



Barack Obama enforces US immigration overhaul

21 November 2014

Millions of immigrants living illegally in the US will be allowed to apply for work permits under a major shake-up unveiled by President Barack Obama.

They include immigrants who have been in the US for five years and have children staying legally in the US.

About four million people are expected to benefit from a reform package forced through using executive orders, which allow Mr Obama to bypass Congress.

5 Republicans have accused the president of an "illegal power-grab".

There are estimated to be 11 million illegal immigrants in the US.

Under Mr Obama's plan, undocumented parents of children who are US citizens or legal residents will be able to apply for work permits lasting three years.

10 Only parents who have lived in the US for five years will qualify.

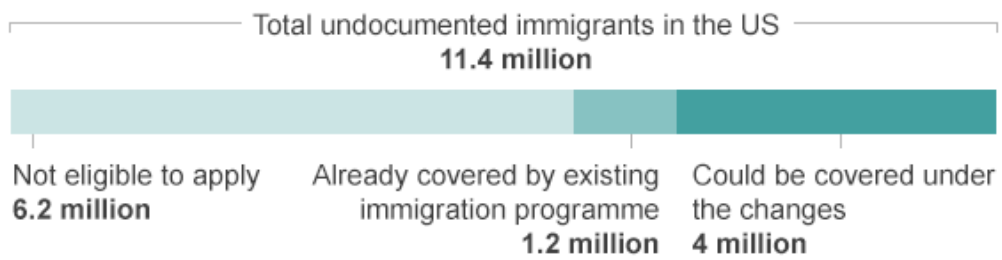
Some 3.7 million people are thought to be eligible for this scheme, according to the Migration Policy Institute.

Another part of the package will extend a programme that gives temporary legal status to people who arrived in the US as children.

15 Currently only those under the age of 30 who arrived before 2007 can apply for the programme, which was launched in 2012 and already covers roughly 1.2 million people.

Mr Obama has abolished the age limit and extended the cut-off point to 2010, potentially extending the programme to a further 300,000 people.

How many people are affected?



Source: Migration Policy Institute

[...]

US illegal immigrants' country of origin (2012)

- Mexico - 59%
- El Salvador - 6%
- Guatemala - 5%
- Honduras - 3%
- Philippines - 3%

Source: **Department of Homeland Security**