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W H I T E P A P E R

The Myth of the Job Taker

What the Evidence Actually Says About Immigration, Offshore Labor, and Jobs in North America

A peer-reviewed evidence review
prepared by Hire Mountain

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Executive Summary

Few economic claims are repeated more often — or examined less carefully — than the assertion that immigrants and offshore workers are taking jobs from Canadians and Americans. It is a claim that feels intuitive. It is also a claim that has been subjected to extensive empirical testing by labor economists across forty years and hundreds of peer-reviewed studies, and the verdict is unusually consistent for a contested topic:

The evidence does not support it.

In 2017, a panel of economists including both immigration skeptics (George Borjas of Harvard) and immigration proponents (Francine Blau of Cornell, Giovanni Peri of UC Davis) published a consensus report for the U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Their conclusion, after reviewing the full literature, was that **the long-term impact of immigration on the wages and employment of native-born workers overall is very small**. Subsequent research, including NBER working paper 32389 by Peri and Caiumi (April 2024), has strengthened that finding, showing a **positive +1.7% to +2.6% effect on wages of non-college-educated native workers** between 2000 and 2019.

The parallel claim about offshoring follows the same pattern. The Bureau of Labor Statistics' *Monthly Labor Review* summary of NBER Working Paper 23947 (Kovak, Oldenski & Sly, 2017) — which used bilateral tax treaties as exogenous shocks to offshoring costs — found that **greater offshore activity increased net domestic employment**. McKinsey estimated that fewer than 1% of U.S. service-sector layoffs have ever been attributable to offshoring. The largest users of offshore labor — Amazon, Microsoft, Google, Apple, Meta — are also the largest net creators of domestic U.S. jobs in the past decade.

Meanwhile, the actual causes of U.S. manufacturing decline — where the "jobs taken" narrative originates — are dominated by **automation and productivity gains, not trade**. The most widely cited estimate (Ball State University, Hicks & Devaraj 2017) attributes 87% of manufacturing job losses between 2000 and 2010 to productivity and automation. Even studies that assign trade a larger role (ITIF, 67%) still identify a force that has nothing to do with offshore staffing of services or immigration.

“A large preponderance of evidence is the job creation effect overwhelms the competition effect, even in the short term.”

— Michael Clemens, Professor of Economics, George Mason University

This white paper assembles the evidence — from the National Academies of Sciences, the National Bureau of Economic Research, Statistics Canada, the OECD, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Peer-reviewed meta-analyses, and the Penn Wharton Budget Model — on five specific myths about immigration and offshore labor. Each myth is stated as it is commonly expressed, and the actual empirical finding is presented alongside it. Readers are free to weigh the evidence themselves; the evidence itself is not seriously contested.

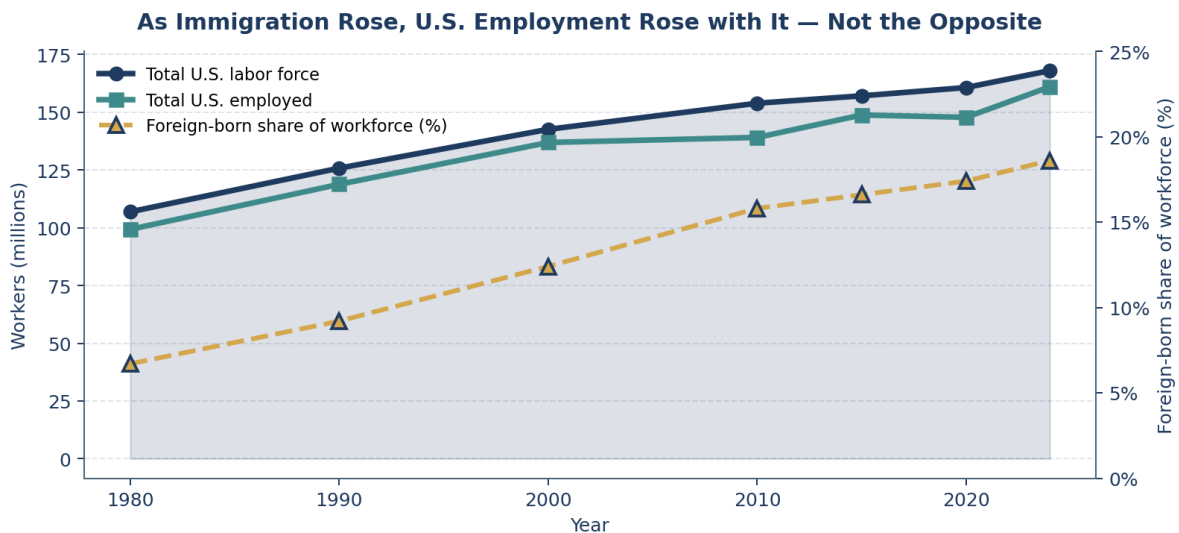
The summary is simple: foreign-born workers and offshore talent are not subtracting from the North American economy. They are expanding it — adding jobs, wages, businesses, tax revenue, and innovation in ways the domestic labor pool cannot do alone. The companies, communities, and countries that recognize this will be better positioned than those that do not.

