



**Competition Without Displacement: Why High-Skilled Immigration Faces Resistance in
White-Collar America**
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Abstract

Resistance to high-skilled immigration in the United States is largely driven by perceived career competition rather than actual economic harm. Research consistently shows that immigration has limited average effects on native workers' wages and employment outcomes (Caiumi & Peri, 2024; Friedberg & Hunt, 1995). In many cases, immigration can also contribute to economic growth and productivity through labor market adjustments and specialization (Borjas, 2019). Despite this, opposition among native workers remains strong.

This paper argues that in white-collar labor markets, competition is structured through selective hiring, limited promotion opportunities, and pressure to advance within career hierarchies. Because these opportunities are scarce, new entrants can be perceived as direct competitors even when overall economic outcomes remain stable (Stier, 2015; Chance, 2023). This perception is intensified when those competitors are immigrants, since they may be viewed not just as coworkers but as outsiders within professional environments (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014).

As a result, resistance is shaped by both career-related pressures and identity-based factors, including stereotypes and status concerns. The paper concludes that opposition persists not because of widespread economic harm, but because of how competition is experienced in white-collar careers, and suggests that it may be reduced through more transparent advancement systems and greater interaction across groups in professional settings (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006).

Competition Without Displacement: Why High-Skilled Immigration Faces Resistance in White-Collar America

High-skilled immigration into U.S. white-collar labor markets has become a persistent source of controversy in public debate and workplace culture. What makes this controversy interesting is that it is not that well explained by a simple story of widespread economic harm. One cannot just say that the new immigrants from Asia are directly stealing American jobs and at the same time are also creating new companies to take away money from American companies. The issue is much more nuanced. Across a large body of labor economics research, the average effects of immigration on native wages and employment are often found to be small rather than full replacement of the native-born workforce. Yet resistance among native-born American workers, especially in professional and managerial labor markets where immigration is increasingly visible, has started to become very apparent (Caiumi & Peri, 2024).

This paper aims to address the puzzle of why native-born American workers are opposed to immigrants in their fields. I believe that opposition to high-skilled immigration in white-collar labor markets is driven less by tangible wage or employment losses and more by perceived career competition. In professional labor markets, competition is frequently experienced through bottlenecks such as promotions and other career-advancing situations rather than through immediate wage cuts. Hiring methods, limited promotions, and scrambling for credentials can

create a subjective sense of zero-sum threat even when the reality may not be as dangerous. In that environment, immigration seems to be worsening rivalries for achievement and not simply acting as an adjustment in supply and demand that shows up in wage data. This means that native-born workers see immigrants as obstacles in the already competitive climb through the white-collar career ladder. This view of immigrants as obstacles may also be due to racism (See section titled: II. Motivations Behind Resistance to High-Skilled Immigration in White-Collar Labor Markets).

This paper focuses on the United States and examines high-skilled immigration in white-collar labor markets, meaning non-manual, usually office-based work that mostly requires a formal education or specialized training. These types of jobs are often associated with a defined career ladder and can include managers, lawyers, accountants, consultants, financial analysts, and programmers. What characterizes white-collar jobs over others is the more analytical and managerial work that they do (Güven, 2021; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). The paper aims to address a narrower question: why resistance persists even when research often finds limited evidence of widespread wage or employment displacement at the level of the workforce as a whole (Borjas, 2019). High-skilled immigrants in the United States are drawn from a small number of countries, particularly in Asia. Research from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine shows that a large share of high-skilled visa holders come from countries such as India and China, and they are concentrated in professional sectors including technology, engineering, and medicine, where formal credentials and specialized skills are required (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017). Due to the fact that these groups are highly concentrated in these specific areas, they are much more visible in issues regarding debates around immigration into white-collar fields.

To develop this argument, the paper gathers insights from different methods that are often discussed separately. First, I review research on the impacts of immigration on the labor market, showing what the evidence suggests about wage and employment effects in white-collar contexts. Second, I examine research on attitudes toward immigration, focusing on how perceptions of the labor market, national identity, and socioeconomics shape a person's responses to skilled immigration. Third, I draw on work in psychology and intergroup relations to explain why perceived competition continues, even if there is little proof that people are actually losing out on opportunities. Finally, I suggest certain solutions that can be used to mitigate the issue.

