

Center for the Study of International Migration, UC Los Angeles  
Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, UC San Diego  
Berkeley Interdisciplinary Migration Initiative, UC Berkeley  
Global Migration Center, UC Davis

***Now We Are Here: Family Migration, Children's Education,  
and Dreams for a Better Life***

Tuesday, March 3, 2026 | 12:00PM - 1:30PM Pacific Time  
Will be held in person (Reading Room, 3340 Moore Hall) and via Zoom

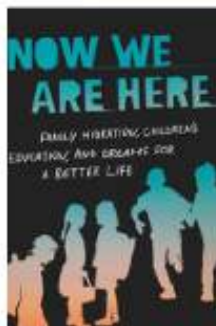


**Gabrielle Oliveira**

Gabrielle Oliveira is an anthropologist of education whose research examines immigration, mobility, and family life across borders, with a focus on children's education, gender, and transnationalism in the Americas. She is the author of *Motherhood Across Borders* (NYU Press), winner of the Erickson and Hornberger Book Award and the Council on Anthropology and Education's Book of the Year Award, and *Now We Are Here: Family Migration, Children's Education, and Dreams for a Better Life* (Stanford University Press). Oliveira's ethnographic work spans multiple countries and centers on immigrant children and families navigating educational systems, including dual language programs. A Radcliffe Fellow (2024–2025), she is currently working on a third book based on research with immigrant children in public schools in northern Brazil.



**Discussant: Marjorie Elaine (Professor, Graduate  
School of Education and Information Studies,  
UCLA)**



Each day, families around the world make the difficult decision to leave their homes in search of safety, stability, and opportunity. For many migrant families, this search centers on access to strong, caring, and equitable educational systems that enable children to flourish. *Now We Are Here* follows the lives of 16 migrant families from Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras as they navigate the promises and challenges of the American education system. Drawing on immersive ethnographic research in homes and schools from 2018 to 2021, Gabrielle Oliveira offers an intimate portrait of these families' experiences. She weaves together stories of parental sacrifice, children's educational and migration journeys, and educators' responses to trauma—all shaped by the additional disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more information please email [duranasaydee@ucla.edu](mailto:duranasaydee@ucla.edu)

We are excited to invite you to our upcoming Virtual Book Talk with Gabrielle Oliveira on *Now We Are Here: Family Migration, Children's Education, and Dreams for a Better Life*. Join us on Zoom **next Tuesday, March 3rd at 12:00pm (PST)** to learn more about Gabrielle Oliveira's ethnographic research on migrant families and the American education system.

[Register here](#)

Center for the Study of International Migration, UC Los Angeles  
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***Believing in Light After Darkness: Displacement and Refugee Resettlement***

Wednesday, March 11, 2026 | 12:00PM - 1:30PM Pacific Time  
Will be held in person (Haines Hall, Rm 279) and via Zoom

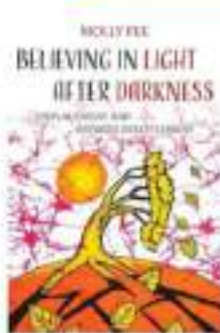


**Molly Fee**

Molly Fee is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and Interdisciplinary Social Sciences at the University of South Florida. Previously, she was a Postdoctoral Prize Research Fellow in Sociology at Nuffield College, University of Oxford where she was also a Research Associate at the Refugee Studies Centre. She received her PhD in Sociology from the University of California, Los Angeles. Molly studies how organizational structure and policies shape the migration and incorporation of refugees in the United States and how refugees interact with the institutions that grant rights and resources. Her research has been published in outlets such as *Social Problems*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, and the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. Her book, *Believing in Light after Darkness: Displacement and Refugee Resettlement*, is forthcoming in March 2026 with the University of California Press.



**Discussant: Jake Watson (Professor of Sociology, UCSD)**



War, persecution, and climate change too often force people from their homes and across borders. Most remain in difficult conditions in neighboring countries. The less than one percent of refugees offered resettlement to a different country gain an alternative path forward, with access to specialized supports and services that are traditionally understood as a solution to displacement and a program of integration. Examining the complexities of refugees' lived experiences, Molly Fee's deeply humanistic ethnography reframes resettlement as a period of disruption and disorientation, when newly arrived refugees must navigate the rules and expectations of a new country. For those who have already rebuilt their lives numerous times, resettlement becomes yet another uprooting. *Believing in Light after Darkness* reveals how humanitarian solutions, though well intentioned, do not immediately resolve the conditions of displacement.

For more information please email [duanasaydee@ucla.edu](mailto:duanasaydee@ucla.edu)

We are excited to invite you to our upcoming Virtual Book Talk with Molly Fee on *Believing in Light After Darkness: Displacement and Refugee Resettlement*. Join us on Zoom **next Wednesday, March 11th at 12:00pm (PST)** to learn more about Molly Fee's ethnographic research on migration, displacement, and navigating the complexities of resettlement.

[Register here](#)

FEBRUARY 23, 2026 | 9:15 AM

# Money, Migration, & Markets: Remittance Trends Between the U.S. and Venezuela

1155 15th Street NW Suite 800 Washington, DC, 20005 & Online



## The Dialogue – 23 de febrero de 2026 | 09:15 AM

“Venezuelans in the U.S. recognize the importance of remitting money to their homeland. Since December 2025, there has been a notable shift: more than 25% of remittance flows from the U.S. to Venezuela now move through licensed, formal money transfer channels. With total remittances estimated at US\$6 billion, with half originating in the United States, this change signals an important transformation in how remittances are sent and received.

What is driving this move toward formal transfers? Will increased competition bring more options and better services to consumers? Is this growth sustainable over the long term? And could these inflows help stabilize Venezuela’s foreign exchange market?

Join the Dialogue on **February 23, 2026, from 9:15 AM to 11:00 AM ET** for a timely and insightful conversation on US-Venezuela remittance market trends. This is a hybrid event—attend in person or online. [...]” [Consulte más detalles del evento](#)

## [Invitation: 28th Biennial CESA Conference](#)

CESA-SCEE – 9 y 10 de octubre de 2025

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

We invite you to join us at the 28th Biennial CESA Conference, taking place October 9–10, 2026, at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity in Banff, Alberta, Canada.

This year's conference theme — "Ethnic Dynamics and Immigration in a World in Flux" — will bring together scholars, researchers, and practitioners working in the areas of ethnicity, migration, race, and diversity. We believe this gathering will be of strong interest to many within our community.

We encourage members to submit a proposal and to share this announcement widely with colleagues and networks.

Full conference details, including the call for proposals, are available at:

English: <https://cesa-scee.ca/2026-conference/>

French: <https://cesa-scee.ca/2026-banff-conference/>

[Consulte más detalles del evento](#)



## Myths and Realities about Migrations to the United States

Por Guillermo Castillo Ramírez

**Voices of Mexico, Issue 127, CISAN, UNAM** – febrero de 2026

According to the latest International Organization for Migration reports (2020-2024), international movements grew in the early 2020s and after the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic. They have mainly been made up of people with irregular situations from the center and southern parts of the hemisphere who were heading to the United States, passing through Mexico.

