

Geographical Implications of Anti-Immigration Sentiments at Global Level

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Prologue

Immigration has become an enduring feature of many societies in the world. Recent studies on immigration highlight a complex, rapidly evolving landscape driven by economic necessity, safety concerns and geopolitical factors. Consequently, the literature is emerging on anti-immigration sentiments since the past two decades or so. It is based on large-scale, multi-country studies to understand where and why such sentiment is more pronounced. Opposition to such immigration has also become an important issue all over the world. Consequently, the Anti-Immigration Sentiments are rising globally. Significant volume of research has been conducted to explore increased immigration affecting natives' attitudes towards immigrants. Immigration, foreign policy and international relations have become embedded fields of study. The focus of present research paper is on the anti-migration sentiments. It explores these sentiments and various related aspects all over. The paper is benefited from a generous bibliography provided by National Social Science Documentation Centre (NASSDOC) and intellectual support from Ratan Tata library (RTL). The discussion is organised in five sections, viz. Introductory (Meaning, Roots & Diffusion), Global Scenario, Drivers, Impact & Responses.

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I. Introduction

Numerous countries are seeing increased interest in the anti-immigration movement, especially as economic conditions tighten and global migration increases. In USA, Europe and Australia, , for instance, political parties often highlight immigration as a top concern. Additionally, during the recent refugee crisis¹, countries in the Middle East have accommodated millions of people, and Europe has received new asylum claims in large numbers. The crisis has led to increased anti-refugee sentiment, with host governments enacting stricter policies manifesting in political movements and protests, often highlighting housing shortages and job insecurity as core issues, while also raising fears of racism and cultural erosion. It is a political position that seeks to restrict or ban legal and illegal immigration. In the modern sense, immigration refers to the entry of people from one state or territory into another state or territory in which they are not citizens. Illegal immigration occurs when people immigrate to a country without having official permission to do so.² Opposition to immigration ranges from calls for various immigration reforms, to proposals to completely restrict immigration, to calls for repatriation of existing immigrants. Anti-immigration sentiments stem from concerns about economic impacts, cultural integration, national identity and perceived pressure on resources like housing, often amplified during tough economic times, leading to calls for stricter policies or even bans. However, many studies also see immigrants as good for the economy, bringing new ideas and cultures. Therefore, while some see immigrants as vital for economic growth and diversity, others worry about overcrowding, cultural erosion and job scarcity, fuelling debates and sometimes xenophobic ideologies. On the one hand, the anti-immigrant hostility continues to rise throughout multicultural societies; on the other, the multicultural societies are struggling to incorporate immigrants successfully into their economic, social and political spheres.

Definition

Immigration is the movement of persons (migrants) into a new country with the intent to reside in that country. Opposition to immigration, known as anti-immigration, means opposed to the situation in which people come to a country in order to live there permanently. Although there are important legal differences among categories of migrants, in public perception the term is typically extended to also include refugees and asylum seekers. In any case, the anti-immigration refers to a public sentiment opposing the entry and settlement of people from other countries, advocating for stricter controls, reduced numbers, or outright bans on immigration, with demands including tougher borders, prioritizing native citizens, and sometimes repatriation. Although the

anti-immigration is a social position that supports stricter controls on who enters and lives in a country, it does not always mean rejecting all migrants. Instead, it often focuses on reducing immigration numbers, tightening border security, giving priority to local citizens and limiting certain types of visas or refugee admissions. In short, the anti-immigration meaning centres on the belief that a country should protect its borders, workforce and cultural identity by restricting immigration. The common terms for anti-immigration sentiment and ideology include 'nativism' and 'xenophobia', the former opposing foreign influence to protect native culture, and the latter is the dislike or prejudice against people from other countries. Other related words describe this stance as 'Nationalism' (chauvinism), 'Restrictionism', 'Protectionism' and 'Remigration'. Nationalism/Chauvinism is extreme patriotism or belief in the superiority of one's own nation, which can fuel anti-immigrant views. Restrictionism advocates for stricter limits on immigration. Protectionism includes policies designed to protect domestic industries or workers, which can include restricting immigration. Remigration, on the other hand, is a term used by some groups for policies aimed at sending immigrants back to their home countries. These views manifest as anxiety, fear or outright xenophobia, impacting social cohesion and political discourse globally. The Core Beliefs of Anti-Immigration sentiments include the following:

- i. Economic Concerns: Belief that immigrants take jobs, lower wages, or burden public services (healthcare, housing);
- ii. Cultural Identity: Fear that large-scale immigration dilutes or threatens the nation's established traditions, language and culture;
- iii. National Security: Perception of immigrants as potential security risks or threats; and
- iv. Social Cohesion: Concerns about integration challenges and potential social conflict.

Roots & diffusion

Anti-immigration attitudes globally are rooted in a complex mix of economic anxieties, perceived cultural threats and psychological factors, often exacerbated by political rhetoric. The fundamental driver is frequently identified as the

'Group Threat-Paradigm'³, where the native population perceives immigrants as competitors for scarce resources, jobs, housing and services. The diffusion of anti-immigrant attitudes occurs through complex social, spatial and digital mechanisms, often driven by a combination of deemed threats and the rapid spread of information. The diffusion of anti-immigrant attitudes, precisely, spreads through political discourse, media amplification (especially social media), economic concerns (anticipated resource scarcity) and psychological factors like dehumanization. These are often intensified by right-wing parties⁴, "super-spreaders" online, leading to increased polarization and support for restrictive policies. This spread is a complex interplay of elite messaging, public fear and digital platforms that accelerate misinformation and polarization. Several key pathways for this diffusion can be highlighted as follows:

1. Transnational and Political Diffusion: It occurs through Foreign Influence, Media Mediation and Institutional Feedback. Anti-immigration attitudes in one country can polarize when anti-immigration parties perform well in national elections abroad. Local media often serve as a vehicle for cross-national influence, covering foreign successes of anti-immigrant platforms, which generates both "legitimization" and "backlash" effects at home. High-profile anti-immigrant laws (e.g., Arizona's SB 1070⁵) may not immediately shift general attitudes but effectively mobilize existing anti-immigrant users and motivate new ones to join the discourse.
2. Digital and Social Media Dynamics: Anti-immigration content on platforms like X (formerly Twitter) spreads approximately 1.66 times faster than pro-immigration messages. While pro-immigration networks are often larger, anti-immigration communities tend to be denser and more active. A tiny group of "super users" (the top 1%) can be responsible for over 23% of total anti-immigrant posts.
3. Spatial and Geographic Clustering: Research indicates a significant spatial connectivity, i.e. regions geographically closer to one another share more similar trends in anti-immigrant sentiments than more distant regions. Attitudes often cluster in areas with specific economic constraints, such as low GDP or high competition for scarce resources like jobs and infrastructure. Sudden or rapid ethnic changes in a local area can increase support for anti-immigrant parties (the "NIMBY" effect⁶).
4. Psychological and Ideological Drivers: Diffusion is often fuelled by two types of perceived threats, viz. Realistic Threats: Concerns over economic resources, jobs and physical safety; and Symbolic Threats: Perceived challenges to a nation's cultural identity, values and language. Ideological beliefs that immigrants are "cheating the system" can lead to dehumanizing emotions like contempt, which further legitimize discriminatory attitudes. Individuals who feel their group is being unfairly disadvantaged compared to others (even if they are not personally struggling) are more susceptible to anti-immigrant rhetoric.

Global Scenario

The rise in anti-migrant sentiment is not exclusive to the developed regions of the world. Similar rhetoric and tactics are gaining ground elsewhere, revealing a global trend that extends far beyond America, Europe and

Australia.⁷ Rising anti-immigrant sentiment is also noted in regions with worsening economic conditions, such as parts of Africa and the Middle East. Anti-immigration sentiment that has become a widespread global phenomenon, is driven by concerns over national identity, economic strain and security, often characterized by the rise of right-wing populism, restrictive policies and increased, rapid, and often violent, online converse. In many countries around the world, right-wing populists⁸ have turned against immigrants and their descendants, describing them as burdens on public welfare, illegal intruders, unfair competitors for jobs, abusers of the asylum system, or threats to national security. This surge manifests itself in political shifts, electoral outcomes and public opinion on immigration policies. Fear-driven narratives about job competition, pressure on public services and national identity are dominating the public discourse. This sentiment is frequently manifested through political movements, border restrictions and sometimes xenophobic violence. Anti-immigration sentiments have risen significantly in the countries of North America, South America, Europe, Australia, Asia and Africa.

North America

Over the last two decades, the American states have become increasingly active in shaping immigration policies.⁹ North America has seen a significant rise in anti-immigration sentiment, particularly, in the United States and Canada. In the United States, there is a long history of anti-immigrant sentiments that have affected Irish, Chinese, Mexican and many more communities. As far as the history of immigration is concerned here, the reasons behind immigration before and after its independence in 1776, have varied. For example, in 1620, the Pilgrims travelled from England to America seeking freedom to practice their religion.¹⁰ Then, the Irish migration in the 1800s occurred because of a potato famine. For as long as immigration has existed, there has been anti-immigrant sentiment. The Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798¹¹ were an early sign of anti-immigrant views by the United States. A century later, the number of immigrants continued to increase at a rapid speed, particularly immigrants from Eastern European countries. This led to an increase in the number of white Americans who supported the concept of nativism, an early form of anti-immigrant sentiment. It was the belief that native-born Americans deserved more rights than foreigners.¹² The concept of nativism continued to play a role in the evolution of the anti-immigrant movement throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. However, there were periods of high anti-immigrant sentiments and time periods in which the United States was in urgent need of immigrants. The Immigration Act of 1924¹³ created a quota for the number of European immigrants that could enter the United States while excluding Asian immigrants. The zero-population growth movement gained popularity in the 1960s and 1970s. This concept meant a population that does not grow or decline.¹⁴ It centred on the well-being of a state in terms of its population, rather than it being a racist or xenophobic way of thinking. If a government wants to have a stable population, then it would need to strictly control its immigration. Aside from the sporadic actions of those opposed to immigration, the creation of four prominent organizations (viz. ZPG (Zero Population Growth), FAIR (Federation for American Immigration Reform), CIS (Centre for Immigration Studies) & UCP (United Constitutional Patriots) is the basis of the current anti-immigrant movement. All of these organizations were established directly by or with the help of John Tanton. He was the president of ZPG from 1975 to 1977, a period in which he used population control as a tool for establishing anti-immigrant rhetoric and becoming a prominent activist in the field. Following his departure from ZPG, he established the FAIR in 1979.¹⁵ FAIR identifies itself as a non-partisan organization with the objectives: ending illegal immigration, no amnesty, protecting wages of American citizens, improving interior enforcement, ending the abuse of the asylum system, implementing a pause to immigration and priding themselves on not being a racist organization.¹⁶ FAIR has succeeded in becoming an important factor in the anti-immigrant movement while protecting its image in a way that encourages the main-stream media to use them as a legitimate source and advocate. The CIS plays a different role and focuses on the supposed research that is meant to back up the claims that FAIR makes. CIS began as a research branch of FAIR and later on, became an independent think tank. At the same time, there has been a more proactive approach in the anti-immigrant movement in the form of border vigilantes. These vigilantes have focused their efforts on the US-Mexico border with various groups focusing on different states. One group in particular stands out for its use of “tours” as a tool for publicity. Larry Mitchell Hopkins founded the UCP, also known as the Guardian Patriots, in an effort to decrease the number of immigrants crossing the border. This paramilitary organization has a clear leadership structure and takes on a more aggressive stance towards anti-immigration, one that prefers to focus on the influx of immigrants entering from the US-Mexico border rather than from other regions of the world. These militias have succeeded in creating fear among both immigrant communities and communities of color.¹⁷ Today, environmental factors and wild animals are no longer the only fears about making the dangerous journey into the United States; there are now militarized anti-immigrant activists who also pose a danger. They differ from Tanton’s organizations in their tactics and immediate goals. Although, in the end both actors want a country without any undocumented immigrants and a limited number of legal immigrants. Thus, the vast majority of organizations and prominent activists in the movement stem from one player, John Tanton.¹⁸ Although, Tanton can be considered a major actor in the founding of the current anti-immigrant movement in USA, more recently Trump has become a symbol for the white supremacist movement

and the anti-immigrant movement. As his presidency continued to support anti-immigration, the number of hate crimes rose. The success of Trump's presidential campaign, and his subsequent presidential term, gave a voice to the movement and its supporters the strength to voice their opinions, verbally and physically, without remorse. The organisations like FAIR, CIS and Numbers USA were incredibly successful during the Trump Administration. Political scientist Cas Mudde defines the American definition of nativism as "xenophobic nationalism"¹⁹ The 2016–2020 period saw an "alarmist discourse" on migration and the implementation of policies like the "Muslim travel ban,"²⁰ which was later revised and expanded by various state-level efforts. In 2024, debates on this topic remained highly polarized, with increased, intense, and often violent online debate, that rapidly and often spread negative sentiments regarding immigrants. Immigration enforcement has become a central issue in political campaigns, with concerns about border security and unauthorized immigration frequently highlighted. Donald Trump's anti-immigration platform centres on restricting legal and illegal immigration through, for example, promises of massive deportation, border wall construction and strict asylum limits. Trump frequently described immigration as an 'invasion of aliens', which fuelled a climate of fear and intensified anti-immigrant sentiment. Rhetoric often linked immigrants to crime, terrorism and economic instability to justify restrictive policies. The policies are rooted in protecting the 'value of American citizenship' and reducing the number of foreign-born individuals in the U.S. Driven by rhetoric linking immigrants to crime and economic instability, Trump Administration Policies & Actions include, for instance, Mass Deportation & Enforcement, Border Security, Efforts to seal the US-Mexico border, Restricting Legal Immigration and Family Separation. His initiatives include plans for the largest mass deportation in U.S. history and empowering state and local police to assist in immigration enforcement. In order to seal the U.S.-Mexico border it is suggested to build a wall, deploy troops, and implement the Title 42 policy to swiftly expel asylum seekers. Policies Restricting Legal Immigration include limiting asylum, reducing refugee admissions and attempts to end birth right citizenship. Besides, a "zero tolerance" policy has led to the separation of thousands of children from their parents at the border. Impact of these Policies was seen in the form of Humanitarian Concerns, Polarization and Legal Challenges. These policies cause significant distress, including, for example, reports of long-term trauma from family separations and high levels of fear and anxiety among immigrant communities. Immigration views became highly polarized along party lines, with, for example, 59% of Republicans supporting his approach in 2025, compared to 81% of Democrats strongly disapproving. Many executive orders were challenged in court by rights groups. In recent years, an increase in anti-immigrant sentiment has been witnessed in the United States, particularly from politically conservative groups.²¹ Thus, aligning with a conservative political ideology is associated with anti-immigrant sentiment irrespective of having immigrant friends. Strategies to increase intergroup contact and promote cross-group friendships are included, and directions for future research are offered. The anti-immigrant movement has had a strong hold in American society and their visibility increased during the Trump administration, but the numbers show that Americans continue to support immigration. Regardless of the successes that the anti-immigration movement has had in the past, if immigration activists continue to fight against xenophobic organizations and racists politicians, the United States can become a country that welcomes immigrants.

While Canada has historically maintained high public support for immigration, the rapid increase in newcomers between 2022 and 2024 fuelled a major backlash, leading to increased numbers of citizens population growth. Consequently, anti-immigration sentiment in Canada has risen significantly, with 58% of Canadians believing there is "too much immigration" by 2024, a sharp increase from 27% in 2022. This shift represents a move away from long-standing pro-immigration, multicultural views, with growing concerns regarding the speed of integration and the volume of newcomers. Key aspects of current anti-immigration sentiment in Canada include Economic and Social Drivers, Shifting Attitudes on Numbers, Cultural Concerns, Political Shift and Targeting of Minorities. The rise in negative sentiment is directly linked to the cost of living crisis, housing shortages, and strained public services. Immigration has become a more prominent partisan, wedge issue, placing pressure on governments to reduce targets, leading to recent federal actions to tighten immigration rules and lower newcomer targets. Anti-immigrant sentiment sometimes overlaps with hate directed at specific racial or religious groups, particularly those from South Asian and Black communities. Despite these trends, public opinion is not monolithic, with a significant portion of Canadians remaining welcoming of immigrants, while others express concern about how immigration is being managed rather than the immigration itself.

south America

With the influx of Venezuelan migrants since 2015, Chile, Peru, Brazil and Argentina exhibit strong restrictive trends in South America. Anti-immigration sentiments in South American countries, often fuelled by economic strain, crime concerns, Security Issues, media, Political Rhetoric and xenophobia, have led to tighter border controls, stricter residency requirements, and, in some cases, violence against migrants. Drivers of Sentiment are largely related to Economic Strain which concerns that migrants take jobs, reduce wages or strain public services like health and education. Increased perception, often perpetuated by media coverage, link immigrants to rising

crime, violence and insecurity. Right-wing and populist actors frequently capitalize on xenophobia to push for securitized border policies. The massive, rapid influx of over 4.5 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants has overwhelmed local communities.