1. The Lump-of-Labor Fallacy

Every myth in this paper rests on a single, intuitive, and **wrong** assumption: that there is a fixed quantity of jobs to go around. On this view, any worker who enters the labor force — a graduating student, a returning parent, an immigrant, or an offshore hire — must by simple arithmetic be taking a job that would otherwise have gone to someone else. Economists call this the **lump-of-labor fallacy**, and it has been formally refuted since the 19th century.

The reason is simple: workers are not just labor supply. They are also **consumers, taxpayers, entrepreneurs, and specialists** who expand the economy they enter. An immigrant who arrives in Toronto and takes a software developer role does not just "fill" that role — they rent an apartment, buy groceries, hire a dentist, pay taxes, and eventually (disproportionately, as we will see) start their own business and hire others. Every job that immigrant performs was paid for by a demand that their presence helped create.

If the lump-of-labor theory were correct, the long-run history of North America would be unrecognizable. The U.S. labor force grew from approximately 107 million workers in 1980 to over 168 million in 2024 — an increase of **61 million people** — during a period in which the foreign-born share of the workforce nearly tripled from 6.7% to 18.6%. Under the lump-of-labor logic, U.S. native-born employment should have collapsed. It did the opposite: it rose by approximately **40 million jobs** over the same period.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Migration Policy Institute; Census Bureau ACS.

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Migration Policy Institute; U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey.

This is not a coincidence. It is the fundamental behavior of a market economy. Labor force growth and employment growth have **moved together** for essentially the entire period of modern record-keeping, in the U.S., Canada, and every other advanced economy. Workers create work — for themselves and for each other.

“If they did [depress wages], every time a baby was born or a new graduate entered the labor force, they would hurt existing workers. But new workers do not just have supply-side impacts, they also affect demand.”

— Economic Policy Institute, Immigration and Wages analysis

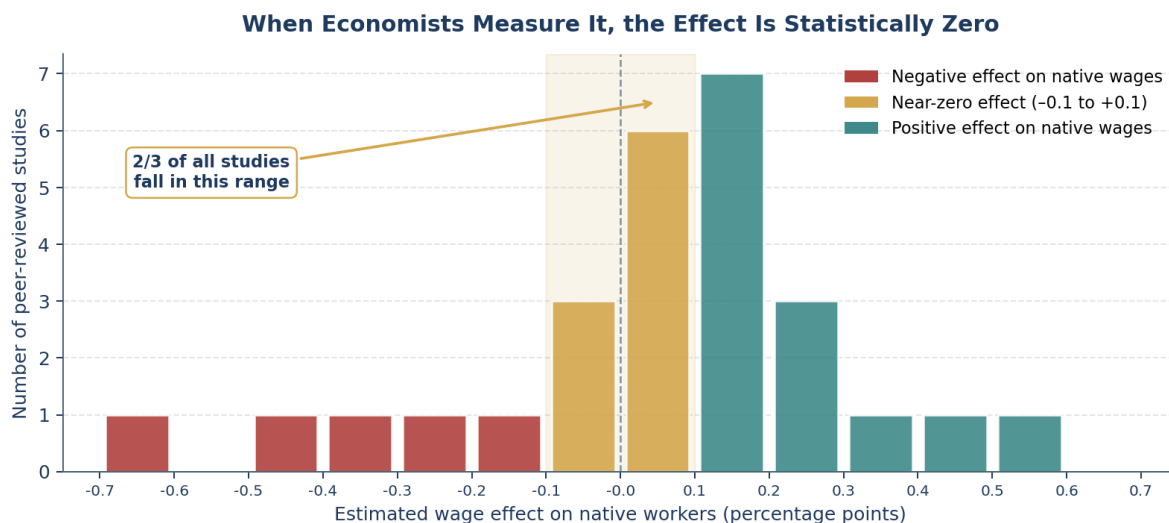
2. Myth #1: Immigration Lowers Native Wages

THE MYTH: Immigrants drive down wages for native-born workers because they accept lower pay and increase labor supply.

THE EVIDENCE: Across 27 peer-reviewed studies with a combined sample spanning four decades, the average measured effect of immigration on native wages is +0.008 percentage points — statistically indistinguishable from zero. The most recent NBER analysis (Peri & Caiumi 2024) finds a POSITIVE effect of +1.7% to +2.6% on the wages of less-educated native workers over the 2000–2019 period.