Initially, I predicted that the resistance to high-skilled immigration in U.S. white-collar markets was due to economic factors. I believed that native workers' wages may be dropping or the volume of jobs available may be lower. However, after analyzing the literature, I have concluded the following: in the United States, native resistance to high-skilled immigration in white-collar labor markets persists despite limited evidence of widespread wage or employment displacement, suggesting that perceived career competition and racial prejudices play a larger role than realized economic harm.

In this paper, "resistance" refers to native-born Americans who are in opposition to skilled immigration, expressed through policy preferences, workplace attitudes, and exclusionary

dynamics within professional environments. This can include preference for restrictive immigration policy, negative beliefs about immigrants' labor-market effects, or informal gatekeeping and bias within firms and professional networks (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014). The paper treats these as related outcomes that may share common psychological and social motivations. Social drivers may include racial or cultural prejudices along with intense nationalist ideals. "Perceived career competition" refers to beliefs that high-skilled immigrants threaten natives' career paths through intensified competition for scarce opportunities, even when large average wage or employment losses are not observed (Chance, 2023). In white-collar labor markets, perceived competition is especially likely to appear in situations such as selective entry jobs, prestigious internships, promotion slots, and credential signaling where titles and credentials serve as proof of someone's ability. All of these situations are bottlenecks because they only allow a limited number of people to pass through and leave others behind. Because these markets often reward relative rank and status, perceptions of threat can persist even when economic harms are small, diffuse, or concentrated only in specific niches (Stier, 2015).

Labor Market Effects of High-Skilled Immigration

One of the main concerns in debates over high-skilled immigration is its impact on native workers' wages and employment. The intuition is basic: increasing the supply of skilled labor might decrease wages or employment opportunities for native workers. That is because immigrants and natives could potentially compete for the same positions.

However, across the research, the dominant finding is that the average labor market effect of immigration on native workers is not extreme at all. The literature shows small average wage effects and little evidence of large-scale employment displacement, found using updated data and improved empirical methods. Friedberg and Hunt (1995) show that across decades of research, immigration tends to have small average effects on native wages and employment, with limited evidence of large-scale displacement, although localized impacts can occur. However, these findings do not say that immigration has no effects at all. Rather, they suggest that the magnitude of the effects is more limited and more complex than people commonly assume (Friedberg & Hunt, 1995). The research is showing that the predicted wage-displacement does not actually exist. However, the resistance is still persisting despite this.

High-skilled immigration into the United States is focused in professional white-collared industries like technology, engineering, and medicine (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median weekly earnings of foreign-born workers were about \$1,001 in 2024 compared with \$1,190 for native-born workers (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024). The wages that these foreign workers work for are not that different from the native ones. That means that companies are not fully incentivized to only hire immigrant workers for cheaper pay.

In fact, contradicting this idea of immigration lower pay, evidence focusing on the United States provides a picture of economic benefit. Caiumi and Peri (2024) analyze the labor market effects of immigration over the period from 2000 to 2019, with additional attention to the post-2019 period. Their findings show that immigration actually raised wages for native workers

with a high school education or less by approximately 1.7 to 2.6 percent from the years 2000 to 2019. For college-educated natives, who are more likely to work in white-collar occupations, the study finds no statistically significant wage effects (Caiumi & Peri, 2024). In other industries, immigrants help to improve the market. However, in the white-collared industries, there is little wage change. The fact that there is little wage change is crucial. Immigrants coming into the white-collared market are not making it worse than before. Combined with their benefits in other sectors, immigrants began creating a net positive benefit on the economy.

Just like wages, employment effects follow a very similar pattern. If high-skilled immigration was depriving native workers of their jobs, one would expect to see declines in employment among native workers. However, in their paper, Caiumi and Peri (2024) find no evidence of declines in employment. Native employment rates rise for most groups, and even in the 2019 to 2022 period the wage effects for less educated natives remain small but positive. That means people's wages are not drastically changing and for some they are even increasing (Caiumi & Peri, 2024). Together, these patterns support the idea that labor markets adapt to changes in worker populations in ways other than just replacing one worker for another. Adding more immigrants is once again not working to damage the economy.

Beyond wages and employment, immigration also affects the economy through productivity and growth channels. Borjas (2019) argues that immigration increases overall economic output by expanding the size of the workforce. In standard growth models, a one-time increase in labor supply raises total GDP but can temporarily reduce per capita income until capital adjusts (Borjas, 2019). Due to the setup of white-collar markets as shown above, a greater influx of immigrants actually leads to greater benefits. With more workers in the white-collar workforce, the American economy is able to expand and increase profitability. That increase in profitability spreads out throughout all the workers in the market, benefiting everyone. Immigrants entering the United States are actually helping to make the jobs of all others easier as well.