For more than a decade, the world's largest migratory corridor has been the one joining Central and North America. As Jeffrey S. Passeland and Jens Manuel Krogstad's Pew Research Center publication "What We Know about Unauthorized Immigrants Living in the U.S." and the Mexican National Population Council's Anuario de migraciones y remesas 2024 (Annual Report on Migration and

Remittances 2024) report, for a large part of this century, the United States has been the largest receiver of migrants.

Nevertheless, since the beginning of the second Trump administration, migration has undergone drastic changes. People with irregular migratory status there have been subjected to growing state criminalization that deliberately infringes on their human rights using violence as a political strategy[...]. [Consulte artículo completo \[formato PDF\]](#)



CENTROAMÉRICA – INTERNACIONAL

### [Use of Digital Financial Applications for Payments in Central America](#)

Por Manuel Orozco y Rebecca Khoury

**The Dialogue** – 17 de febrero de 2026

“Analyzing Survey Data from Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua

This piece shares findings on the extent of digital adoption in Central America for regular payment practices. Overall, we find that consumers continue to prefer making payments in person, and those who use mobile financial services tend to do so infrequently. We also share a number of factors that, at the individual level, are associated with higher rates of digital usership.

#### **FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND DIGITAL FINANCIAL VEHICLES**

Central American adults have less access to financial services than their counterparts elsewhere in Latin America, with [fewer than 45 percent owning a bank account](#). Constrained financial access and



inclusion is a significant challenge to regional economic development, and one that the Inter-American Dialogue has been working to address through [targeted financial advising](#).

This strategy has promoted financial education and savings formalization among vulnerable communities with low rates of access to formal financial services. For example, [about 20](#) percent of women receiving advice formalized their savings, in turn improving their asset-building opportunities and furthering economic independence. Many of them also learned to stretch their disposable income over time. [...]” [Consulte más detalles de](#)

[la publicación](#)

# The New York Times

OPINION

GUEST ESSAY

## *WHO STANDS TO LOSE IN THE BIRTHRIGHT CITIZENSHIP CASE*

**Feb By Akhil Reed Amar.** Mr. Amar is a professor of constitutional law at Yale.

**20, 02, 2026**



Credit...Sun Bai

America's Constitution proudly proclaims that all people born on American soil and under the American flag are Americans — equal birthright citizens — regardless of their parentage. Constitutionally, it does not matter if you are born Black or white, male or female, in wedlock or out. It does not matter what religion, if any, your parents profess, what country or continent they descend

from, whether their ancestors were ever enslaved or whether they themselves are American citizens or even lawful permanent residents.

But on the first day of his second term, President Trump declared his intent to defy this grand guarantee by refusing to recognize the citizenship of a wide swath of American-born babies going forward. With small exceptions, Mr. Trump's [Executive Order 14160](#) proclaims that an American-born baby will not be treated as a birthright American citizen unless at least one of the baby's parents is a citizen or lawful permanent resident (colloquially, a green-card holder).

Every judge to consider the matter thus far has emphatically rejected Mr. Trump's edict, which has not been allowed to take effect. On April 1, Supreme Court justices will take center stage, hearing oral arguments in *Trump v. Barbara*, a legal challenge to the executive order. A final written ruling from the court will most likely emerge in June.

The opening sentence of the 14th Amendment, ratified in 1868, means exactly what it says: "All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States." The key initial preposition, "in," is geographic. The text says nothing whatsoever about the family to whom a baby is born. The refining jurisdictional clause essentially means that a baby must be born under the flag.

This was the precise phrase that the architects of this constitutional amendment in the mid-1860s — Abraham Lincoln's Republican allies — repeated dozens of times. The word "under" was (and still is) synonymous with "subject to," and "the flag" was (and still is) a helpfully concrete stand-in for the more abstract word "jurisdiction." The amendment thus codified a simple test that 1860s Republicans reiterated ad infinitum: On the day a baby is born, does American soil lie below, and does an American flag fly above?

Like the preposition "in," the preposition "under" was geographic and place-based, not hereditary and blood-based. Certain territorial enclaves located inside the general geographic perimeter/footprint of the United States fell under a different flag — most notably, quasi-sovereign American Indian lands, foreign embassies and land occupied and administered under international law by foreign armies. These enclaves lay outside the full guarantee of constitutional birthright citizenship.

Crucially, nowhere does the text use the words "parent," "parents" or "domicile." Had it done so, the amendment's framers and ratifiers would have needed to wrangle over countless complexities, large and small, raised by these words. For example: Would both parents matter or just one? If one, which one? Who exactly are a baby's parents? What if a mother is married to one man but another man is the biological progenitor? What about foundlings?

Chief Justice Roger Taney saw things differently in the infamous Dred Scott case in 1857. Taney proclaimed that no Black American descended from slaves or from “the slave races” could ever be a citizen.

By late 1862, Lincoln’s administration openly began pushing back against blood-based and hereditary-caste-like citizenship rules. Sidestepping Dred Scott, Lincoln’s attorney general Edward Bates in November 1862 issued a landmark opinion asserting that American citizenship was based on soil and not blood. Birthright citizenship, Bates said in an official response to an inquiry from Treasury Secretary (and future Chief Justice) Salmon P. Chase, generally depended on where a person was born. “Every person born in the country,” [wrote Bates](#), “is, at the moment of birth, prima facie a citizen ... without any reference to race or color, or any other accidental circumstance.”

In an earlier memo to Secretary of State William Seward, Bates was absolutely emphatic on the precise question at the heart of today’s Trump v. Barbara case: “Children born in the United States of alien parents, who have never been naturalized, are native-born citizens of the United States.” In official correspondence in 1864, Seward echoed Bates: “The children of foreigners born here are citizens of the United States.” Chase, too, enthusiastically echoed Bates’s opinion: “All free persons born in the United States or naturalized of whatever color, are citizens of the United States.”

After Lincoln’s death, his allies in Congress aimed to vindicate his and his cabinet’s vision in a clearly written constitutional amendment with bulletproof rules guaranteeing Black birthright citizenship: soil-based rules, clean and clear rules that focused on where a person was born and not fuzzy rules focusing on parentage or parental allegiance or parental domicile. Republicans never aimed to allow ex-Confederate states to deny the vote to various Black men because these men had been born to slave mothers or slave fathers who in turn had been born in Africa.

Countless American freedmen were indeed born to formerly enslaved parents who themselves were not citizens when their babies were born. Many of these parents were not only African-born and never-naturalized aliens; they were also African-born and never-naturalized illegal/undocumented aliens, having been smuggled into America after 1807 in violation of [American law](#) prohibiting international slave importation. Republicans aimed to make citizens of the children of all such aliens — no ifs, ands or buts.

Beginning with a landmark 1898 decision, *United States v. Wong Kim Ark*, the Supreme Court has faithfully followed the clear letter and spirit of the birthright citizenship clause. So has Congress in an iconic [statutory provision](#) first enacted in 1940 and re-enacted in 1952.

America’s government may properly impose a wide range of harsh sanctions on foreign parents who violate America’s immigration laws. But unless and until our Constitution is amended, our government

is simply not allowed to punish innocent babies guaranteed full and equal citizenship by the Constitution itself.

