



Study: Top India-based IT firms reduce visa hires, switching to cloud and AI

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June 5, 2017

India-based IT firms experienced a significant drop in high-skilled visa petitions in the 2016 fiscal year, a change that researchers think that has very little to do with the election of President Trump and his criticism of U.S. immigration policy.

The top seven India-based companies reported a 37 percent decrease (5,436 in total) in approved petitions for H-1B high-skilled worker visas from 2015 to 2016 according to research from the National Foundation for American Policy (NFAP) a nonprofit policy research organization [with links](#) to the libertarian Cato Institute think tank.

The seven firms include TCS, Wipro, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, HCL American, Larsen & Toubro and Mindtree.

The NFAP [posits](#) that the drop is the result of trends toward cloud computing services and artificial intelligence, which reduce the need for workers as well as a decision on the part of companies to beef up their domestic workforces. They argue that it's these factors, and not Trump's victory in November, that are responsible for the changes.

In April, Trump signed the "Buy American, Hire American" executive order. The order calls for a focus on hiring American workers and reforming the high-skilled worker visa application system to prevent abuses, such as companies relying on the program for a majority of their hires.

"Economists note that if policymakers want less 'outsourcing,' then they should increase immigration," the report reads.

"The more Congress and executive branch agencies restrict immigration, particularly the use of H-1B and L-1 visas, the more likely companies are to increase their investments outside the

United States, both in their own offices and affiliates, and through contracting out to other companies.”