

NEGATIVE POPULATION GROWTH

Press Release

For immediate release

Contact: Craig Lewis
2861 Duke Street, Suite 36
Alexandria, VA 22314

Phone: 703.370.9510 / Fax: 703.370.9514
media@npg.org / www.NPG.org



NEW NPG RESEARCH PAPER FOCUSES ON IMMIGRATION, POPULATION, LABOR AND THE ECONOMY

Calls for Shift in Immigration Policy to Restore Fairness to the Labor Market

Alexandria, VA (May 22, 2018) – Many observers have been voicing growing uneasiness about the degradation in the conditions facing America’s working and middle classes in the past few decades. To what degree are stagnating wages, decreasing prospects for mobility and the hollowing out of the middle class attributable to immigration? More importantly, what can we do to halt the worsening of the condition of the country’s workers?

According to a new research paper released by Negative Population Growth, the answer to those important questions will be largely determined by how successful our nation is in making critical changes to current immigration policies in the near future.

The NPG Forum Paper, [*Immigration, Population and the Labor Market: Toward a Fair System for American Workers*](#) is authored by respected Boston-based consultant John Thompson. The paper focuses on immigration, human capital and economic development in the United States, especially in the mid-20th century when the corporate sector thrived, prosperity was broadly shared, and labor unions were powerful – and how all of those pluses spun out of control in recent decades.

Thompson cites major changes in immigration policies in the mid-60s as being the major catalyst for dramatic change, which as he notes, originally promised few changes at all. He states: “The present system of immigration, which was introduced in 1965, was not envisaged as a return to high immigration but as a limited correction of perceived unfairness in the system of national quotas. The law’s proponents assured legislators and voters that 1) overall immigration would remain steady, 2) no surge of immigration from nontraditional regions or of unskilled persons would take place and 3) the country’s ethnic composition would not be affected. All these assurances have been proven wrong.” He continues: “Quantitatively, the law has resulted in a surge in immigration far beyond anything foreseen in 1965, when less than 200,000 persons were entering the country each year. Even considering that the population has risen 50%, immigration would still only be 300,000 annually if it had risen in proportion to population rather than over 1 million as it is.”

In his paper, Thompson presents an array of demographic and wage information and notes: “Since 1970, the American economy has been transformed from an economy with rising productivity, substantial social mobility and the highest wages in the world to the present situation in which the labor market is

segmented into 1) an elastic supply of low-skilled immigrants who mostly do menial jobs, 2) a cadre of skilled workers who do fairly well under the system and 3) a marginalized group of medium to low-skilled natives with stagnating wages and diminished prospects for mobility.” However, he adds: “It would plainly be an exaggeration to place all of the blame for the degradation of the labor markets on immigration or to portray the present globalized economy in entirely negative terms...Even in the absence of immigration, structural changes in the global economy would probably have worked against low to medium skilled workers.”

What’s to come? In looking to the future, Thompson stresses that “...After surging in the 1990s illegal migration dropped sharply after 2007. With minimal political resolve it should be feasible to maintain control of the border. However, the same coalition that supports higher legal immigration has also blocked enforcement of immigration laws. It is not inconceivable that if the present momentum of reform stalls, enforcement will also slacken. If global population trends unfold as forecast, hundreds of millions of persons from Africa and the Middle East are likely to try to enter the country as unlawful migrants or as refugees or asylum seekers.”

Thompson’s assessment of the economic and social impact of lax immigration policies fits right in with NPG’s goal to slow, halt, and eventually reverse America’s population growth. He concludes: “The solution is simple: 1) reduce immigration to the point that it makes no net contribution to population growth and 2) select immigrants who are less burdensome. A merit-based system as in the Raise Act, which is currently before Congress, is plainly a step in the right direction. However, it is not clear why the country has any interest in accepting large numbers – even of better-skilled immigrants. A reasonable objective would be zero net migration, i.e., the number of immigrants should be equal to those who leave the country. Future immigrants should consist mostly of children or spouses of citizens, with a small residual reserved for individuals of extremely high actual or potential accomplishment.”

At the end of his paper Thompson states: “In brief, it may not be possible to return to the Golden Age of 1945-1970 but it is possible to avoid the dystopian future that we face if we do nothing.”

Founded in 1972, NPG is a national nonprofit membership organization dedicated to educating the American public and political leaders regarding the damaging effects of population growth. We believe that our nation is already vastly overpopulated in terms of the long-range carrying capacity of its resources and environment. NPG advocates the adoption of its [Proposed National Population Policy](#), with the goal of eventually stabilizing U.S. population at a sustainable level – far lower than today’s. We do not simply identify the problems – we propose solutions. For more information, visit our website at www.NPG.org, follow us on Facebook [@NegativePopulationGrowth](#) or follow us on Twitter [@npg_org](#).