I know many sensible people who would like to see birthright citizenship ended. But none of them think it should be, or could be, ended by executive order. That the Supreme Court might interpret these very clear words differently, and overlook the weight of precedent, is profoundly disturbing.

**More on birthright citizenship**

Opinion | Randy E. Barnett and Ilan Wurman

Trump Might Have a Case on Birthright Citizenship

Feb. 15, 2025

Opinion | Carlos Lozada, Aaron Retica and Derek Arthur

There's a Reason Trump Is Going After Birthright Citizenship

Feb. 3, 2025

Opinion | Carlos Lozada

Born in the U.S.A. Doesn't Mean What It Used To

Jan. 27, 2025

*Akhil Reed Amar is a professor of constitutional law at Yale and the author of "Born Equal: Remaking America's Constitution, 1840-1920."*

### LA ADMINISTRACIÓN TRUMP REFUERZA SU CONTROL SOBRE LOS INMIGRANTES Y ORDENA EL ARRESTO DE REFUGIADOS QUE ESPERAN VISAS PERMANENTES.

Por Redacción

**Resumen Latinoamericano** – 20 de febrero de 2026



La política migratoria de la administración Trump es blanco de protestas masivas en Estados Unidos. Crédito: Roberto Schmidt/AFP  
*"Los agentes de ICE, la policía de inmigración, obtienen el poder de detener a extranjeros durante el proceso de legalización en el país.*

El gobierno de Estados Unidos ha decidido que las personas que ingresaron al país legalmente como refugiados pueden ser detenidas para una evaluación adicional. Un documento oficial del Departamento de Seguridad Nacional (DHS) establece que estos extranjeros deben regresar a la custodia estatal un año después de ingresar a Estados Unidos para una «reevaluación».

Según las normas locales, quienes reciben el estatus de refugiado en EE. UU. deben solicitar la residencia permanente después de 12 meses de estancia. Esta nueva directriz contradice una norma de 2010 que estipulaba que la falta de visa de residencia no era motivo para arrestar o expulsar a una persona del país.[...]" [Consulte nota completa](#)

### MUERE EN ACCIDENTE TESTIGO CLAVE QUE CUESTIONÓ VERSIÓN DE ICE SOBRE TIROTEO EN TEXAS

Por Redacción

**Resumen Latinoamericano** – 23 de febrero de 2026

"El único testigo presencial que cuestionó la versión oficial sobre el tiroteo en el que murió un ciudadano estadounidense a manos de un agente federal en el sur de Texas falleció este fin de semana en un accidente automovilístico no relacionado con el caso, informaron autoridades locales a The New York Times.

Joshua Orta, de 25 años, viajaba como copiloto el 15 de marzo de 2025 cuando su amigo de la infancia, Rubén Ray Martínez, de 23 años, recibió varios disparos en South Padre Island por parte de un agente del Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas de Estados Unidos ( ICE, por sus siglas en inglés). Según la versión gubernamental, Martínez no acató la orden de descender del vehículo.

Sin embargo, en una declaración escrita obtenida por NYT, Orta sostuvo que ambos jóvenes intentaban obedecer a las autoridades y no opusieron resistencia. De acuerdo con su testimonio, estaban tratando de dar vuelta al automóvil conforme a las instrucciones cuando la situación se tornó caótica y el agente abrió fuego. [...]" [Consulte nota completa](#)

# The New York Times

## ADMINISTRATION TARGETS NONCITIZEN VOTING, DESPITE FINDING IT RARE

*The intensified push is part of an extraordinary all-fronts effort to insert federal law enforcement into the machinery of American elections ahead of the midterms.*



Voters in Miami Beach in 2024. A new nationwide effort by the Trump administration to find and charge criminal voting cases appears to be targeted at green card holders. Credit...Scott McIntyre for The New York Times



By [Glenn Thrush](#)[Devlin Barrett](#)[Alan Feuer](#)[Zolan Kanno-Youngs](#) and [Hamed Aleaziz](#)  
Reporting from Washington

**Feb. 18, 2026**

Homeland security officials, at the direction of the White House, are intensifying efforts to investigate voting by noncitizens in pursuit of President Trump's baseless claims that illegal voting by undocumented immigrants is a rampant and insidious threat.

Homeland Security Investigations, an arm of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, recently issued a two-page memo requiring its employees to “review all open and closed voter fraud cases” involving immigrants who registered to vote, or actually voted, before they became naturalized U.S. citizens.

The memo, obtained by The New York Times, is part of an extraordinary all-fronts effort to insert federal law enforcement into the machinery of American elections ahead of the midterms. It is consistent with instructions the administration has issued to some U.S. attorneys’ offices around the country in recent weeks.

The initiative “reflects the administration’s commitment to safeguarding democratic processes and maintaining public confidence in the electoral system,” the memo stated.

The nationwide effort to find and charge criminal voting cases is meant to target all noncitizen voters, but could have a particularly negative effect on current and former green card holders. While in the country legally, green card holders are not U.S. citizens and therefore may not vote legally in federal, state and most local elections — but might be unaware of these distinctions.

[Such confusion](#) is hardly unheard-of: It appeared to have been the cause of a small town mayor’s recent arrest on charges of voting illegally by the state authorities in Kansas.

The push comes as an analysis of immigrant voting, commissioned by the Trump administration, has provided [no evidence of widespread or even significant voter fraud](#), according to interviews with government officials and documents reviewed by The New York Times.

Officials referred about 10,000 of 49.5 million voter registrations to Homeland Security Investigations for further investigation.

That was roughly 0.02 percent of the names processed.

The Justice Department and Homeland Security Department declined to comment.

Mr. Trump “is committed to ensuring that Americans have full confidence in the administration of elections, and that includes totally accurate and up-to-date voter rolls free of errors and unlawfully registered noncitizen voters,” Abigail Jackson, a White House spokeswoman, said in a statement.

“Noncitizens voting is a crime,” she added. “Anyone breaking the law will be held accountable.”

Administration officials have pointed to an array of arrests and actions to justify cracking down on illegal voting, despite the lack of evidence that scattered irregularities and relatively rare instances of fraud have made a significant difference in recent elections.

Instead, they have presented as a major accomplishment the removal of dead voters from state rolls. They have also publicized the discovery of noncitizens, typically no more than a few hundred to about a thousand, who were registered illegally in Louisiana, Ohio and Texas and subsequently purged from the rolls.

A small percentage of those instances have resulted in actual prosecutions, however, and many of those cases have involved immigrants charged with more serious criminal offenses, including illegal gun possession.

The directive for H.S.I. agents appears aimed at trying to determine if immigrants who became naturalized may have voted illegally before they gained citizenship. If so, the directive envisions not just charging them with certain crimes and misdemeanors, but might also strip them of their citizenship and deport them.

The administration’s efforts are not limited to cases related to immigration, but also those involving discredited conspiracy theories involving the foreign manipulation of voting machines and other claims of vote-fixing that served as the justification for the [F.B.I.’s seizure near Atlanta last month](#) of ballots from the 2020 election.