Anti-immigration sentiment in Chile has risen significantly, as already stated, due to increased migration from Venezuela and other nations. Concerns over rising crime rates, economic pressure and cultural differences have led to increased, sometimes violent, xenophobia, particularly in northern regions. Key aspects of the current situation include Political Climate, Targeted Groups, Societal Impact and Government Response. The Right-wing politicians have capitalized on anti-immigrant sentiment by linking immigration to increased crime and promising "iron fist" approaches, including military deployment to borders. Sentiment is especially hostile toward Venezuelan, Haitian and other irregular migrants. High levels of discrimination, xenophobia and negative media portrayals have been reported, impacting the mental health and safety of migrants. In response to public pressure, the government has militarized northern border regions and introduced stricter immigration policies, including voluntary expulsion programs. The rapid increase in arrivals, combined with the aftermath of 2019 social unrest and pandemic-related economic strain, has shifted the public mood from a more welcoming stance to one of restriction.

Anti-immigration sentiment in Peru that has risen significantly, is also driven primarily by the influx of over 1.5 million Venezuelan migrants, with 73% of citizens disapproving of this migration as of 2019. Concerns centre on increased crime, job competition and strained public services. By late 2025, this backlash resulted in states of emergency at the southern border to manage northward migration. Key aspects of anti-immigration sentiments in Peru include Widespread Disapproval, Economic and Security Concerns, Border Strain, Demographic Factors and Social Vulnerability. A large majority of Peruvians express negative views, with 8 in 10 opposing the integration of more Venezuelans into their social circles. Sentiments are fuelled by perceptions that migrants increase crime, insecurity and competition for jobs. Following increased xenophobia and stricter immigration policies in Chile, thousands of Venezuelans moved toward the Peru-Chile border, leading the Peruvian government to declare a state of emergency and deploy armed forces in late 2025. Rejection is higher in rural areas, among women, older adults, and those in lower socio-economic backgrounds. Despite the backlash, Venezuelan migrants face significant social vulnerability, including housing, health and education difficulties. Peru implemented restrictive entry requirements and witnessed public sentiment suggesting migrants steal local jobs, leading to increased pressure on the migrant population.

Anti-immigration sentiment in Brazil particularly target black and indigenous migrants from nations like Haiti and Venezuela. These attitudes are often driven by xenophobia, racism, and economic insecurity, resulting in discrimination and limited social integration for migrants. While Brazil has traditionally viewed itself as a welcoming, multi-ethnic society, this image is increasingly challenged by xenophobic behaviours and structural barriers against migrants, particularly those from the Global South. Brazil faced growing anti-migrant sentiment, specially in border states like Roraima, where residents and officials have targeted Venezuelans, leading to incidents of violence and calls for border closures. Key details regarding anti-immigration sentiments in Brazil cover, for instance, Targeted Discrimination, Growing Hostility, Influence of Political Rhetoric, Socio-Cultural Xenophobia, Policy Shifts and Symbolic Incidents. Prejudice is frequently intersectional, mixing xenophobia with racism, with black migrants often facing more severe, sometimes violent, hostility. Despite a relatively low total immigrant population (0.8% in 2022), incidents of discrimination against Haitians and Venezuelans have increased. Former President Jair Bolsonaro's rhetoric, specifically on social media, played a significant role in fostering anti-immigrant sentiment by portraying migrants as security threats or social burdens. Modern anti-immigrant discourse in Brazil often focuses on cultural, religious and lifestyle differences rather than just biological racism²². Despite a 2017 progressive migration law, recent trends show tightening restrictions, such as new, more restrictive visa policies implemented in 2025²³.

Driven by economic anxiety, Argentina witnesses increase in anti-immigration sentiment. Despite historically progressive migration laws, recent policy shifts and rhetoric mirror US-style restrictions, including easier deportation of migrants. Argentina Adopted more restrictive immigration legislation and discourse, moving away from previous, more open policies. While Argentina is a nation built on immigration, there has historically been, at times, racist ideology that privileged European immigrants, with persistent, deep-rooted discrimination against migrants from neighbouring Latin American countries. These developments suggest that Argentina is moving toward stricter, more restrictive immigration policies, increasingly aligning with right-wing, anti-immigrant narratives found in other parts of the world. Key aspects of current anti-immigration sentiments in Argentina include Political Scapegoating, Targeted Deportations, Economic Drivers and Historical Context. President Javier Milei has adopted anti-immigrant rhetoric, accusing migrants of being responsible for social ills, which is believed to be a strategy to manage public frustration over economic issues. As inflation remains high and wages lag, some sectors of the population hold negative views, blaming migrants for straining public services, a sentiment that has appeared periodically throughout Argentine history during economic downturns. The current administration's

stance marks a significant shift from the 2004 National Migration Act, which treated migration as an inalienable right.

Europe

Europe has become a major destination for international migrants. Immigrants are making up a continuously growing proportion of the European population. In 2014, about 1.9 million people moved to the EU-28 from non-member States. By January 2015, 19.8 million citizens of non-member countries and 34.3 million people born outside of the EU were living in the EU-28.²⁴, and an additional 18.5 million persons born in another EU country than the one currently residing in. In this context of a growing foreign-born population, which is now at about 10 per cent of the total European population, xenophobic attitudes against immigrants are generally perceived as having increased over the past decade across Europe.²⁵ In the last decade, many European countries have faced sizeable immigration inflows accompanied by high prevalence of negative sentiments toward immigrants among majority members of the host societies.²⁶ Major European countries with significant anti-immigration sentiment include Russia, Hungary, Poland, Czechia, Germany, France, Belgium and Italy. They are driven by concerns over security, cultural integration, and border control. Populist, right-wing parties in these nations have gained traction pushing for stricter immigration policies, including deportations and reduced asylum access. Across Europe, more than half of respondents in France, Italy and Germany believe legal migrants do not share their cultural values. While some Nordic countries²⁷ are generally more accepting, the overall European trend has shifted toward stricter, more restrictive policies.

There are underlying anti-immigrant sentiment in Russia, particularly, in societies undergoing a search for new national identity borders in post-socialist Russia.²⁸ The level of anti-immigrant attitudes among ethnic Russians (the majority population) is higher than among non-ethnic Russians (ethnic minority group), a sense of group position of ethnic majority. Russia has served as the primary destination for millions of migrant workers from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Following a major attack on Moscow's Crocus City Hall in March 2024—allegedly involving citizens from Tajikistan—anti-migrant sentiment in Russia has surged, leading to a severe, state-led crackdown on Central Asian laborers, including increased deportations, harassment, and police raids.²⁹ In 2024, approximately 2 million workers from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan were in Russia. Migrant numbers in Kazakhstan increased to 330,000 in 2025 from less than 200,000 annually before the crackdown. Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan) hosted 21,814 refugees, 99.3% of whom were from Afghanistan, as of mid-2023. The influx of Russians following the 2022 invasion of Ukraine led to increased, albeit mixed, anti-immigrant sentiment, with locals in some areas expressing resentment over rising living costs and housing, even as some governments sought to manage the new population. In post-socialist Russia, as a society undergoing the critical period of the reconsideration of national identity, the anti-immigrant attitudes of the ethnic majority group rely mostly on perceptions of collective (state) vulnerability, while the anti-immigrant attitudes of ethnic minority groups rely to a greater degree on individuals' vulnerable socioeconomic position, and conservative views and ideologies (i.e., self-interests). Key Aspects of Anti-Immigration Sentiment & Trends are discussed below:

- **Russia's Xenophobic Crackdown (2024–2025):** The March 2024 terrorist attack sparked intense anti-migrant drives, with thousands of Central Asians deported or denied entry. Russian authorities have tightened immigration rules, increased checks, and created a hostile environment for Central Asian migrants.
- **Economic Drivers:** In Russia, migrants are frequently blamed for economic challenges, lower wages, and crime. Despite this, the Russian economy remains heavily reliant on these workers.
- **Shift in Migration Destinations:** Due to increased hostility in Russia, many Central Asian workers are looking for alternatives. Kazakhstan has emerged as a significant regional labour market, with about 330,000 migrants working there in 2025.
- **Cultural and Social Tensions:** Anti-immigrant sentiment is fuelled by concerns over cultural assimilation, national identity, and perceived threats to social cohesion.
- **Intraregional Solidarity:** Central Asian governments are increasingly challenging Russia's treatment of their citizens, with some, like Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, standing up to the harsh policies.

Hungary, in Central Europe, maintains a strong anti-immigrant stance under its leadership. Anti-immigration sentiment here is extremely high, driven by government-led, xenophobic narratives that frame migrants as security, cultural, and economic threats. Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and the Fidesz party have successfully utilized anti-migrant rhetoric to boost electoral support, leading to restrictive border policies and, in some cases, the criminalization of aid to asylum seekers. The government consistently links immigration to terrorism and frames it as a defence of Christian national identity. Hungary has erected fences and created "transit zones" at its borders, restricting legal asylum access to only a few individuals daily. Since 2015, public concern over immigration increased from almost zero to over 30% of the population, with high levels of xenophobia. Beyond Fidesz, other political actors, such as the far-right "Our Homeland," have adopted similar exclusionary, anti-Muslim rhetoric. Despite intense hostile rhetoric, Hungary is largely a transit country with a very small immigrant

population . Asylum seekers are systematically detained, and in 2024, policies further restricted support for refugees. These sentiments have led to a deeply polarized environment where humanitarian assistance to migrants has been criminalized.

Anti-immigration sentiment in Poland, rising significantly in 2025, is driven by far-right political rhetoric, security concerns over border incidents and fears of economic strain, leading to increased hostility against refugees and migrant. Poland has seen a rise in anti-migrant rhetoric targeting both Middle Eastern and Ukrainian refugees. Despite, or because of, large numbers of Ukrainian refugees, many Poles feel that immigration threatens national culture, security, and jobs, prompting local governments to pass restrictive measures and supporting strict border controls against illegal migration. Key aspects of the current anti-immigration sentiment in Poland include Political Rhetoric, Security Concerns, Economic and Cultural Fears, Impact on Ukrainian Refugees, Rise of Vigilantism and EU Conflict. Right-wing figures, particularly from the Law and Justice (PiS) party, have capitalized on anti-migrant sentiment to win votes, often framing immigration as a "flood" of illegal, dangerous or culturally incompatible outsiders. The Polish government has intensified efforts to stop illegal migration, particularly on the border with Belarus. A significant portion of the population fears that migrants will drain public resources and take jobs, despite studies suggesting the contrary. There is also a strong sentiment towards maintaining a homogeneous national culture. While Poland initially welcomed millions of refugees from Ukraine, the prolonged presence of newcomers has contributed to a hardening of attitudes and a rise in xenophobic incidents, including verbal abuse, particularly as economic pressures increase. There is growing concern about the rise of volunteer anti-migrant patrols or "militias" on the border, which are seen as dangerous and a sign of weakening state control. Poland has consistently rejected EU-mandated, solidarity-based migration policies, such as the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum. These attitudes are particularly evident in the wake of the 2025 election campaigns, where anti-migrant, nationalist rhetoric has been widely used to influence public opinion.

The Czech Republic holds some of Europe's strongest anti-immigration sentiments, with 53% of citizens viewing immigration as making the country worse, despite low actual numbers of immigrants. Public opinion, often driven by fears of crime and economic strain, has fostered high support for restrictive measures, such as rejecting EU refugee quotas and favouring border closures. Key Aspects of Anti-Immigration Sentiment in Czechia cover Homogeneous Society High Opposition Rates, Misconceptions and Stereotypes, Political Discourse ,The 2015 Refugee Crisis, Media and Disinformation. A deeply rooted, highly homogeneous society contributes to resistance against cultural change. Surveys frequently show that around two-thirds of Czechs oppose accepting migrants from non-European or, specifically, poorer/war-torn countries .Despite having a relatively low migrant population compared to Western Europe, many citizens perceive immigrants as a threat to security (52%) and a burden on the welfare system (65%).Anti-immigration rhetoric is common in political debates, with both populist (e.g., Freedom and Direct Democracy) and, at times, mainstream parties adopting restrictive stances to appeal to voters. This event solidified negative attitudes, with a 2015 survey showing 69% of people opposed accepting refugees from the Middle East or North Africa. While consistently negative, some data suggests a gradual, slow improvement in attitudes regarding foreigners in general, declining from 73% in 2003 to 50% in 2022 considering their presence a problem. Negative media coverage, including disinformation, significantly shapes public opinion. While countries like Poland have shown slight shifts in public opinion, the Czech Republic remains among the most restrictive regarding immigration and integration policies. Despite the generally hostile sentiment, some moments, such as the 2015 crisis, saw temporary outbursts of public solidarity before being overtaken by political and societal resistance.

Germany in the west has experienced increasing hostility, with 53% of the public supporting policies that would allow no new migrants, and a rise in support for Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), a far-right, right-wing populist, national conservative and nationalist political party in Germany. Anti-immigration sentiment in Germany has intensified, driven by economic stagnation, concerns over security, and the rise of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party. The AfD, now a major opposition force, advocates for strict immigration limits and "remigration," significantly influencing mainstream political discourse towards more restrictive policies, including increased border controls and debated deportation plans. Key aspects of anti-immigration sentiments include Political Shift, Economic Factors, Social Impact, Hostile Environment and Public Opinion. The AfD's popularity, often polling around 20%, has pressured mainstream parties to adopt tougher stances on immigration, including stricter asylum rules and increased border controls. Rising hostility is linked to the perception that migrants strain social services and contribute to economic pressures, despite the economic necessity of labour migration. The discourse often focuses on cultural concerns, particularly regarding immigration from Muslim-majority countries, with debates heavily influenced by arguments against "welfare tourism". Anti-immigrant rhetoric has led to increased discrimination and uncertainty for immigrants, with some reports noting a rise in hostility, even in regions where they significantly contribute to the economy. While there is a strong call for stricter immigration policies and integration, public opinion is complex and often mixed on the overall impact of immigration. As of early 2026, these issues remain central to the German political landscape, shaping both national policy and public debate.

France exhibits strong anti-immigration sentiment, with 51% of citizens supporting a halt to new migration. Driven by concerns over cultural integration, national identity and security. The immigrants in France are more likely to be perceived as socioeconomic, cultural and safety threats by persons who experience economic hardship, show low levels of social attachment, are not concerned with the welfare and interests of others, live in ethnically homogenous communities, tend to distance themselves at work and in the family from immigrants belonging to ethnic minority groups, overestimate the size of the immigrant population in the country, are politically conservative, are females, and belong to younger or older cohorts. At the region level, while employment effects on public attitudes are negligible, the natives' aggregated personal economic circumstances appear to affect the residents' sentiments toward immigrants, as economic theories of attitude formation would predict. In support of one of the contact theory's versions, larger the proportion of foreign-born residents in a region, less intense anti-immigrant sentiments are.³⁰ Driven by the far-right National Rally, 70% or more of citizens supported stricter 2024 immigration laws, reflecting deep anxiety about changing demographics and, in 2024, a 10% increase in xenophobic offenses. Key aspects of this trend include Cultural and Security Concerns, Political Shift, Public Opinion and Discrimination. Many in France believe immigrants do not integrate well, with anxieties rooted in security, particularly after 2015-16 terror attacks, and a perceived loss of national identity. Far-right rhetoric has become normalized, influencing mainstream politics and driving tougher legislation on family reunification and residency. While attitudes temporarily improved between 2014 and 2018, they have stabilized at a relatively negative level compared to other European nations. There is documented evidence of discrimination against immigrants in the labour market, with non-European origin individuals facing a 40% lower chance of securing job interviews. Recent measures have tightened restrictions on foreign students and family, reflecting a broader European trend of restrictionism policies.

Anti-immigrant sentiments in Belgium are currently shaped by a combination of political shifts, economic concerns and perceived cultural threats. While the overall level of sentiment is near the Western European average, it is highly polarized across Belgium's linguistically distinct regions, particularly in Flanders. The factors that fuel these attitudes are identified as Perception vs. Reality, Economic Competition and Cultural Distance. Belgians frequently overestimate the size of the immigrant population. With some speculation about how anti-immigrant sentiments are created in areas with a very low levels of ethnic diversity, and what this implies for the electoral potential of radical-right parties.³¹ Most of the literature suggests a positive relationship between immigrant concentration and anti-immigrant sentiments.³² Studies show that people who perceive a larger migrant presence tend to be more hostile, regardless of the actual number of immigrants in their local community. Concerns that migrants "benefit from social services" without contributing equally are a recurring theme, occasionally leading to violent protests in cities like Brussels. Specific groups, particularly Muslim immigrants, are often cast as culturally incompatible with Western norms, making them primary targets of "ethnoracist exclusion". As of early 2026, Belgium has seen a shift toward more restrictive measures. A new federal government, led by the Flemish nationalist New Flemish Alliance (N-VA), has introduced major reforms aimed at tightening the asylum system.

