

# Do Migrants Transmit Poverty?

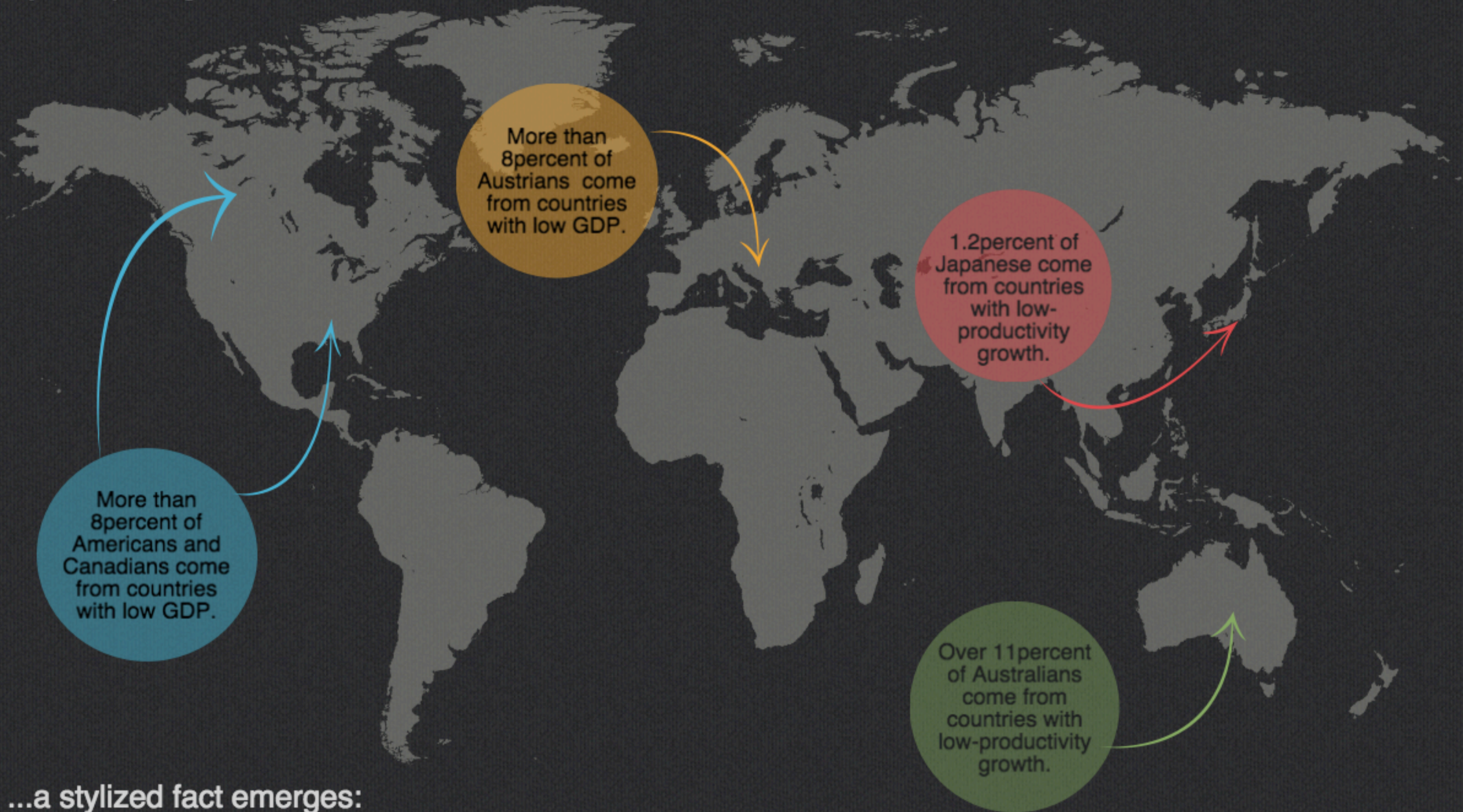


## The new economic case for migration restrictions

- paper by Michael Clemens and Lant Pritchett, 2016

Some scholars suggest that migrants from poor countries carry with them low productivity, which spreads to rich countries like disease. This ability for migrants to impoverish host nations is said to offset global gains to migration, and migration barriers therefore make good economic sense. **Is this true?**

By comparing OECD countries....



...a stylized fact emerges:

There is **no relationship** between levels of migration and economic productivity across a wide range of observed countries. If anything, growth in productivity has been **higher in countries** with medium to high levels of migrants from low-income levels of migrants from low-income countries (e.g. Sweden, Great Britain, USA higher than Japan, Italy, Norway).

## The economic case for migration restrictions assumes that:



migrants from poor countries spread low productivity when relocating

*We find that existing data and empirical evidence does not support this claim.*



the cumulative impact of migration would be to make the whole world poorer

*If this unproven effect exists, it would require a rate of migration which far exceeds current levels.*

In economists' best estimates, simply **reducing** migration restrictions could nearly **double world income**

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