An emerging focus of the administration’s effort is to scour voter rolls in populous conservative states, like Florida and Texas, whose state governments are working closely with the Trump administration. States controlled by Democrats have resisted efforts to give the administration access to such data.

Both the H.S.I. memo and instructions given to career prosecutors cite Mr. Trump’s executive order on election security to provide a legal basis for their actions. A senior administration official said the initiative was not new but reflected the enactment of existing directives ahead of the elections.

The overall effort to enlist federal law enforcement in elections is being coordinated, at least in part, by Anthony Salisbury, a top deputy to Stephen Miller, Mr. Trump’s domestic policy adviser and the architect of the administration’s increasingly hard-line immigration crackdown.



Anthony Salisbury has, at least in part, coordinated the administration's effort to enlist federal law enforcement in elections. Credit...Andrew Harnik/Getty Images

In recent weeks, Mr. Salisbury, himself a former H.S.I. agent, has overseen a working group on election fraud. At times it has included three aides to the deputy attorney general, Todd Blanche: Colin McDonald, Nick Davis and Vetan Kapoor; a top H.S.I. official, John Condon; representatives from the National Security Council and other White House aides, according to a person familiar with the group who requested anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

It is not clear what directives the group has issued. But the effort is decidedly top-down.

In some instances, career prosecutors, typically given broad investigative discretion, have been ordered to provide their Trump-appointed superiors detailed justification if they choose not to bring voting fraud prosecutions that are flagged as potentially promising, according to officials who requested anonymity to avoid retribution.

Federal prosecutors in the Southern District of Florida, a jurisdiction with a large immigrant population and a state government friendly to the Trump administration, recently received such a directive, according to a person familiar with the matter.

It was highly unusual in demanding that any decision to decline to pursue an immigration-related case needed to be reviewed by the U.S. attorney, Jason A. Reding Quiñones, and his chief deputy, the person said.

The increasing involvement of H.S.I., an agency responsible for immigration enforcement, in elections has raised alarm among voting rights groups that believe it is part of a campaign to intimidate legal voting by immigrants.

Kristi Noem, the homeland security secretary, stoked those concerns when she recently said her goal in cracking down on voter fraud was to “make sure we have the right people voting, electing the right leaders to lead this country.”

Mr. Trump, who has promoted a variety of discredited conspiracies, has said he wants to “[nationalize](#)” [the elections](#), even though the Constitution explicitly gives the authority to administer elections to the states.

He has also said that if the Republican-controlled Congress does not pass [a new law](#) imposing strict identification requirements to vote, he will seek to do so by presidential decree. That bill would require proof of citizenship, such as a passport or birth certificate, to vote. Roughly half of Americans have a passport.

The bill would also impose criminal penalties on any election official who registers a person to vote without knowing if they are U.S. citizens — even if they are U.S. citizens.

The Trump administration has made denaturalization a priority for the Department of Homeland Security.

Late last year, [The Times reported](#) that the agency was seeking 100 to 200 denaturalization cases a month from immigration officers across the country. Administration officials have said the effort is meant to root out those who fraudulently or wrongfully received their citizenship, while advocates for immigrants see it as a way to further curtail people’s legal immigration pathways.

**Glenn Thrush** covers the Department of Justice for The Times and has also written about gun violence, civil rights and conditions in the country’s jails and prisons.

**Devlin Barrett** covers the Justice Department and the F.B.I. for The Times.

**Alan Feuer** covers extremism and political violence for The Times, focusing on the criminal cases involving the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol and against former President Donald J. Trump.

**Zolan Kanno-Youngs** is a White House correspondent for The Times, covering President Trump and his administration.

**Hamed Aleaziz** covers the Department of Homeland Security and immigration policy for The Times.

A version of this article appears in print on Feb. 20, 2026, Section A, Page 15 of the New York edition with the headline: Noncitizen Voting Is Rare, but Trump Mobilizes Against It.

# The New York Times

## REFUGEES WITHOUT GREEN CARDS COULD BE ARRESTED UNDER NEW TRUMP POLICY

*The change is part of the administration's broad effort to target refugees and tighten pathways for immigrants to legally enter or remain in the United States.*



Immigration agents stopping drivers in Minneapolis last month. Credit...Victor J. Blue for The New York Times



By **Madeleine Ngo**. Reporting from Washington

**Feb. 19, 2026**

Refugees who were lawfully admitted to the United States could be arrested if they have not yet obtained a green card, a change to previous policy that is the Trump administration's latest effort to scrutinize immigrants who were approved for status.

In a new memo, which was [described in court filings](#) on Wednesday, officials at the Department of Homeland Security said immigration agents would be required to detain refugees if they had not applied for legal permanent status after a year of living in the country.

Refugees would be “inspected and examined for admission to the United States” after being detained, according to the memo, which was issued on Wednesday by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. It was unclear how long refugees could be kept in detention. According to the memo, they would be confined for “the reasonable length of time it takes” to re-examine their cases.

The memo is part of the Trump administration’s broad effort to target refugees and tighten pathways for immigrants to legally enter or remain in the United States. Last month, the Homeland Security Department announced that it would [review thousands of refugee cases](#) in Minnesota, requiring them to submit to new interviews and background checks amid a surge of federal immigration enforcement in the state.

In the following weeks, [at least 100 refugees were arrested](#) in Minnesota and sent to detention centers in Texas for interviews, lawyers, family members and faith leaders said. A federal judge later [ordered immigration agents](#) to stop detaining and deporting refugees in Minnesota and to immediately release those held for re-examination of their cases. On Thursday, a federal judge will hear arguments on whether to extend those temporary protections.

That judge’s order came after the Trump administration slashed the number of refugees accepted into the country. In October, the administration [lowered the ceiling](#) of refugee admissions to 7,500 for this fiscal year, down from the 125,000 cap the Biden administration had set the previous year. Federal officials also said they would [prioritize slots for mostly white South Africans](#).

The new policy rescinds an [Obama-era memo](#) that had previously determined that a refugee’s failure to apply for legal permanent status within a year was not sufficient grounds to detain or deport them. In a statement, a Citizenship and Immigration Services spokesperson said the agency was enforcing [immigration laws](#) that required the federal government to inspect refugees after their first year in the United States.

“The memo almost reads like they think they have an obligation to detain refugees who don’t have green cards after one year of being in the United States, which is a wild interpretation because refugees can’t even apply for green cards until after a year,” said Sarah Pierce, a former policy analyst at Citizenship and Immigration Services who is now the director of social policy at the center-left think tank Third Way. “This is just yet another policy that’s being driven by removal numbers.”

Ms. Pierce added that the Trump administration's [pause on immigration applications](#) filed by people from countries subject to the president's travel ban would also make it harder for at least some refugees to obtain green cards.

Federal officials said the new directive was necessary to root out people with serious criminal backgrounds, identify those who posed national security risks and ensure that refugees did not fraudulently obtain lawful status.

Groups that provide assistance to refugees swiftly condemned the memo, saying it could strip the legal status of immigrants who had already been extensively vetted and welcomed into the United States after fleeing persecution. They also said they expected more refugees to be deported as a result of the efforts.

