

The Globalist Quiz

IMMIGRATION HAVENS



HECTOR MATA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The complex — and often controversial — issue of immigration is once again near the top of the political agenda in many industrialized countries. Witness the recent riots in Australia or the US debate over illegal immigration. We wonder: Which of the following countries experienced the highest rate of net migration between 2000 and 2005?

ANSWERS
A. Australia B. Spain C. Canada D. United States

A. Australia is not correct.

Between 2000 and 2005, Australia's net migration rate averaged 5.1 people a year per 1,000 of its population. The net migration rate is defined as the balance between the number of persons entering and leaving the country, including illegal immigrants.

Australia's dynamic economy has attracted large numbers of immigrants in recent years, many of them from Asia. Still, immigration has long been a contentious issue in a country that, until the 1950s, severely restricted immigration by nonwhites — with tensions culminating in the December 2005 riots in Sydney.

B. Spain is correct.

Spain experienced the highest net migration rate of the four countries between 2000 and 2005 — with 9.7 people per 1,000 of its population, according to data by the UN Population Division.

Morocco accounts for the largest share of foreigners residing in Spain, with sizable groups of immigrants also coming from South American countries (such as Ecuador, Colombia, and Argentina) and Eastern Europe (Bulgaria and Romania). In 2005, some 700,000 illegal immigrants used a three-month amnesty program to register with Spanish authorities.

C. Canada is not correct.

Between 2000 and 2005, Canada had a net migration rate of 6.7 per 1,000 of its population. This openness to foreign newcomers reflects the country's long history as an immigrant destination as well as its willingness to accept foreign refugees and its embrace of multiculturalism.

However, like many other industrialized countries, Canada has sought to attract more skilled immigrants to fill the needs of Canada's growing economy.

D. United States is not correct.

With four immigrants coming to US shores each year on a net basis per 1,000 of the country's population, the United States has a lower rate of net migration than Australia, Canada, or Spain.

In the most recent year, 2005, the net migration rate into the United States is estimated at 3.3 per 1,000 of population — less than the rate of the 25 EU countries, which stood at an estimated 3.7 per 1,000 population in 2005.

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Harder line on Palestinians sought

US bills follow Hamas win

By Farah Stockman
 GLOBE STAFF

WASHINGTON — At least four efforts to toughen the US stance toward Palestinians following the Hamas election victory are gaining momentum in Congress. If passed, the measures would sharply curtail the power of the State Department and the White House to shape American policy toward the Palestinians.

The bills go well beyond the "review" of aid programs that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced after the militant Islamic group's landslide on Jan. 25. One bill, put forward by Representative Anthony Weiner, a New York Democrat, would cut off all humanitarian funding to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank through the US Agency for International Development. That aid totaled \$225 million last year.

Another bill, sponsored by Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a Florida Republican, would deny US visas to representatives of the Palestinian Authority, including President Mahmoud Abbas, who supports peace talks with Israel. Under the measure, President Bush would have to sign a special waiver for Abbas to visit Washington.

The moves on Capitol Hill could complicate the already difficult task of deciding whether to withhold financial assistance from Palestinians as Hamas, which the United States and Europe consider a terrorist organization, takes over control of the government in the coming months.

Congress already prohibits direct US aid to the Palestinian Authority without a special presidential waiver. Last year, after Abbas was elected, Bush signed such a waiver to give \$50 million in direct funding for housing construction and \$88 million more to the UN agency that supports Palestinian refugees.

With Hamas in power, US officials say, Bush will not sign another waiver. But US lawmakers are seeking to limit the president's power to do so anyway.

The Bush administration has announced it is reviewing all aid programs to ensure that support will not benefit Hamas. US and European Union officials are pressuring Hamas to renounce violence and recognize Israel by threatening to withhold aid to the Palestinian Authority, which is heavily dependent on foreign assistance.

But other officials in the Middle East warn that such pressure punishes moderate Palestinian politicians alongside Hamas. Completely eliminating aid could also leave extremist groups, and perhaps countries such as Iran and Syria, as the only sources of aid in the poverty-stricken Palestinian territories.



MOHAMMED SALEM/REUTERS

Hamas supporters gathered last week to celebrate victory in the Palestinian election.

"We don't want to see others who are not supportive of the peace process filling that vacuum," Jordan's foreign minister, Abdullah al-Khatib, told reporters in Washington on Thursday.

James Prince, president of the Democracy Council, a nonprofit group that conducted an anticorruption program for the Palestinian Authority from 1999 to 2004, said that "a wholesale cutoff would be disastrous and would be the detriment to the very people we are trying to help."

