

Offshorability and the Lobby for Immigrant Labor

Authors : Ellen A. Holtmaat

Abstract : Research on lobbying for immigration is limited and the influence of offshorability on lobbying for immigration has not extensively been assessed. This research focuses on the U.S. and argues that offshorable firms have an 'outside-option' when they are in need of labor, which makes them less likely to lobby for immigration in the lower-skilled sectors. Higher-skilled offshorable sectors settle often in the U.S., as the U.S. has a comparative advantage in these sectors. The companies compete globally and demand world's best labor, which induces them to lobby for immigration. This relationship is assessed using lobby data available from the 1995 Lobby Disclosure Act. Some evidence of the relationship is found and the research suggests that offshorability might also in general influence lobbying.

Keywords : immigration, lobbying, non-tradable sector, offshoring

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