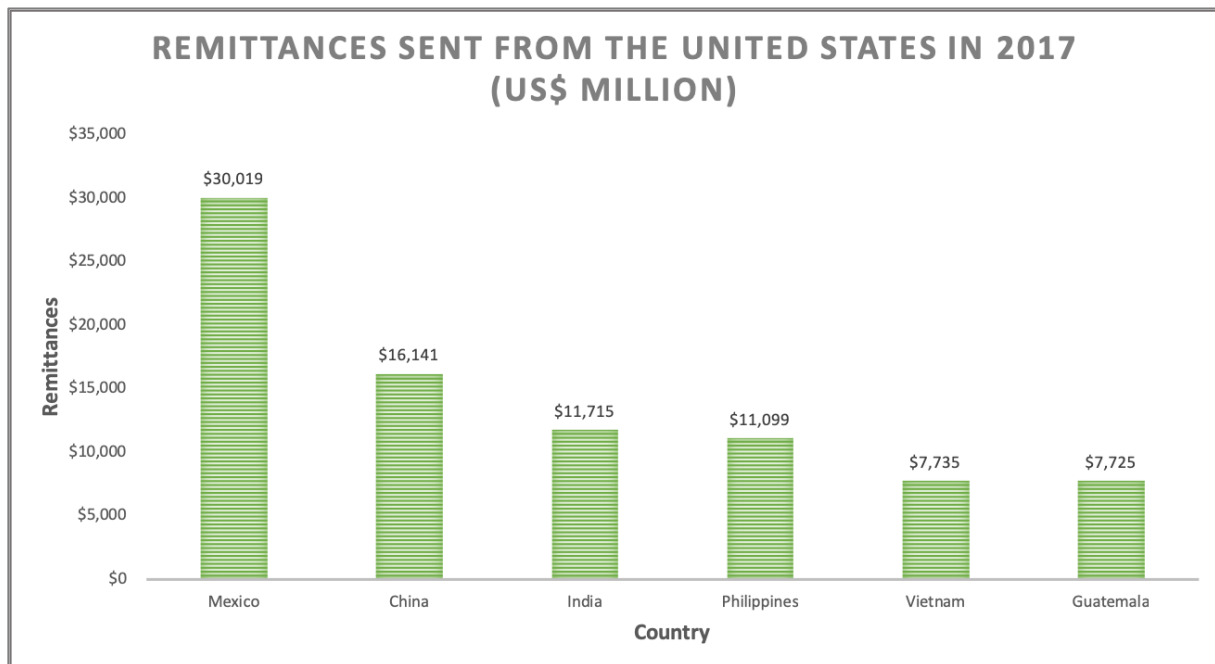


Note: Immigration data is based on the number of foreigners granted legal permanent residence (LPR) status, as reported by fiscal year. Persons legalized under the provisions of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) are included in the statistics presented above. Data retrieved from United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2015)
<https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/empirical2/migrationflows.asp#>

As defined by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), remittances involve personal transfers consisting of all current transfers in cash or in-kind made or received by resident households to or from other non-resident households (*Definitions of Remittances*, 2006). The directional flow of remittances can be indicative of the neoclassical economic theory of migration in practice. The neoclassical economic theory of international migration places an emphasis on the labour market as the primary mechanism that prompts migration. On a macro level, in Figure 3 below, it can be observed that the remittances sent from the United States are sent to relatively capital-poor or labor force-rich countries, or a combination of both. To an extent, the labor flows from underdeveloped economies to the United States improve labor market efficiency. In theory, with the progression of migration from low- and middle-income countries to high income states, the wage differentials between the capital-rich countries and the capital-poor states should reach a competitive national equilibrium. The continuation of cross-border mobility captured by remittance flows indicates a perpetuity in the wage disparity levels between the states, which further reinforces migration flows from the Global South to the Global North. From a microeconomic perspective, in accordance to the neoclassical economic framework, a laborer will opt to migrate after conducting a cost-benefit analysis and concluding that a greater return is expected than if choosing not to migrate. In the situation of the United States, the sizable remittance records to the migrants' home countries suggest that, on an individual level, the injection of migration into a family unit is financially beneficial, as migrants are able to support themselves abroad and still manage to supplement their household income in their home countries.

Recent data estimates that worldwide, an estimated \$625 billion (USD) was sent by migrants to individuals in their respective home countries in 2017, a 7% increase from 2016, when the figure approximated \$586 billion (The World Bank, 2017). In the United States, a considerable portion of migrant remittances are directed to its southern neighbor, Mexico. In addition to the entrenched migration flows between the countries, commerce agreements such as the newly-renegotiated North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), now known as the United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement (USMCA), have also contributed to the immense north-south financial transfers. However, it is important to note that, with the exception of Guatemala and Mexico, the bulk of the other countries presented in the display are located in the continent of Asia. The unanticipated figures come as a result as a recent shift in the origins of immigrants to the United States. Throughout the years, immigration flows from Europe and Eurasia have remained relatively stable, whereas there has been a gradual decline in migration flows from Mexico to the United States.

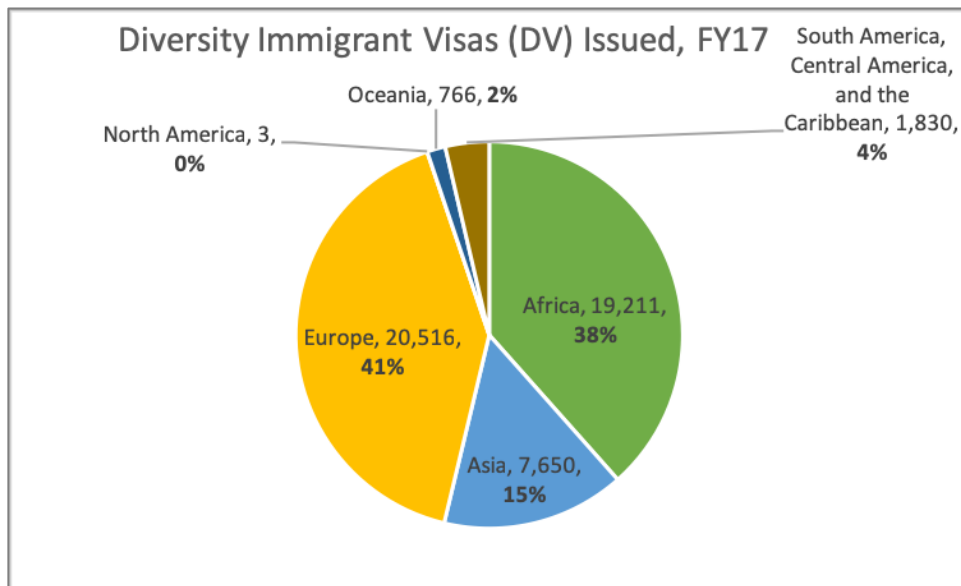
Figure 3: Remittances sent from the United States in 2017 (US\$ Million)



Note: Data retrieved from World Bank Bilateral Remittance Matrix 2017,
<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/migrationremittancesdiasporaissues/brief/migration-remittances-data>

Migration continues to play an empirical role in domestic affairs presently as it did in the early days of the founding of the United States of America. Since 2007 up until now, the American state has experienced a consistent fluctuating trend of migration composed of diverse groups of people. Unlike prior situations in the earlier history of the United States, the demand for migrant labor has become unrestricted from unskilled manual labor. Recent attention has also been positioned on the role of the Diversity Immigrant Visa (DV) Program in further boosting diversity in the country. The DV program is administered by the U.S. Department of State and operates in a lottery fashion, providing for a class of immigrants known as “diversity immigrants,” from countries with historically low rates of immigration to the United States (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). Offered at no cost for the applicant, the amount of DVs issued are limited and dispersed between six geographic regions, in which no region is to be allocated more than 7% of the total visas offered during the fiscal year.