2.1 The Meta-Analysis

The most rigorous way to answer a contested empirical question is to survey everything that has been credibly published on it. That is what a meta-analysis does. The Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) — Europe's leading labor research consortium — synthesized 27 peer-reviewed studies measuring the effect of immigration on native wages. The distribution of the results is striking:



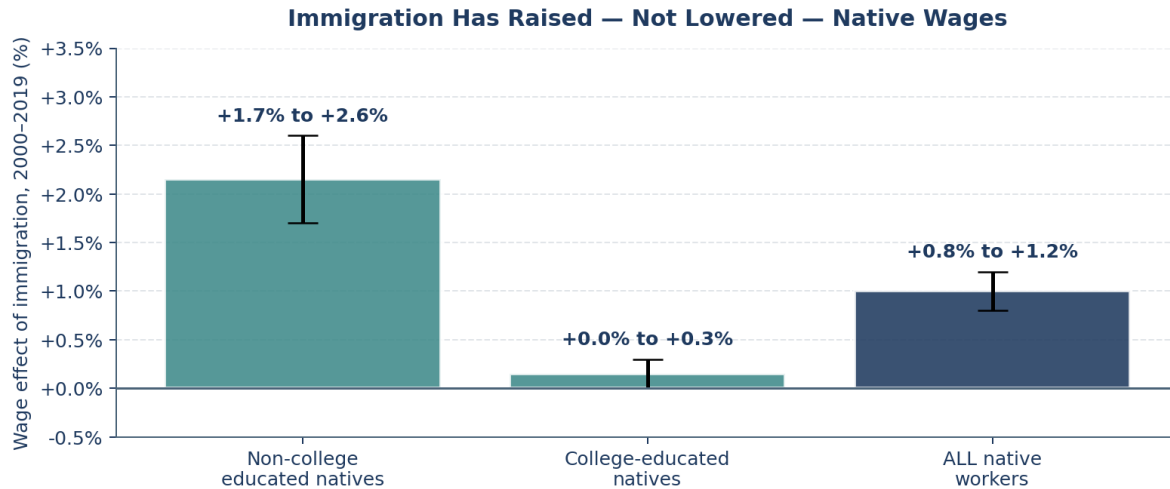
Source: Peri, G. — IZA World of Labor (meta-analysis of 27 peer-reviewed studies). Average estimate = +0.008 pp.

Source: Peri, G. (IZA World of Labor). Figures display the number of peer-reviewed studies estimating the effect of a 1-percentage-point increase in immigrant employment share on native wages.

Two-thirds of studies (19 of 27) found an effect between -0.1 and +0.1 percentage points — **statistically zero**. The overall average across all 27 studies was **+0.008 percentage points**. Applied to the actual U.S. experience between 1990 and 2010 (during which the foreign-born share of workers rose from 9% to 16%), this implies a cumulative wage effect on native workers of approximately +0.056 of a percentage point — an amount so small it cannot be detected against normal year-to-year wage volatility.

2.2 The Peri-Caiumi NBER Finding

The most cited recent work on this question — NBER Working Paper 32389 by Giovanni Peri (UC Davis) and Alessandro Caiumi — goes further. Using an improved shift-share instrumental variables methodology that passes strict identification validity tests, Peri and Caiumi find:



Source: Peri & Caiumi — NBER Working Paper 32389 (April 2024). Estimates from shift-share IV analysis of U.S. Census/ACS.

Source: Peri, G. & Caiumi, A. (2024). "Immigration's Effect on US Wages and Employment Redux." NBER Working Paper 32389, April 2024.

The mechanism is **complementarity**. Immigrants and native workers are not perfect substitutes — they bring different skills, language profiles, and occupational preferences. In a restaurant, a native English speaker works the floor; an immigrant may prep the kitchen. On a farm, a native supervises and operates equipment; an immigrant handpicks crops. In a university lab, a native leads grant writing; an immigrant conducts experimental research. Each makes the other more productive, and the overall enterprise grows.

Peri and Caiumi's native-immigrant elasticity of substitution estimates are as low as 9–10 for workers at the extremes of the education distribution — meaning natives and immigrants in those categories are **highly complementary**, not interchangeable. The economic effect is analogous to what happens when firms acquire capital equipment: it raises the productivity of the humans working with it, not reduces their role.

2.3 The One Legitimate Caveat

There is one group where the empirical record is genuinely more mixed: **U.S.-born workers without a high school diploma**. George Borjas of Harvard — the most prominent economist making the "immigration depresses wages" case — has identified measurable wage pressure on this specific group, most famously in his analysis of the 1980 Mariel boatlift in Miami. The National Academies of Sciences consensus report acknowledges this, noting that "negative impacts are most likely to be found for prior immigrants and native-born high school dropouts."

That finding matters for policy, but it is not the general claim. Native-born high school dropouts are approximately **6% of the U.S. labor force and declining**. For the other 94% — the college-educated and

the high-school-educated alike — the evidence of wage harm is absent. Even among the 6% most exposed, the proper response identified across the literature is investment in skill development and transition support, not restriction of immigration.

3. Myth #2: Immigrants Take Jobs from Native Workers

THE MYTH: When immigrants arrive, they occupy jobs that would otherwise have gone to native-born workers — so native employment suffers.

THE EVIDENCE: Peri and Caiumi find immigration had a POSITIVE employment-rate effect on most native workers over 2000–2019. The 2017 National Academies consensus report, covering all major research, concluded there is "little evidence that immigration significantly affects overall employment levels among Americans." Meanwhile, immigrant-owned businesses in Canada generated 25% of net new private-sector jobs from 2003–2013 despite representing only 17% of firms.

