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## **U.S. immigration is less welcoming than 24 major nations. Trump's plan would put us behind 28.**

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America takes in fewer immigrants as a share of its population than most economically developed countries, and new proposals from Congress and the White House — several of which were rejected by the Senate on Thursday — would push the nation further toward the back of the pack.

Under the status quo, the United States welcomes about 3.3 immigrants annually for every 1,000 current residents, which puts it 25th among developed nations in welcoming immigrants. Only 10 countries of the 35 in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, a group of developed nations, have lower immigration rates per capita, according to projections based on OECD data.

The White House's proposed cuts to immigration, released last month, would move the U.S. further down on the list. The Trump administration's plan to end various forms of family-based migration and a diversity visa program would put America in the 29th position, meaning that six other nations included in the OECD — Mexico, Turkey and four countries in Eastern Europe — would have lower immigration rates. A more aggressive cut to legal immigration, introduced in the Senate by Sens. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) and David Perdue (R-Ga.) would also move America into the 29th slot. (These numbers were found by comparing 14-year averages of immigration flows for OECD countries with American immigration rates, as projected by the Cato Institute, under the Trump and Cotton-Perdue plans.)

A bipartisan plan that passed the Senate in 2013 to approximately double immigration would have raised America to the 15th position globally. That bill died in the House of Representatives.

Trump is pushing Congress to enact legislation dramatically cutting legal immigration rates, arguing that America is taking in too many people from around the world without proper vetting or scrutiny. If adopted, his plan would result in America's immigration rate falling from a little more than 1 million annually to about 600,000, depending on how it is interpreted, primarily by barring U.S. residents from sponsoring visas for certain categories of families. In exchange for the cuts, Trump has offered protections for 1.8 million young immigrants, known as “dreamers,” who became vulnerable to deportation after he ended an Obama-era program last fall.

“For decades, open borders have allowed drugs and gangs to pour into our most vulnerable communities,” the president said in his State of the Union address in January. “They have allowed millions of low-wage workers to compete for jobs and wages against the poorest Americans.”

Critics say that America does not have unusually high, or even above-average, levels of immigration for an advanced nation. “This shows the United States does not have the most generous immigration policies in the world and is one of the least generous countries, in many respects,” said David Bier, an analyst at the Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank that has opposed Trump's plan. “The administration’s proposal would make America an even more incredibly ungenerous country on immigration than it already is.”

People who favor immigration restrictions counter that America does take in a large number of immigrants overall. Germany takes in more than 800,000 immigrants annually — no countries other than Germany and America take in more than 500,000 — and political leaders there have faced a fierce backlash for doing so from the right. Under Trump's plan, America would take in fewer immigrants annually than Germany but still more than any other developed nation. The Cotton-Perdue plan would lead America to take in about 500,000 immigrants annually, while Spain takes in 457,826 and Britain accepts 403,435.

Michael Clemens, an immigration expert at the Center for Global Development, also noted that comparing American immigration rates to some European Union countries may not be fair, given that, for example, the “immigrants flowing into Luxembourg are [likely] very similar to the Luxembourgish.” But he noted that the same could not be said of Canada and Australia, both of which have higher per capita immigration rates than the United States and similarly diverse immigrant populations.

Several bipartisan proposals have emerged in the Senate to try to break the logjam over immigration. Sen. Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.) floated a plan earlier this week to create a pathway to citizenship for young undocumented immigrants in exchange for \$25 billion in border security and \$1.8 billion for a wall along the Mexican border. On Thursday, the Senate's new Common Sense caucus agreed to a plan with similar policies. Neither plan would cut overall levels of legal immigration, according to Senate aides, but the Trump administration has come out strongly in opposition.