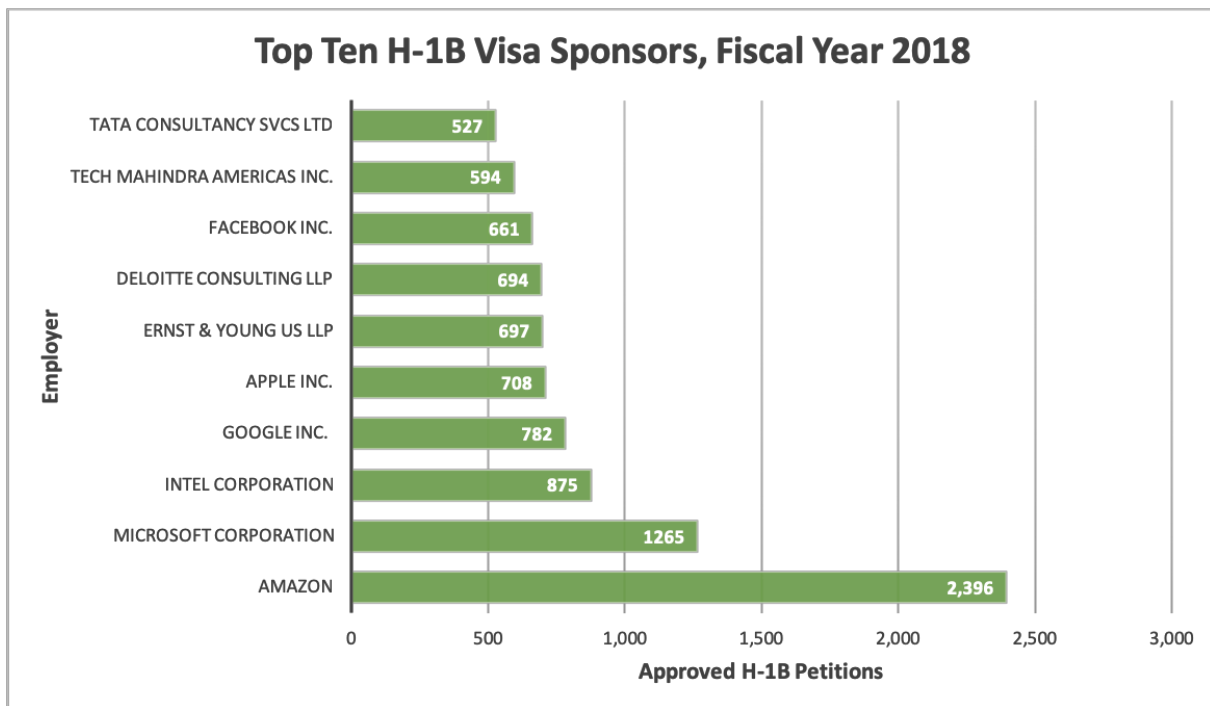
Figure 4: Diversity Immigrant Visas Issued, Fiscal Year 2017



Note: Data retrieved from U.S. Department of State Diversity Visa Program Statistics, Fiscal Years 2008-2017. Available online <https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/Statistics/AnnualReports/FY2017AnnualReport/FY17AnnualReport-TableVII.pdf>

Moreover, a highly technologically innovative society, the United States, as well as other industrial states, recruit highly-skilled foreign professionals on specialized employment visas. Under the H-1B program implemented by the United States, companies may temporarily employ foreign workers in occupations that require the theoretical and practical expertise of a body of highly specialized knowledge and a bachelor's degree or higher in a specific field (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2019). The initiative allows for the recruitment of 65,000 foreign professionals with a Bachelor's degree or equivalent, and 20,000 with a Master's degree earned in the United States for a time period of three years, with a possibility to apply for permanent residence status depending on specific circumstances of the visa holder. The H-1B program has added to the diversity within migrant groups, as a large portion of H-1B visa recipients stem from Asian countries.

Figure 5: Top Ten H-1B Visa Sponsors, Fiscal Year 2018



Note: Data retrieved from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) H-1B Employer Data Hub Files, Fiscal Year 2018. Available online <https://www.uscis.gov/tools/reports-studies/h-1b-employer-data-hub-files>

As displayed in Figure 5, many large companies in the technology and consulting industries depend on foreign talent to continue growth and development within their operations. Given the close relations between highly-skilled foreign laborers and top companies in the United States, these industries have been especially supportive of migration reforms that would safeguard or expand programs such as the H-1B visa.

2.4. The Role and Powers of the President of the United States

The first official constitution of the United States, known as the Articles of Confederation, was ratified in 1781 by envoys of each of the original thirteen provinces, as an attempt to unify the confederation of states. The agreement formed a national government consisting of a single legislative body which granted the states the authority to carry out duties such as currency governance, foreign affairs engagement, and manage war conflict. The document, however, lacked a central government to enforce the states to hold each other accountable and commit to the agreed terms. In 1783, the outcome of the American Revolution granted the thirteen colonies their independence from Great Britain, and simultaneously proved the urgent demand for a central authority to maintain the allegiance among the states.

Signed in 1787 by the Constitutional Convention delegation in Philadelphia, the Constitution of the United States outlined integral laws of the land, guaranteed specified basic rights for its citizens, and founded America's national government as it is known today. A significant development from the updated charter was the establishment of the three branches of government and their designated powers. The Legislative arm, known as Congress, is comprised of two chambers-- the House of Representatives and the Senate, whom jointly compose the legislative framework of the United States of America. Furthermore, the elected President of the United States oversees the Executive branch of the government, and enforces the mandates agreed upon by Congress. The third element of the American government is constituted by the Judicial branch, which is formed by nine Supreme Court judges whom are nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate, the upper chamber of Congress. The dynamics between the three national branches of government is largely driven by the Separation of Powers structure outlined in the Constitution. By decentralizing the legislative process between the three branches of government, this prevents one body from obtaining too much power, and at the same time protect the rights of the citizens of the United States.

Upon being elected into office, the President holds the executive authority to nominate the members for the Cabinet of the United States, whose role is to advise the President on any subject he may require relating to the duties of each member's respective office. The Presidential Cabinet consists of the heads of state agencies such as the Department of Defense, Central Intelligence Agency, Department of Energy, among other executive departments ("The Cabinet," n.d.). Although the President is limited in his capacity to exert undue authority over state institutions and other branches of government, the Presidential function of appointing national agency executives allows the Head of State to wield indirect influence in this respect, as the President is more likely to only designate officials that support his agenda, rather than potential adversaries.