Italy in Southern Europe has taken a hard-line approach, with 51% of the public supporting reduced migration. Anti-immigration sentiment in Italy, driven by concerns over national identity, economic impact and security, are often amplified by right-wing political rhetoric. The coalition government, led by Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, has implemented restrictive policies, including increased deportations and attempts to curb sea arrivals. Key Aspects of Anti-Immigration Sentiment include Political Rhetoric, Public Perception, Impact the 2015 refugee crisis, Policy, Ethnic Replacement Theory, Economic Anxiety, Cultural Security, Rise of Populism, High unemployment and economic downturns. Right-wing parties, specifically Lega and Fratelli d'Italia, have built strong platforms on protecting Italian culture and national identity from outside threats. A large portion of the population associates immigration with increased crime, economic burden and threats to cultural identity. The 2015 refugee crisis and subsequent sea arrivals significantly worsened negative sentiment, which was further amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Meloni government has focused on curbing illegal immigration, with measures like the Piantadosi decree³³ and international deals, such as with Albania, to process migrants outside Italy. Some politicians have promoted the idea that immigration is an "ethnic substitution" designed to replace Italians. All these have fuelled the perception that immigrants are a burden on the state and economy. Fears that immigrants, particularly from Africa and the Middle East, will alter Italy's predominantly Catholic, traditional culture. Anti-establishment and Euro-sceptical parties have utilized anti-immigration sentiment to gain power, often positioning themselves against European Union policies on migration.

Beneath its long-cultivated image as a progressive, humane and orderly society built on universal healthcare, Denmark has in recent years become one of Europe's most restrictive states on immigration and asylum. Denmark has adopted some of Europe's strictest immigration policies, with anti-immigrant sentiment spanning the political spectrum, resulting in a "zero-asylum" approach and mandatory, rapid assimilation. Policies include temporary

resident permits, strict family reunification, and the controversial "ghetto" laws to reduce non-Western populations. Key aspects of Denmark's anti-immigration, pro-assimilation stance include Political Consensus, Stringent Policies, Targeted Demographics, "Ghetto" Policies and Public Opinion. Once a liberal, open country, Denmark's mainstream parties, including the centre-left Social Democrats, have embraced tough anti-immigration policies, arguing that high immigration threatens the welfare state and cultural cohesion. Policies focus on deterrence, including the 2016 "jewellery law"³⁴ (allowing police to seize valuables from asylum seekers), reducing asylum, and making residency, family reunions, and permanent status, such as the 8-year wait, exceptionally difficult. Policies particularly impact Muslims and non-Western immigrants. Research indicates this environment has created significant, long-lasting "minority stress," anxiety, and depression among ethnic minorities due to a feeling of being viewed as unwanted. While a significant portion of Danes support strict controls, nearly half still believe immigration has made Denmark better. However, the political consensus is aimed at limiting multiculturalism and protecting a homogenous society. Denmark's approach is increasingly seen as a model by other European nations seeking to tighten their own asylum regulations.

Across the pond, in the United Kingdom, the supposedly progressive Labour government seems eager to follow the Danish example. Under pressure from the far right and Reform UK's enduring rise in the polls, Prime Minister Keir Starmer has warned that the UK risks becoming an island of strangers unless immigration is sharply reduced, and has promised that his government's reforms will ensure that migration will fall. Despite a 2022 survey showing relatively high tolerance, 2024–2025 saw significant unrest. In 2025, persistent anti-migrant protests occurred in several cities, including Bristol, Birmingham, and Aberdeen, with demonstrators framing asylum seekers as threats to safety and demanding to "send them home". Anti-immigration sentiment has intensified in the UK, with 70% of surveyed people in early 2025 believing immigration rates were too high. Driven by economic anxiety and political discourse, this has led to increased anti-migrant protests, violence and a rise in racially motivated hate crimes. Key Aspects of Anti-Immigration Sentiments in the UK may be highlighted as Rise in Sentiment and Protest, Impact of Rhetoric and Media, Racially Motivated Attacks. Following a period of relative stability, concern over immigration peaked in 2024, becoming a top issue for voters. This materialized in widespread, often violent protests targeting asylum seekers in hotels during 2024 and 2025. Experts suggest that negative framing in political discourse and media, which often links migration to crime and illegality, has increased, particularly between 2019 and 2024. The increase in anti-immigrant sentiment has correlated with a rise in racist abuse and hate crimes targeting minority communities, including attacks on Muslims and Sikhs. Major Drivers of Sentiment are Economic Strain, Concerns over Illegal Migration and Online Disinformation. The cost-of-living crisis and pressure on public services have fuelled anti-migrant feelings. Far-right groups have used social media to stoke tensions, with anti-migrant posts increasing by over 90% from 2023 to 2024.

Thus, almost half of Europeans mention immigration as the issue of greatest concern, well ahead of terrorism and the economy.³⁵ Although there is no unified theory for public attitudes and opinion on immigration, the literature presents a number of factors potentially driving anti-immigrant sentiments³⁶. Economic theories for instance, explain opposition to incoming migrants to be shaped by fears about labour market competition³⁷ and a growing fiscal burden on public services³⁸. Economists anticipate that natives are more likely to oppose immigrants with similar skills and support inflows of those with skill endowments that complement their own³⁹. Economic theory suggests that if governments adjust tax rates to balance their budgets (or adjust per capita welfare benefits while trying to keep tax rates constant), high-income earners are economically more negatively affected by inflows of unskilled immigrants than low-income earners and, therefore, are expected to be more opposed to (in favour of) low-skilled immigrant inflows⁴⁰. Non-economic explanations emphasize socio-cultural factors, mainly reflecting nativist mind-sets and a high degree of national identification with a strong desire for ethnically homogeneous societies. Hostility to newcomers has been associated with pessimistic evaluations of the current and future state of the economy, and feelings of alienation from mainstream social and political institutions⁴¹; racial or cultural prejudice⁴²; beliefs about the size of the immigrant population, cultural and national identities, and a general disposition to trust in other people⁴³; threats to in-group resources and threats to the shared customs and traditions of the society⁴⁴; perceived cultural threats especially with regard to the English language⁴⁵; or stereotypical beliefs about the work ethic and intelligence of other groups⁴⁶. Immigration attitudes vary significantly across European regions⁴⁷, which still exist even after controlling for socio-economic differences⁴⁸. These spatial patterns however seem to change over time. Anti-immigration sentiments are part of a spatial-dynamic diffusion and clustering process by which otherwise similar people living in different European regions tend to vary greatly in their attitudes. In terms of Tobler's first law of geography⁴⁹ – that (average) immigrant attitudes of people living in one European region are more influenced by attitudes in nearby regions than those in more distant ones – even if nearby regions are on different sides of country borders. Perceptions and beliefs that immigrants pose a threat to the economic, cultural and social status quo and future prospects of the majority population have, reportedly, been playing a critical role across Europe over the past decade. European societies and institutions seem to be challenged by an increasing trend in immigration, but even more by the broadening electoral support for far right and populist parties across Europe. Drawing upon data from seven rounds (2002-2014) of the European Social

Survey (ESS), an empirical investigation of the drivers discovers inter-regional differences and variation in attitudes towards three different types of immigrants⁵⁰: those of the same race or ethnicity, different race or ethnicity, or from poorer countries outside Europe. The people who have a more marked interest in politics and a greater tendency to trust others appear associated with more tolerant attitudes towards immigrants. People who attribute greater importance to living in safe and secure surroundings and having domicile in rural areas are found to be associated with growing hostility towards further immigrant flows. There exists a significant spatial connectivity of anti-immigrant attitudes at sub-national levels, with spatially more proximate regions exhibiting greater similarity in anti-immigrant attitudes than more distant regions. People's attitudes about immigration are influenced by the local and regional environment, which is the people they are surrounded by and are exposed to. This implies, in accordance with Tobler's first law of and in the spirit of Latané's social impact theory⁵¹, that immigrant attitudes in one region are more influenced by respective attitudes in nearby regions than to those of more distant ones. The identification of a spatially dependent process in the diffusion and clustering of anti-immigrant attitudes has significant bearing for understanding the rise and fall of populist movements in Europe and changing electoral support for xenophobic parties across European regions over time. Clustering of populations with anti-immigrant attitudes however may not only be influenced by xenophobic populations living in nearby regions or the presence of factors that facilitate anti-immigrant attitudes such as economic hardship or isolated social environment, migration or 'sorting' processes themselves. People with more liberal attitudes may move to regions with a greater presence of like-minded others, while those with more nativist attitudes may do the same. This may lead, at least to some extent and only in the long term, to a 'population re-sorting' along attitudinal categories creating spatially more homogenous clusters of anti-immigrant populations.

Oceania

Anti-immigration sentiment in Oceania is most prominent in Australia. Here, it is largely driven by concerns over high net overseas migration, which peaked at 433,000 in 2022 and prompted protests in 2025-2026. Other areas experiencing tension include New Zealand, New Caledonia, Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea.

Australia experiences strong republic debate regarding high migration levels. Political, media and social landscapes have featured anti-asylum seeker sentiments, often portray arrivals as a threat. Recent 2025 protests also occurred in cities like Sydney and Melbourne. The Sentiments here are influenced by various Economic and Socio-Cultural concerns. These concerns are regarding the pressure of immigrants on housing, public infrastructure and the impact of rapid population growth on national identity. Anti-foreigner sentiments often target specific migrant groups rather than general immigrants. While public opinion is mixed, significant segments support strict border control, particularly against unauthorized arrivals. Anti-immigration policies in the region often focus on restricting arrivals to manage population pressure, infrastructure strain and national security. Australia has a history of immigration policies that were geographically and racially selective (e.g., the "White Australia" policy⁵²). In recent times, while an official policy of multiculturalism is in place, recurring anti-immigration sentiments have gained political momentum. Governments have tried to use migration policy to influence geographical distribution, offering incentives for migrants to settle in regional areas to ease urban pressure and address specific regional needs. Anti-immigration sentiments in Australia have significant geographical implications, primarily by influencing population distribution, exacerbating urban-regional divides, affecting regional development and creating localized social and cultural tensions in urban centres. Anti-immigration sentiments often call for reduced overall migration, which counter-intuitively exacerbates the concentration of the existing population in major cities as Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. This is because migrants, who are a significant driver of national population growth, tend to cluster in these urban economic hubs. A reduction in the migrant inflow, therefore, does little to address existing urban congestion but can hinder development in regional areas. Exacerbation of Urban-Regional Divide is occurring through regional skill shortages, housing and infrastructure pressure and demographic aging. Regional Australia often suffers from skill and labour shortages, which are typically filled by migrant workers. Anti-immigration policies or reduced migration levels would likely intensify these shortages, hampering regional economic activity and development. While a common concern, anti-immigration policies might actually worsen housing affordability in the long run. Economic modelling suggests that slashing migration would reduce the number of construction workers available to build homes, potentially leading to higher property prices than under current migration settings. Immigration helps to lower the average age of Australia's population because migrants are typically younger than the resident population. Restricting immigration could accelerate the aging of the population, particularly in regional areas where younger local populations are already migrating to cities for opportunities. Localized social and cultural tensions are the consequences of Urban Enclaves, Social Cohesion and political support. Anti-immigration sentiment has led to the formation of ethnic enclaves in cities as migrant groups seek community and safety. While these can provide social cohesion within the group, critics argue they might reduce interaction with the broader community. Recent anti-immigration rallies, which have occurred in major cities like Sydney and Melbourne and specifically targeted certain migrant groups (such as the Indian community), highlight these localized social tensions and divisions. Anti-immigration attitudes have been weaponized by right-wing populist

parties and groups, which can see a geographical clustering of political support in specific regions or electorates. This influences political landscapes and policy decisions at both state and federal levels. In essence, anti-immigration sentiment has a real-world impact on the spatial dynamics of Australia, creating potential development roadblocks in regional areas and heightening social friction in urban centres.

Anti-immigration sentiment in New Zealand, while not dominant, often surges during high migration periods, driven by concerns over housing, infrastructure pressure and job competition. While most residents hold positive views on the economic and cultural impact of migration, specific groups from Asia, the Pacific Islands, and refugees have historically faced discrimination. Key aspects of anti-immigration sentiment include Economic and Social Drivers, Targeted Groups, Political and Social Incidents and "Us vs Them" Dynamics. Concerns frequently focus on the impact of migration on housing affordability, with "Chiwick" (a nickname for Auckland suburb Howick) highlighting anxiety over foreign property investment. Asian and Pacific Island migrants have historically faced discrimination, including the "white New Zealand" policy⁵³ before the 1980s and more recent anti-Asian sentiment. Anti-immigrant groups have occasionally disrupted cultural events, such as the 2025 disruption of a Sikh parade in Auckland. Political rhetoric, particularly from the New Zealand First party, has historically targeted high immigration levels. Sentiments sometimes involve anti-Asian rhetoric, such as accusations or fears of losing cultural identity. Despite these sentiments, many New Zealanders value the diversity brought by migrants, and overt anti-immigration movements are relatively rare.

Asia

Driven by concerns over cultural homogeneity, economic security and public safety, several Asian nations exhibit significant anti-immigration sentiments. International migrations are especially widespread in South and Southeast Asia, with most of the countries being large sources of emigration. Part of these emigrations is directed to the countries outside the region, to destinations in the Global North and the Middle East, while another part is funnelled to receiving countries in Southeast Asia.⁵⁴ Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore are the three largest Southeast Asian receiving countries.⁵⁵ These three countries host a total of more than 10 million migrants, primarily from South and Southeast Asia. Among others, the anti-immigration sentiments are also rising in Central Asia, Japan, South Korea, China and India. These attitudes are often reflected in strict immigration policies, with populist, far-right or nationalist rhetoric gaining traction in countries facing demographic pressures. This sentiment is often intensified by nationalist political movements, social media and concerns over maintaining homogeneous social cohesion. People's apprehension regarding competition for jobs generate negative attitudes. While many Asian nations continue to rely on foreign labour, the influx of migrants—particularly following pandemic restrictions—fuel public resentment. Men, elderly people and people with lower education often tend to be more negative towards immigrants than women, younger and more educated individuals.⁵⁶ Anti-immigration sentiment in Central Asia is heavily tied to its complex, symbiotic, and often tense relationship with Russia. As discussed earlier, the most significant anti-immigration sentiment affecting Central Asia is directed at them by Russian society and authorities, forcing a major shift in labour migration patterns within the region.

Among the receiving countries, anti-immigration sentiments in Singapore are primarily driven by economic anxiety, competition for jobs and pressure on public infrastructure. Roughly 7 in 10 citizens support stricter limits on foreign labour, with concerns often manifested as social media backlash and the "othering" of migrants, blaming them for overcrowding and higher costs of living. Key Aspects of Anti-Immigration Sentiment, therefore, are economic competition & job security, Infrastructure strain, cultural identity concerns, social media & public discourse and demographic factors. A significant portion of the population perceives foreign talent as a threat to their livelihood, particularly during economic downturns. This is often framed as a competition for high-skilled jobs. Foreigners are often scapegoated for overcrowding in public transportation, increased demand for housing and longer queues for public services. There is a perception that immigrants do not integrate well, causing a dilution of national identity. Anti-immigrant sentiment is frequently expressed online, with some users reframing these sentiments as a form of marginalization, claiming Singaporeans are becoming "second-class citizens". While high-skilled foreign talent is necessary to fill skill gaps, their presence is often viewed with scepticism, especially when they compete with local workers. These sentiments present a challenge to the government.

Anti-immigration sentiment in Malaysia is a growing concern, driven by xenophobia directed at foreign workers. Sentiment is frequently aimed at migrant workers from South and Southeast Asia, particularly from Bangladesh and Indonesia, as well as refugees and undocumented migrants. These attitudes are often linked to concerns over economic competition, security and cultural differences. Key aspects of anti-immigration sentiment in Malaysia include targeted groups, economic impact, impact on vulnerable groups and regional differences. Concerns often relate to the economic impact of foreign labour, including competition for jobs and pressure on social services, as well as, in some cases, perceived cultural threats. Refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented immigrants face particular scrutiny and discrimination. These sentiments often paradoxically coexist with the economic need for

foreign workers to address aging populations and shrinking labour forces. Such sentiments are observed to be more prevalent in Peninsular Malaysia compared to East Malaysia. These sentiments contribute to a challenging environment for foreign workers and migrants in the country. Similar to Singapore, surveys indicate a preference for strict immigration policies, often tied to social, economic or security concerns.

Anti-immigration sentiment in Thailand is on the rise, driven by economic stagnation, competition for jobs and cultural anxieties, particularly regarding migrants from Myanmar. Over 70% of surveyed Thais in some studies associated migrants with higher crime rates and threats to local culture. These sentiments often fuel calls for stricter, more nationalistic labour policies. Key factors are related to, for instance, economic drivers & job competition, social & cultural perceptions and anti-Myanmar sentiment. With over 3 million migrants, mainly from Myanmar, many Thais believe they are losing jobs and that immigrants, including those from Vietnam, should be restricted to menial labour. A significant portion of the public views migrants as threats to Thai culture, heritage and national security, often preferring laborers over asylum-seekers. Due to the surge in refugees fleeing the post-2021 Myanmar coup, anti-immigrant rhetoric has intensified, with some social media discourse portraying Myanmar nationals as "swallowing up" Thailand. Although migrant labour is essential for sectors like fishing and construction, authorities periodically launch crackdowns on illegal workers in response to public complaints. The long-standing Malay Muslim insurgency in southern Thailand has also heightened negative sentiment toward outsiders, especially in that region. Despite these negative sentiments, the locals with more frequent interaction with immigrants tend to have slightly more positive attitudes.