Borjas (2019) also discusses the net gain to natives from immigrants after accounting for distributional effects. Empirical estimates suggest that this surplus is relatively small in terms of the whole, on the order of approximately 0.29 percent of GDP in the short run. At the same time, the gains and losses are unevenly distributed. Native workers who are close substitutes for immigrant labor may experience modest wage pressure, while capital owners and complementary workers may benefit from lower production costs and expanded output. Importantly, Borjas emphasizes that high-skilled immigration is more likely to generate positive long-run effects if it produces human capital spillovers or raises the productivity of native workers (Borjas, 2019). The structure of the white-collar workforce that places importance on employers is what creates more openings for immigrants. Upon entering, immigrants indeed do have some negative effects such as exerting wage pressure, but over the long term, they instead work to better the economy.

To better interpret these results, it helps to be explicit about how white-collar labor markets differ from low-skill markets. A major share of job growth in modern economies occurs in high-skilled occupations that typically require academic credentials and are associated with higher pay and better working conditions (Stier, 2015). In these markets, the outcome is often

not just whether or not someone has a job but also the quality of the job and the growth opportunities it offers. Stier (2015) emphasizes that job quality includes features such as job security, autonomy in the job, development of skills, and opportunities to advance in one's career and not just wages (Stier, 2015). This matters because white-collar careers are defined through things like promotions, selective positions, and credentials. All these factors can create competition that is not present in other types of labor markets (Stier, 2015). That is because in this particular environment, people with the same or similar skills are forced to out-compete one another just to get that promotion. Not everyone is able to get the same promotion, so that competition can create opposition.

This structure changes how workers experience labor market pressure. If a market is organized around advancement ladders, then competition shows up as increasing difficulty in getting a promotion, more selective hiring, or increasing credential expectations rather than just a drop in wages. In other words, even when the evidence finds little average wage decline for college-educated natives, workers may still encounter competition, and create their resistance, at the bottlenecks that matter for status and long-run career outcomes.

Essentially, the influx of immigrants does not broadly harm native-born workers. Their wages remain the same if not increased, and the national economy does nothing but expand with more workers. Despite this, there is still substantial resistance to immigrants seen in the white-collar native workforce. That resistance can be attributed to workers perceiving the incoming immigrants as competitors in an already crowded career-ladder competition. However, even among native-born workers there is already intense competition. Why would they care if the competitor is from the United States or not? The next section analyzes other factors such as prejudices and nationalism that fuel the resistance to immigration from white-collar native workers.

Motivations Behind Resistance to High-Skilled Immigration in White-Collar Labor Markets

A key puzzle motivating this paper is that resistance to high-skilled immigration can remain intense even when the typical, economy-wide estimates of wage and employment displacement for natives are small. This mismatch between economic evidence and political or workplace hostility suggests that: a) people may be reacting to narrower, career-relevant bottlenecks rather than to average labor market effects, and b) attitudes are often shaped by symbolic, identity-based concerns that are not reducible to wages. Large reviews of immigration opinion consistently find that personal economic self-interest is usually not the dominant cause of popular attitudes. Instead, concerns about how immigration supposedly affects the country and concepts like ethnic stereotypes and nativism play a larger role. (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014).

When people say “racism,” they often imagine overt aggressiveness or explicit claims of someone being inferior based on their race. In modern U.S. politics, prejudicial motivations are more indirect. They can appear as resentment based on morals, beliefs about who is “deserving,” discomfort with demographic change, or assumptions about cultural compatibility and belonging. Classic public opinion work distinguishes between “old-fashioned” racism and

newer forms, often discussed as symbolic racism or racial resentment, where political choices are shaped by hostility based on morals and stereotypes even when people deny personal prejudice (Kinder & Sears, 1981). This matters for immigration because opposition to it can be justified in race-neutral language (for example, “protecting our culture” or “they do not fit”), while still tracking racial group boundaries and status hierarchies.