Although the President holds the titles of Head of State and Head of Government, the President of the United States lacks many of the explicit decree authorities available to chief executives elsewhere (Sala, 1998, p. 254). Despite the lack of overt powers granted to the American President, the Executive branch continues to be perceived as the prevailing arm of the national government, retaining a great amount of influence of the policy developments of the state. Granted by the U.S. Constitution, the president possesses the power to issue instructions and orders to executive officers concerning the performance of their duties (Cash, 1963, p. 44). The ambiguous phrasing of presidential assertions allows for a wide interpretation of the granted

authority, to which the President holds a platform to voice his opinions in hopes of influencing domestic policy.

2.4.1. Authority to Issue Executive Orders

In the matter of migration, executive orders have been issued by various presidents throughout the history of American politics. Due to the fact that the United States has been dealing with issues regarding migration for decades, this issue has become a major topic in recent presidential campaigns. For instance, in the most recent Presidential campaign during 2016, then-candidate Donald Trump's main pledges were to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and implement an injunction against citizens of some Muslim countries from entering the United States. Once president Trump came to power, he issued Executive Order 13769, which bans nationals of Iran, Pakistan, Somalia, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, and Syria from travelling to the United States (Tran, 2017). Furthermore, the Trump Administration has taken measures to phase out the DACA program, which was announced by president Obama in 2012. In doing so, the President's decisions were still fought against and appealed at the United States Supreme Court. The Supreme Court upheld the administration order to ban to the nationals of seven countries from entering the United States.

On the issue of undocumented immigration, President Obama issued one of the most controversial orders, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). Under DACA, those who arrived to the U.S before age 16 and had been living in the US since 2010 were granted a three-year period in which deportation is deferred and recipients of the program can legally work (Tran, 2017). An attachment to this proposal included similar protections to the parents of DACA recipients, known as Deferred Action for American Parents (DAPA). However, faced by immediate opposition, this measure was shut down and prevented from being implemented.

The former administration's strategy to deal with undocumented minors in the United States is viewed by the Trump administration as a threat to national security. When discussing immigration, one can generally assume the ruling administration's stance based on their political party affiliation. However, in previous cases, presidents, such as Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush, who belong to the Republican Party, have issued orders that tended to be in favor of immigrants. For instance, President Ronald Reagan issued Reform and Control Act of 1986, which gave amnesty to three million undocumented immigrants ("A Reagan Legacy," 2010). Furthermore, George W. Bush announced the Immigration Act of 1990, which allowed 700,000 immigrants to work in the US on a fiscal year (Leiden & Neal, 1990, p. 329). Despite

a common conception of the Republican party opposing immigration to the country, previous Republican presidents have expressed favorable opinions in the form of legislative measures.

In a separate case, Donald Trump took executive action on his pledge to cease the expansion of the DACA program. However, President Trump's decision to terminate DACA is yet to be confirmed, as the matter is still under review at the Supreme Court of the United States. On the issue of undocumented immigration, President Obama issued one of the most controversial orders—DACA. DACA aims to allow undocumented immigrants who arrived before a certain age to be able to work in the United States. Obama's strategy is viewed by the current administration as a threat to national security. When thinking about migration, one can think of the role of the party's presidents belong to, however in previous cases presidents, such as Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush, who belong to the Republican Party, have issued orders that tended to be in favor of immigrants. For instance, President Ronald Reagan issued Reform and Control Act of 1986, which gave amnesty to three million undocumented immigrants. Furthermore, George W. Bush announced the Immigration Act of 1990, which allowed 700,000 immigrants to work in the US on a fiscal year (Leiden & Neal, 1990, p. 329). President Bush's immigration act focused on increasing the number of legal immigrants as a way to fight unauthorized migration. These orders had their impacts in the past, yet as presidents' terms end, some of their order are abandoned by their successors.

2.4.2. Veto Power

Article II of the United States Constitution is the passage that establishes the Executive branch of the government and calls for a President to serve as the head of state, head of government, as well as the Commander-in-Chief of the United States Armed Forces. The Executive branch of the government holds the responsibility and authority to execute and enforce the law as stated in the United States' Constitution (U.S. Const. art. II, § 2). Though it is the Legislative branch that holds the lawmaking responsibility of the land, the President maintains the power of the presidential veto, should the Head of State disagree with the bills proposed by the Congress. The power of the veto is one the most significant mechanisms accessible to a President to prevent or delay certain legislative measures from being implemented.

2.5. Migration Lobbying

Currently, the issue migration and immigration reform continue to play an empirical role in domestic affairs in the United States, as it did in the early 20th century. When discussing what determines and shapes the immigration policies enforced in the United States, one should analyze the impact of specific interest groups on the framework of the American migration policy. The effects of lobbying groups on immigration policy were first observed in the late 19th century, with the implementation of the Chinese Exclusion Act. The legislation, aimed at limiting immigration from a specific country came as a result of the efforts of the newly-founded Federation of Organized Trade and Labor Unions (FOTLU) (Facchini, Mayda, & Mishra, 2008, p. 5). The California Gold Rush, which began in the late 1840s and extended through the 1850s, stimulated the American economy significantly, attracting a large influx of immigrants from Asia and Europe. After the peak of the Rush, a large percentage of Chinese immigrants whom had experienced financial success, opted to remain in the western coast of the United States in search of further economic opportunity. Similarly to the Immigration Act of 1907, which would be passed two decades later targeting Japanese immigration to the United States, the lobbying efforts of the FOTLU resulted in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which ‘suspended’ all Chinese immigration for 10 years, renewed for a decade in 1892, made permanent in 1902, and eventually repealed in 1943 (Briggs Jr., 2004, p. 8). The Chinese Exclusion Act was the first migration exclusionary provision in the history of the United States as a result of pursued efforts on behalf of a lobbyist organization. Over one century later, the effects of interest groups on the issue of immigration may still be observed in the current immigration discussions.

Historically, we have witnessed the rise of labor unions and their undisputed influence on the development of public policy in regard to labor rights and wages. Today, the lobbyist movement continues to maintain momentum, however the influencing agents have evolved with time. Seldom discussed in media outlets is the increasing involvement of the tech and consulting industries on immigration issues. In support for “Dreamers”, over 20 major technology, media communications, and other companies have launched a Coalition for the American Dream, which aims to lobby on a local, and national level on behalf of Dreamers to seek the passage of bipartisan legislation that gives Dreamers a permanent solution to remain in the country and be treated just as any other American once and for all (“Our Mission,” n.d.). Some of the larger companies forming the membership of the coalition are Google, Microsoft Corp, Amazon.com Inc, Facebook Inc, Intel Corp, Uber Technologies Inc, IBM Corp, and Marriott International Inc (“Coalition for the American Dream Membership,” n.d.). The coalition, which refers to

Dreamers as part of society, essential in defending the country, and supporting the nation's economy, have pressed for bipartisan legislation that would benefit Dreamers, and at the same time not cause a disturbance to the operations of their companies. Data from the group claims that 72 percent of the top 25 Fortune 500 companies employ DACA recipients (Rodriguez & Dastin, 2017). The support is not isolated to Dreamers, as the same companies largely based out of Silicon Valley have expressed their desire to increase the official H-1B cap (Guzzardi, 2018). Frequently criticized for hiring foreign nationals as opposed to American talent, the high-tech industry attributes their diverse employee portfolios to their successes. Despite the lack in stable immigration reform for Dreamers, or an expansion to the H-1B visa program, there is no doubt that the multi-billion-dollar high-tech industry plays a role in generating conversation within the legislative chamber.