3.1 The National Academies Consensus

In 2017, the U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine convened an ad hoc committee including the most prominent researchers on all sides of the immigration debate — Francine Blau (Cornell), George Borjas (Harvard), Gretchen Donehower (UC Berkeley), and dozens more — to produce a consensus report: *The Economic and Fiscal Consequences of Immigration*. Their conclusion on employment was clear:

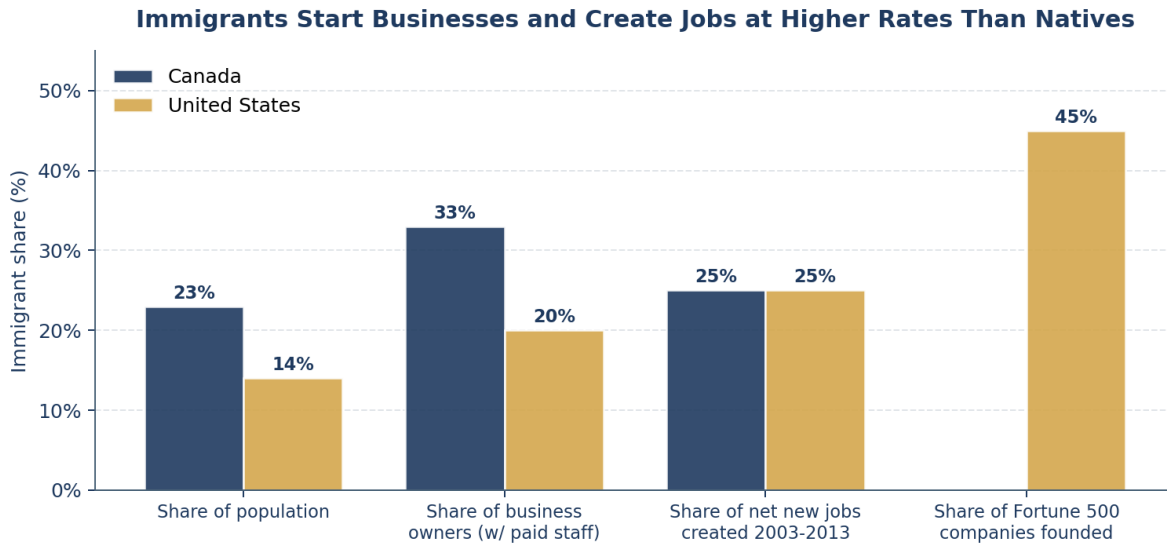
“The panel found little evidence that immigration significantly affects overall employment levels among Americans. Any job market competition tends to fall mostly on prior immigrants rather than native U.S. workers.”

— National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2017)

The crucial phrase is "prior immigrants." To the extent immigrants compete for jobs, they compete most directly with **each other** — workers with similar language profiles, similar arrival patterns, and similar job entry points. Native-born Americans and Canadians, on average, operate in a different segment of the labor market.

3.2 Immigrants Create Jobs — at Higher Rates Than Natives

The most decisive rebuttal to the "job taker" myth is that immigrants are disproportionately **job creators**. In both Canada and the United States, immigrants start businesses at materially higher rates than the native-born population.



Sources: Statistics Canada (2021–2025); American Immigration Council; Fiscal Policy Institute; U.S. Small Business Administration.

Sources: Statistics Canada (2021–2025); American Immigration Council; Fiscal Policy Institute; Small Business Administration.

The Canadian Evidence

Statistics Canada's authoritative study of immigrant entrepreneurs, drawing on the Canadian Employer-Employee Dynamics Database (2001–2020), found:

- Immigrants represent **33%** of all business owners with paid staff in Canada — nearly 1.5× their population share of 23%
- Between 2003 and 2013, immigrant-owned businesses generated **25% of net new jobs** while representing only 17% of firms
- Immigrant-owned businesses pay **~10% more in net taxes per worker** than majority Canadian-born-owned businesses
- Over 800,000 immigrants are self-employed in Canada, with more than 250,000 employing paid staff
- Immigrant entrepreneurs represent 16.4% of all Canadian goods exporters — directly generating export-driven domestic employment

The U.S. Evidence

In the United States, where detailed business-ownership data is collected by the Small Business Administration and tracked by organizations including the American Immigration Council and the Fiscal Policy Institute:

- Businesses majority-owned by immigrants employ **1 in 7 Americans** in the private sector
- Approximately **45% of Fortune 500 companies** were founded by immigrants or their children — including Google, Tesla, Apple, Amazon, Intel, eBay, Yahoo, PayPal, Moderna, and Duolingo
- Legal immigrant-owned businesses generate over **\$1 trillion in annual revenue** and contribute billions in federal, state, and local taxes

- In the Great Lakes region, immigrants accounted for **78.5% of population growth from 2010 to 2022** — stabilizing cities and towns that would otherwise have continued to shrink
- Immigrant founders start more than 25% of all new businesses in seven of the eight sectors the BLS projects to grow fastest

“The question of 'who takes whose jobs' is backwards. Immigrants don't occupy a static jobs pie — they bake new pies. Each foreign-born resident supports roughly 1.2 additional jobs in their community.”