The anti-foreigner sentiment in Japan is a complex mix of genuine economic concerns, cultural identity, political opportunism and misinformation, creating a challenging environment for integrating a growing foreign workforce. Japan faces a severe labour shortage and aging population, making foreign workers essential for economic sustainability. Japan has historically maintained restrictive immigration policies, viewing itself less as a "country of immigration". The findings demonstrate⁵⁷ that as immigration increases in Japanese prefectures and municipalities, residents become increasingly reluctant toward immigration. Rising concern exists regarding foreign residents, with 68% believing they worsen public safety and 63% citing cultural clashes. Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi has proposed stricter immigration policies. Despite labour shortages due to aging populations, 59% of Japanese, oppose accepting more foreign workers. Nationalism and anti-foreigner sentiment have grown, with nationalist parties like Sanseito gaining traction by blaming the "foreigner problem" for economic struggles and falling wages, despite the country's need for foreign labour to address a shrinking workforce. There were also reports of misinformation fuelling anger against foreign residents. Polls indicate 56% of people want fewer immigrants, believing they decrease safety. Right-leaning politicians, such as those associated with the Sanseito party, are capitalizing on this. Despite needing foreign workers to prevent economic stagnation, public sentiment became more volatile due to fears regarding social cohesion and security. Misinformation on social media, including false reports of a surge in immigrants, led to protests and the cancellation of some, albeit limited, foreign worker exchange programs. The rise of nationalist parties, such as Sanseito, has been accompanied by increased, anti-foreigner rhetoric and criticism, of the country's growing foreign population. Despite labour shortages, Japan maintains highly restrictive immigration policies. Growing public unease, exacerbated by over-tourism and economic stagnation, has fuelled support for far-right parties advocating "Japanese first" platforms. Anti-foreigner sentiment in Japan is leading to concerns about foreigners straining resources and displacing Japanese workers, despite Japan's significant need for foreign labour due to an aging population. This sentiment clashes with the reality of a small immigrant population (around 3%) and a cultural emphasis on homogeneity, creating tension where deep-seated prejudices surface, often amplified by media and political rhetoric that portrays foreigners negatively, even as officials grapple with balancing economic needs with public perception. The key Drivers of Anti-Foreigner Sentiment are Far-Right politics, economic anxiety, cultural homogeneity and social media. Parties like the Sanseito party, promoting "Japan First" messages, link foreign workers to economic problems and social decay. Concerns that foreign workers take jobs or burden social welfare systems (healthcare, housing) are common, despite experts suggesting Japan needs millions more workers. A strong belief in Japan's ethnic homogeneity creates social pressure and resistance to large-scale immigration. The rise in sentiment has forced the ruling LDP(Local Democratic Party) to consider stricter immigration rules, despite economic imperatives.

Similar to what is happening in Japan, the anti-immigration sentiment is rising, despite a growing need for labour in South Korea, as well. It is due to deep-seated beliefs in key aspects like ethnic homogeneity, economic concerns, discrimination & integration, refugee opposition, targeted groups and generational shift. The foundational belief in a single, homogeneous nation makes integration difficult for outsiders, leading to an "us vs them" mentality. There is significant anxiety regarding job competition and the use of public resources, with 92.8% of residents in one Seoul district supporting prioritizing jobs for citizens. The foreign residents report experiencing discrimination, particularly regarding language skills or nationality. Discrimination is often felt in housing and daily life, as South Korea lacks comprehensive anti-discrimination laws. Anti-refugee sentiments have spiked, notably during the 2018 Yemeni refugee crisis⁵⁸, where a significant portion of the population opposed accepting

refugees, fearing for public safety and cultural disruption. Concerns focus on the economic burden of supporting immigrants and the impact on local culture. A recent poll showed 77% of respondents believe immigration should be reduced, with 40% linking immigrants to higher crime. Despite these sentiments, the foreign-born population reached 5.3% in 2025, forcing a slow, reluctant, yet ongoing transition toward a more multicultural society.

In concordance with many other Asian countries, China is also sailing the same boat. Here, the anti-immigration sentiment is driven by economic anxiety, popular nationalism and xenophobia, despite a shrinking population and labour shortages. Significant turning points include, for instance, 2020 Permanent Residency Reform Controversy, Anti-Indian Sentiment (2025) and COVID-19 Pandemic. A draft regulation to ease permanent residency ("Green Card") requirements sparked an unprecedented online outcry. Nationalists argued it was an attack on Han ethnic identity and an unnecessary "population policy." Due to this backlash, the proposal was largely shelved. Recent reports highlight an uptick in extreme anti-Indian rhetoric on platforms like Douyin, fuelled by border tensions and misinformation about "mass migrations" that do not exist in reality. The pandemic intensified "everyday othering" and racialization of foreigners, who were portrayed as public health threats. The region saw a surge in anti-immigrant sentiment driven by the influx of Russian citizens fleeing the war and conscription. This created tension, as locals felt the arrivals were driving up inflation and competing for jobs and housing. Online nationalists frequently protest potential immigration policies, stereotyping foreigners and accusing them of taking jobs. While elite/high-educated groups show rising anti-immigrant views, public sentiment remains complex, often balancing nationalism with some economic pragmatism. Key Drivers are Nationalism & Economic Uncertainty, Targeted Xenophobia, Anti-Foreigner Sentiment in 2025, Cultural Nationalism, Nationalist Identity & Social Media, Perceived "Privileged Treatment" and Economic Anxiety. Rising anti-immigrant sentiment is linked to post-pandemic economic stagnation and high unemployment, which leads to viewing foreigners as competition. Recent trends show increased hostility towards specific groups, including racist comments regarding Indian immigrants. Plans for a "K visa" program to attract young foreign scientific talent faced severe backlash on social media, with nationalists claiming foreigners would overwhelm China. The popular online discourse often views foreign residents through a lens of racial purity or national superiority. Anti-immigrant sentiment is more pronounced in areas outside major international cities, where people may feel less personal benefit from immigration. While younger people in some areas (e.g., Shanghai) can be more welcoming, the overall trend is toward higher resistance to foreign migrants. Residence permits for foreigners in China have fallen, and the path to citizenship is practically non-existent. Foreigners are often used as scapegoats during economic downturns, particularly in discussions surrounding job scarcity. Online discourse frequently links a Han-centric national identity to the preservation of social stability. "Cyber-racism" and ethnonationalist rhetoric often target specific groups, notably African and, more recently, Indian migrants. A significant portion of the public believes foreign nationals receive better treatment than locals, such as scholarships for international students or tax breaks for foreign professionals. This perception has led to a "populist" backlash against any perceived leniency in immigration rules. As China's economy has slowed, some citizens view immigrants as competitors for limited jobs and social resources, despite the country's actual foreign-born population remaining extremely small. **Anti-immigration sentiment has surfaced prominently** in recent years, particularly in digital spaces and response to specific policy proposals. This sentiment is often driven by a mix of nationalist identity, economic anxiety, and perceptions of "foreigner privilege".

Lastly, anti-immigration sentiment in India is driven by fears of economic strain, cultural insecurity and national security threats, often manifesting in policies like the CAA and Assam's NRC⁵⁹ that disproportionately target undocumented Muslim migrants. These sentiments are fuelled by claims of millions of illegal immigrants, particularly from Bangladesh. Key aspects of anti-immigration sentiment in India include, for instance, Assam & Citizen Policies, Economic Anxiety, Security Concerns and Political Populism. The National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam and the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) have created a climate of fear, specifically targeting Bengali-speaking Muslims, while protecting others, resulting in significant human rights concerns. Migrants are often viewed as a burden on infrastructure (housing, education, healthcare) and competitors for limited jobs in the informal sector, leading to calls for stricter immigration control. Anti-immigrant rhetoric often frames foreigners as threats to national security, accusing them of involvement in trafficking or anti-national activities. Right-wing populist narratives sometimes weaponize anti-immigrant sentiment to consolidate voter bases by highlighting the "otherness" of specific migrant groups. Some debate the economic impact of migration, asserting that it can actually boost GDP, the prevailing political sentiment in India is increasingly focused on identifying and removing undocumented individuals.

Thus, the anti-immigration and anti-foreigner sentiments in Asia are largely driven by economic anxieties, post-pandemic recovery pressures, and rising nationalism, particularly in countries navigating high inflation, housing shortages, and demographic shifts. The Contextual Factors incorporate demographic pressure, Online Influence, Shift in Perspective, Economic Strain, Nationalist Politics, Cultural Friction, Cultural & Social Cohesion, Safety

& Crime Concerns, Economic Anxiety, National Identity & Nationalism, Demographic Paradox, Economic Strain, Cultural Homogeneity and Misinformation. While many of the Asian nations have low birth rates, the influx of foreign workers is viewed with suspicion rather than as a solution. Anti-foreigner content on social media, sometimes generated by AI, contributes to the rise in xenophobia. There is a notable, rapid shift from welcoming, or at least ignoring, immigration to active, mainstream opposition in some countries. High inflation and cost-of-living increases, often post-pandemic, led citizens to blame immigrants for job competition and housing shortages. There is rise of political rhetoric focused on "natives first" policies. Concerns about the loss of national identity and cultural uniformity can be widely observed. In Japan, for instance, a strong emphasis on homogeneity leads to concerns that immigrants might disrupt social norms and cohesion. In Japan and South Korea, significant portions of the population believe that increased foreign residents lead to higher crime rates and reduced public safety. In Southeast Asia (Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand), negative attitudes are strongly linked to fears of competition for jobs and resources. Far-right or nationalist politicians in Japan have used anti-foreigner sentiment to gain support, emphasizing the preservation of a traditional, non-diverse society. Despite aging populations and labour shortages, nations like Japan and South Korea are reluctant to embrace high levels of immigration, leading to a "paradox" where foreign labour is needed but unwanted. Rising inflation and post-pandemic economic pressures made populations more prone to viewing immigrants as competitors for limited jobs and housing. In nations like Japan and South Korea, ethnic nationalism and a strong preference for social homogeneity continued to fuel opposition to large-scale immigration, even when faced with severe labour shortages. Social media played a major role in amplifying fears, often spreading disinformation about immigration levels, which was utilized by right-wing or populist political actors to gain support.

Africa

Outside the Western world, xenophobia is also on the rise in Africa, besides Asia. Anti-African sentiment or Afrophobia is prejudice, discrimination, or racism towards people of the African diaspora. Prejudice against Africans and people of African descent dates back to ancient history, although it was especially prominent during the Atlantic slave trade, the trans-Saharan slave trade, the Indian Ocean slave trade, the Red Sea slave trade, and the colonial period. Under the pretense of white supremacy, Africans were often portrayed by Europeans as uncivilized and primitive. Due to the use of oral tradition, and subsequent lack of written histories in most African cultures, African people were portrayed as having no history at all, despite having a long, complex, and varied history.⁶⁰In recent years, there has been a rise in Acrophobic hate speech and violence in Europe and the United States. This has been attributed to a number of factors, including the growth of the African diaspora in these regions, the increase in refugees and migrants from Africa, and the rise of far-right and populist political parties.⁶¹Anti-immigration sentiments in Africa are most prominent in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, with South Africa exhibiting the highest levels, driven by groups like *Operation Dudula* targeting foreign nationals. Key Findings on Anti-Immigrant Sentiment state that While South Africa is the epi-centre, other nations like Kenya, Libya, Tunisia, Namibia, Botswana and Ghana also show high levels of opposition to immigration. It is driven by high unemployment, economic scarcity, and political scapegoating of foreign nationals.

South Africa shows the harshest anti-immigrant sentiment, with 21% favouring a complete ban on foreign entry and 64% favouring strict limitations. The vigilante group *Operation Dudula* actively targets migrants, blocking access to public healthcare and threatening to restrict school access. Xenophobia targeting migrants from other African countries has been a constant feature of life and politics in post-apartheid South Africa. Xenophobic sentiment has been on the rise with many immigrants experiencing violence and hostility, as the state has often used anti-migrant politics as a tool of governance. A survey of Southern African Development Community (SADC) members indicated that South Africans hold some of the harshest anti-immigrant views, with significant percentages favouring a complete ban or strict limitations on foreign entry. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the government systematically overlooked migrant communities, excluding many from relief programmes and framing protection of South Africans as the priority. The state also constructed a 40-kilometre fence along the border with Zimbabwe to block undocumented persons. South Africa has also seen the rise of explicitly anti-immigrant mobilisation. The 'Put South Africans First' movement, a coalition of civil society groups advocating the mass deportation of African migrants, organised a march to the Nigerian and Zimbabwean embassies on September 23, 2020, claiming that foreigners contribute to South Africa's social ills such as drugs, human trafficking and child abductions. The vigilante group *Operation Dudula* emerged from this movement in 2021. The group is better known for calling for mass deportations, blocking migrants from accessing hospitals and clinics, and raiding or shutting down foreign-owned businesses.

Anti-immigration sentiment in Kenya is primarily driven by security concerns regarding regional instability, economic anxiety over jobs, and pressure on resources, particularly targeting Somali refugees. While the government publicly supports refugee inclusion, it often employs harsh domestic policies, including, for example, forced encampment and crackdowns on undocumented workers. Key Aspects of Anti-Immigration Sentiment in

Kenya concern Security Threats, Economic Pressures, Government Action, Targeted Crackdowns, Media and Social Narratives. The rise in anti-migrant sentiment is deeply linked to fear of terrorism, with officials often associating refugees—particularly from Somalia—with *Al-Shabaab*, a militant group based on Somalia. Citizens have expressed concerns that immigrants, including refugees, negatively impact the economy, contributing to higher, for example, housing costs and increased competition in the labour market. Despite international commitments, the Kenyan government has taken a hard line approach, such as threatening to close refugee camps (e.g., Dadaab) and forcing refugees to stay in designated areas. Operations targeting illegal immigrants and refugees in urban areas like Nairobi have led to arrests and deportations, which human rights groups warn risk increasing xenophobia. Negative stereotypes, often highlighting migrants as threats to national security, are frequently promoted, creating an environment that fuels xenophobic attitudes. These sentiments, fuelled by security fears, create significant challenges for, for example, the integration and protection of refugees within Kenya.

Europe-bound migrants in Libya face horrific levels of violence and abuse. They are subjected to extreme and often deadly conditions including arbitrary detention, extortion and violence. According to Amnesty International, they are subjected to prolonged arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, torture, rape, unlawful killings, extortion and forced labour. These abuses occur within a system effectively underwritten by European governments, which have funnelled funding, training and equipment to Libyan coastguard units tasked with intercepting migrants before they reach international waters. Keen to stem the flow of migrants across the Mediterranean, European Union states have outsourced border control to Libya despite knowing the consequences, supporting the authorities' ability to continue with measures the United Nations says could very likely amount to crimes against humanity.

Further west, in Tunisia, Black African migrants have faced sporadic violence for years. In early 2023, President Kais Saied claimed there was a criminal plan to change Tunisia's demographic makeup through irregular migration, turns it into a purely African country that has no affiliation to the Arab and Islamic nations. Anti-immigration remarks have triggered a surge in mob attacks on Black migrants, students and asylum seekers. There was also an increase in arrests and the police appeared to be targeting Black African foreigners based on their appearance. Those detained included undocumented migrants, registered refugees and asylum seekers, as well as migrants with valid credentials, a stark demonstration of how state practices can shift once xenophobia is given political sanction.

Among other countries, Namibia, Botswana and Ghana are identified as having significant anti-immigrant sentiments in the region. These sentiments are often fuelled by economic disparities, high unemployment, and the perception that foreigners overburden local infrastructure.

Further, in Africa, the medical xenophobia has resulted in documented cases of foreign nationals being denied access to clinics and hospitals, particularly in South Africa. Reports suggest that anti-immigrant sentiments are affecting children, who are being socialized into acts of "othering" and hostility toward migrants. The rise of anti-immigrant sentiment has led to violent protests, intimidation, and the targeting of foreign-owned businesses. These actions are often justified by proponents as necessary to address illegal immigration and protect citizens' interests. Despite this, these sentiments have been criticized for threatening the lives of African migrants and undermining the ideal of an African renaissance. Xenophobic attitudes have resulted in several incidents of violence against migrants since 1994, including attacks on foreign-owned businesses and medical xenophobia, with movements like *Operation Dudula* advocating for the forced removal of foreigners. Key aspects of anti-immigration sentiments include Economic Drivers, Political and Social Action, Regional Contrast and Social Media Amplification. Negative perceptions are frequently fuelled by claims that immigrants take jobs, lower wages, and strain public services, such as health clinics and housing. Political elites sometimes use exclusionary rhetoric to gain support, while vigilante groups like *Operation Dudula* directly confront and harass foreign nationals. While South Africa faces high levels of xenophobia, other regions like the East African Community (EAC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have generally made more progress toward regional integration and, in some cases, easier migration. Social media, such as *TikTok*, has been used to spread hate speech, often blaming foreigners for social issues without evidence. These sentiments often contradict Pan-Africanist ideals and create dangerous conditions for migrants, who may face violence, displacement and exclusion from essential services.