Immigration often gets racialized, so attitudes about race and immigrants move together. A major reason racial prejudice can powerfully shape immigration attitudes is that immigration is not perceived as the abstract policy about labor supply that it is. It is instead perceived as the movement of particular racial groups, and those groups become the target of political imagery and media emphasis. In the U.S., research has documented that immigration attitudes and racial attitudes have become increasingly intertwined over time. Analysis of high-quality survey trends finds that views on immigration and racial resentment grew more strongly correlated over recent decades, and both became more strongly tied to partisan polarization (Hout & Maggio, 2021). In other words, immigration opinion is not simply just someone’s economic reasoning. Instead, it is frequently bundled with racial and identity conflict.

That idea of bundling helps explain why the same underlying economic facts can produce very different reactions across different people. If immigration is actively processed through an “us versus them” lens, even high-skilled immigrants may be evaluated less as contributors and more as outsiders who threaten the group. This can be especially prevalent in white-collar labor markets where social networks, organizational culture, and informal gatekeeping matter for advancement (Akerlof & Kranton, 2000). Even when wages do not fall, in-group members may experience anxiety about who will be promoted, respected, or seen as leadership material.

Shifting towards the media, peoples’ opinions can be shaped by coverage and political discussion of certain groups. Brader et al. (2008) argue that general ethnocentrism (the idea of evaluating other cultures from the lens of your own) tends to predict unfavorable views of immigrants, but they also show that effects that focus on certain groups become especially powerful when immigration is repeatedly framed around a particular out-group. That just means that the media focuses on one race of people like latinos for example. Their evidence suggests that news coverage of immigration mentioned Latinos far more than other groups beginning around the mid-1990s. It also suggests that attitudes toward Latinos in particular accounted for a lot of the effect of ethnocentrism on immigration opinion in that period (Brader et al., 2008). The media caused the negative opinion toward this group by focusing on them more.

The reactions keep worsening as more negative press is created around immigrants. For instance, a well-known experiment project reports that negative immigration news increased opposition, and that perceived threat to one’s “way of life” rose broadly in response to immigration stories (Brader et al., 2008). These dynamics help explain why workplace or political resistance can persist even when labor market evidence is mixed: media cues and narrative framing are very effective at swaying a person’s opinion.

Furthermore, moving away from the media, status perception is another factor of a native-worker’s feeling of threat. Status threat arguments emphasize that members of historically high-status groups may feel “under siege” as demographic change increases and as institutions display more diversity in elite roles. Mutz (2018), using a representative panel that

tracked the same individuals from 2012 to 2016, finds little support for a simple “pocketbook hardship” explanation of 2016 vote shifts and instead concludes that changes were more consistent with anxiety among high-status groups and perceived threats tied to racial diversity and globalization (Mutz, 2018). While this study is about electoral behavior, it provides a psychological mechanism. When hit with a perceived loss of status, people in a group begin to act defensively, resisting against whatever is forcing that change.

In the context of white-collar labor markets, this defense fits a common pattern. A person’s resistance may target high-skilled immigrants not because the average wage falls, but because immigrants become visible competitors in prestige and leadership tracks. The threat becomes about who gets to represent the firm, who advances into authority, and what the professional in-group looks like.

However, there does not even need to be a loss of status for the resistance to be triggered. Jardina’s 2019 work on white identity politics shows that many individuals express concern that whites are losing influence within their countries and these attitudes correlate with colder feelings toward immigrants and stronger endorsement of beliefs like immigrants taking jobs (Jardina, 2019). Even when people are not economically marginalized, viewing the world solely through a single political identity can cause these people to interpret immigration as a threat to their in-group instead of just another factor in the broader economy.

If resistance were mainly driven by mistaken beliefs about how immigrants are changing a society, simple factual correction should reduce opposition. But evidence suggests that this often fails, consistent with the broader claim that attitudes are partly symbolic and identity-based. Hopkins et al. (2019) report that even though providing accurate information can reduce misperceptions about immigrant population size, it does little to change attitudes toward immigration across multiple experiments. They suggest that those misperceptions may be driven by underlying attitudes. (Hopkins et al., 2019). Essentially, people’s misconceptions are not coming from a form of being misinformed; instead, the misconceptions are directly coming from the person’s already existing attitude, despite the new facts that they are getting.

That said, sometimes information does move opinion when they directly connect to a concrete labor-market narrative. Haaland and Roth (2020) show that giving respondents research evidence about a real immigration episode (the Mariel boatlift where massive amounts of Cubans came to the USA) and its minimal wage and unemployment effects actually increased support for immigration. This increase included changes in expressed policy preferences and real petition-signing behavior (Haaland & Roth, 2020). That suggests that having tangible examples of how immigrants really work within the economy does a better job at helping to clear up a misperception than just providing information alone.