Prince calls the bills in Congress "well intentioned" but said that some measures — such as the complete cutoff of humanitarian aid — could lead to chaos or even civil war among Palestinian factions.

"Assistance programs need to have some sort of external controls to make sure Hamas does not benefit," he said. "There are ways to do it to support the liberal democrats against the terrorists."

Palestinians say the harsh measures would send the message that they are being collectively punished for the results of a democratic election that the United States pushed them to hold.

"They asked us to have democracy, and we did," said Ahmed Zorba, 23, a clothing salesman in Nablus, the West Bank's largest city. "This means they are two-faced."

Hamas has rejected as "blackmail" international demands that it recognize Israel. Its leaders have already appealed to Muslim governments and private organizations from around the world to keep the Palestinian Authority afloat.

Yasser Mansour, a Hamas spokesman in Nablus, said the movement could meet Palestinians' needs without US or European support.

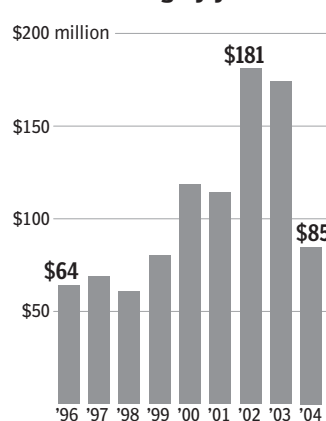
"We have other resources," he said in a recent interview. Asked whether Hamas would accept massive funding from Iran, he said, "We don't speak about this now."

Serious questions remain about whether a Hamas-led government would be able to raise enough to fund the Palestinian

What's at stake

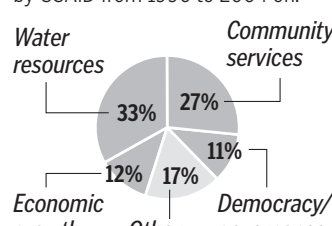
USAID spent more than \$946 million on aid to the West Bank and Gaza between 1996 and 2004.

USAID funding by year



Where it went

Percent of the \$946 million spent by USAID from 1996 to 2004 on:



SOURCE: USAID; Associated Press

GLOBE STAFF GRAPHIC/JAMES BENNETT

Authority's 137,000 employees if international funding dries up.

Last year, the authority, the largest employer in Gaza and the West Bank, spent about \$150 million per month, \$80 million of which went to salaries, according to financial reports posted on the Palestinian Ministry of Finance website. About \$60 million per month of those costs was covered by customs and VAT revenues collected by Israel. The remainder was covered by bank loans and aid from the EU and Arab countries.

But this week, Palestinian officials delayed the payment of salaries after Israel refused to turn over its portion of the funding. In recent months, the EU also halted some of its funding because Palestinians failed to keep the cost of salaries in check. Meanwhile, banks have stopped lending to the

authority, which is already crippled by debt.

The possibility that the authority could collapse poses a "real dilemma" to the United States, said Ed Abington, a longtime Washington-based consultant to the Palestinian Authority.

"What happens if you have no particular government in the West Bank?" Abington asked. "Where are we in five years? Maybe there will be conditions where you are trying to move back to the peace process but there is no one on the Palestinian side to talk to."

Among the other bills in Congress is one sponsored by Representative Vito Fossella, a New York Republican, which would prevent the president from signing a waiver for direct aid to the Palestinians unless he first removes Hamas from the terrorism list.

Another bill, sponsored by Senator Rick Santorum, a Pennsylvania Republican, would prevent a president from signing an aid waiver unless he can certify that the Palestinian Authority has met seven conditions, including amending Hamas's charter to delete statements hostile to Israel.

The bill pushed by Ros-Lehtinen, a contender for the powerful position of chair of the House International Relations Committee, goes even further. In addition to preventing Palestinian Authority officials from traveling freely to the United States, it also would prevent the authority from having a diplomatic presence in Washington and restrict the travel of Palestinian representatives at the UN.

In the West Bank, the flurry of activity in Washington did not faze Palestinians who already were disillusioned over the inability of previous government — led by the defeated Fatah movement — to deliver a real change in their lives. "No Palestinian will die of starvation," said Ibad Abu Salhiyeh, 36, a stockbroker in a crowded brokerage office. "Even if America and Europe cut us off, Palestinians will manage."

Anne Barnard of the Globe staff contributed to this report from Nablus, West Bank.



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