3. Obama's Stance on Migration

The announcement of Barack Obama's nomination for president 2007 as the candidate for the Democratic Party came as a surprise to the nation, praised by some and denounced by others. Throughout his campaign, in order to build support and add credibility to his "Change We Can Believe In" catchphrase, Barack Obama highlighted the failures of the Bush Administration and linked these shortcomings to his Republican contender, John McCain. A change in the White House would mean replacing the ineffective Bush presidency and changing the way Washington worked by introducing a Democratic administration ("Barack Obama's campaign themes and strategies," n.d.). Rather than allowing political differences to cause a rift in governmental decisions, Obama pledged in favor of bipartisan collaboration that would effectively address the concerns of the American people. Cooperation from both sides would be a crucial achievement during a period of economic crisis in the country, in which consensus between parties would be fundamental in recapturing the state's economy. Moreover, another key component of Obama's policy agenda during his first presidential term was to tackle the role of lobbyist organizations in the policymaking process of the United States. During his official campaign, the president-elect pledged to bar members of the Obama administration from working on matters involving their prior employers (Cooper & Zeleny, 2008) in order to prevent former lobbyists from continuing to pursue the interests of their preceding engagements. Furthermore, Obama also emphasized the development of a universal healthcare system for all Americans as national priority and committed to bring the scheme to fruition during his presidency.

3.1. Obama's First Presidential Term, 2009-2012

One year and a relentless presidential campaign charged with a message of hope and change later, Obama would be elected as the first African-American president of the United States. Upon arrival to the White House on January 20, 2009 to assume his new role, President Obama was tasked with the undertaking of the Great Recession stemming from the nationwide collapse of the real-estate housing market which began in 2007. In an attempt to stimulate the economy and boost job growth, the Obama administration implemented the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) in February 2009, with an allocated budget of over \$700 billion over the course of ten years (Congressional Budget Office, 2009). The stimulus plan consisted mainly of tax incentives for companies and individuals, unemployment assistance, infrastructure development plans, and support to healthcare and education systems. Although

the effects of the economic recession remained widespread, Obama persisted on his campaign proposal to reform the healthcare system of the country. Signed into effect in March 2010, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, referred to as the Affordable Care Act (ACA), illustrated one of the high points of Obama's first presidential term. Obama's first presidential term consisted primarily of domestic economic policy reforms and the onset of an attempt to overhaul the healthcare system of the United States. However, during his reelection campaign and throughout his second term, the issue of migration to the United States, undocumented migration in particular, was at the forefront of many of the former President's discussions.

3.2. Obama's Second Term, 2012-2016

During his second term, President Obama prioritized the issue of immigration and incorporating skilled immigrants into the country's labor force. The Obama administration, along with support of fellow congressional Democrats, implemented legislative measures that caused controversy within the federal government and between American citizens, such as the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA) programs. Moreover, the former President also issued several executive orders on the matter of temporary skilled migration during his second term which granted work authorization permits to additional migrants, such the spouses of H-1B working visa holders (Zamora, 2016). Overall, these decisions have ceded positive and negative repercussions on migration and immigration situation of the country in general, which will be interpreted and discussed thoroughly below.

3.3. Border Security and Immigration Initiatives

Traditionally, the Democrat political agenda has conveyed relatively higher tolerance towards immigration than Republicans, and President Obama was determined to sustain this legacy. A few months before Americans would take to the polls and decide whether to re-elect Barack Obama for a second term or designate the presidential title to Republican contender Mitt Romney, Obama announced a revision to the country's immigration policy that has fixated the spotlight on migration and border security ever since. Standing in the Rose Garden of the White House, President Obama would announce the DREAM Act proposal, drafted by both Republicans and Democrats ("Remarks by the President on Immigration," 2012). The objective of the DREAM Act was to bring a subgroup of undocumented immigrants out of the shadows of fear and integrate them into society by granting temporary relief from deportation proceedings and providing the option to apply for work authorization. In order to qualify as a

“Dreamer”, the unauthorized person would have to have been relocated to the United States as children, by their parents, and not represent a risk to national security or public safety (CAP Immigration Team, 2012). The suspension of deportation orders would become to be known as DACA. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals initiative protected those who arrived to the United States before the age of 16, and granted a two-year renewable permit for study and employment purposes.

Since its inception in 2012, nearly 800,000 individuals have signed up and received approval for the federal program, with approximately half of all program beneficiaries living in the states of California, Illinois and Texas (“DACA Recipients By State,” n.d.). When justifying the decision to implement the program, President Obama asserted that the United States has maintained its strength from being a nation of immigrants, and that CEOs concur that it is the right thing for the economy (Pierce & Selee, 2017, p. 2). As discussed in the previous chapter, the high-tech industry is one of the main supporters for pro-immigration legislative reforms. Many of the CEOs of these powerful companies are immigrants themselves, sons and daughters of immigrants, or belong to minority groups like former President Barack Obama. In one way or another, there is a personal attachment that envelops the immigration discussion among Democrats and the tech industry. The combination of the successes and personal migration paths of the leaders are an example that international migration can be very beneficial to a country and may result in positive externalities that may also have a constructive impact on other countries as well.

In addition to DACA, Obama announced the DAPA program in November 2014, which would protect from deportation and provide eligibility for work authorization to as many as 3.6 million unauthorized immigrants (“What Are DAPA and DACA?,” 2016). DAPA grants parents of U.S. citizens or green card holders who arrived in the U.S. before 2010 the right to remain in the United States for 3 years before applying for an extension. Had the measure been approved, DAPA beneficiaries would have been authorized to work for duration of their status. DAPA was challenged by 26 states in courts, yet, Texas was the state that represented the opposition on DAPA and won the case in *Texas vs. the United States* (Astor, 2018). Texas has based on their claims that allowing such program would force them to alter or issue new state laws, which the state considered to be an impact. Obama’s successor, President Trump, believes that this program should never be implemented, and decided not to move forward with it.