Finally, resistance to high-skilled immigration is often intensified by the characteristics of immigrants that the native population does not share. For example, a person’s accent or way of dressing. Pew Research Center’s national survey work on Asian Americans documents how commonly Asian Americans report being treated like foreigners in ordinary encounters. These include experiences where people assume they do not speak English or tell them to “go back” to their “home country” (Ruiz et al., 2023). Ruiz et al. also point out that many high-skilled

immigrants in U.S. professional labor markets come from Asia. Even though it can start at ordinary encounters, the perception can move into other areas such as work life.

Organizational research also shows that accent and other non-visual characteristics can trigger stereotyping and discrimination. A recent review argues that workers with non-American English accents often face negative workplace experiences and that these experiences can be explained by stereotypes or by lower processing fluency (Stone et al., 2020). This matters because even when employers are not explicitly xenophobic, they may view foreign characteristics as something that signals lower competence. That can undermine the work of an immigrant. Additionally, if that immigrant begins to advance within the workplace, other native workers may perceive them as unfit because of their foreign characteristics.

Interim discussion

Taken together, the evidence is consistent with a framework in which white-collar resistance to high-skilled immigration is often driven by a blend of perceived career competition and threats to someone's perceived group. Under this view, immigration becomes a symbolic conflict over group boundaries and status, so opposition can persist even when average labor-market harms are small (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014; Mutz, 2018; Brader et al., 2008). This sets up the final section of the paper: recommendations should address not only policy design but also the psychological and social roots of resentment that shape public opinion and workplace dynamics.

Methods of reducing the resistance

Reducing resistance to white-collar immigration has real tangible benefits. It is unfair to deny someone equal opportunities based on their origin. There are also other benefits to reducing resistance. First, immigration attitudes have become tightly connected to partisan polarization and to racial resentment, making immigration a recurring driver of political conflict and policy instability (Hout & Maggio, 2021). Thus, helping to alleviate tensions with immigrants entering the white-collar workforce would directly help alleviate political instability within the United States.

Second, resistance can translate into workplace discrimination and exclusion, harming immigrants' opportunity sets and also undermining efficient talent allocation in high-skill labor markets (Stone et al., 2020; Ruiz et al., 2023). That takes away the right of immigrants to pursue opportunities like everyone else. On top of that, it is harming the labor market by denying talents that might have been beneficial for the market to grow.

Third, persistent resistance can distort firms' ability to match skilled workers to the roles where they are most productive because "fit" judgments and informal gatekeeping can overrule formal credentials and demonstrated performance (Rivera, 2012). Essentially immigrants might be placed in jobs based on social perceptions rather than technical skills. That would mean that immigrants are getting placed into positions such as admin work even though they are more skilled at programming, just because of resistance to immigrants and a desire to keep the workplace satisfied. By reducing that resistance, both parties benefit, with immigrants receiving desirable opportunities and companies getting the best minds on their important tasks.

We discussed why it would be good to reduce this resistance. Now let's get into how exactly we achieve that. Experiments summarized by Hopkins et al. (2019) indicate that giving accurate information about immigrant population shares can reduce misperceptions but often does little to change attitudes toward immigration. This implies that many people's factual beliefs may rationalize deeper identity-based orientations (Hopkins et al., 2019). That said, communication can work when it targets labor-market threat narratives. Haaland and Roth (2020) show that providing people with credible evidence of minimal adverse labor-market impacts can change beliefs and increase expressed support for immigration. It also increases signing of real online petitions (Haaland & Roth, 2020). By comparing both of these outcomes, the difference becomes clear. Just the information alone will not reduce the resistance. The strategy through which the information is communicated must be altered. People providing information about immigrant populations should use believable examples, define which labor aspect is being discussed (wages vs. promotions vs. job assignment), and speak directly to the concerns people actually experience instead of relying on intangible pro-immigration moral claims (Haaland & Roth, 2020; Hopkins et al., 2019). Through grounding these claims in something tangible, people are more likely to see the importance of the statistics and lower their resistance.

