

The solution to immigration is even more unknown than the journey.

We seem to be running into an immigration reality that we don't know how to face - that the questions of life are difficult to solve and the resolutions are always somewhat unknown.

The Trump Administration had an immigration policy that many derided as inhumane and uncaring. The Biden Administration has proposed a different solution and additional legislation, but is continuing to hold migrant children in detention centers. The effects on our humanity appear similar.

Rightly so, national dialogue on the topic has focused on the challenges that immigration creates for us, our tax distribution, our infrastructure and our ability to retain our heritage. These questions create practical consequences that generate emotional responses for nearly everyone.

A caring person might ask, what happens if we don't detain or deter them? They are left to navigate a system without resources, support, or education and the potential for increased crime or increased resources consumed would be less prevalent with a less welcoming policy.

The same person could also argue cynically that the tax base is shrinking, the birth rate is shrinking and more people in the economy long-term will have a positive effect on both output and tax receipts. Letting migrants participate legally as a part of the labor market will keep wages lower than if additional people weren't available and they will fill jobs that current Americans aren't as interested in performing.

People immigrate to find a better life, but Native communities can attest to the challenges immigration presents. More directly, many Americans may be wary of immigration because of the damning evidence of our own.

However, we are still faced with a decision.

No one, including me, seems to possess a sufficient answer for how we should proceed in this world so scarred from our past while accounting for people escaping their present.

Politics abounds with presumed answers, but can we tell ourselves that we, as a nation, have a grasp of the long-term results of any immigration policy? Rather, it is plausible to admit that we can't fully predict what happens in daily lives across the country when we broaden our immigration policies. It is reasonable to concede that there will be positive results, and there will be negative results, and human consequences will abound for each.

As the country to which people migrate to seek better lives, we have an incentive to set goals to ensure that ours get better as well.

We need to have fully integrated communities over the space of two or three generations and that integration needs to include higher economic outcomes for each of us coupled with increased opportunities for civic and political participation.

If we state our shared goals, we can work backwards to create the policies that have the highest likelihood of achieving them. These steps will cost money and the discussion is certain to be more complex than any we are currently having but the returns will be positive.

Discussion is the solution to the challenge of immigration and the goals we set for it. This action guarantees we learn to value the humanity of others while ensuring the benefits to the cynical and the hopes to the caring.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/feb/24/biden-is-locking-up-migrant-children-will-the-world-still-care-with-trump-gone>