“This government will clearly stop at nothing to terrorize refugee communities, and really all immigrants, while trampling over our constitutional rights,” Laurie Ball Cooper, the vice president for U.S. legal programs at the International Refugee Assistance Project, said in a statement.

Immigrant advocacy groups said they expected the directive to largely affect recently arrived refugees. In the 2024 fiscal year alone, more than 100,000 refugees were admitted to the United States, [according to data](#) from the Department of Homeland Security.

***Madeleine Ngo** covers immigration and economic policy for *The Times*.*

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## Our Coverage of U.S. Immigration

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**Court Orders Violated:** The Trump administration [has violated more than 50 orders](#) from federal judges in the District of New Jersey, all in cases involving immigrants' challenging the legality of their detention, according to a court-ordered review conducted by a senior Justice Department official.

**Justice Department Lawyer Found in Contempt:** A federal judge in Minnesota [found a Trump administration lawyer in civil contempt of court](#), a significant escalation between the judiciary and the executive branch.

**ICE Buying Warehouses:** The agency is ramping up arrests, but local pushback, including from some Trump voters, [is complicating efforts to expand detention capacity](#) and prevent overcrowding.

**Journalists Arrested Overseas:** Four journalists investigating a secretive Trump administration effort to deport migrants to the African nation of Cameroon were detained by local police, [according to two of the people detained](#).

**Columbia Protester:** [A judge has blocked the deportation](#) of Mohsen Mahdawi, a green-card holder and organizer of the pro-Palestinian movement at the university who was arrested during a citizenship appointment last year.

# The New York Times

## POLICE INVESTIGATE ICE ARREST OF A MAN WHO SUFFERED SEVERE HEAD INJURIES

*The police in St. Paul, Minn., are investigating an arrest last month during the immigration crackdown. The man has said he was beaten by agents. ICE asserted that he ran into a wall.*



Alberto Castañeda Mondragón told The Associated Press that he was in a friend's car at a shopping center in St. Paul, Minn., when immigration agents pulled him from the car. Credit...Mark Vanleave/Associated Press



By **Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs**

Feb. 19, 2026

The police in St. Paul, Minn., say they are investigating an immigration arrest last month that left a man with a fractured skull and bleeding in his brain. Immigration agents have claimed the injuries were a result of the man running into a wall, but he has said that the agents beat him.

The arrest of Alberto Castañeda Mondragón on Jan. 8 left him with severe head injuries, according to a federal judge, who concluded that Immigrations and Customs Enforcement agents had “largely refused to provide information” about how Mr. Castañeda Mondragón had been injured. The judge, Donovan W. Frank, who ordered Mr. Castañeda Mondragón to be freed from detention last month, said in [his ruling](#) that the agents had suggested that the injured man ran headfirst into a brick wall.

The Department of Homeland Security, which includes ICE, did not respond to requests for comment. Tensions have been high for weeks between local and federal law enforcement agencies over the behavior of immigration agents during the Trump administration's surge in the Twin Cities region. Federal prosecutors say they are investigating [false statements](#) by agents about the circumstances of a nonfatal shooting of a man in Minneapolis, and the Justice Department's civil rights division is investigating the fatal shooting by agents of [Alex Pretti](#), a U.S. citizen who was a nurse. And after [Renee Good](#), another U.S. citizen, was fatally shot by an agent, federal officials refused to provide evidence to state investigators.

In Mr. Castañeda Mondragón's case, The Associated Press [reported last month](#) that hospital employees quickly doubted descriptions by ICE agents about how he had gotten hurt, and this week [reported](#) that the F.B.I. was investigating the arrest, as were the St. Paul police. A spokeswoman for the Minneapolis field office of the F.B.I. did not respond to requests for comment.

John J. Choi, the prosecutor in Ramsey County, which includes St. Paul, has said that he expects to investigate "allegations of criminal conduct by federal agents" and would "hold accountable anyone who has violated Minnesota law."

Mr. Castañeda Mondragón's lawyers said in a statement that they were aware of "ongoing investigations" and that they "trust that the authorities will fully investigate" what had caused his injuries.

Mr. Castañeda Mondragón, who is from Mexico, entered the country legally in March 2022 on a temporary work visa, court records say.

Judge Frank ordered Mr. Castañeda Mondragón's release from ICE custody after he was held for 15 days, with an agent monitoring him from his hospital bed as he recovered from the head injury. The judge, who was appointed by President Bill Clinton, said the detention was unlawful because agents did not have at the time a warrant or reasonable suspicion to believe that Mr. Castañeda Mondragón was in the country illegally.

In an interview, Mr. Castañeda Mondragón [told The A.P.](#) that he was in a friend's car at a St. Paul shopping center when immigration agents pulled him from the car, threw him to the ground,

handcuffed him and beat him with their fists and a baton. He was so injured and disoriented from the beating, he said, that he did not remember that he had a 10-year-old daughter.

His condition declined to the point where he struggled to communicate with hospital staff members, according to the judge's order. Eventually, he improved and was released from the hospital on Jan. 27.

**Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs** reports for *The Times* on national stories across the United States with a focus on criminal justice.

*Continúa...*

# The New York Times

## TRUMP ADMINISTRATION ASKS SUPREME COURT TO END PROTECTIONS FOR SYRIAN MIGRANTS

The president has sought to end the program, known as Temporary Protected Status, for various migrants as part of his mass deportation efforts.



A destroyed mosque in Darayya, near Damascus, last year. The U.S. government initially put protections in place for migrants from Syria in 2012, citing the “extraordinary and temporary conditions” in the country resulting from “a brutal crackdown” by former President Bashar al-Assad. Credit...Nicole Tung for The New York Times



By [Ann E. Marimow](#)  
Reporting from Washington

**Feb. 26, 2026**

The Trump administration on Thursday asked the Supreme Court to allow it to end protections for thousands of migrants from Syria who have been living in the United States without risk of deportation. About 6,000 Syrians have been authorized to live and work in the United States through the program, known as Temporary Protected Status. The program is meant to protect migrants who cannot return to their countries because of unsafe conditions.

The Trump administration announced in September that it was ending the program for Syrians. It has been ending T.P.S. for various groups of migrants as part of its immigration crackdown as the president moves to expel a larger set of migrants from the United States.

Efforts to end the program for more than one million foreign nationals have prompted a number of legal challenges, including from a group of Syrian nationals who sued over the termination of the protections in October.

D. John Sauer, the solicitor general, filed an emergency request on Thursday asking the justices to halt a lower court order that has blocked the administration's efforts to end the protections. He said the ruling was inconsistent with the Supreme Court's temporary orders in another case involving hundreds of thousands of migrants from Venezuela. Mr. Sauer also urged the Supreme Court to formally review the underlying legal questions to provide lasting guidance for lower courts considering the issue.

The administration called that lower court ruling from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit "indefensible" in light of the justices' earlier orders. If the Supreme Court does not act, the Justice Department said lower courts would continue to "impede the termination of temporary protection that the secretary has deemed contrary to the national interest, tying those decisions up in protracted litigation with no end in sight."

Lawyers for the migrants have argued that Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem's decision to end T.P.S. for the Syrians was "preordained" and that she failed to consult with other appropriate agencies before making her decision.

