

Untying the Knot Series: Unemployment and Immigration

[Untying the Knot \(Part I of III\): The Unemployment and Immigration Disconnect](#) [1]

With Congress once again poised to consider comprehensive immigration reform, a key question confronting lawmakers is to what extent immigration and unemployment are related. Opponents of immigration reform frequently argue that immigrants “take” jobs away from many native-born workers, especially during economic hard times. Yet an analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau clearly reveals that this is not the case. In fact, there is little apparent relationship between recent immigration and unemployment rates at the regional, state, or county level.

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[Untying the Knot \(Part II of III\): Immigration and Native-Born Unemployment Across Racial/Ethnic Groups](#) [2]

One of the most contentious issues in the debate over immigration reform is whether or not the presence of immigrants in the U.S. labor force—especially undocumented immigrants—has a major adverse impact on the employment prospects of African Americans. However, data from the U.S. Census Bureau reveal that this is not the case. In fact, there is little apparent relationship between recent immigration and unemployment rates among African Americans, or any other native-born racial/ethnic group, at the state or metropolitan level.

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[Untying the Knot \(Part III of III\): The Disparity between Immigrant Workers and Unemployed Natives](#) [3]

The Immigration Policy Center (IPC) released the third and final installment of a three-part report, *Untying the Knot*. The final report, by Rob Paral and Associates, reveals that unemployed natives and employed recent immigrants cannot simply be “swapped” for one another since unemployed natives and employed immigrants tend to have different levels of education, live in different parts of the country, and have experience in different occupations and different levels of work experience. The report also shows that immigrants tend to fit into the labor force in areas where there are insufficient numbers of comparable native workers. In other words, removing immigrants would not automatically lead to job openings for natives.

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