3.4. Obama's Portrayal in Media

Before and after the election of Barack Obama into presidency, his team was favored by the media. “Therefore, the media’s “spin” on a candidate, largely affected by the candidate’s financial means, contributes to the outcome of an election—which, in Obama’s case, was a positive one.” (Louine, 2016, p. 2). Throughout the campaign, the former president succeeded in convincing the public that his presidential goals will target for all Americans rather than a certain race. The president took a new approach in his campaign, after his congressional loss in 2000. The president was portrayed as the inspirational, the speaker, and the politician (Alexander, 2010, p. 70). In 2008 presidential election, president Obama received higher positive comments from the press in comparison with John McCain, the republican candidate (Pew Research Center, 2018). While running for his second term in office, president Obama tried to reach out to the most number of people around the U.S., Obama appeared on radio, sports channels, and entertainment channels (Byers & Tau, 2012). Based on his media activity, Obama targeted all segments of the public. In his pursuit to reach the largest number of audience, Obama administration was the first government to make use of social media, such as Twitter, Facebook, and Snapchat (Freking, 2017). Throughout his two campaigns, Obama made use of media and was able to reach out to large number of audience as 1.8 million attended his inauguration in 2009 (Bump, 2017). Obama’s strategy with media made him closer to people, and for some he was portrayed a hero. Obama’s reach out paid off as he had over 1 million in both inauguration ceremonies.

4. Trump's Stance on Migration to the United States

In public appearances and on social media, Donald Trump has frequently referenced the infamous slogan “Make America Great Again” as a depiction of his political agenda. Throughout his campaign, President Trump emphasized several key points regarding migration reform that he deemed essential for making America ‘great again’. Even before running for the highest position in the U.S. government, Trump publicly criticized the immigration policies set forth by former president Barack Obama. In a tweet posted by Donald Trump on his personal account on Twitter in November 2014, Trump stated that “Repubs [Republicans] must not allow Pres [President] Obama to subvert the Constitution of the US for his own benefit & because he is unable to negotiate w/ [with] Congress” (Trump, 2014). Trump tweeted about this matter after Obama announced his intention to expand the DACA initiative and enforce the DAPA program. In addition to expressing his criticism towards the Obama administration and congressional Democrats on social media outlets, Trump geared attention to several of the legislative measures passed by the previous administration during his campaign. A main point of contention that has caused a significant amount of debate in Trump’s campaign and presidency is the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). Furthermore, Donald Trump has often referred to immigration as an imminent threat to the well-being of the country, rather than a mechanism to enhance the economy and the labor market. At a political rally held in the state of Arizona, Donald Trump (2015) commented on Mexican migration to the United States:

“I love the Mexican people... I respect Mexico... but the problem we have is that their leaders are much sharper, smarter and more cunning than our leaders, and they’re killing us at the border. They’re taking our jobs. They’re taking our manufacturing jobs. They’re taking our money. They’re killing us.”

In a similar manner, Trump-appointed Director of National Intelligence Daniel Coats expressed in a Worldwide Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community, that high crime rates and weak job markets will spur additional US-bound migrants from the Northern Triangle — El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, countries with substantial gang violence and high homicide rates (2019, p. 41). Overall, President Trump and his team of advisers have frequently signaled to migration from Central and Southern America as a threat rather than potential economic asset to incite economic growth of the country.

4.1. Pillars of Immigration Reform and Border Security

President Trump promised a series of reforms to the previous immigration policies, such as the phasing out of DACA, enforcing a ban on residents of specified Muslim countries, the development of an extreme vetting process for all applicants for admission to the US, and the construction of a physical barrier across the entire U.S. border with Mexico (Pierce & Selee, 2017, p. 2). In addition to the reforms mentioned, the Administration exercised its legal authority to implement tighter rules on immigration. Trump's 'zero-tolerance' policies forced 61,094 immigrants out of the country and made about 110,568 arrests from January 20, 2017 to September 30, 2017 (Sacchetti, 2017). The percentage of removals increased by 37% than in the same period of 2016, and the number of arrests increased by 42% (Pierce & Selee, 2017, p. 3). The staggering figures elucidate the power, authority, and autonomy gained by the Immigration and Custom Enforcement agency (ICE) since President Trump's inauguration in 2017.

Opponents of the Trump administration have spoken out against the 'America First' directives promoted by the government on the issue of immigration, criticizing it as contradictory to the known impression of the 'American Dream'. For so long, millions of people have thought of the U.S. as a sanctuary for those who did not have the opportunity to advance in their life, or those who have been forced out of their home country due to war, religious, political conflicts or otherwise. The United States of America has historically been stereotyped in the media, movies, and songs as the place where all dreams may come true. However, the new administration has pulled the reins on both documented and undocumented immigration. The new measures taken have also impacted those who are on a Temporary Protected Status (TPS) visa. Below, the chapter will go over the commitments made by President Trump prior to his inauguration, the laws that have been passed after taking the presidential seat, and the impacts of such decisions. This chapter will highlight the recent measures taken by Trump administration to strengthen border security, post-execution, and reaction.

Seven days after his inauguration, President Trump signed his first Executive Order number 13769 titled "Protecting the Nations from Terrorist Entry Into The United States" on January 27th, 2017 ("Trump's executive order: Who does travel ban affect?," 2017). The Executive Order placed a travel order preventing nationals of seven Muslim-majority countries: Iran, Somalia, Libya, Syria, Iraq, Sudan, and Yemen, from entering the United States for 90 days. The executive order also suspended the United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) for 120 days and banned Syrian refugees for an indefinite period (Trump, 2017). The

proclaimed ‘Muslim ban’ was one of the President's main promises to the people of the U.S. during his campaign towards the White House. Despite the pouring backlash on a domestic and international level, the implementation of executive order meant another triumph for the Trump administration. However, the achievement would turn out to be short-lived, as immediately after the executive order was announced the President was faced with mass opposition, which eventually led to a temporary injunction filed by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). As a result, a federal court in the state of New York granted the ACLU’s request for a nationwide temporary suspension of the executive order which would block the deportation of the citizens from the blacklisted countries (“Timeline of the Muslim Ban,” n.d.). The court’s ruling was based on the grounds that the ban violates the First, Fifth Amendment, as well as the federal laws of the United States. The First Amendment states that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances” (U.S. amend. I). Despite federal support to suspend the ban, President Trump would make another attempt at reinstating the measure, that would ultimately lead to the involvement of the highest tribunal in the United States, the Supreme Court. As a result, the Trump ‘travel ban’ was overturned by federal courts, leading to the birth of Executive Order 13780, which according to the Administration was the “politically correct” version of the travel restriction measure. Order 13780 added Venezuela, Chad, and North Korea to the list, while Iraq was removed. After a long battle, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the administration’s third version of the ban in June 2018 (Liptak, 2018). To no avail, adversaries have maintained that the order must be deemed unconstitutional as the decision represented a clear prejudice toward a specific branch of faith. Critics have expressed displeasure on the ruling, claiming that the United States used to be a safe haven for people fleeing their home countries due to varying problems, has now evolved into an unwelcoming nightmare for immigrants.

Among the many promises made in his Arizona speech, Trump (2015) said that his administration would immediately terminate President Obama’s two ‘illegal executive amnesties’. The proposals Trump referred to were the previous administration’s executive orders to grant work authorization for childhood arrivals and protection from deportation, DACA and DAPA (Pierce & Selee, 2017, p. 14). Although this resolution was pledged prior to Trump’s election and had no legal backing at the time, it certainly came as a shock to the program’s beneficiaries. However, a few years later, and another assurance would come to fruition. On September 5th, 2017, the Trump administration announced the termination of the

DACA program (Kopan, 2018). Since, the Administration stopped granting benefits to DACA beneficiaries, rejected new applicants and renewals whose benefits expire after March 5th, 2018 (Prakash, 2018). Several lawsuits have been filed after the administration's decision, and ultimately the Ninth Circuit deemed the decision unlawful on November 8th, 2018; therefore, renewals have been reinstated, until the matter is resolved by the U.S. Supreme Court ("Status of Current DACA Litigation," n.d.). Recent tensions regarding border funding have led many to believe that the current administration is using the DACA program as a token to pressure Congress to come to an agreement regarding the southern-border wall.

