

DREAMers



The monarch butterfly represents the natural act that is migration. Artwork by Favianna Rodriguez.

When it comes to immigration reform, versions of the DREAM (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) Act have been proposed since 2001 to provide protections and a pathway to citizenship for those who are undocumented and immigrated to the U.S. as children. None has successfully passed into law yet; however, the California Dream Act allows undocumented students to receive state and institutional educational grants if they meet income guidelines.

A “Dreamer” (often also spelled “DREAMer”) refers to an immigrant youth who would qualify under the DREAM Act. While the majority of Dreamers come from Latin America, Dreamers are a diverse group from countries and cultures across the globe, including from South Korea, the Philippines, India, Jamaica, Tobago, Poland, Nigeria, Pakistan, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, and Guyana. There is no legal pathway for Dreamers to earn citizenship at all, despite 86 percent of American voters supporting having pathways to legal status.

Dreamers are also frequently referred to as “DACA recipients”. DACA stands for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals and was enacted in 2012 as a federal temporary program that provides relief from deportation and work authorization for undocumented immigrants brought to the U.S. as children. The future of the program is uncertain at this time. The 2021 version is currently proposed in the federal legislature as H.R. 6.



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SOURCES

“American Immigration Council.” American Immigration Council,
www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/.

“The Largest Immigrant Youth-Led Network in the Country.” United We Dream, 26
Feb. 2021, unitedwedream.org/.