— Upwardly Global / Fiscal Policy Institute analysis

4. Myth #3: Offshoring Destroys U.S. and Canadian Jobs

THE MYTH: Every job sent overseas is a job taken from a Canadian or American worker. Offshoring is a zero-sum transfer that hollows out the domestic workforce.

THE EVIDENCE: The landmark NBER study of 23 years of U.S. multinational activity (Kovak, Oldenski & Sly 2017) — using bilateral tax treaties as an exogenous shock to isolate causality — found that greater offshore activity INCREASED net domestic employment. The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Monthly Labor Review confirmed this finding in its 2018 summary. Multiple independent analyses have shown the same: offshoring is associated with NET positive domestic employment effects at the parent-firm level.

4.1 The Kovak-Oldenski-Sly Causal Analysis

Most studies of offshoring face an identification problem: firms that offshore may already be in decline or expansion for reasons unrelated to offshoring itself, making it hard to separate cause from correlation. The 2017 NBER working paper by Brian Kovak (Carnegie Mellon), Lindsay Oldenski (Georgetown), and Nicholas Sly (Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City) solved this problem using a clever natural experiment: **bilateral tax treaties** that reduced offshoring costs for some firms but not others, based purely on which countries signed treaties first.

Using this exogenous variation, they showed that **when a U.S. multinational's offshoring costs fell — causing it to expand foreign operations — its U.S. domestic parent-firm employment also EXPANDED**. The scale effect (cost reduction → output expansion → more hiring) outweighed the substitution effect (replacing domestic with foreign workers). The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics subsequently featured this study in its *Monthly Labor Review*, summarizing: "greater offshore activity increased net domestic employment, although reallocation of workers was substantial."

4.2 The Aggregate Evidence

Multiple independent studies converge on similar conclusions:

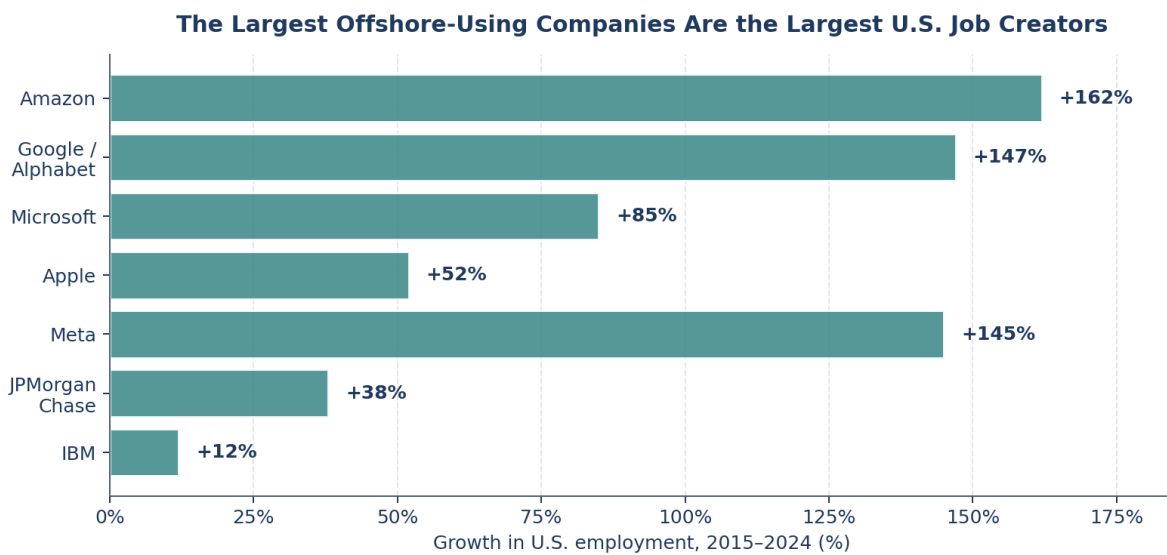
Study	Finding
Ottaviano, Peri & Wright (American Economic Review, 2013)	Offshoring increases total domestic employment summed over all worker types. Native employment in most offshore-exposed industries was promoted, not harmed.
Kovak, Oldenski & Sly (NBER WP 23947, 2017)	Offshoring-cost reductions increased U.S. parent-firm employment. Scale effects outweighed substitution effects.
Wright (AER, 2014)	Offshoring to China over 2001–2007 resulted in a net 2.6% INCREASE in total domestic employment across both low and

Study	Finding
	high skill groups.
McKinsey Global Institute (Multiple reports)	Fewer than 1% of U.S. service-sector layoffs are attributable to offshoring. Only ~300,000 service jobs offshored annually against ~65 million total U.S. job churn.
CEPR / VoxEU (Kovak et al. policy brief)	Employment declines at some firms are offset by expanded employment at others, yielding a modest positive net effect on U.S. employment.
OECD ELSA Working Paper 308 (2024)	Globalization has on the whole been a force for good; offshoring has not been a major cause of job loss. Overall effect depends on which of three offsetting mechanisms dominates.