Drivers

Public attitudes towards immigration have become a major societal issue. A host of factors appear in the above discussion that drive people's attitudes towards immigration. They are difficult to isolate and also tend to affect each other. In general, however, public attitudes differ depending on contextual factors, migrant characteristics and personal characteristics in three ways⁶² Firstly, countries differ in their average support to immigration and their level of polarization. For example, people in North America tend to hold more positive views towards immigration than Europeans, and East Europeans tend to be more negative than West Europeans.⁶³ Furthermore,

the public in some countries is rather hostile toward immigration (i.e., Czech Republic, Hungary), while other countries are internally quite divided (e.g., The Netherlands, Norway), or rather supportive (Canada, New Zealand)⁶⁴. There are various reasons for these country differences, including historical, political, religious, educational and work skills.⁶⁵ Secondly, in their immigration policies, countries often make distinctions between types of migrants – e.g., Western and non-Western; European Union (EU) and non-EU immigrants – and the public tends to do the same. Public attitudes are, for example, more negative towards immigrants who are culturally less similar, such as Muslims in Europe⁶⁶. Additionally, newcomers who are considered to have migrated voluntarily (i.e., labour migrants) face more negative public attitudes than involuntary migrants (i.e., refugees).⁶⁷ Thirdly, some sections of the population are supportive of immigrants and refugees, while other sections are rather negative or even hostile. In general, more positive attitudes are found among the higher educated and political liberals, who tend to have a more cosmopolitan orientation, experience little competition and threat from migrants, and more strongly value openness, change and cultural diversity.⁶⁸ The role of these personal factors is not uniform. Psychological characteristics will matter more under some conditions than others. For example, people with an authoritarian predisposition are particularly prone to react with increased negativity towards culturally dissimilar immigrants (non-Western, Muslims), who are perceived as normative threatening, rather than towards culturally similar immigrants (Western, Christian). Another example is that people who have economic concerns and worries about crime are more negative towards Eastern European immigrants, whereas those who perceive cultural or terrorism-related threats have more negative views towards Muslim immigrants.⁶⁹ Additionally, individual differences matter more for anti-immigrant attitudes when the proportion of immigrants is higher, the economic situation is declining, and the ideological climate in society is dominated by hierarchy enhancing and *status quo* preserving norms and values⁷⁰. Information about immigrants can invoke both feelings of threat and countervailing humanitarian concerns, whereby the former can override the latter, but also the latter can override the former⁷¹. System justification motivations can be used by politicians and policy makers to garner support for refugees (e.g., “Open hearts and welcoming communities: it’s the Canadian way”).⁷² In general, people tend to overestimate the number of immigrants and refugees entering their country, and that subjective perceptions are much more important for people’s attitudes than actual changes and events. This means that how public policies are being framed and how immigrants are depicted in the media and by politicians is important. It matters whether newcomers are described as a potential threat to the host society or rather as making a valuable contribution and being in need of help⁷³. Public opposition to immigration can be a major social and political disruptive force and has negative implications for the opportunities of newcomers. Understanding what drives individuals to be positive or rather negative towards immigrants, and when and how the various psychological determinants become less or more important for their attitudes, is crucial for trying to avoid the divisive consequences of migration and increase the successful accommodation of newcomers.

Mass immigration is a global phenomenon affecting most countries, and there is much at stake for societies, communities and individuals, including the mental health of newcomers. Two kinds of arguments dominate. Many studies suggest that the skills of individual applicants matter most, as citizens prefer well educated and younger applicants who work in high-income jobs (such as engineers and doctors) because such immigrants may benefit the national economy the most; and the animosity toward racial others or Muslim immigrants (in Christian-majority countries) drives xenophobia. In recent years, a third perspective has been introduced, focussing on the political relations between countries of origin and the host country, rather than the characteristics of immigrants themselves. They show that refugees are more likely to be welcomed by governments with a hostile relationship to the country of origin, such as the dissidents and refugees from Eastern Europe who found open doors in the West during the Cold War. In essence, anti-immigration sentiments are deeply intertwined with local conditions and spatial dynamics, creating a feedback loop where geography influences attitudes, and these attitudes, in turn, shape the social and political geography of a region.

Three observable implications may be derived from the above arguments about how regular citizens evaluate immigrants from different countries of origin. First and most generally, individuals should show a clear preference for immigrants from allied countries and an aversion toward immigrants from rival countries with a history of competition or conflict with the respondent’s country (H1). Immigrants from neutral countries should be neither preferred nor discriminated against. Second, if the national identification mechanism operates, members of ethnic majorities will be more sensitive to international rivalries when expressing preferences for immigrants from specific countries (H2). This is because according to social dominance theory⁷⁴, national majorities tend to identify more strongly with their country than minorities. Third, individuals who believe that their country is superior to other nations (an attitude commonly referred to as “chauvinism”) may be particularly attuned to geopolitical competition and the threat it can pose to their nation’s status. They are therefore likely to be more strongly opposed to immigrants from rival countries and more warmly disposed toward immigrants from allied countries than respondents with less pronounced chauvinist attitudes (H3). The logic of the overall theoretical argument is illustrated by some prominent examples from the history of the United States, including Germanophobia during World War I, anti-Japanese propaganda and persecution during World War II, or Islamophobia in the wake of the

9/11 attacks launched from Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. In particular, immigrants from rival countries with whom the host country has a history of contentious and conflictual encounters are likely to be the least welcome while immigrants from allied countries may be the most welcome. Preferences for immigrant groups could thus represent a popular reflection of geopolitical relations of opposition and alliance. A 2017 study comprised 18,000 interviews across eleven countries: Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Japan, Korea, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States. The study found that "higher-skilled immigrants are preferred to their lower-skilled counterparts at all levels of native socio-economic status (SES). There is little support for the Labour Market Competition hypothesis, since respondents are not more opposed to immigrants in their own SES stratum. While skin tone itself has little effect in any country, immigrants from Muslim-majority countries do elicit significantly lower levels of support, and racial animus remains a powerful force."⁷⁵ A paper published in 2018 found that an influx of high-skilled immigration was associated with declines in nationalist voting, but that an influx in low-skilled immigration was associated with increases in nationalist voting in elections during the 2007–2016 period.⁷⁶ Perceptions that immigrants are low skilled also caused increased opposition (though high-skilled immigrants are more likely to be welcomed).⁷⁷ A 2019 paper from Tel Aviv University identified economic competition, cultural competition, racial attitudes and fear of crime as some of the most significant factors in opposition to immigration.⁷⁸ A 2007 study in International Organization found that "the link between education and attitudes toward immigrants is driven by differences among individuals in cultural values and beliefs. More educated respondents are significantly less racist and place greater value on cultural diversity than do their counterparts; they are also more likely to believe that immigration generates benefits for the host economy as a whole."⁷⁹ Research in 2017 also indicated opposition to immigration⁸⁰ may be motivated by a person's concern about their group's social position. Studies found that increasing Hispanic immigration to the US caused greater support for immigration restriction amongst both white Americans and non-Hispanic non-white Americans (Hispanic Americans⁸¹ showed no change in attitudes), suggesting that concerns about group position could motivate opposition to immigration. Political ideology can also interact with group social position; in the 2016 United States presidential election Clinton voters were strongly opposed to the notion of white Americans limiting immigration to maintain their group position but were not generally opposed to the notion of Hispanic Americans desiring to increase their population share via increased immigration, while white Trump voters showed the opposite. David Frum suggests that while mass migration has occurred historically, for societies that have undergone a demographic transition, immigration brings change faster since the native population has fewer children. This causes immigrants to be perceived not as reinforcing the native population but instead as replacing it.⁸²

Push Factors

Immigration, the movement of people from their home country to a new destination, is primarily driven by a complex interplay of several "push factors"—conditions at the point of origin that force or motivate individuals to leave. As derived from the above discussion, there emerge six primary push factors (driving forces at the point of origin) that compel individuals to leave their home countries, viz. Economic, Socio-Cultural, Demographic, political and Technological. These factors rarely exist in isolation and are often intertwined.

Economic Drivers

Classical macroeconomic theory argues that the difference in income between origin and destination communities and countries is one of the main reasons that people migrate. The economic theory argues that the global economy itself makes it likely that people will migrate from lower-income countries with a less skilled workforce, to wealthier countries with a more skilled workforce. Economic differences between nation States are widening, increasing the motivation for economically stimulated migration⁸³ (World Bank, 2018). It should be noted, however, that the poorest of the poor seldom have the resources needed to migrate internationally; poor people from the least developed countries are more likely to move internally or to neighbouring countries that provide better economic opportunities, if at all. Most migrants are young people seeking work. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), global participation of youth in the labour force has been declining since 1999 and the youth unemployment rate was 13.6 per cent in 2019 (ILO, 2020). It has been particularly high in Northern Africa (30 per cent in 2019) and the Arab States (23 per cent in 2019), well above the rest of the world (ILO, 2020). Economic stagnation and strain is one of the most prominent drivers of migration, often functioning as a fundamental "root cause". Poverty and lack of jobs are major drivers that force people to leave. A lack of economic opportunity, low wages and limited social mobility can make it difficult for individuals to sustain themselves and their families. This often includes a lack of access to adequate education, training, or healthcare services, which pushes individuals to seek better prospects elsewhere. The most common and powerful economic drivers are listed below:

- Poverty and low wages: A desire to escape destitution and secure a higher income is a primary motivator.

- Lack of employment opportunities: High unemployment rates or a lack of job availability can force people to seek work elsewhere.
- Poor economic conditions: General economic instability or the failure of local industries can drive emigration.
- Income inequality: Significant disparities in wealth and income within a country can motivate those with fewer options to leave.
- Agricultural Decline: In many developing regions, crop failure, land degradation, or lack of land for farming forces rural populations to migrate, particularly in regions dependent on agriculture.

Socio-Cultural

: Scholars have identified many Socio-Cultural factors that lead to changes in anti-immigrant sentiment. Key socio-cultural push factors forcing people to migrate are Academic Expectations, Discrimination & Persecution, Safety & Security Concerns, Political & Social Freedom, Family Conflict & Structure, Cultural & Social Changes and War & Conflict. The Academic Expectations, affect anti-immigrant sentiment on the academic experiences and outcomes of immigrant students. The immigrants generally have higher educational and occupational expectations than their non-immigrant peers. However, these positive associations decrease in countries with higher levels of anti-immigrant sentiment. These patterns manifest for both first- and second-generation immigrants, indicating that the potential adverse effects of anti-immigrant sentiment span generations of immigrants. The out-of-family and out-of-school factors shape the educational trajectories of immigrant youth and show that increases in anti-immigrant sentiment might bring about long-term damage to the success of immigrants in their host countries.⁸⁴ other socio-cultural push factors

force Individuals to seek safer living conditions elsewhere. Lack of freedom of speech, oppressive governmental policies and violation of human rights are significant reasons to move. Personal issues like family conflicts, and in some contexts, gender-based pressures or marriage, can trigger migration. Exposure to different lifestyles via media can create dissatisfaction with one's current, conservative or restricted society. Ongoing warfare causes displacement and forces individuals to seek refuge. The Socio-Cultural factors frequently act in conjunction with economic or political pressures to create a, often unbearable,, environment that compels individuals to move.

Demographic

Demographic Factors, at the place of Origin, relate to quality of life and personal aspirations. Rapid population growth and high population density in certain regions can lead to intense competition for resources, forcing migration. In general, Demographic push factors are negative population-related conditions at a place of origin that force people to emigrate. Key drivers include high population density or overpopulation, rapid population growth exceeding resources, unfavourable age structures (high youth dependency), high infant mortality rates, low life expectancy, environmental degradation and security issues. Crowded areas with limited space drive people to less densely populated regions to seek a better standard of living. Rapid growth often outpaces the development of local infrastructure, housing and food supply, forcing residents to leave. A very high proportion of youth (high dependency ratio) can put immense pressure on limited resources and available jobs, prompting migration.

Poor health conditions, high infant mortality or high death rates act as push factors by suggesting an inadequate or dangerous living environment. Though sometimes considered environmental, a demographic-driven exhaustion of resources (e.g., overgrazing, depletion of water sources) forces population movement. Lastly, Conflict and Security Risk, War, civil conflict and targeted violence are primary drivers for forced migration. When safety is compromised by indiscriminate attacks or systemic violence, individuals are compelled to leave for their survival. These factors compel migration to balance population with resources. These factors often work alongside economic hardship (unemployment, poverty) and social instability, contributing to a "push" that makes the area of origin less attractive.

Political Drivers

Political push factors are negative, origin-based conditions that force people to emigrate for safety and survival, driven by instability and oppression. Key drivers include war, conflict, persecution, authoritarian regimes, human rights violations and poor governance. These factors create involuntary migration due to fear, insecurity and a lack of basic rights. Armed conflict, civil war and widespread violence force people to flee to safer regions or countries. Lack of freedom, repression, violations of basic rights, Poor economic policies, restrictive legislation or political corruption reduces the quality of life. Ineffective, unstable, or corrupt governments, as well as high crime rates, make daily life unsafe and motivate people to seek stability. Abuses and lack of protection by the government may compel people to leave their homes. These factors often force individuals to leave their home countries to escape danger, creating a need for safety that is not met in their place of origin. The past 50 years have seen a proliferation of new States and the attempted secession of breakaway regions. This has been caused largely by the break-up of countries such as the former Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, as well as by surging nationalism within subregions. These changes have often been accompanied by migration; in some

cases, the change in borders make former citizens into non-nationals. And with more nations, there are more borders to cross. Considering only the United Nations member States, there were 193 generally recognized nation-states in 2020, up from 51 in 1945. Refugees, and displaced persons in particular, are the result of these processes. Too often, the formation of new States leads to the expulsion of those considered to be of another nationality or citizenship, particularly when these persons practice a different religion or have a different ethnicity from those in power. Political instability, conflict and human rights violations are further causes of migration. Some of the displaced population may be defined as refugees while others are internally or internationally displaced without the legal protections afforded to refugees. In these cases, the governments of the countries of origin may be implicated in the actions that displace people. In other cases, non-State actors ranging from insurgent forces and terrorist organizations to family members may threaten the security of those who are displaced. The key to whether people are forced to flee lies in the extent to which governments have the capacity and will to intercede on behalf of potential victims and provide them with protection. Political factors also determine the willingness of States to admit international migrants and allow them to remain, at least temporarily. Many countries have ratified United Nations human rights conventions that commit them to providing all persons with basic rights such as due process. As a result, in many countries, migrants without legal status can nevertheless stay several years by applying for various forms of relief from deportation. Anti-immigration sentiments may be fuelled by social media, which too often spread misinformation about the realities of migration⁸⁵. Such populism is a two-way street, though. Not only does it affect national policies – often leading to restrictions in immigration – but it also affects the interest and willingness of would-be migrants to move to a destination where anti-immigration rhetoric and actions predominate. As ethno-nationalist populism increases, higher-skilled immigrants with more options may be reluctant to come to a country where they feel unwelcome.

Environmental Drivers

Environmental changes, Natural conditions and changes can also act as significant drivers. Natural disasters, including floods, earthquakes and droughts, can force people to abandon their homes. Long-term climate change acts as a "threat multiplier" that exacerbates existing issues by making land uninhabitable, reducing resource availability and destroying livelihoods. Acute events such as earthquakes, floods, hurricanes and tsunamis can damage homes and livelihoods, forcing immediate displacement. Long-term changes like recurrent droughts, desertification and rising sea levels undermine agricultural livelihoods and make areas uninhabitable. Environmental factors can lead to crop failures and a lack of access to essential resources, causing people to move in search of basic necessities. There appear to be four principal pathways by which environmental drivers in general and climate change in particular affect migration patterns:

- Recurrent and persistent droughts that undermine livelihoods, especially in rural communities that rely on rain-fed agriculture. These combine with desertification, land degradation and habitat/ecosystem loss that also affect livelihoods.
- Rising sea levels and coastal erosion that over time make vast areas of land uninhabitable or undermine livelihoods such as agriculture.
- Acute disasters linked to natural hazards that appear more frequently and more intensely, such as earthquakes, floods, fires, tornadoes, tsunamis and cyclones.
- Conflicts over scarce resources, most of which are within countries and can lead to political instability; communal, ethnic and religious divisions; and mass displacement of people.

Pull Factors

Economic Drivers

Destination countries with strong economies and a high demand for labour, particularly in specific sectors (e.g., agriculture, construction, technology, healthcare), act as a powerful magnet for migrants to fill available jobs. Economic opportunities are consistently the most significant draw for immigrants. As the education level rises in wealthy countries, there are fewer native-born people willing to work at the wages and under the working conditions offered for less-skilled jobs. This provides opportunities for migrants to fill economic niches. The main economic pulls, therefore, are Job Opportunities and High Wages, Strong Labour Markets, Higher Standard of Living and Economic Stability. The primary driver is the prospect of better employment and career advancement opportunities, often with significantly higher pay compared to their origin countries. Migrants are attracted by the potential for an improved overall standard of living, including better housing, more disposable income, and the availability of goods and services. A stable economy with reliable job security and a lower risk of economic downturns offers long-term security that is appealing to potential immigrants.

