

# TRUMP SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER RESTRICTING IMMIGRATION

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

Tough decision: President Donald Trump addressing media persons in the White House. AP Alex Brandon

U.S. President Donald Trump signed an executive order on Wednesday barring certain categories of immigrants from admission to the U.S. for 60 days, ostensibly to protect Americans' jobs at risk from the COVID-19 pandemic. The order has several exemptions, including for those who are already in the U.S. seeking to switch their visa status to permanent residency.

Mr. Trump had tweeted earlier this week that he would "temporarily suspend immigration".

"In order to protect our great American workers, I've just signed an executive order temporarily suspending immigration into the United States. This will ensure that unemployed Americans of all backgrounds will be first in line for jobs as our economy reopens," he told a press conference in Washington on Wednesday. He also suggested it could be amended or extended at the appropriate time.

The President's proclamation went into effect shortly before the country's weekly job report was released, showing that another 4.4 million Americans had declared themselves unemployed in the week ending April 18, taking the total number to some \$26 million since the pandemic began.

The immigration of the following categories of non-U.S. citizens is restricted for 60 days starting Thursday: those outside the U.S., those who do not already have a valid immigrant visa, those that do not have an official travel document other than a visa that is valid on the effective date of the proclamation "or issued on any date thereafter that permits him or her to travel to the United States and seek entry or admission".

## Chain migration

The new order, while in effect, will prevent individuals from bringing their parents, adult children, or siblings into the U.S. (Mr. Trump has called this "chain migration").

Entry into the U.S. for individuals who are already legal permanent residents is not suspended. The order also does not apply to spouses of U.S. citizens or those seeking entry on the EB-5 investor visa.

Some immigrant visa holders such as doctors, nurses, healthcare workers and COVID-19 researchers and their spouses and minor dependents are exempt from the suspension order

"Without intervention, the United States faces a potentially protracted economic recovery with persistently high unemployment," the presidential order reads.

"...Introducing additional permanent residents when our healthcare resources are limited puts strain on the finite limits of our healthcare system at a time when we need to prioritize Americans

and the existing immigrant population,” it said.

Last year, just over 1 million people got green cards as per Department of Homeland Security (DHS) data. Some 56% switched visa status from within the U.S. and 44% entered the U.S. on immigrant visas. The proportions for the 53,707 Indians who got green cards in FY2019 (year ending October 2019) were similar —with slightly less than half getting immigrant visas from outside.

Mr Trump’s policies have progressively tried to restrict both legal and illegal migration to the U.S.

Critics have said his latest policy is to distract from criticisms of his handling of the pandemic.

“President Trump now seeks to distract us from his fumbled COVID-19 response by trying to put the blame on immigrants. The truth is that many immigrants are on our front lines, protecting us as doctors, nurses, health aids, farmworkers, and restaurant workers,” Jerrold Nadler, a high ranking Democrat in the House of Representatives said.

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