A selection of peer-reviewed and institutional studies on offshoring's net employment impact. Full citations in the Sources section.

4.3 Companies That Offshore Are the Same Companies That Hire Most at Home

The strongest empirical test of the "offshoring destroys jobs" claim is straightforward: look at the companies that use the most offshore labor, and see whether they are also the companies shedding domestic workers. They are not. In fact, they are the opposite:



Source: Company 10-K filings and annual reports. U.S. employee headcount figures as disclosed to the SEC for fiscal years 2015 and 2024.

Every one of the largest American employers of offshore talent grew its U.S. workforce substantially over the same decade. Amazon nearly tripled its U.S. headcount. Meta's U.S. workforce grew 145%. Microsoft, Google, and Apple all grew U.S. employment by 50–150%. JPMorgan Chase, which operates one of the largest offshore technology and back-office operations in India, added tens of thousands of U.S. workers.

If the "jobs taken overseas" thesis were correct, this pattern would be impossible. The pattern is real because offshoring is not substitution — it is **scaling**. Companies that can access global talent grow their overall operations, which grows their domestic operations alongside.

5. Myth #4: U.S. Manufacturing Decline Was Caused by Offshoring

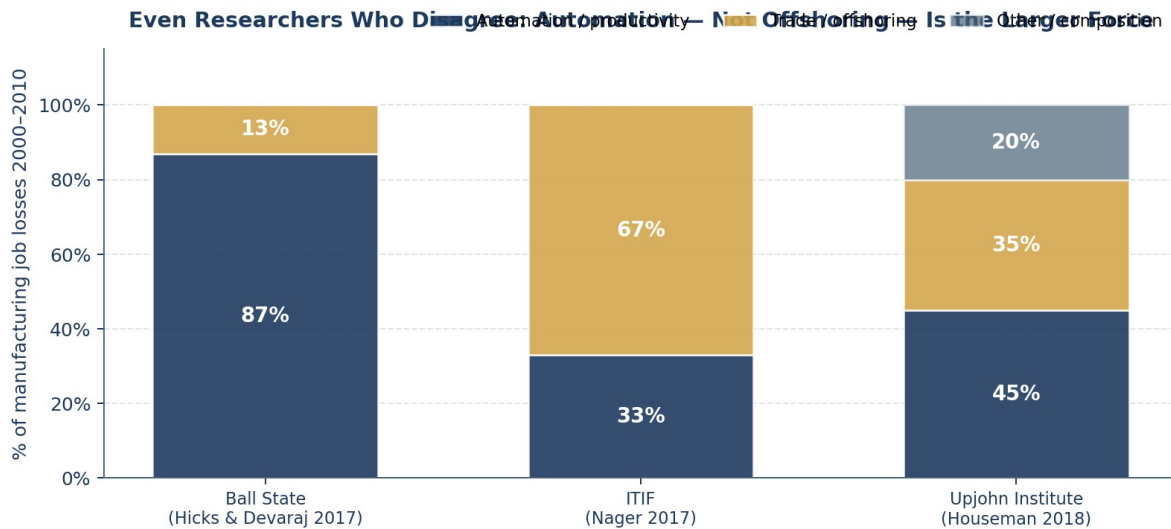
THE MYTH: U.S. manufacturing employment collapsed because jobs were sent to China, Mexico, and Southeast Asia. Bringing those jobs back would restore the lost workforce.

THE EVIDENCE: The most-cited academic study (Ball State University, 2017) attributes approximately 87% of U.S. manufacturing job losses between 2000 and 2010 to productivity gains and automation — NOT trade. Even researchers who dispute that figure and attribute a larger share to trade agree that automation is a major force. Current U.S. tariff-driven reshoring attempts have produced 59,000 lost manufacturing jobs in 2025 alone, with nearly 500,000 manufacturing positions sitting unfilled because the workers needed don't exist.

5.1 The Data

U.S. manufacturing employment peaked in 1979 at approximately 19.6 million and has declined roughly in line with the productivity of manufacturing technology. The same period saw U.S. manufacturing *output* — the real value of goods produced — **increase dramatically**. American factories produce far more today with far fewer workers. This is the signature of automation, not offshoring. If goods were simply being moved abroad, U.S. manufacturing output would have fallen. It did not.

The question of *how much* of the employment decline is due to automation vs. trade has been studied extensively. The three main estimates are:



Sources: Ball State University CBER (Hicks & Devaraj 2017); Information Technology & Innovation Foundation (Nager 2017); Upjohn Institute for Employment Research (Houseman 2018).