"We will build a great wall along the southern border. And Mexico will pay for the wall. One hundred percent. They don't know it yet, but they're going to pay for it" (Trump, 2015). Also addressed during his Arizona state rally, building the wall along the U.S.-Mexico border is one of the President's main objectives since coming into power. So far, the wall appears to be one of the principal challenges in domestic policy that the current administration has encountered, as complete financial funding for Trump's border security plans have yet to be agreed upon by Congress.

The escalating tensions regarding the border wall issue have developed into the longest government shutdown in the history of the United States. The 35-day long shut down occurred over a dispute over the funding of the wall (Lee, 2019). A government shutdown means that all 'non-essential' federal operations are shut down due to a funding gap which fails to allocate financial resources to state agencies. To build the wall, President Trump requested a \$5.7 billion-dollar budget, and simultaneously threatened to declare a state of national emergency, should his request not be approved by Congress (Lee, 2019). Due to the extensive length of the border between the U.S. and Mexico, which is estimated at 1933 miles, or 3110.80 kilometers (Almond, n.d.), the border wall would consist of a combination of physical barriers and technological detection systems. However, this begs the question as to why President Trump has put on such a hard fight to build a wall across one of the biggest international borders in the world, despite he has already announced a zero-tolerance policy, in addition to several other measures that have made it extremely difficult for immigrants to reside in the United States. Could it be that the President fears losing the public's popularity should the wall not be built, or does he genuinely believe that a wall will be effective in stopping undocumented immigrants and drug trafficking? My assumption is that, contrary to President Obama's economic and relatively rational perspective on the issue, President Trump's fixation on the issue has

discarded any concession that could convert a selected group of migrants into an economic gain for the state. The recent government shut down is a vivid representation of the drastic measures President Trump is willing to take to execute his promises and deliver to the American people.

Moreover, another of President Trump's adjustments on immigration policy is the increase of restrictions on Temporary Protected Status (TPS) visa beneficiaries. Since assuming his position as president of the United States, Donald Trump has ended TPS for more than three thousand people (Johnson, 2019). Several lawsuits have been filed on behalf of those affected by the decision on the basis that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) were terminating status based on racial discrimination (Ballesteros, 2018). Furthermore, the Center for American Progress reported that nationals of six countries lost their TPS eligibility over the course of two year; the countries are: Haiti, El Salvador, Honduras, Nepal, Nicaragua, and Sudan (Medina, 2019). Simultaneously, the Administration has also ended a program for Liberians nationals in the U.S. called Deferred Enforcement Departure. Although President Trump did not promise to end TPS in his campaign, the program is considered as one of the new administrative measures to end the flow of migrants to the United States. This initiative has long been criticized by Congress, as many believe that a large part of TPS beneficiaries are receiving more assistance than they should, and are therefore exploiting to social welfare system of the country. When considering the reasons why people migrate, the New Economics of Labor Migration theory highlights that one of the main motivators for international migration are the lack of, or inefficient social institutions in the migrants' home countries. Although the principal objective of all immigrants is not usually to take advantage of the social system abroad, the current administration perceives it such. Though it can be assumed that some migrants may view this as a priority, access to state and federal assistance is tightly regulated, and mostly reserved for U.S. nationals.

Another legal migration path the current administration has expressed interest in reforming the Diversity Immigrant Visa (DV) Program. The DV, widely known as "lottery Green Card", is a program administered by the U.S. Department of State, in which applicants from several countries around the world submit applications to obtain a permanent residency to live in the United States ("Green Card Through the Diversity Immigrant Visa Program," 2018). The applications are drawn randomly, and the number of Green Cards provided varies based proportionally depending on the size of the population of a specific country. The U.S.

Citizenship and Immigration Services reported that the program provides 50,000 immigrant visas annually. During his campaign, Trump criticized the program calling it “a disaster for our country” (Decker, 2017). The current administration is trying to end the program, and change into a merit-based program, where applicants are screened based on merit. After the Manhattan terrorist attack in 2017, in Trump’s meeting with the U.S. Cabinet, he connected this program, which gave the attacker the right to reside in the U.S, to chain migration. The president said that his team has always been against it, as the program “has never been good”, and he asked congress to immediately terminate it and find a way to end chain migration (Singman, 2017). As of now, the administration has still not been able to end the program. All these decisions give an insight on Trump’s stance on migration; however, coming from a businessman’s perspective, it is difficult to comprehend why the president is so reluctant to consider that impartial migration reform could result in an economic gain for the United States.

4.2. Perspective on H-1B and the American Job Market

The President has repeatedly said “America First” and has perpetually criticized the previous administration for not prioritizing the interests of Americans. In his 2019 State of Union speech, the President went over the administration’s achievements thus far and reassured the American public about his crack down on immigration (Trump, 2019). President Trump stressed the notion that there is a crisis on the southern border of the U.S. to push Congress to pass a bill that would finally grant the funding. On the wall, President Trump (2019) argued, “Simply put, walls work and walls save lives. So, let's work together, compromise, and reach a deal that will truly make America safe.” This quote has emphasized the president’s belief that undocumented migration is a constant and direct threat to the U.S.’s national security. Although the president has taken several serious measures to deter some legal migrants from moving to the U.S., his focus has mainly centered on undocumented migration. From a business perspective, which President Trump has been involved in for decades, the President believes that undocumented migration and low-skilled laborers severely impact the job market in a negative manner, and that the administration prefers highly-skilled employees over families of Green Card holders (Hauslohnner & Tran, 2018). The President has stated on several occasions that American nationals’ jobs are impacted by the flow of undocumented immigrants, which applies a downward pressure on wages. A report on the fiscal effects of immigration concluded that an increase in immigration flows leads to higher incomes for productive factors that are complementary with immigrants, but lower incomes for factors that compete with immigrants. However, many immigrants plan to eventually return home and therefore take on temporary

employment opportunities which tend to have a rather neutral impact (Smith & Edmonston, 1997, p. 136). Furthermore, Smith & Edmonston (1997) demonstrated that immigrants create new areas in the economy that would not exist without migration (p. 143). When considering the impact of the migration, several aspects should be taken into consideration. Rather than the focusing on the basic assumption depression in wages, there are myriad jobs that natives are not willing to take or perform, as a native has access to more technical and better paying employment opportunities. The Dual Labor Market theory of migration supports this argument, as an economy with an active immigrant workforce is known to be divided into a primary sector for the native population, and a secondary sector that offers opportunity mainly to undocumented migration and lower-skilled laborers.