Demographic Drivers

Demographic pull factors at a destination are positive population-related attributes that attract migrants, including a youthful workforce, high demand for labour, balanced sex ratios and better living standards. These factors often include superior healthcare, educational opportunities and safety, which appeal to families and individuals seeking

better quality of life. Key demographic pull factors, thus, include Labour Demand & Economic Opportunities, Favourable Age Structure, Improved Quality of Life & Healthcare, Family & Social Networks and Cultural & Religious Similarity. Destinations with a high demand for labour, often due to an aging population or rapid industrial growth, attract working-age migrants seeking higher wages. Regions with a younger, vibrant or specialized workforce can attract professionals, while areas with high-quality retirement amenities attract older populations. Access to superior healthcare systems, lower crime rates and better public services are significant draws. The presence of existing communities or family members (chain migration) acts as a strong demographic pull, providing support systems. Destinations that share cultural, linguistic or religious ties with the origin area can attract migrants seeking a familiar environment. These pull factors often interact with economic, social and environmental factors to make a destination more attractive. Population growth has slowed in many parts of the world. Most of the world's population is in middle-income countries (Population Reference Bureau, 2021). World fertility rates (that is, the number of children per woman) have dropped to 2.3 children per woman, but fertility in low-income countries remains high, at 4.7 children per woman. Fertility in higher-income countries is below replacement levels, at 1.5. In high-income countries, population is expected to decline as societies age: the number of people aged 65 and over is projected to increase from 700 million in 2020 to 1.5 billion in 2050. Without immigration, these very different fertility patterns mean that the population shares of the world's countries will change during the next decades. Destination countries with aging populations or specific labour shortages may create policies to attract younger, working-age immigrants to fill gaps in their workforce.

Political

Political pull factors are attractive, positive civic conditions in a destination country that draw migrants. These factors often include liberal immigration policies, political stability and reduced risk of corruption or persecution. A stable political environment and strong legal protections are important draws. Key political pull factors at destinations include, for instance, Political Stability & Safety (Freedom from war, civil conflict and corruption), Democratic Governance & Freedom (Guaranteed civil liberties, freedom of speech and political participation), Human Rights Protection (against discrimination based on religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation), Favourable Immigration Policies (Liberal asylum laws, structured immigration processes, and opportunities for legal permanent residency), Rule of Law & Low Corruption (Transparent government institutions and fair treatment under the law), Civil Liberties and Rights. These factors contrast with political push factors like persecution, instability or conflict, attracting individuals seeking a more stable and free life. Destinations with all the above offer a secure environment that may be lacking in the country of origin. The presence of strong civil and political rights, an equitable legal system and protection under the law can attract those seeking a fairer society. The immigration policies of a destination country, such as the availability of specific work visas, family reunification programs, or asylum-seeker reception policies, directly affect the ability and willingness of people to migrate there.

Social & Cultural Drivers

Socio-cultural pull factors are destination attributes that attract tourists and migrants, focusing on cultural enrichment, social opportunities and lifestyle enhancements. Key factors include rich cultural heritage, unique local traditions, language, safety, political stability, entertainment and opportunities for social interaction. Policies and practices that discriminate or persecute based on social and cultural norms force them to flee from harm's way. For example, social and cultural attitudes towards sexual orientation, female labour force participation and domestic violence can take away the means through which people can migrate or be important drivers of migration. These attitudes affect not only those directly targeted but also others who do not share the values that underpin the attitudes. As societies change, opportunities may arise for migration by choice rather than necessity. This can sometimes result from the social remittances that migrants send home in terms of new values and principles. For example, as women have gained greater autonomy, the potential to migrate for their own employment or education has grown significantly. Also, social networks are one of the most important drivers of migration because they enable migrants to access information and resources needed to cross national borders, obtain employment and housing on arrival, and integrate into new communities. Key Socio-Cultural Pull Factors at Destinations are, for instance, Cultural Heritage & Local Life (Unique cultural sites, museums, arts, local customs, and festivals, e.g., in Mumbai, India), Safety and Political Stability (Secure environments, low crime rates and stable governance), Social Connections (Presence of friends, family, or existing cultural communities), Quality of Life & Lifestyle (Better healthcare, education systems and a relaxing or exciting environment), Tolerance and Freedom (Religious and political freedom, including inclusive social environments) and Special Events & Entertainment (Access to sports, concerts, and unique entertainment experiences). These factors, alongside economic opportunities, drive decisions to visit or migrate. They are often paired with "push factors" at the origin to explain mobility trends. Customs and social norms, as well as changes to them, are key drivers of migration. For instance: Family formation and family reunification are important social drivers of

migration, whether to a new home in the same or nearby community or thousands of miles away to a new country. Pursuit of education is another social driver of migration. Parents migrate in order to provide better educational opportunities for their children; young people migrate in order to enrol in institutions of higher education. In turn, education programmes targeting international students expand. Institutions strive to attract students, and their student fees, and to expand opportunities to collaborate with similar educational institutions across borders.

Thus, the powerful push factors are Poor access to education and healthcare, Desire to reunite with family, Discrimination and social norms, Societal or cultural discrimination, Population Pressures, markets. Family Reunification and Cultural and Social Norms. Social conditions and human development opportunities play a crucial role in shaping migration decisions. The presence of existing family members, friends, and co-ethnic communities significantly influences the choice of destination. These networks provide vital information, support, and a sense of belonging, reducing the financial and psychological costs of migration (also known as chain migration). Access to quality education, including universities and specialized training programs for themselves or their children, is a key pull factor. Countries with robust healthcare systems and quality medical care are more attractive destinations. Factors such as a safe environment, lower crime rates, public transport, and access to arts and recreation services enhance the appeal of a destination.

Technological drivers

Technological pull factors at a destination are infrastructure-based, tangible attributes that attract visitors or migrants, including high-speed internet, smart city technologies, advanced transportation and digital services. These factors enhance efficiency, connectivity and convenience, specifically supporting remote work (digital nomads) and improving the overall experience. Key Technological Pull Factors incorporate Widespread, reliable high-speed internet (5G/fiber), Smart Infrastructure (Advanced, efficient public transportation, digital payment systems, and smart city services), Co-working Spaces (Availability of dedicated workspaces and high-tech, flexible office environments), Information Accessibility (access to, and exchange of, information via smartphones and digital platforms), Modern Amenities (High-quality, technologically equipped accommodation) and Efficiency in Services (Technology-driven, streamlined administrative processes and services).

Environmental Drivers

Environmental pull factors are desirable natural or man-made environmental conditions at a destination that attract migrants. Desirable natural amenities such as a pleasant climate, proximity to coastlines, or a less polluted environment can be a draw for certain migrant groups, such as retirees or those in specific industries (e.g., tourism). Key Environmental Pull factors include Favourable Climate, Natural Amenities & Beauty, Lower Risk of Environmental Disasters, Environmental Quality, Resource Availability and Reduced Climate Change Vulnerability. Regions with warmer winters, ample sunshine, or temperate climates, such as the Mediterranean (e.g., Spain) or the Alps to scenic landscapes, including coastal areas, mountains and pristine natural environments, acts as a significant pull factor for lifestyle migrants and tourists. Destinations that are safe from the floods, droughts, hurricanes and earthquakes that plague the origin area. Areas with lower pollution levels, clean air, better waste management, and green spaces attract people seeking a healthier lifestyle. Areas with abundant natural resources, such as water, agricultural land, or natural resources (e.g., oil, gold), can attract workers. Locations with higher adaptive capacity to climate change, providing a safer long-term environment. These environmental factors are often closely tied to better overall living conditions, including improved health and safety standards.

Impact of Anti-immigration sentiments

Anti-immigration sentiments worldwide have fuelled restrictive policies, causing labour shortages in key sectors like agriculture and construction, slowing economic growth, and exacerbating demographic crises in aging nations. These sentiments drive political polarization, increase social hostility and strain international relations. These sentiments are often intensified by economic anxiety, housing shortages, and social media, creating a deeply divided public discourse. Migration, particularly at international level affect the system in variegated forms as listed in Table-1. However, such impacts are more evident at the place of destination than origin, socio-cultural consequences being more widespread.

Table-1: Impact of Anti-immigration sentiments

Economic

- Job Competition
- Burdened Infrastructure
- Strained Public Services
- Housing Pressure

Demographic

- Net Overseas Migration
- Illegal Migration
- Population Growth
- Increased Unemployment

Socio-Cultural

- Separation & Isolation
- Targeted Groups
- Group Responses
- Crime-Concerns
- Xenophobia
- Violence
- Bashing
- Racism
- Verbal abuse
- Cultural Integration
- Public misperception
- Public safety
- Cultural dilution
- Public resentment
- Public Discourse
- Increased Conflicts
- Terrorism

Political

- Border Strain
- Political Rhetoric
- Political Scapegoating
- Targeted Deportation
- National Identity

Environmental

- space constraint
 - quality
 - resource scarcity
-

At the Place of Origin

Some opponents of immigration argue that immigration of highly skilled or well-educated individuals may hurt their home countries, which could otherwise benefit from them and build up their economy and improve their social and political system. This is identified as 'Brain Drain'. In spite of the fact that it forms a debatable issue, it is also recognised as the source of remittances for the countries of origin^{86,87,88,89,90,91} Remittances have a major impact on the developing economies of the world with the majority of remittances, \$441 billion in 2015, going to developing nations. This amount is nearly triple the \$131 billion of global Official Development Assistance. For many developing nations, remittances received make up a significant portion of their economies often receiving over 10% of their GDP in remittances each year.⁹² From a macroeconomic perspective, there is no conclusive relationship between remittances and GDP growth. While remittances can boost aggregate demand and thereby spur economic activity, other research indicates that remittances may also have adverse macroeconomic impacts by increasing income inequality and reducing labour supply among recipient countries.

At the Place of Destination

Key impacts of the rising anti-immigration sentiment at the Place of Destination include, for instance, Economic Consequences, Social & Cultural Impact, Political Shifts, Impact on Innovation and Individual & Health Effects.

Economic

Stricter immigration laws reduce labour supply, leading to higher labour costs and wage inflation. In countries with aging populations, such as in the EU and Japan, this exacerbates talent shortages. Economic arguments concentrate on competition for employment, and the higher burdens that some groups of immigrants may impose on social welfare systems, health systems, housing and public schools of the native state. For example, Denmark's strict immigration law reform has saved the country 6.7 billion euros compared to previous more permissive approach, according to a 2011 report from the Danish Integration Ministry.⁹² George Borjas, economics professor at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, states that "the more unskilled the immigrant, the more likely the

immigrant will be a fiscal burden".⁹³ High-skilled immigrants have better labour market prospects than those admitted based on kinship ties or for humanitarian reasons. It also depends on the tenures, wages and ages of the immigrants and the country's integration system. Anti-immigrant sentiment can affect regional economies. For example, a 2007 crackdown in Arizona in USA led to an exodus of undocumented workers, resulting in increased rental vacancies and a destabilized local housing market. Conversely, anti-immigrant policies in aging societies can lead to a shrinking workforce, negatively impacting long-term economic growth.⁹⁴

Demographic

Anti-immigration sentiments have significant consequences, manifesting in distinct spatial patterns of attitudes and policies, shaping regional demographics and political landscapes. The key implications are centred around an urban-rural divide, the concept of "place resentment," and localized economic and social dynamics. Anti-immigration attitudes are significantly stronger in rural and peripheral areas compared to central inner cities. This divide is often linked to the "geography of discontent," where inhabitants of peripheral areas feel their communities are ignored by policymakers and disrespected by urban elites. The feeling of spatial injustice, where residents perceive their area as not getting its fair share of resources or recognition, is a major driver of anti-immigration sentiment and support for populist parties in specific regions. The actual physical presence of immigrants has varied effects depending on Spatial Proximity to Immigrants. In areas with higher immigrant populations and positive intergroup contact, anti-immigrant sentiment may be reduced ("Contact Hypothesis"⁹⁵). In some cases, anti-immigrant feelings are highest in areas *bordering* immigrant-dense locations, not necessarily within them. Proximity to highly visible sites like refugee reception centres has been shown to increase support for populist parties in surrounding municipalities ("Halo Effect" / Perceived Threat). "Population sorting" occurs when people with similar attitudes cluster together; those with nativist attitudes tend to sort into more homogeneous areas, while those with liberal attitudes move to diverse urban centres, reinforcing existing geographical patterns of sentiment.

Socio-Cultural

The immigrants bring their culture with them. The immigrants' thinking, their norms, practices, customs and values influence the native country's culture. Immigrants can be isolated in their own communities, forming self-organized communities, ghettos or parallel societies where they live according to their own culture, rather than assimilating to the native culture with a reduced or minimal spatial, social and cultural contact with the majority society into which they have immigrated. Such ethnic enclaves can be the result of humans naturally liking to be around people like themselves.⁹⁶ They might not learn the local language and might eventually undermine the national unity, as well as the cultural and religious unity of the native country. Ethnic enclaves promote social cohesion at the cost of decreasing tolerance between groups and that their size, autonomy and proximity are factors. Increased anti-immigrant sentiment can lead to greater social polarization and provide momentum for extremist groups. The sentiments contribute to symbolic boundary-making, social segregation in everyday spaces, online hate campaigns, and in extreme cases, physical violence and vigilantism in specific locales. Immigrant bashing is partially a reaction to the "deterritorialization" and increasing delegitimization of the nation-state as a viable "encapsulating" entity. Such deterritorialization represents a qualitative change in immigration patterns: Immigrants from underdeveloped to core capitalist countries have progressively formed "daughter communities" and become settlers instead of temporary, circular migrants, thus becoming economically less functional for U.S. capital, for instance. At the same time, their cause has been taken up by Mexican-American political groups, making them increasingly dysfunctional in political terms.⁹⁷ Increased hostility fosters xenophobia, reduces multicultural exchange, and weakens social cohesion. It has resulted in increased hate crimes against immigrants, as observed in Germany and South Africa. Increased enforcement creates fear, leading to mistrust of authorities and reduced access to healthcare and services for migrant communities.

Political

Anti-immigration sentiment is a major driver behind the rise of far-right political parties and populist movements in Western nations, influencing policy decisions like Brexit (a portmanteau of "British" and "exit, it refers the historic withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union). Some concerns regarding immigration can be found in perceived military loyalty, especially if the country of emigration becomes involved in a war with the country of immigration⁹⁸ or if a country finds itself to need conscription. Anti-immigrant sentiment influences electoral results and strengthens nationalist or populist political parties. Anti-immigration sentiments fuel support for populist radical-right parties, leading to clear geographic divides in voting behaviour and contributing to political polarization. Political parties often exploit these sentiments for electoral gain, especially in regions experiencing economic or social decline.

Technological

Restrictions on skilled migrants hamper research, innovation, and start-up formation, with studies showing a significant percentage of top-valued start-ups have immigrant founders. Individuals in low-immigration societies tend to be more susceptible to negative anti-immigration messages because they lack personal experience or stable

predispositions regarding immigrant populations., (1.66 times faster in some studies).: Terms such as "Ban Muslim," Anti-immigration rhetoric often spreads much, faster than pro-immigration content "Border crisis," and "our country back" are heavily used in online platforms to polarize the conversation on immigration.

Environmental

Some are concerned about urban sprawl and congestion, alterations in the wildlife and natural environment of the state, and an expansive carbon footprint due to immigration. Furthermore, some are concerned over a state's scarce resources, dwindling water reserves, energy, pauperized soils and solid waste. Immigrants (and cross-border movements in general) can bring infectious diseases uncommon to the native population from their home countries⁹⁹. which some perceive as a threat of significance in opposition to immigration. There is a history of white supremacist groups such as the 'Ku Klux Klan' exaggerating or fabricating a connection between immigrants and infectious disease in order to stoke anti-immigrant Opponents of immigration often claim that immigrants contribute to higher crime rates, but research suggests that people tend to overestimate the relationship between immigration and criminality. The academic literature provides mixed findings for the relationship between immigration and crime worldwide. Unauthorized or irregular migration can expose immigrants to many dangers, including exposure to harsh environments, lack of food and water, and violence from smugglers and authorities. Since 2014, over 4,000 people have died each year on migration routes around the world, and this is likely to be a low estimate since many deaths are never recorded. In the United States, the border patrol policy of Prevention Through Deterrence has deliberately acted to divert migrants into remote areas where they are more likely to encounter life-threatening dangers.

Responses

The nature of Anti-immigration strategies (responses) varies at the points of origin and destination. Anti-immigration strategies at the point of origin focus on addressing the root causes that drive (push) people to leave their home countries. These strategies are typically collaborative efforts between origin and destination countries to manage migration before it becomes irregular or unauthorized. Such Anti-immigration strategies at the point of origin are often referred to as "externalization" or "remote control" migration management. They involve actions taken by destination countries in partnership with—or pressure on—origin and transit countries to prevent migrants from leaving or starting their journey. These strategies aim to address migration before it reaches the borders of developed nations. Primary interventions at Point of Origin are driven by the rise of global anti-immigration sentiment stemming from perceived economic, cultural, and security threats. Governments often engage in these activities to avoid the human rights implications and domestic political costs associated with managing large numbers of asylum seekers at their own borders. Primary strategies at the point of Origin include the following:

- I. Economic Development & Job Creation: Implementing initiatives like vocational training, support for small and medium enterprises, and agricultural development to provide local opportunities. Projects such as 'Make in India' and 'Skill India' are examples of domestic efforts to retain skilled youth.
- II. Foreign Aid & Targeted Investment: Donor countries often allocate development aid specifically for "root cause" programming, including environmental preservation and urban development, to deter emigration by improving local living standards.
- III. Development Aid Conditionality: Donor countries often direct development aid toward origin countries to improve local economies, stability and employment, with the goal of reducing the economic push factors that compel people to emigrate.
- IV. Border Externalization and Outsourcing: This involves strengthening border surveillance and establishing border outposts in foreign countries, as demonstrated by the use of Indian border forces and technology to prevent infiltration at international borders.
- V. Capacity Building for Third Countries: Richer nations invest in training and equipping the security forces of transit or origin countries to prevent illegal border crossings and combat human trafficking organizations.
- VI. Preventive Diplomacy and Cooperative Migration Agreements: Bilateral dialogues and agreements are utilized to facilitate the return of illegal immigrants and ensure that transit countries block migrants from moving further, often termed a "No War No Peace" approach to border security.
- VII. Information Campaigns: Destination countries run campaigns in origin countries to warn potential migrants of the dangers of illegal migration and the low likelihood of successfully gaining legal status.
- VIII. Increased Embassy Screening: Embassies in origin countries are tasked with stricter screening of visa applications to detect and deny potential immigrants, focusing on identifying those who may seek to overstay or work illegally.
- IX. Diaspora Engagement and Surveillance: Utilizing diplomatic missions to monitor and engage with local populations to counteract pro-emigration sentiment or encourage return.