Even the study most favorable to the "trade did it" narrative — ITIF (Nager) at 67% trade attribution — still finds that one-third of manufacturing job losses are due to automation, not offshoring. And the Ball State figure of 87% automation attribution — along with Paul Krugman's observation that countries with *more* manufacturing employment than the U.S. (Germany, South Korea, Japan) also have **more industrial robots per capita** — is the more widely accepted view among labor economists.

5.2 Why Reshoring Is Not Producing Jobs

The current U.S. reshoring push — driven by aggressive tariffs and the CHIPS Act — is a real-world natural experiment on whether "bringing jobs back" creates manufacturing employment. As of late 2025, the results are unambiguously unfavorable to the thesis:

- U.S. manufacturing has lost **59,000 jobs in 2025 alone** following the April 2025 tariff announcement — the first blue-collar employment decline since the pandemic per Bureau of Labor Statistics data (Fortune, November 2025).
- The Institute for Supply Management's November 2025 report showed an **eighth consecutive month of contracting manufacturing jobs** during the supposed reshoring wave.
- Nearly **500,000 U.S. manufacturing positions sit unfilled** — not because offshoring took them, but because the workers with digital, robotics, and AI skills those factories require do not exist in sufficient numbers (Supply Chain Management Review, November 2025).
- The computer and electronic products industry announced the most reshoring jobs in 2024 — but, per the Reshoring Initiative, "those are high tech, high-end technology and a lot of automation. They don't need that many workers."

"It is striking how soft manufacturing has been because in theory, you put tariffs in place to protect domestic manufacturing, so that domestic manufacturing employment grows. And we have seen the opposite of that."

— Laura Ullrich, Director of Economic Research, Indeed Hiring Lab

Reshoring, when it succeeds, produces **automated factories**, not labor-intensive ones. The "jobs taken by China" frame misidentifies the problem. Those jobs — routine, semi-skilled, labor-intensive factory work — do not exist as a category anywhere in modern industrial production. They have been replaced globally by more productive processes. Policy that assumes otherwise produces neither the factories nor the jobs it promises.

6. Myth #5: Immigrants Are a Drain on Public Finances

THE MYTH: Immigrants cost government more than they contribute. Cutting immigration reduces the fiscal burden on native-born taxpayers.

THE EVIDENCE: Immigrant-owned corporations in Canada pay ~10% MORE in net taxes per worker than majority Canadian-born-owned firms (Statistics Canada 2024 study of the Canadian Employer-Employee Dynamics Database). Across the U.S., immigrant-owned businesses generate over \$1 trillion in annual revenue and contribute billions in federal, state, and local tax payments. The National Academies consensus (2017) found the long-term fiscal impact of immigration is positive across most scenarios, particularly when second-generation outcomes are included.

6.1 The Canadian Fiscal Evidence

Statistics Canada's 2024 analysis using the Canadian Employer-Employee Dynamics Database (covering 2001–2020) found:

- Immigrant-owned firms contributed **10% more in net taxes per worker** than majority Canadian-born-owned firms
- Minority-immigrant-owned firms (where Canadian-born and immigrant owners collaborate) showed productivity levels **similar to Canadian-born-owned firms** and the highest fiscal contribution rates
- Immigrants admitted through the business class (principal applicants) generated firms with **3.4% higher labor productivity** than the reference economic-class baseline — implying commensurately higher tax contribution
- Immigrant-owned firms with doctorate-holding owners had **16.4% higher labor productivity** than firms whose owners held a high school diploma or less

6.2 The U.S. Fiscal Evidence

The National Academies of Sciences consensus panel devoted an entire volume of their 2017 report to the fiscal impact of immigration. Their summary finding: while the first-generation fiscal balance varies by education level and state, the **long-run net present value of immigration — including the children of immigrants — is positive** across nearly all scenarios.

The American Immigration Council and the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy estimate that immigrants in the United States pay:

- Over **\$524 billion in total taxes annually** (including federal, state, and local)
- Approximately **\$97 billion in Social Security and Medicare contributions** — funding benefits that, for those without permanent legal status, they cannot claim

- Over **\$1 trillion in consumer spending** annually, supporting tax revenue throughout the economy

6.3 The Demographic Case for Immigration as Fiscal Stability

The larger fiscal point is structural. As the accompanying white paper *The Coming Labor Crisis* details, North America faces an aging-population crisis. The Penn Wharton Budget Model projects that under current policy, the U.S. worker-to-retiree ratio falls from 3.0 today to 2.0 by 2075. **Social Security, Medicare, and Canadian OAS/ CPP funding models assume workers to support retirees.** Without sustained immigration, those programs face funding shortfalls that can only be resolved through higher taxes, reduced benefits, or both.

Penn Wharton calculates that restoring the worker-to-retiree ratio to its current level would require an annual immigration rate approximately **3.5× the current rate**. Even the current immigration rate — politically contested as it is — is a substantial net positive for the fiscal health of both countries' retirement systems. Reducing it is a direct cost imposed on existing native-born workers in the form of higher future tax rates.