Lupe Aguirre, a senior litigation attorney at the International Refugee Assistance Project, which represents the migrants, said in a statement that losing the protections "would be catastrophic" for the thousands of migrants, many who have been in the United States for more than a decade.

The administration's "push to strip valued community members of their legal status and send them back to danger in Syria is unconscionable and motivated by racial animus against nonwhite immigrants."

The justices have requested a formal response from the lawyers representing the migrants by next Thursday.

In other cases, lower court judges have ruled against the Trump administration pertaining to [about 600,000 Venezuelans](#) and [more than 350,000 Haitians](#). But this month, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit allowed the Trump administration to [move forward](#) with ending protections for more than 60,000 migrants from Nepal, Honduras and Nicaragua.

The appeals court pointed to the emergency orders from the Supreme Court last May and October that cleared the way for the administration to lift protections for hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans. Similarly, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit allowed Ms. Noem to end protections for migrants from Afghanistan and Cameroon.

The government initially put protections in place for migrants from Syria in 2012, citing the “extraordinary and temporary conditions” in the country resulting from “a brutal crackdown” by former President Bashar al-Assad. While intended to be temporary, those protections were [repeatedly extended](#) — including by the first Trump administration — until Ms. Noem announced in September that the conditions in Syria no longer met “the criteria for an ongoing armed conflict that poses a serious threat to the personal safety of returning Syrian nationals.”

She also highlighted what she said were “significant public safety and national security risks” in allowing the migrants to remain in the United States, including that the government lacks access to information to reliably vet Syrians applying to enter the country given the lack of a U.S. Embassy in Syria.

In November, a district court judge indefinitely postponed the termination of the program, finding that Ms. Noem had made her decision based on “political influence,” rather than concluding that the action was in the “national interest,” as required by law. The judge questioned the secretary’s evaluation of conditions in Syria.

On appeal, the Second Circuit said it had considered the Supreme Court’s earlier orders in related matters, but found they did not necessarily apply to this case because they involved “a different country, with different factual circumstances, and different grounds for resolution.”

*Ann E. Marimow covers the Supreme Court for The Times from Washington.*

*A version of this article appears in print on Feb. 27, 2026, Section A, Page 17 of the New York edition with the headline: White House Asks Supreme Court to End Protections for Syrian Migrants.*

EE.UU. – INTERNACIONAL

### "LOS AGENTES ESTÁN CAZANDO A LOS MIGRANTES EN MINEÁPOLIS CUANDO SALEN A TIRAR LA BASURA"

Por Valentina Oropeza

**BBC Mundo** – 3 de febrero de 2026

*"El pastor Sergio Amezcua recibió una llamada de emergencia. Un muchacho se lanzó desde un tercer piso cuando descubrió que agentes uniformados recorrían el edificio donde vivía para detener a migrantes indocumentados."*

Amezcua, de 46 años, recuerda que pidió detalles: dónde estaba el muchacho, cómo se encontraba, qué se podía hacer para ayudarlo. Su interlocutor respondió que el joven había resultado herido en la



caída. 'El muchacho estaba lavando su ropa en el cuarto de lavandería y cuando escuchó el ruido en el pasillo, rompió la ventana y se tiró para escapar', explica en una llamada telefónica desde Mineápolis, donde lidera la iglesia evangélica Dios Habla Hoy.

El migrante caminó alrededor de un kilómetro hasta que unos vecinos le dieron refugio, cuenta el pastor. 'Cuando se le ayudó, estaba sin zapatos ni camisa, andaba en shorts en temperaturas bajo cero, tocando puertas y llorando'[...]" [Consulte nota completa](#)

EE.UU. – INTERNACIONAL

### 'COYOTES' CAMBIARON DE RUTA: TRAFICANTES DE PERSONAS AHORA INTENTAN LLEGAR POR CANADÁ

**N+ Univision** – 18 de febrero de 2026

*"Las autoridades estadounidenses aseguraron que esa frontera también se encuentra 'muy bien vigilada', por lo que advirtieron que cambiar de trayecto no garantiza el cruce ilegal."*

La Embajada de Estados Unidos en México informó este miércoles 18 de febrero de 2026 que el reforzamiento en la frontera sur ha provocado un cambio en las rutas que los llamados 'coyotes' usan para cruzar personas de manera ilegal.

A través de su cuenta oficial en la red social X, antes Twitter, la representación diplomática señaló que 'la frontera sur está tan protegida que ahora los traficantes están intentando cruzar gente por la frontera norte'.

#### **Fronteras reforzadas ante nuevas rutas de tráfico**

Según el mensaje, los llamados 'coyotes o polleros' buscan ahora ingresar a migrantes a territorio de Estados Unidos utilizando Canadá como ruta alternativa. Sin embargo, las autoridades estadounidenses aseguraron que esa frontera también se encuentra 'muy bien vigilada', por lo que advirtieron que cambiar de trayecto no garantiza el cruce ilegal.[...]" [Consulte nota completa](#)

LIBIA

## ONU DENUNCIA ABUSOS SISTEMÁTICOS CONTRA MIGRANTES

Por Al Mayadeen

**Resumen Latinoamericano – 18 de febrero de 2026**

" La ONU denuncia abusos sistemáticos contra migrantes en Libia y pide frenar su retorno, alertando sobre redes de trata vinculadas a autoridades locales.

Los migrantes en Libia son víctimas de abusos sistemáticos, incluyendo asesinatos, torturas, violaciones, trabajos forzados y detenciones arbitrarias en centros y zonas controladas por redes de trata de personas.

Un informe de la Oficina del Alto Comisionado de Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos (ACNUDH) corroboró estos abusos y exhortó a la comunidad internacional a detener la interceptación de barcos de migrantes en el mar y su devolución a Libia.

El documento, elaborado junto con la Misión de Apoyo de la ONU en Libia, señaló que los migrantes son **secuestrados y retenidos sin procedimientos legales**, y a menudo trasladados a centros donde sufren [malos tratos](#).

Los testimonios revelaron violaciones reiteradas contra niñas, explotación laboral sin remuneración y separación forzada de familias, mientras el informe advirtió que los migrantes están atrapados en redes de trata vinculadas incluso a autoridades libias y extendidas más allá de las fronteras. [...]" [Consulte nota completa](#)

HAITÍ

## 1,4 MILLONES DE DESPLAZADOS POR VIOLENCIA DE BANDAS CRIMINALES

Por TeleSUR

**Resumen Latinoamericano – 20 de febrero de 2026**

"Haití enfrenta una catástrofe humanitaria con 1,4 millones de personas desplazadas internamente por el terror de las bandas criminales. Según la Organización Internacional para las Migraciones (OIM), estas pandillas operan sin control estatal, obligando a comunidades enteras a huir para sobrevivir. A esta cifra se suman 23 mil ciudadanos expulsados desde el exterior y devueltos al país en enero, quedando en total desprotección.



El deterioro de la estabilidad política empeoró la vulnerabilidad de la población civil. **Miles de familias abandonan sus hogares de forma abrupta, sin preparación ni documentos esenciales.** Esta situación impide que los desplazados accedan a servicios básicos, profundizando el ciclo de pobreza generado por la violencia armada que asola al país caribeño.