On the other hand, the strategies at the point of destination, often termed deterrence or restrictionist policies, are designed to reduce the inflow of migrants, deter illegal entry and restrict access to rights and services for those

already present. These measures are increasingly focused on leveraging technology, outsourcing border management and tightening internal enforcement, as discussed below:

1. Border Reinforcement and Deterrence

Governments use physical and technological barriers to prevent unauthorized entry at the point of arrival.

- Physical Infrastructure includes Installation of physical barriers (fences, walls), floodlighting, and construction of patrol roads; and Strengthening border outposts with higher manpower, patrolling, and specialized anti-tunnelling exercises. On the other hand, Technological Surveillance covers Utilization of technology like cameras, sensors, and surveillance equipment to detect illegal infiltration. One such example is Implementation of systems like the Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS), which uses high-tech equipment and force multipliers to monitor vulnerable areas.

2. Deterrence and Border Externalization: it is carried on through "Prevention by Deterrence" following Policies that intentionally channel migrants toward dangerous, remote areas (e.g., in the US) to discourage crossing attempts; Offshore Detention/Return Hubs, i.e. Transferring asylum seekers to third-party countries (e.g., Italy's agreement with Albania, the UK's previous Rwanda plan) to discourage asylum claims; and Strict Border Surveillance, i.e. Increased patrolling and strict monitoring by maritime forces.

3. Internal Enforcement and Legal Restrictions implemented through Accelerated Screening Procedures, as, for example, the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum (2024) introduced 7-day screening processes for border crossers and asylum applicants, involving identification and fingerprinting; Increased Detention and Deportation by Expanding detention capacity and strengthening laws to facilitate the removal of irregular migrants; and National Registries, i.e. use of systems to track residents (e.g., National Register of Citizens in India).

4. Administrative and Socio-Economic Barriers executed through Restricting Access to Services, i. e. Limiting access to public housing, healthcare, or employment for undocumented migrants, which often results in human rights issues; Visa Restrictions particularly for lower-wage or seasonal workers, to reduce the intake of migrants; and Family Reunification Hurdles limiting the ability of migrants already in the country to bring family members.

5. Counter-Misinformation and Rhetoric exercised through Deterrence Campaigns using anti-immigration messaging in origin and transit countries to deter people from taking the journey; and Combating Xenophobia/Narratives to push for tighter controls.

To cite Global Examples, in United States, for example, the 2025 administration launched a second wave of restrictive policies, including declaring a national emergency at the border, ending birth right citizenship for some children, and enhancing deportation efforts. Countries like Italy, Germany, and France have implemented more restrictive immigration laws, including targeting sea arrivals and reinforcing land borders. The National Register of Citizens (NRC) in India aims to identify undocumented immigrants. However, Research indicates that these strategies often fail to stop migration, instead leading to increased danger, higher illegal smuggling, and increased deaths among migrants attempting to navigate these barriers. Furthermore, restrictive policies often conflict with economic needs, such as labour shortages in aging populations in the Global North.

II. Conclusion

Immigration, that has become an enduring feature of many societies in the world, is being opposed widely as well. Anti-immigration sentiment, resisting the entry and settlement of people from other countries, manifests in political movements and protests, often highlighting economic concerns, national Security and social cohesion as core issues, while also raising fears of racism and cultural erosion. In public perception the term is typically extended to also include refugees and asylum seekers. Globally, the anti-immigration attitudes are rooted in a complex mix of economic anxieties, perceived cultural threats and psychological factors, often exacerbated by political rhetoric. The diffusion of anti-immigrant attitudes occurs through complex social, spatial and digital mechanisms. The diffusion takes place through political discourse, media amplification (especially social media), economic concerns (anticipated resource scarcity), and psychological factors like dehumanization. These are often intensified by right-wing parties, leading to increased polarization and support for restrictive policies. Anti-immigration sentiments have risen significantly in the countries all over. The rise in anti-migrant sentiment is not exclusive to the developed regions of the world. It has also been noted in regions with worsening economic conditions, as parts of Africa and the Middle East. North America has seen this rise in the United States and Canada. With the influx of Venezuelan migrants, Chile, Peru, Brazil and Argentina exhibit strong restrictive trends in South America. Europe has become a major destination for international migrants, directed particularly to Russia, Hungary, Poland, Czechia, Germany, France, Belgium and Italy. Anti-immigration sentiment in Oceania is most prominent in Australia, other areas experiencing tension being New Zealand, New Caledonia, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore are the three largest Southeast Asian receiving

countries in the Asian continent. Among others here, the anti-immigration sentiments are also rising in Central Asia, Japan, South Korea, China and India. Outside the Western and Eastern world, the Anti-immigration sentiments are most prominent in the Southern African Development Community region, with South Africa exhibiting the highest levels in the continent. While South Africa is the epi-centre, other nations like Kenya, Libya, Tunisia, Namibia, Botswana and Ghana also show high levels of opposition to immigration. As far as major targeted communities are concerned, those affected for long are Irish, Chinese, Mexican and many others in United States, for instance. Anti-immigrant sentiment in Canada overlaps with hate directed at specific racial groups from South Asian and Black communities. Anti-immigration sentiment in Brazil, target black and indigenous migrants from nations like Haiti besides Venezuela. Recent anti-immigration rallies, which have occurred in major cities like Sydney and Melbourne in Australia specifically target certain migrant groups, as the Indians. Anti-immigration sentiments in Kenya particularly target Somali refugees. The National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam and the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in India have created a climate of fear, specifically attacking Bengali-speaking Muslims.

A host of factors appear in the above discussion that drive people's attitudes towards immigration. In general, however, public attitudes differ depending on contextual factors and migrant and personal characteristics. Anti-immigration sentiments stem from concerns about economic impacts, cultural integration, national identity, security and perceived pressure on resources like housing, often amplified during tough economic times, leading to calls for stricter policies or even bans. Anti-immigration sentiment is often characterized by the rise of right-wing populism, restrictive policies, and increased, rapid, and often violent, online converse. Immigration is primarily driven by a complex interplay of several "push factors"—conditions at the point of origin that force individuals to leave. As derived from the above deliberation, there emerge intertwined six primary push factors at the point of origin that compel individuals to leave their home countries, viz. economic, socio-cultural, demographic, political, technological and environmental. The same set of factors, also act as the pull factors at the point of Destination. But, here they are meant to attract, rather than repel individuals seeking better opportunities and a higher quality of life. The difference in income between origin and destination communities and countries is one of the main reasons that people migrate. Most migrants are young people seeking work. Economic stagnation and strain is one of the most prominent drivers of migration, often functioning as a fundamental "root cause". The most common and powerful economic drivers are Poverty and low wages, Lack of employment opportunities, Poor economic conditions, Income inequality and Agricultural Decline. Key socio-cultural push factors forcing people to migrate are academic expectations, discrimination & persecution, safety & security concerns, political & social freedom, family conflict & structure, cultural & social changes and war & strife. Demographic Factors, at the place of origin, relate to quality of life and personal aspirations. Rapid population growth and high population density in certain regions can lead to intense competition for resources, forcing migration. In general, Demographic push factors are negative population-related conditions at a place of origin that force people to emigrate. Key drivers include high population density or overpopulation, rapid population growth exceeding resources, unfavourable age structures, high infant mortality rates, low life expectancy, environmental degradation and security issues. Political push factors are negative, origin-based conditions that force people to emigrate for safety and survival, driven by instability and oppression. Key drivers include war, conflict, persecution, authoritarian regimes, human rights violations and poor governance, creating involuntary migration due to fear, insecurity and a lack of basic rights. The past 50 years have seen a proliferation of new States and the attempted secession of breakaway regions. This has been caused largely by the break-up of countries such as the former Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, as well as by surging nationalism within subregions. These changes have often been accompanied by migration. There appear to be four principal pathways by which environmental drivers in general and climate change in particular affect migration patterns, viz. recurrent and persistent droughts that undermine livelihoods, rising sea levels and coastal erosion, acute disasters linked to natural hazards and conflicts over scarce resources. Destination countries with strong economies and a high demand for labour, specifically in sectors like agriculture, construction, technology and healthcare, act as a powerful magnet for migrants to fill available jobs. Economic opportunities, thus, are consistently the most significant draw for immigrants. Migrants are attracted by the potential for an improved overall standard of living, job security, better housing, more disposable income and the availability of goods and services. Demographic pull factors at a destination are positive population-related attributes that attract migrants, including a youthful workforce, high demand for labour, balanced sex ratios and better living standards. These factors often include superior healthcare, educational opportunities and safety, which appeal to individuals seeking better quality of life. Key demographic pull factors, thus, include Labour Demand & Economic Opportunities, Favourable Age Structure, Improved Quality of Life & Healthcare, Family & Social Networks and Cultural & Religious Similarity. Destinations with a high demand for labour, often due to an aging population or rapid industrial growth, attract working-age migrants seeking higher wages. These pull factors often interact with economic, social and environmental factors to make a destination more attractive. Political pull factors are

attractive, positive political conditions in a destination country that draw migrants. These factors often include liberal immigration policies, political stability and reduced risk of corruption or persecution. A stable political environment and strong legal protections are important draws. Key political pull factors at destinations include, for instance, Political Stability & Safety (Freedom from war, civil conflict, and corruption), Democratic Governance & Freedom (Guaranteed civil liberties, freedom speech, and political participation), Human Rights Protection (Legal systems that protect against discrimination based on religion, ethnicity, or sexual orientation), Favourable Immigration Policies (Liberal asylum laws, structured immigration processes, and opportunities for legal permanent residency), Rule of Law & Low Corruption (Transparent government institutions and fair treatment under the law), Political Stability and Safety (a stable government, freedom from conflict, violence, and persecution (political, religious, or ethnic), Civil Liberties and Rights. These factors contrast with political push factors like persecution, instability or conflict, attracting individuals seeking a more stable and free life. Destinations with all the above offer a secure environment that may be lacking in the country of origin. Socio-cultural pull factors are destination attributes that attract tourists and migrants. Key Socio-Cultural Pull Factors at Destinations are, for instance, Cultural Heritage & Local Life (Unique cultural sites, museums, arts, local customs, and festivals, e.g., in Mumbai), Safety and Political Stability (Secure environments, low crime rates, and stable governance), Social Connections (Presence of friends, family, or existing cultural communities), Quality of Life & Lifestyle (Better healthcare, education systems, and a relaxing or exciting environment), Tolerance and Freedom (Religious and political freedom, including inclusive social environments) and Special Events & Entertainment (Access to sports, concerts, and unique entertainment experiences). These factors, alongside economic opportunities, drive decisions to visit or migrate. International migration is also affected by the future of work. Technological pull factors at a destination are infrastructure-based, tangible attributes that attract visitors or migrants, including high-speed internet, smart city technologies, advanced transportation and digital services. These factors enhance efficiency, connectivity and convenience, specifically supporting remote work (digital nomads) and improving the overall experience. Key Technological Pull Factors incorporate Widespread, reliable high-speed internet, Smart Infrastructure, Co-working Spaces, Information Accessibility, Modern Amenities and Efficiency in Services. Lastly, environmental pull factors are desirable natural or man-made physical conditions at a destination that attract migrants. Desirable natural amenities such as a pleasant climate, proximity to coastlines, or a less polluted environment. Key Environmental Pull factors include Favourable Climate, Natural Amenities & Beauty, Lower Risk of Environmental Disasters, Environmental Quality, Resource Availability and Reduced Climate Change Vulnerability. Regions with warmer winters, ample sunshine, or temperate climates, such as the Mediterranean (e.g., Spain) or the Alps to scenic landscapes, including coastal areas, mountains, and pristine natural environments, acts as a significant pull factor for lifestyle migrants and tourists. Destinations that are safe from the floods, droughts, hurricanes, and earthquakes that plague the origin area. Areas with lower pollution levels, clean air, better waste management, and green spaces attract people seeking a healthier lifestyle. Areas with abundant natural resources, such as water, agricultural land, or natural resources (e.g., oil, gold), can attract workers. Locations with higher adaptive capacity to climate change, providing a safer long-term environment. These environmental factors are often closely tied to better overall living conditions, including improved health and safety standards.

Migration, particularly at international level affect the society in variegated forms. Anti-immigration sentiments have significant consequences, manifesting in distinct spatial patterns of attitudes and policies, and shaping regional demographics and political landscapes. Anti-immigration sentiments worldwide drive political polarization, increase social hostility and strain international relations. These sentiments are often intensified by economic anxiety, housing shortages and social media, creating a deeply divided public discourse. However, such impacts are more evident at the place of destination than origin, socio-cultural consequences being more widespread. Key impacts of the rising anti-immigration sentiment at the Place of Destination include, for instance, **Economic Consequences**, Social & Cultural Impact, Political Shifts, Impact on Innovation and Individual & Health Effects. Stricter immigration laws reduce labour supply, leading to higher labour costs and wage inflation. In countries with aging populations, such as in the EU and Japan, this exacerbates talent shortages. Anti-immigrant policies in aging societies can lead to a shrinking workforce, negatively impacting long-term economic growth. Anti-immigration attitudes are significantly stronger in rural and peripheral areas compared to central inner cities. The immigrants bring their culture with them. The immigrants' thinking, their norms, practices, customs and values influence the native country's culture. Immigrants can be isolated in their own communities, forming self-organized communities, ghettos or parallel societies where they live according to their own culture, rather than assimilating to the native culture. Ethnic enclaves promote social cohesion at the cost of decreasing tolerance between groups and that their size, autonomy and proximity are factors. Increased anti-immigrant sentiment can lead to greater social polarization and provide momentum for extremist groups. The sentiments contribute to symbolic boundary-making, social segregation in everyday spaces, online hate campaigns, and in extreme cases, physical violence and vigilantism in specific locales. Increased hostility fosters xenophobia, reduces multicultural

exchange, and weakens social cohesion. It has resulted in increased hate crimes against immigrants, as observed in Germany and South Africa. Increased enforcement creates fear, leading to mistrust of authorities and reduced access to healthcare and services for migrant communities. Anti-immigration sentiments fuel support for populist radical-right parties, leading to clear geographic divides in voting behaviour and contributing to political polarization. Political parties often exploit these sentiments for electoral gain, especially in regions experiencing economic or social decline. Anti-immigration rhetoric often spreads much, faster than pro-immigration content. Unauthorized or irregular migration can expose immigrants to many dangers, including exposure to harsh environments, lack of food and water, and violence from smugglers and authorities.

To cite examples of strategies to combat immigration, attempts undertaken in USA included, for instance, the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798, the Immigration Act of 1924 creating a quota for the number of European immigrants that could enter the United States while excluding Asian immigrants, the zero-population growth movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Aside from these sporadic actions of those opposed to immigration, the creation of four prominent organizations (viz. ZPG (Zero Population Growth), FAIR (Federation for American Immigration Reform), CIS (Centre for Immigration Studies) & UCP (United Constitutional Patriots) is the basis of the current anti-immigrant movement in the country. Further, driven by rhetoric linking immigrants to crime and economic instability, Trump's administration implemented policies like Mass Deportation & Enforcement, Border Security, Efforts to seal the U.S.-Mexico border, Restricting Legal Immigration and Family Separation. Impact of these Policies was seen in the form of Humanitarian Concerns, Polarization and Legal Challenges. Among other nations, in response to public pressure in Chile, the government has militarized northern border regions and introduced stricter immigration policies, including voluntary expulsion programs. Hungary has erected fences and created "transit zones" at its borders, restricting legal asylum access to only a few individuals daily. Denmark has in recent years become one of Europe's most restrictive states on immigration and asylum. Denmark has adopted some of Europe's strictest immigration policies, with anti-immigrant sentiment spanning the political spectrum, resulting in a "zero-asylum" approach and mandatory, rapid assimilation. Policies include temporary resident permits, strict family reunification, and the controversial "ghetto" laws to reduce non-Western populations. Key aspects of Denmark's anti-immigration, pro-assimilation stance include Political Consensus, Stringent Policies, Targeted Demographics, "Ghetto" Policies and Public Opinion. Denmark's mainstream parties, including the centre-left Social Democrats, have embraced tough anti-immigration policies, arguing that high immigration threatens the welfare state and cultural cohesion. Policies focus on deterrence, including the 2016 "jewellery law" (allowing police to seize valuables from asylum seekers), reducing asylum, and making residency, family reunions, and permanent status, such as the 8-year wait, exceptionally difficult. Australia has a history of immigration policies like "White Australia" policy that were geographically and racially selective. Here, the Governments have tried to use migration policy to influence geographical distribution, offering incentives for migrants to settle in regional areas to ease urban pressure and address specific regional needs. The Kenyan government has taken a hard line approach, such as threatening to close refugee camps and forcing refugees to stay in designated areas. Operations targeting illegal immigrants and refugees in urban areas like Nairobi have led to arrests and deportations, which human rights groups warn risk increasing xenophobia.