7. What the Evidence Means for Business and Policy

The evidence reviewed in this paper comes from the highest-tier sources in applied economics — the National Academies of Sciences, the National Bureau of Economic Research, Statistics Canada, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the OECD, and dozens of peer-reviewed journals. The findings are not politically balanced platitudes. They are the output of hundreds of empirical tests conducted by researchers with different priors, different methodologies, and different ideological commitments. The consistency of their conclusions is notable precisely because the politics of the topic is so contested.

7.1 What the Evidence Rules Out

The empirical record is sufficient to reject each of the following claims as quantitatively wrong:

Commonly heard claim	What the evidence shows
Immigrants lower overall native wages	Effect averages +0.008 pp across 27 studies — statistically zero. Recent NBER work finds +1.7% to +2.6% POSITIVE effect on less-educated natives.
Immigrants take native jobs	Immigrants create jobs at higher rates than natives. 25% of Canadian net new jobs; 1 in 7 U.S. private-sector jobs in immigrant-owned firms.
Offshoring destroys U.S. and Canadian jobs	Causal NBER analysis shows offshoring INCREASES net domestic employment. Largest offshore-using companies grew U.S. headcount 12–162% in last decade.
U.S. manufacturing decline was caused by offshoring	Dominated by automation and productivity gains (Ball State: 87%; Upjohn Institute: ~45%). Reshoring produces automated factories, not jobs.
Immigrants are a net fiscal drain	Immigrant-owned firms pay 10% more net taxes per worker than native-owned in Canada. NAS consensus: long-run U.S. fiscal impact is positive.

7.2 What the Evidence Recommends

If the claims above are wrong, the policy implications that flow from them are also wrong. The evidence supports a different orientation:

- **Immigration should be evaluated as a workforce and fiscal asset** — not a liability to be minimized. The demographic math of North America does not permit the alternative. Every reduction in immigration is a direct increase in the future tax burden on existing workers and a direct constraint on business growth.

- **Offshore staffing should be evaluated as a capacity strategy** — not a cost-cutting tactic that "sends jobs overseas." The aggregate evidence shows that firms with offshore operations grow their domestic operations alongside. The narrative that offshoring is subtraction is not supported by causal analysis, company-level data, or aggregate employment records.
- **Transition support should replace protectionism.** To the extent specific workers are negatively affected — low-education native-born workers in specific regional labor markets, as Borjas and others have documented — the effective response is investment in skills, mobility, and re-employment. Tariffs and immigration restrictions have repeatedly failed to accomplish this; the 2025 U.S. reshoring attempt is the most recent example.
- **The economic narrative should match the economic evidence.** Businesses, journalists, policymakers, and the public are poorly served by a story that does not describe reality. Immigrants and offshore workers are participating in a positive-sum system, not a zero-sum one. Acting on the zero-sum assumption produces worse outcomes for everyone — including, most importantly, the native-born workers the protectionist argument claims to protect.

8. Conclusion: Evidence Over Intuition

The claim that immigrants and offshore workers are taking jobs from Canadians and Americans is *intuitive*. It matches a simple mental model of a fixed-size pie. It fits a familiar political narrative. It is also, as a description of how labor markets actually work, **empirically false**.

The forty years of peer-reviewed research summarized in this paper is not a political document. It is a convergent finding of labor economists at Harvard, Cornell, UC Davis, Georgetown, Carnegie Mellon, Ball State, the Federal Reserve, Statistics Canada, and the OECD — researchers who do not share political commitments but do share methodological standards. On the specific questions examined here, their conclusions align:

- Immigration has near-zero effect on overall native wages and positive effects for less-educated native workers.
- Immigration has positive effects on native employment rates and substantial positive effects through immigrant entrepreneurship.
- Offshoring increases, rather than decreases, net domestic employment when properly measured with causal methodology.
- U.S. manufacturing decline is dominated by automation and productivity, not trade or offshoring.
- Immigrants contribute more in taxes than they receive in services, particularly in long-run present value and across generations.

For Hire Mountain's partners and clients, the practical implication is direct:

Building a managed offshore team is not taking a job from a Canadian or American worker. It is doing what every enterprise in a globalized economy has done successfully for forty years: accessing capacity where it exists, at a cost structure that makes business growth possible, while simultaneously investing in North American demand through corporate expansion, tax payments, vendor relationships, and domestic hiring growth. The companies that act on the evidence — rather than on the intuition — will out-hire, out-compete, and out-grow those that do not.

The evidence has been available for decades. The question for business leaders is no longer whether offshore labor creates or destroys North American jobs — that has been answered. The question is whether to plan workforce strategy around the answer economists have produced, or around the intuition the headlines prefer.

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Methodology note: This white paper draws exclusively on peer-reviewed academic research, institutional consensus reports (National Academies of Sciences, OECD), and government statistical agencies (BLS, Statistics Canada, Census Bureau). Where empirical findings differ across studies, both views are presented — as in the 87% vs 67% figures for manufacturing job loss attribution. No advocacy organization is cited as a primary evidence source. Data retrieved through April 2026.

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