4.3. Role of Mass Media and the Current Administration's Influence

During his campaign, Donald Trump claimed Twitter as a self-promotion and venting platform. Despite the criticism he has received, Trump continues to communicate extensively with his following via Twitter. Among world leaders, President Trump has gathered the highest number of followers on the social media platform with around 60 million followers ("Twitter," n.d.), further increasing the visibility of the Trump administration domestically and around the world. On his Twitter account, the President Trump has taken the liberty to openly discuss his personal opinion on domestic policy and global cases. Also on his Twitter profile, the president has opted to promote news outlets, such as right-leaning Fox News, and shame others, such as CNN, which often reports positively of the left.

Furthermore, the president has rarely hesitated in criticizing the previous administration, or other countries. For instance, Trump blamed Mexico over undocumented migration and having to pay for the border wall as a consequence (Corbett, 2018). Given his preceding career as a businessperson and public figure, Trump has had access to fans and supporters, and has only become even more globally recognized since winning the election. During his campaign, the president has received a lot of attention due to his unique personality and his celebrity background. In their recent book *Identity Crisis*, Sides, Tesler & Vavreck (2018) contend that Trump's outsized media coverage during the primaries, stemming from both from his outlandish statements and celebrity past, probably helped him during the Republican nomination contest (p. 115). However, given the president has the platform to access to the public through his Twitter account and media coverage during his campaign and post-election, how has the president's views shaped the public opinion of immigrants? President Trump's views of some immigrants were clearly stated during his campaign and Twitter account. For instance, the

president referred to Mexican nationals who come to the US unlawfully as rapists (Wolf, 2018). The president may not be targeting all Mexican nationals, and he might not purposefully intend to offend the state of Mexico, yet this is how his statements are perceived by many. A study conducted in 2017, concluded that by exposing white respondents to the president's speeches against Mexican, the respondents developed an aggressive reaction not only towards Mexican, but also toward other racial groups (Schaffner, 2018). Shaffner's study shows that exposing people to hateful messages by the president shape an idea of the policy and develops hatred toward those who are targeted by the president. Since running for presidency, president Trump has displayed a distinctive personality that has drawn attention to him and his political ideologies. His strong media outreach and following has, to some extent, transferred some ideas that he believed in to his platform. Although media can be a double-edge sword, Donald Trump has succeeded in drawing attention by being interactive on social media on a daily basis, which may make the public feel closer to the Executive branch.

The Trump administration has visibly fought in favor of restricting migrants from coming to the United States. So far, the current administration has succeeded in deporting hundreds of thousands of migrants and in the detention of thousands. The administration continues to press for stricter border security, and an increase in number of border security personnel to increase coverage along the U.S.-Mexico barrier. All of these actions have cost the U.S. government a vast amount of funds since Donald Trump was inaugurated in 2017 (Rodgers & Bailey, 2019). However, these new measures have resulted in several negative and positive impacts on the nation's economy and safety. In his 2019 State of Union speech, the President stressed that the current unemployment rate is the lowest in the history of the United States (Trump, 2019). Some relate this to Trump's new immigration policies, as many migrants have left the country, or are being detained within the country or at the border when attempting entry. Yet, throughout history, studies have failed to show definitive proof that migration has had direct impact on unemployment. On other hand, several studies prove that immigrants contribute to the economic growth of the United States. As concluded by Goldin et al. (2018), migration has been essential to economic growth in the United States, especially since the economic recession a decade ago. The report also studies the growth with and without migrants. When estimating the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth with no migrants, the study showed a much slower growth rate (Goldin et al., 2018, p. 5). These studies show that the current administration has failed to consider these details, which are important in shaping the future U.S. economy. Migrants contribute to the economy of the United States in many different ways. Since they are mostly laborers, on their free time, migrants usually pay for entertainment and tourism, which

plays a major role in driving economic development. In addition, in most cases, migrants pay their tax responsibilities, without being able to claim social assistance or receive a tax refund at the end of the year, and that has an overall impact in U.S. economy. Over time, these basic elements have contributed to the powerful economy of the United States. The new administration is aiming to reduce immigration in general. Despite the president's new call for highly-skilled workers, the general feeling of being not welcomed is push factor that may deter high talent from migrating to the U.S.. As mentioned earlier, one the current administration's themes are stricter laws on immigration, which will in turn lead to a lower number of highly-skilled workers.

5. Comparative Analysis on Migration Policies of the Obama and Trump Administration

The issue of migration has been viewed and considered somewhat differently by every president. Although some presidents attempt to reach a similar goal, the approach is always different. Yet, the current and previous administration are believed to have a very distinct approaches and goal. During his presidency, Obama issued several orders that were considered to favor the incorporation of migrants into the American labor force. Obama recognized that a large portion of immigrants do not necessarily possess the skillset to acquire complex jobs in the United States, but there is still a place in the economy for immigrants. Though Obama's migration closely aligned with the economic-centered theories such Dual Labor Theory and Neoclassical Economic theories of migration, Obama also employed a humane approach towards the situation found an opportunity to improve the situation for undocumented children in the U.S. by implementing legislative measures that would protect these youth from deportation, and in return offer education and employment opportunities in their adopted home country, the United States of America. With regards to skilled migration, the Obama administration established a much more welcoming environment by allowing the spouses of H-1B visa holders to also actively participate in the labor force of the United States. In doing so, the domestic economy would benefit further from foreign expertise.

However, it is apparent that president Trump's view on migration is distinct from that of the Obama administration. The migration policies set forth by President Trump can be interpreted as responses to the Network, Dual Labor, and New Economics migration theories. The current administration has publicly criticized chain migration and has taken active measures to cease the present immigration legislations that allow for chain migration to occur. For instance, the current administration is fighting to end the Diversity Lottery Program and convert it into a merit-based system, and only welcome migrants with elevated skillsets. On the issue, the Trump administration's justification rationale is that one can obtain a green card through such program despite the fact the one might not be highly skilled, and they can later file a petition for one of their relatives to reside in the U.S., and their relatives can do the same.

There is a diffused belief among many Americans that immigration system of the United States has allowed a substantial amount of people to reside in the country and obtain U.S. citizenship when they are considered to be a heavy weight on the economy. The current administration approach immigration and its impacts on the job market. The policies that Trump has created

have targeted many segments of immigrants, but mainly the low-skilled and undocumented workers. Although the effect on migration overall has been nominal, the president's claim that low-skilled immigrants force the wages of Americans down, has incited anti-immigration sentiments across the country. Many of the jobs available to low-skilled and unauthorized migrants are found in the secondary labor sector of the economy, and many times consist of manual labor in agriculture, the food and hospitality industries which provide low wages and lack of job security. However, by developing a thriving environment in the secondary sector for both Americans and foreigners, the native population that is not inclined to participate in the secondary sector of the labor force can have the opportunity to earn an advanced education, and ultimately secure a better-paying and more secure job in the primary sector. The cumulative impact of this leads to technological and socioeconomic development of a country.

