

Pew Report: Half of Americans Believe Immigrants are Bad for the Economy

Yesterday, Pew Research [released a report](#) which showed that 59 million immigrants have arrived in the U.S. in the last 50 years. This far exceeds the 32 million immigrants which arrived between 1840 and 1919.

The immigration debate can be quite sensitive for a number of reasons. For one thing, denying entry to a certain people or group can seem racist or discriminatory. For another thing, many of us were ourselves descended from immigrants, and it seems rather unfair to deny that opportunity to others.

Despite these sensitive issues, the Pew report demonstrated that many Americans fear immigrants are making life in the U.S. worse, particularly in the areas of the economy, crime, and social and moral values.



Unfortunately, these fears might have some grounds, particularly as [over half](#) of today's immigrants receive some form of welfare, and [nearly 40%](#) of federal crime sentencings are for illegal immigrants.

Pew also discovered that a majority of Americans believe that immigrants don't want to assimilate and truly adopt their new home.



Calvin Coolidge [once said](#),

“American institutions rest solely on good citizenship. They were created by people who had a background of self-

government. New arrivals should be limited to our capacity to absorb them into the ranks of good citizenship. ... Those who do not want to be partakers of the American spirit ought not to settle in America."

Does such a sentiment seem mean and heartless? Or is there a certain amount of wisdom in it that we could apply to America's current situation? Should our immigration policies be limited to those who are committed to self-government and the other principles upon which America was founded?

Image Credit: Bob Jagendorf