



Why the immigration issue 'will not go away' for Americans

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Americans increasingly consider immigration to be the country's main issue — as well as a good thing for the country — indicating that the topic will remain at the front of voters' minds going into the 2020 election.

According to a recent [Gallup poll](#), a record 23% of respondents indicated that immigration is the main issue in the country.

“This means that the issue will not go away until policymakers find a way to resolve this issue to the satisfaction of American voters,” Alex Nowrasteh, the director of immigration studies at the Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank, told Yahoo Finance.

Americans don't seem confident that will happen anytime soon as politicians, most notably President Donald Trump, take hardline positions on immigration. And 26% of respondents said “the government” is the main issue facing the country.

Furthermore, a record 76% described immigration as a good thing for the country.

“America's demographic and workforce challenges mean we need more workers to grow and I think most people would agree it is much better that those future workers enter the United States legally,” Stuart Anderson, the executive director for the National Foundation for American Policy, told Yahoo Finance.

'Immigrants are an integral part of the American community'

Immigration was a main talking point during the first round of the Democratic presidential debates. Much of the focus was on President Trump's policies and sharp rhetoric, which has drawn rebukes from critics, particularly due to the current condition of immigrant detention centers.

“President Trump's focus on this policy issue, his actions, and public reaction to them have likely pushed people into having an opinion — and they are mostly not agreeing with him,” Nowrasteh said, adding that he's “not surprised” by the findings “as public opinion has been gradually moving in this direction for a long time.”

The poll indicates that 43% of Americans think that immigrants are making the overall U.S. economy better. On the contrary, though, 42% say immigrants are having a negative effect on taxes.

“People increasingly realize that immigrants are an integral part of the American community and our economy, which likely one reason why there is so much support for them than before,” Nowrasteh said.

Yahoo Finance previously reported on a study from the U.S. Census Bureau, which revealed that immigrant-owned tech firms are more innovative than U.S.-born entrepreneur firms. The key reason for these findings is because of “higher propensities to engage in innovation and R&D” compared to locally-owned firms.

Notable immigrants involved in tech firms include Google (GOOGL) co-Founder Sergey Brin from the former Soviet Union and Tesla (TSLA) CEO Elon Musk from South Africa.

“Given that immigration news stories have been front and center on television and in newspaper coverage, it’s not surprising that immigration is viewed as an important problem,” Anderson said. “That doesn’t mean, of course, that everyone has the same solution to the problem, or even that people agree on what the immigration problem is right now.”