

Worksheet 1.5a: Factors affected by immigration

1. Read Olive's opinions on immigration.
2. Highlight in **blue** any social factors she mentions and in **red** any economic factors she mentions.

Olive's opinions on immigration

I'm fifteen and I live in Bedford. It'll take me ages to explain my views on immigration because there are so many angles to consider!

I believe you've got to think about immigration both in terms of individuals and in terms of the whole country. For example, my best friend Nada is Muslim and was born in Egypt. She came here when we were five and we've been close ever since. On a personal level, she improves my life because she's a loyal friend. She's also taught me what her religion is like in reality – as opposed to how the news describes it! On a whole-country level, it's good she lives here because she's going to be a doctor. That means that thousands of patients will get her help. She'll also pay UK taxes.

Nada's family is really interesting. On an individual level, they're lovely people. They always help the school to run a big party at Christmas. They send in gifts for all Nada's class – everyone loves it! They also run a food bank near us. This has made a massive difference to some of our neighbours (who were struggling to feed their kids before). On a whole-country level, Nada's parents contribute loads too. Her mum owns a computer business. It employs about 200 British people. In other words, she's created jobs for a lot of UK citizens. Her dad couldn't speak English ten years ago, but now works as a manager for a dyslexia charity. If he hadn't moved here and learned our language, loads of British people would have missed out on his expertise.

Like I said before, immigration needs considering from different angles. Let's forget Nada and her family for a second. In some ways, immigration has massive benefits. For example, our local Italian restaurant is incredible because it's run by genuine Italians. Also, a teacher from Warsaw has just inspired me to work in Poland this summer. I'd never have sorted out the placement without his help and it'll definitely improve my uni application. On the negative side, immigration causes tension. Last week, our maths lesson was really boring because there were three new pupils who couldn't understand English. It took ages for us to do the group activity and caused an argument. Also, someone in my class has just been excluded for racism. He's been saying stuff online about foreigners taking all our jobs. He's out of order. I've noticed lots of foreigners near me do low-paid jobs that I bet most British people wouldn't do!

If you're asking whether I'm in favour of immigration or against it, I'd say... it depends! If you can get people who are born in your country to mix properly with immigrants, everyone gains something. However, if you don't have strict rules about who's allowed to live here, fear breeds really quickly. Violence can happen too. I think we need clearer guidance on issues such as immigrants respecting British culture. For example, in our country women and men now have equal rights. I'd hate it if immigration changed that for future generations. Finally, let's not forget housing, transport, benefits and healthcare. Is there enough for everyone to share? I'm not sure.