La OIM enfatiza que **la crisis alcanzó niveles críticos debido a la agresividad de los grupos criminales en zonas urbanas.** Estos desplazamientos masivos transforman permanentemente el panorama social y desarticulan el tejido comunitario. **La falta de autoridad permite que estructuras delictivas controlen territorios estratégicos, convirtiendo la seguridad en un privilegio inalcanzable para la mayoría.**[...]" [Consulte nota completa](#)

EE.UU. — GHANA, ZIMBABUE, SIERRA LEONA Y SENEGAL— CAMERÚN

## ESTADOS UNIDOS. REVELADO: GOBIERNO ESTADOUNIDENSE DEPORTA A MIGRANTES A UN CENTRO SECRETO EN ÁFRICA

Por Redacción

**Resumen Latinoamericano** – 21 de febrero de 2026

*"El gobierno de Trump envió a un grupo de deportados a un centro secreto en África de condiciones similares a una prisión, denunciaron abogados de algunos migrantes."*



Nueve de los primeros deportados el mes pasado desde un centro de detención en Luisiana llegaron al aeropuerto de Yaundé, en Camerún, un país en África Central ubicado en el Golfo de Guinea.

Según un abogado camerunés que representa a aproximadamente a la mitad de este grupo de migrantes deportados, otros ocho, incluidos ciudadanos de Ghana, Zimbabue, Sierra Leona y Senegal, arribaron el lunes.

Ninguno de ellos es originario de Camerún, según documentos gubernamentales obtenidos por The New York Times y los abogados de los deportados. Estados Unidos no ha hecho público ningún acuerdo con Camerún para recibir deportados procedentes de otros países.

Varios de los hombres y mujeres deportados —cuyos casos no se habían reportado previamente— dijeron a The Times que no sabían que serían enviados a Camerún hasta que fueron esposados y encadenados en un vuelo del Departamento de Seguridad Nacional que salió de Alexandria, Luisiana, el 14 de enero.

El Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Camerún declinó hacer comentarios cuando fue contactado por teléfono, y el Departamento de Estado estadounidense indicó que no comentaría sobre sus “comunicaciones diplomáticas con otros gobiernos” al ser preguntado sobre los términos del acuerdo. [...]” [Consulte nota completa](#)

HONDURAS

## CONADEH EXIGE APLICAR MARCO LEGAL ANTE CRISIS DE DESPLAZAMIENTO INFANTIL

Por Redacción

Resumen Latinoamericano - 21 de febrero de 2026



CONADEH exige medidas y acciones contra el desplazamiento forzado. Foto: EFE

EL Comisionado Nacional de los Derechos Humanos hondureño, denuncia falta de protección real para menores desplazados.

CONADEH exige medidas y acciones contra el desplazamiento forzado.

La comisionada urgió al Estado a implementar **políticas públicas** para **prevenir el desplazamiento forzado de niñas, niños y adolescentes** que **huyen de sus comunidades por amenazas y violencia**, resaltando que la niñez es uno de los sectores de la población hondureña más vulnerables, directa e indirectamente ante esta problemática.

La **Defensora del Pueblo** advirtió que entre 2019 y 2024 se atendieron **más de 7,100 quejas** que afectaron a unas **18,100 personas; 20 de cada 100 desplazados por violencia eran menores de edad**. El 2023 fue el año más crítico, con 1,243 menores afectados; cinco departamentos concentran el 84 % de los casos, encabezados por Francisco Morazán y Cortés.

De acuerdo al seguimiento brindado a las quejas, por parte de la UDFI, en el **69% de los casos de niñas, niños y adolescentes víctimas o en riesgo de desplazamiento**, el principal responsable son las maras y pandillas, en un 22% el agresor es desconocido, en un 5% por bandas criminales y en apenas un 4% son personas conocidas.

La **Defensoría de la Niñez** advirtió que, pese a existir una **ley de protección**, no se observa una respuesta contundente en investigación y sanción de los responsables. [...] ["Consulte nota completa](#)

EE.UU. – GUATEMALA

## EEUU DEPORTA A MÁS GUATEMALTECOS ESTE AÑO: 180 DIARIOS

Por Miguel Salay

**Resumen Latinoamericano** – 24 de febrero de 2026

*"En lo que va de año crecen exponencialmente las deportaciones de guatemaltecos desde Estados Unidos en comparación con el año pasado.*

Las escenas se repiten todos los días en las afueras de la Fuerza Aérea de Guatemala, familiares reencontrándose después de meses o años separados por la necesidad de migrar y encontrar posibilidades de superarse en otras tierras; sin embargo, los reencuentros llevan consigo la obligación de pagar el costo del viaje de manera irregular hacia Estados Unidos, que oscila entre los 10 y 15 mil dólares, y la incertidumbre de encontrar cómo sostenerse en un país que los expulsó.

Sebastián, el hermano de María, pasará de ganar un promedio de 120 dólares al día a ganar el equivalente a diez dólares en Guatemala si es que encuentra trabajo, lo mismo que el sobrino de doña Lucrecia y sus conocidos.[...]" [Consulte nota completa](#)

# The New York Times

**SEVEN MILES FROM SOFIA, BULGARIA'S CAPITAL, THIS FORMER MILITARY BARRACKS HOUSES HUNDREDS OF MIGRANTS.**



By Caitlin L. Chandler. *Caitlin L. Chandler, who writes frequently about migration, spent 10 months reporting this article, interviewing dozens of detainees and refugees, European officials and immigration lawyers.*

**Published Feb. 10, 2026 Updated Feb. 18, 2026**

The smell of Busmantsi's "special home for foreigners" is indescribable, but if you had to use words they would be some combination of stale urine, mildew, dried sweat and rot. Thirty people are packed into each cell, which guards lock at 10 p.m. and don't open again until 7 a.m. The rooms do not contain toilets, so at night men urinate out the window. There is no running water, so those with flu or food poisoning vomit into plastic bags. Some men hang sheets around their beds in a gesture toward privacy, but in the corner is a camera, with its telltale red eye.

Occasionally, a few of the men housed in this former military barracks seven miles from Bulgaria's capitol, Sofia, are brought to a small room, where officials from the Bulgarian police and the European Union border police, called Frontex, are waiting. There are no lawyers present. The officials tell them they can leave if they sign an agreement to return to their home countries — Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere. If they don't, they will be locked up for a year and a half. At first, most refuse to sign, but it is hard to hold onto sanity in a Bulgarian cell when you have not committed a crime, so occasionally men sign, and a week or so later, they are gone. Those inside rarely hear from them again. Some, though, decide to hold out for the full 18 months, after which most will be released and allowed to remain in Bulgaria; many hope they'll be able to move on from there. Hesham, a Syrian with honey brown hair and a shy smile who arrived last spring, was among 100 or so men who had chosen to wait. Just a few months earlier, he had been living in a town in southern Germany, learning the language and dreaming of returning to his job as a tailor. But when he arrived for an appointment at the local immigration office in Saxony-Anhalt last February, the police arrested him, detained him for weeks at the Munich airport, then deported him to Sofia.

