

# Skill Complementarities among Highly-Educated US Immigrant and Native-Born Workers\*

Giovanni Peri (University of California, Davis and NBER)

Chad Sparber (Colgate University)

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## Abstract

Economic debate about the consequences of immigration in the US has largely focused on how influxes of foreign-born workers affect less-educated native-born labor. Recent evidence suggests that less-educated immigrant and native-born workers supply unique skills and complement each other in production. Surprisingly few studies, however, analyze the effect of immigration on the market for highly-educated labor. We use O\*NET data on job characteristics to measure the knowledge and abilities that occupations require. We find that foreign-born workers with graduate degrees specialize in occupations requiring quantitative and analytical skills, whereas similarly-educated native-born workers specialize in occupations demanding oral and written communication skills. Immigration among highly-educated workers induces further specialization. In states with a large number of highly-educated immigrants, native-born Americans supply relatively less analytical versus communication skills.

**Key Words:** Immigration, Skill Complementarities, Highly-Educated Workers, US States.

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\*Addresses: Giovanni Peri, Department of Economics, UC Davis, One Shields Avenue, Davis, CA, 95616. email: gperi@ucdavis.edu. Chad Sparber, Department of Economics, Colgate University, 13 Oak Drive, Hamilton, NY, 13346. email: csparber@mail.colgate.edu.