The anti-immigration is a social position that supports stricter controls on who enters and lives in a country, but it does not always mean rejecting all migrants. Instead, it often focuses on reducing immigration numbers, tightening border security, giving priority to local citizens and limiting certain types of visas or refugee admissions. Opposition to immigration ranges from calls for various immigration reforms, to proposals to completely restrict immigration, to calls for repatriation of existing immigrants. However, many studies also see immigrants as good for the economy, bringing new ideas and cultures. Therefore, while some see immigrants as vital for economic growth and diversity, others worry about overcrowding, cultural erosion and job scarcity, fuelling debates and sometimes xenophobic ideologies. In general, however, the anti-immigration advocates for stricter controls, reduced numbers, or outright bans on immigration, with demands including tougher borders, prioritizing native citizens, and sometimes repatriation. The nature of Anti-immigration strategies (responses) varies at the points of origin and destination. Anti-immigration strategies at the point of origin focus on addressing the root causes that drive (push) people to leave their home countries. These strategies are typically collaborative efforts between origin and destination countries to manage migration before it becomes irregular or unauthorized. Such Anti-immigration strategies at the point of origin are often referred to as "externalization" or "remote control" migration management. They involve actions taken by destination countries in partnership with—or pressure on—origin and transit countries to prevent migrants from leaving or starting their journey. These strategies aim to address migration before it reaches the borders of developed nations. Primary interventions at Point of Origin are driven by the rise of global anti-immigration sentiment stemming from perceived economic, cultural, and security threats. Governments often engage in these activities to avoid the human rights implications and domestic political costs associated with managing large numbers of asylum seekers at their own borders. Primary strategies at the point of Origin include Economic Development & Job Creation, Foreign Aid & Targeted Investment, Development Aid Conditionality, Border Externalization and Outsourcing: This involves strengthening border

surveillance and establishing border outposts in foreign countries, as demonstrated by the use of Indian border forces and technology to prevent infiltration at international borders, Capacity Building for Third Countries, Preventive Diplomacy and Cooperative Migration Agreements, Information Campaigns, Increased Embassy Screening and Diaspora Engagement & Surveillance. On the other hand, the strategies at the point of destination, often termed deterrence or restrictionist policies, are designed to reduce the inflow of migrants, deter illegal entry, and restrict access to rights and services for those already present. Border Reinforcement & Deterrence, Physical & Technological Border Enforcement, Deterrence & Border Externalization, Internal Enforcement & Legal Restrictions, Administrative & Socio-Economic Barriers and Counter-Misinformation & Rhetoric are in practice. These measures are increasingly focused on leveraging technology, outsourcing border management, and tightening internal enforcement.

Notes

- 1) As of early 2026, the global refugee crisis has reached critical levels, with over 123 million people forcibly displaced worldwide, including over 42 million refugees. Driven by conflicts in Syria, Afghanistan, Ukraine, Sudan, and Myanmar, more than half of the world's refugees are under 18. The crisis is characterized by long-term displacement, with 71% of refugees hosted in low- and middle-income countries.
- 2) Definition of Illegal immigrant in English". Merriam Webster Dictionary.
- 3) **Group Threat Paradigm** (often termed Group Threat Theory or Group Position Theory) is a sociological and social-psychological framework asserting that prejudice, discrimination, and intergroup conflict arise when a dominant group perceives an out-group (minority) as a threat to their established social, economic, or political position.
- 4) Right-wing and left-wing politics represent opposing ideologies, with the left generally advocating for social equality, progressivism, and government intervention, while the right emphasizes tradition, hierarchy and limited government. Originating from the French Revolution, these labels define approaches to economic, social, and political issues.
- 5) Arizona's Senate Bill 1070 (2010), the "Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act," was the nation's strictest anti-illegal immigration measure designed to encourage voluntary departure of unauthorized immigrants. It required police to determine immigration status during legal stops if "reasonable suspicion" of illegal presence existed.
- 6) "NIMBY" (Not In My Back Yard) is a term for local opposition to proposed developments—such as housing, infrastructure, or renewable energy projects—perceived as undesirable, despite often having broader public support. Driven by fears of reduced property values, noise, or traffic, it can stall urban planning, contribute to housing shortages, and create the "NIMBY Paradox" where residents oppose density while complaining about affordability. Coined in the early 1980s, NIMBYism describes residents who support necessary public projects in principle but oppose their construction in their immediate neighbourhood.
- 7) Somdeep Sen(2025),
- 8) Right-wing populism is a political ideology combining right-wing politics—such as nationalism, social conservatism, and economic nationalism—with anti-elitist, anti-establishment, and "common people" rhetoric. It frequently features nativism, immigration restriction, and authoritarian tendencies, aiming to defend national identity against perceived external threats.
- 9) Andreas Wimmer, Bart Bonikowaki Charles, Crabtree Zheng Fu, Matt Golder & Kiyoteru Tsutsui, **2024.**
- 10) In 1620, the Pilgrims (a separatist group of Puritans) travelled from England via the Netherlands to America seeking freedom to practice their religion. The Pilgrims were harassed, fined, and jailed for not following Church of England teachings. They first fled to the Dutch Netherlands for over a decade, but left due to economic hardship and fears of losing their English heritage. They sailed to the New World to create a new society, landing in present-day Massachusetts. Pilgrims wanted to separate entirely from the Church of England. Though often cited as founders of American religious freedom, their primary goal was to create a community practicing their own specific, strict interpretation of Christianity
- 11) Passed in 1798 by the Federalist-controlled Congress and signed by President John Adams, the four Alien and Sedition Acts were meant to suppress internal dissent and protect national security during the "Quasi-War" with France. These laws restricted immigrant rights, authorized the deportation of "dangerous" foreigners, and criminalized false or malicious speech against the government, severely challenging early First Amendment freedoms.
- 12) Bankston Carl L. and Danielle A. Hidalgo (2006), *p:619*.
- 13) The Immigration Act of 1924, or Johnson-Reed Act, was a restrictive U.S. federal law signed on May 26, 1924, that established national origin quotas, limiting annual immigration to 2% of each nationality's population residing in the U.S. as of the 1890 census. It largely banned immigration from Asia and severely limited Southern/Eastern Europeans.

- 14) Lindsey Bailey,(2014), “What is Zero Population Growth, or ZPG?”, 2014.
- 15) Sebastian Normandin and Sean A. Valles,(2015) **
- 16) Heidi Beirich ,2010.
- 17) Raul A Reyes, 2019.
- 18) “Network Archive,”, 2021.
- 19) Uri Friedman, 2017.
- 20) The "Muslim travel ban" refers to a series of executive orders signed by President Donald Trump starting on January 27, 2017, which restricted entry into the U.S. from several Muslim-majority countries. Often called the "Muslim ban" by critics, it underwent multiple revisions, facing legal challenges before being formally revoked by President Joe Biden on January 20, 2021.
- 21) Elizabeth Kiehne, Elizabeth, Kiehne, Cecilia, Ayón,(2016), Volume 43,Issue 3, pp. 135–154
- 22) SciELO (Scientific Electronic Library Online), originally from Brazil, is a bibliographic database and a model for cooperative electronic publishing in Latin American, Caribbean and Iberian countries.
- 23) Latin America21 is a journalistic platform dedicated to political, economic and social issues about Latin America. It has consolidated itself as a collaborative, independent and pluralistic environment that advocates the dissemination of content that reflects regional developments
- 24) EU-28 refers to the European Union member states **viz.** Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden) plus the United Kingdom.
- 25) Mathias Czaika and Armando Di Lillo (2014), Viviana, Andreescu, (2017), Volume 11, Issue 1, pp:65 -97
- 26) Eldad. Davidov, Bart Meulemann, H Schwartz Shalom, Peter, Schmidt (2014), Volume 66, Issue 1, pp. 263–285
- 27) A geographical and cultural area in Northern Europe and the North Atlantic consisting of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, along with the Faroe Islands, Greenland, and Åland.
- 28) Mathias Czaika and Armando Di Lillo, *op. cit.*
- 29) Cooper, Frederick (2000), pp: 298–336.
- 30) Dieter Stiers, Marc Hooghe (2022), Volume 28, Issue 3, pp. 496-515.
- 31) Marc, Hooghe; Thomas, De Vroome, (2015), Volume 38, Issue 1, pp. 38-56.
- 32) Anastasia, Gorodzeisky; Anya, Glikman, (2018), Volume 65, Issue 4, pp. 543-563
- 33) The Piantadosi Decree (Decree-Law 1/2023, converted into Law 15/2023) is a January 2023 Italian law that restricts NGO search and rescue (SAR) vessels operating in the Mediterranean. It mandates immediate travel to assigned, often distant, ports after a rescue, preventing further operations, and imposes fines (€50,000) and 10-60 day vessel detentions for violations.
- 34) Denmark's "jewellery law," in effect since February 2016 as part of the Aliens Act, allows authorities to search asylum seekers and confiscate cash and valuables exceeding 10,000 DKK (approx. €1,340) to help cover their maintenance costs. Items of special sentimental value, such as wedding and engagement rings, are exempt.
- 35) Price & Oshagan, 1995; Chandler & Tsai, 2001
- 36) Rustenbach, 2010
- 37) Scheve & Slaughter, 2001; Mayda, 2006
- 38) Boeri & Brücker, 2005; Hanson, Scheve, & Slaughter, 2007; Facchini & Mayda, 2009
- 39) Scheve & Slaughter, 2001; Mayda, 2006
- 40) Facchini & Mayda, 2009
- 41) Espenshade & Hempstead, 1996
- 42) Gang, Rivera-Batiz, & Yun, 2002; Dustmann & Preston, 2007
- 43) Sides & Citrin, 2007
- 44) McLaren & Johnson, 2007
- 45) Chandler & Tsai, 2001
- 46) Burns & Gimpel, 2000
- 47) Markaki & Longhi, 2013; Rustenbach, 2010; Schlueter & Wagner, 2008
- 48) Rajzman, Semyonov, & Schmidt, 2003
- 49) Tobler's first law of geography states: “everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related than distant things”. Introduced by Waldo Tobler in 1970, this foundational concept posits that spatial proximity increases the likelihood of similarity or relationship between phenomena. It explains that interactions,, and characteristics are stronger or more similar in close proximity due to distance decay.
- 50) Mathias Czaika and Armando Di Lillo, *op. cit.*
- 51) Bibb Latané's social impact theory (1981) posits that the influence others have on an individual (social impact) is a multiplicative function of three key factors: strength (status/power), immediacy (physical/temporal

proximity), and number of sources. It suggests social influence is greater when influencers are powerful, close, and numerous.

52) The White Australia policy was a set of racist immigration laws, formalized by the Immigration Restriction Act 1901, designed to keep Australia predominantly white by restricting non-European (especially Asian) immigration, using tools like the discriminatory dictation test. It remained influential until gradually dismantled from the 1950s, with its final vestiges removed by the Racial Discrimination Act 1975, establishing Australia's multicultural society.

53) The "White New Zealand" policy was an informal, racially driven immigration stance from the late 19th century to the 1970s, aimed at restricting non-European, particularly Asian, immigration to keep the country predominantly white British. It was enforced through legislation like the Immigration Restriction Amendment Act of 1920, utilizing entry permits and personal, often discriminatory, vetting to maintain this status quo until the policy was abolished in 1974

54) Marko Valenta David Andreas Bell, Zan Strabac, and Mathew Mathews, <https://doi.org/10.1177/01171968251408861>

55) Capaldi MP (2023)

56) Gorodzeisky A, Semyonov M (2009) *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 32(3): 401–423.

57) James, Laurence; Akira, Igarashi; Kenji, Ishida (2022), Volume 101, Issue 1, pp. 369-403.

58) In 2018, the Yemeni civil war triggered a major international humanitarian crisis, with over 23 million people needing aid. Concurrently, a significant surge of over 500 Yemeni asylum seekers reached Jeju Island, South Korea, via Malaysia, utilizing a visa-waiver program. This influx sparked a national debate, anti-refugee protests, and debates over South Korea's refugee policies.

59) Full form of CAA is the **Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019**. Passed by the Parliament of India, it The full amends the Citizenship Act of 1955 to provide a fast-track, simplified path to Indian citizenship for religiously persecuted Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Christian minorities from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan who entered India on or before December 31, 2014; The National Register of Citizens (NRC) is a government-maintained record listing all legal Indian citizens, primarily aimed at identifying and deporting illegal immigrants, with a significant 2019 updation process focused on Assam to identify residents who arrived after March 24, 1971.

60) Michael, Lucy (2017),pp: 275–299.

61) International Organization for Migration, 2015.

62) *Ibid.*

63) Heath AF, Richards 2020;pp:489-511.

64) Ceobanu A, Escandell X. 2010;pp:309-28.

65) Bansak K, Hainmueller J, Hangartner D. 2016;pp:217-22.

66) Verkuyten M, Mepham K, Kros M, 2018;pp:901-18.

67) *Ibid.*

68) Hellwig T, Sinno A. J, 2017;pp:339-58.

69) Fasel N, Green EGT, Sarrasin O. ,2013;pp:253-62

70) Newman BJ, Hartman TK, Lown PL et al. , 2013;pp:583-607

71) Esses VM, Hamilton LK, Gaucher D. 2017;pp:78-123).

72) Maykel Verkuyten(2021), pp:132–133.

73) Andreas Wimmer, Bart Bonikowaki Charles, Crabtree Zheng Fu, Matt Golder & Kiyoteru Tsutsui,2024.

74) Social Dominance Theory (SDT) explains how stable societies develop and maintain group-based hierarchies (like age, gender, race, class) where dominant groups hold more power and resources, using "legitimizing myths" (stereotypes, ideologies) and institutional practices to justify inequality, though individuals differ in their preference for hierarchy (Social Dominance Orientation - SDO). Developed by Jim Sidanius and Felicia Pratto, it integrates psychology, sociology, and evolutionary ideas to show how systems of oppression (racism, sexism, etc.) persist through subtle discrimination and shared beliefs that justify privilege, with hierarchy-enhancing (supportive) and hierarchy-attenuating (equalizing) forces shaping society.

75) Moriconi, Simone; Peri, Giovanni; Turati, Riccardo (2018).

76) Igarashi, Akira, and Yoshikuni Ono.(2019).

77) Gorodzeisky, Anastasia; Semyonov, Moshe (2019).

78) *Hainmueller, Jens; Hiscox, Michael J. (April 2007),pp:399-442.*

79) Kaufmann, Eric (2017). pp. 4, 20–23.

80) Craig, Maureen A.; Richeson, Jennifer A. (2018). Pp:383–392.

81) Hispanic Americans are U.S. residents of Spanish-speaking descent, representing a diverse group from Spain, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and various Central and South American nations. As the second-largest

minority group in the U.S., they are often identified by their cultural roots, Spanish language, and, for many, a history of immigration

- 82) World Development Report, 2018
- 83) Volha, Chykina, (2024).
- 84) "Economic Impacts of Immigration: A Survey", (2011).
- 85) Clemens, Michael; Development, Center for Global; USA (2015).
- 86) "Migration and Development: Who Bears the Burden of Proof? Justin Sandefur replies to Paul Collier | From Poverty to Power". oxfamblogs.org. Archived from the original on 15 July 2016. Retrieved 3 July 2016.
- 87) Haas, Hein de (21 March 2017).
- 88) di Giovanni, Julian; Levchenko, Andrei A.; Ortega, Francesc (2015); Hillel Rapoport (20 September 2016).
- 89) Willenbockel, Dirk Andreas; Go, Delfin Sia; Ahmed, S. Amer (2016); "The Gain from the Drain – Skill-biased Migration and Global Welfare" (PDF).
- 90) Beine, Michel; Docquier, Frédéric; Rapoport, Hillel (2008); Tuccio, Michele; Wahba, Jackline; Hamdouch, Bachir (2016).
- 91) "Immigration and political stability" (PDF)
- 92) Reimann, Anna (2011).
- 93) Rohe, John F (2006).
- 94) Gushulak, B. D.; MacPherson, D. W. (2004).
- 95) The contact hypothesis (or intergroup contact theory) is a social psychology concept stating that interpersonal contact between different groups can effectively reduce prejudice and bias.
- 96) Ziller Conrad, Goodman, Sara Wallace, (2020), Volume 82, Issue 3, pp. 895-907
- 97) Thomas, Patrick W. (2013), Volume 20, Issue 2, pp. 1393-1423.
- 98) UN DESA Population Division, 2020b
- 99) Lesley Chenoweth & Donna McAuliffe (2018),

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