The next set of solutions is inside workplaces, where white-collar resistance is produced. Rivera (2012) documents that hiring in elite professional settings can operate through "cultural matching," meaning decision-makers screen for perceived similarity and fit alongside (or instead of) skills. If they do not define what the "fit" of an immigrant is, it can be a socially acceptable cover for excluding outsiders (Rivera, 2012). Organizational research on accent discrimination reinforces that non-standard accents can operate as powerful out-group cues with negative work outcomes, through both stereotyping and processing fluency (Stone et al., 2020). The current system is basically allowing for resistance to immigrants to occur without explicitly showing it. People can be denied advancement in their careers and not be told the real reason because the employer can simply report another reason. Additionally, by giving employers discretion in their evaluation practices, it becomes easier to score immigrants negatively. The practical fix is to use structured interviews, explicit scoring rubrics, calibrated promotion reviews, and transparency about what earns advancement (Stone et al., 2020; Rivera, 2012). In that way, selection processes can be truly based on the merits of someone's character instead of what their background may be. That eliminates the structure that even makes the resistance possible in the first place.

Finally, a third fix is forcing contact and the creation of connections. Pettigrew and Tropp's (2006) meta-analysis synthesizes a large body of studies and finds that contact between groups is typically associated with reduced prejudice across many contexts (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Having exposure to different people helps people to understand each other better since there is less left to the imagination. As native born workers continue to interact with immigrants and begin to understand them more, they begin to accept them. That acceptance overcomes the resistance. More and more cross-cultural connections dispel the resistance that native workers held against immigrants and make it easier for them to accept. For these white-collar firms, the suggestion is not just some "diversity event." Instead it would be task-relevant collaboration (mixed project teams), mentorship relationships, and equal-status professional interaction that can reduce anxiety and weaken the "us versus them" interpretation of workplace

competition (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). We must create more opportunities for people from different backgrounds to work together and understand each other.

Conclusion

Across all the research, high-skilled immigration has been shown to not produce widespread wage declines or unemployment among college-educated native workers (Caiumi & Peri, 2024; Friedberg & Hunt, 1995). Labor markets frequently adjust to the changes brought by immigrants through specializing in tasks, growing in productivity, and expanding capital rather than simply staying disrupted (Borjas, 2019). Yet resistance to high-skilled immigration in white-collar sectors remains persistent. The discrepancy between limited total economic harm and the continuous resistance is what we discussed through this paper.

When I set out to write the paper, I believed that the main reason for opposition to immigrants in the white-collar workforce could be that idea of economic harm, while also having racial ideas contribute to it. However, the evidence paints a different picture. It shows that the resistance is based on what a person expects an immigrant to do, not what they actually do.

The evidence suggests that resistance is driven less by realized wage losses and more by perceived career competition within structured promotion systems. White-collar labor markets are organized around selective entry points, promotion bottlenecks, and status hierarchies (Stier, 2015). Even when average earnings remain stable, intensified competition at these bottlenecks can be experienced as a zero-sum threat to long-term advancement (Chance, 2023). That means that people are seeing immigrants as extra pieces of competition in an already competitive environment.

At the same time, the evidence also suggests that immigration attitudes are often shaped by identity-based concerns rather than narrow economic self-interest (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014). Research shows that racial resentment and status threat have become increasingly intertwined with immigration opposition (Hout & Maggio, 2021; Mutz, 2018). In elite professional contexts, where leadership and representation signal group standing, high-skilled immigrants may therefore be perceived as challengers to established hierarchies. People begin to feel threatened by others that are different from them, not just because of the economics.

However, there are ways to overcome the resistance to immigrants. Because this resistance is not primarily driven by actual economic harm, but instead by perceived competition and identity-based concerns, the solutions must address those factors. Providing the information alone is not enough since straight information has limited effects on attitudes toward immigration (Hopkins et al., 2019). However, when information is framed around concrete labor-market outcomes, it shifts the opinion much more effectively, as shown in studies of real-world immigration shocks (Haaland & Roth, 2020). Within the workplace, increasing transparency in hiring and promotion decisions can reduce the uncertainty that fuels perceived competition and informal gatekeeping (Rivera, 2012). At the same time, creating more opportunities for real and meaningful interactions between native-born workers and immigrants can weaken the “us versus them” mindset that drives much of the resistance (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Getting people to understand each other helps break down the barriers of resistance. Ultimately, once



immigration is gradually accepted into the culture of the workplace, it becomes less of a threat that one must resist and instead just another aspect of the market.

As the world continues to globalize, immigration in the white-collar market will continue to expand and become a more controversial topic. It will remain as important as ever to address the reasons for native-workers resisting the changes and be prepared to help alleviate them. Reducing the resistance to immigration will not only help immigrants prosper but also help make markets stronger for everyone.



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