In addition to the dual labor market theory, having low-skilled immigrants can also be associated with the world-systems analysis and new economics of migration theory. The U.S. is the highest remittance-sending country in the world, which reflects the number of those working and assisting their relatives abroad. According to Wallerstein's world-systems perspective, the permeance and expansion of the capitalist and it also shows the power of the U.S. job market. The motives of remittance depend on various aspects, however, the negative impact it has on the host economy is one of the migration issues. The president is on his way to end the order that was issued by Obama to allow the spouses of H-1B visas to work in the U.S. This decision might cause an impact on the remittance amount, since some H-1B holders will prefer having their spouses staying home to be able to save money, while sending the remaining back home.

The Trump administration has also gone against those immigrants who are only considered to be benefiting from the social welfare of the United States. To counter this dilemma, the current administration is suggesting to a merit-based system. The administration solution targets the issue of misuse of social welfare, and the decrease in wages. Yet, will these new policies cause labor shrinkage? Connecting the current administration's view of immigrants to the migration theory, shows that the Trump administration focuses on the economic aspect more than anything. President Trump is fighting for a stronger economy for the United States, and he believes that the previous administration had favored migrants over the U.S. economy.

On the other hand, Obama administration viewed the issue of migration distinctly. The previous administration commitment to reduce or even end illegal immigration pushed them to issue some orders that tended to favor legal migration. Obama administration approached migration

more from a dual labor theory perspective, where migrants were filling some of the jobs that native did not fill. According to Desilver (2017), majority of authorized immigrants occupied jobs in private household, agriculture, accommodation, or clothes manufacturing industries. These jobs usually do not require a high skilled worker. On the other hand, Obama administration viewed the issue of migration distinctly. The previous administration commitment to reduce or even end illegal immigration pushed them to issue some orders that tended to favor legal migration. Obama administration approached migration more from a dual labor theory perspective, where migrants were filling some of the jobs that native did not fill. According to Desilver (2017), majority of authorized immigrants occupied jobs in private household, agriculture, accommodation, or clothes manufacturing industries. These jobs usually do not require a high skilled worker. Obama focused on ending the lack of labor in these sectors, by having less strict policies. Also, president Obama gave the spouses of H-1B visas the right to work legally for the duration for their partner's visa. This decision can be viewed from two aspects, maintain high skilled employees, and decreasing remittances. Having a high skilled employee without allowing his spouse to work can make those in H-1B visa less likely to last with their sponsors for long time and increase the chances of losing a high skilled employee that can contribute to the U.S. economy and to the company. By giving such permission, the immigrant is more likely to worry less about having to transfer money abroad.

In the discussion of migration policies, large companies play a major in shaping such decisions, as they are usually directly impacted. Companies, such as Facebook, Apple, or Google, face the impact of such policies. Since these companies offer large numbers of H-1B of visas for high skilled employees, the current administration policies might put them in risk of losing those employees. For example, Google management reaction to Trump's victory in the 2016 election reflected how their view of the election. Google's lobbying spending peaked in 2018, as they seek to shape the new government legislations. Compete America, which represents large tech companies, such as Cisco, Hewlett-Packard Enterprise, and Salesforce, reported that H-1B denials have increased since Trump became in charge. These aspects will play major in the upcoming 2020 election. The 2020 election is already, and some tech companies have already showed interest in Kamala Harris, a democrat candidate that has shown leniency toward migrants, such as Alphabet, a parent company of Google (Fang, 2019). Both administrations heavily related migration to economy but they have a very different beliefs on the impacts of it.

Conclusion

Migration to the United States has historically taken place in waves, distinguished by periods of peaks and troughs. The first cycle of substantial immigration flows to the country dates back to the 17th century, when Europeans arrived in search of economic prosperity, and freedom of religion and political oppression. The same justifications for international migration can still be observed in the contemporary situation of immigration in the United States. Several theoretical perspectives have been developed with an aim to gain further understanding on the primary elements that stimulate the international movement of people. However, Migration is, in fact, too diverse and multifaceted to be explained by a single theory (Arango, 2000, p. 283). The reasons for migration, and the composition of migrants themselves are constantly evolving, and this is precisely one of the reasons why migration policy is so complex, especially in the United States. The complexity in resolving international migration issues can be illustrated by the simple fact that there is no single global migration theory that encapsulates all the individual causes and effects of international movement.

Further, different migrant nationalities within the United States are at different stages of migration. For example, the extensive history of Mexican migration to its northern neighbor has reached the point of reunification. Family units of Mexican origin have established roots in the United States over the course of decades, which has ultimately resulted in the migration of remaining nuclear family members, and in some cases extended kin, to be reunited with their relatives. Recent developments with unaccompanied children making the journey to the U.S. to be reunited with parents also show that Central and South American countries are undergoing a situation similar to Mexico. Over time, different migration theories have been developed as new migratory patterns have been recorded. Visa programs such as the Diversity Immigration Visa, and the H-1B employment authorization have further contributed to the culturally rich society of the United States, and the effects of these initiatives have begun to appear in U.S. population census data with increasing immigrants with Asian and African origins. Once again, the patterns of migration are shifting, and it appears that the political differences regarding immigration between Democrats and Republicans are much too high to come to any agreement.

The United States is much too diverse, and has grown into one of the most powerful economies in the world due to the support of immigration, for the country to turn its back on the very thing that built the nation. Within the tech industry, the topic of immigration goes beyond the issuance of employment visas. Immigration is also at the core of the industry itself, and this has gained

support for Dreamers and high-skilled labor. However, the influence of the tech industry in immigration policy is yet to be determined. This could be due to the current deadlock on immigration reform on a federal level. Furthermore, the security of a nation cannot be fully bet on sealing the nation's physical border. The security of a nation is also largely dependent upon the public policy and the ability of such to be implemented effectively. Effective migration policy may only be derived from cross-party collaboration, and the elimination of politics from the discussion.

Theories of international migration are not always necessarily accurate or applicable to every country or migrant; however, the understanding of the reasoning behind theory can assist in the migration policy making process. If I were to select a couple of theories of international migration that I believe are presently more relevant to the current situation in the United States, I would argue that it is a combination Network theory and New Economics of Labor Migration. In recent years, thousands of people have made the decision to immigrate to the United States to be reunited with their family members. However, migration remains a largely economic-based decision. The uniting factors between human behavior in conjunction with a meso-level perspective makes the New Economics of Labor Migration theory adaptable to a many migrant groups present in the United States.

The topic of my Master thesis was "Managing Migration: Policies of the Obama and Trump Administrations". I selected this topic as it is a highly contested issue in contemporary American politics and relevant in the present political climate of the country. Moreover, I was born from immigrant parents and raised on the southern border of the United States, one of the very places that is constantly being referred to as a 'crisis zone' by the media. However, my border town of Nogales is everything but an area of chaos. In fact, it is the fusion of people, food, languages, and cultures that has bred unique communities all along the border, unlike anywhere else in the country.

The main point of the Master thesis was to compare and contrast the migration policies that have recently emerged from the Obama and Trump Administrations. Both presidents have adopting polarizing strategies with the purpose of resolving the immigration issue of the country. Neither approaches have resulted in the stabilizing of the situation, which once again relates to the main problem of lack of collaboration between legislators. For the most part, the discourse has stemmed from the migrant groups the implemented policies have been directed towards.

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