“I want to file a lawsuit against the prison here,” Hesham wrote me on WhatsApp in early June. “Do you know anything about this?”

I began speaking with Hesham last May. We were connected by Astrid Schreiber, an advocate with the Munich Refugee Council, who met him in Munich’s detention complex. Soon I was texting with or speaking to a dozen detainees from Algeria, Iraq, Morocco, Gaza and Syria, most of whom had been deported from Germany and other E.U. countries.



A room for migrants detained at a facility in Busmantsi, Bulgaria. The interior photographs for this article were provided by detainees.

One man wrote that German police raided his house in the middle of the night. He said that he fled but was chased by dogs and surrendered in a forest. “They grabbed me by the feet while my hands were tied, and they dragged me like an animal,” he said.

Another man wrote: “They are threatening to deport me to Iraq. Here I have scabies and there is no treatment. The situation is very bad, beyond imagination.”

*Continúa...*

## ‘I WANT TO FILE A LAWSUIT AGAINST THE PRISON HERE. DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THIS?’

No phones with cameras are allowed inside Busmantsi, which meant that most of the detainees did not have phones. Those who did shared them, sometimes charging a small fee for access. The detainees told me that they awoke each morning with rosy bedbug bites across their arms and legs. They tried spraying the dirty mattresses with local chemical products that promised to eradicate insects, but it never worked, or at least not for long. Three times a day, they filed to the cafeteria for colorless meals. Breakfast was white bread. A typical lunch was one chicken wing and some cabbage; dinner was boiled potatoes, bread, an apple. They were offered no education, Bulgarian language classes or any chance to earn money.

Not long after I began texting with Hesham, my messages stopped going through. I also lost touch with two other men, an Algerian and an Iraqi, who had been deported from Germany. One detainee told me they had signed the papers to return to their home countries. Hesham, it turned out, was still inside. The prison guards had confiscated his phone, and I could now reach him only through an intermediary.

Detention centers like the one where Hesham is held form a kind of demarcation line along the bloc’s external borders. There can be as many as 1,060 people locked up in Bulgaria’s two sites: Busmantsi, in Sofia, and Lyubimets, in the south. There are centers on the idyllic Greek islands Samos, Lesbos, Khíos, Leros and Kos, as well as on the tiny Italian island Lampedusa and the volcanic landmass of Sicily. [These are difficult to visit and sealed off from the public.](#) Unless you work there or know someone detained there, they are largely invisible. “Most tourists don’t even know there is a detention center,” Robert Nestler, a German asylum lawyer who frequently visits Kos, told me. “It is at the end of the world.”

But if detention sites like Busmantsi sit at the margins of Europe geographically, they are increasingly central to the European Union’s immigration policies. Following the 2015 influx of 1.3 million refugees, mostly Syrians fleeing war, Brussels began to restrict migration, pushing border management and asylum processing to the bloc’s farthest edges. Billions of euros were also funneled to neighboring countries to prevent onward migration to the European Union, resulting in detention sites in Libya that are run by militias and mass deportations from Turkey. Now the most restrictive asylum policies in the bloc’s history are unfolding inside its borders. [The Pact on Migration and Asylum](#), finalized by Brussels in 2024 and coming into full effect later this year, expands detention, including for children, and speeds up deportations.

Western European countries are now capitalizing on an E.U. law that requires refugees to apply for asylum in the first country they enter; those who instead leave for another member country can be sent back to the E.U. nation where they first arrived. This regulation has long been controversial, says Catherine Woollard, the former director of the European Council on Refugees and Exiles, because it places “huge responsibility on the countries at the borders.”

**‘MOST TOURISTS DON’T EVEN KNOW THERE IS A DETENTION CENTER.  
IT IS AT THE END OF THE WORLD.’**

Refugees deported to Bulgaria find themselves trapped in a country that does not want them. Bulgaria has low asylum-recognition rates and has lacked an official integration program for the past 13 years. Migrants have died on Bulgarian territory after authorities [failed to prioritize their rescues](#): In December 2024, three Egyptian teenage boys froze to death in the snowy southern woods. [Those who enter from Turkey are often assaulted by border guards and violently pushed back](#), as both Frontex and human rights organizations have documented. Nonetheless, Germany, one of the bloc’s wealthiest states, is on track to deport five times as many people to Bulgaria, its poorest, as it did in 2022.

The conditions in Bulgaria’s detention sites and abuses along the border have been largely ignored by the European Union. Instead, Bulgaria has become a kind of testing ground for the future of European migration — a heavily patrolled border, fast deportations and policies that encourage, or even coerce, refugees to leave.



Detainees at Busmantsi say that the sinks in this room are broken and that their requests for repairs go unheeded.



A toilet at the facility. At night, the men are forced to urinate out the window.

**I first entered** Busmantsi in late August, along with an acquaintance who was visiting a Palestinian refugee from Gaza. As we approached in a taxi, two four-story concrete blocks loomed behind a high wall topped with barbed wire. It was easy to see how Busmantsi served as a stand-in for a West Virginia penitentiary in the 2009 Hollywood slasher “Wrong Turn 3: Left for Dead.” Near the gated entrance hung two signs highlighting six million euros in E.U. funding.

We passed through two gates and entered a concrete courtyard. On the left was a smaller building managed by the State Agency for Refugees, which then housed people with pending asylum claims, including families with children. On the right was the Interior Ministry section, which typically holds those whose asylum claims have been denied. This is where Hesham was kept. At least a dozen men clustered around the windows, waving their hands frantically through the bars. “Hello!” they shouted. “How are you?”

The Bulgarian government claims that Busmantsi has the capacity to hold 400 people, but it depends on how you define capacity. In the summer, a Turkish woman fleeing domestic violence was forced to stay in the male section for almost three months, sharing a bedroom and showers with 20 men. Time spent in the outdoor courtyard is restricted to 30 minutes a day, including for children. People with severe mental-health conditions are isolated.

*Continúa...*

The center does not have translators, and the Bulgarian staff do not speak Arabic, Pashto, Dari or French; it falls on the detainees to translate for one another. When an Afghan man was locked in a room alone, the Arabic speakers on his floor struggled to communicate with him. Still, they pleaded with the guards to unlock his door so he could use the bathroom; some five days later, the guards complied. Another man arrived at Busmantsi with both legs amputated. The other detainees carried him around. ([Site-visit reports from the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment](#) have extensively documented conditions inside Busmantsi and refer to the center as “prisonlike.”)

“What should I do?” Hisham wrote to me on WhatsApp when we first began chatting. “I can’t go to Syria because my house is completely destroyed.”

### BUSMANTSI HAS THE CAPACITY TO HOLD 400 PEOPLE, BUT IT DEPENDS ON HOW YOU DEFINE CAPACITY.

It was not the first time Hesham had found himself locked up in Busmantsi. Through WhatsApp phone calls, legal documents and interviews with his sister and advocates, I pieced together how he ended up there three times in the space of two years.

Hesham first entered Bulgaria in September 2023, when he was in his early 20s, crossing the southern land border from Turkey. Conditions for Syrian refugees in Turkey worsened after the country agreed to seal its borders following a deal with the European Union that included six billion euros in aid. A decade earlier, at the beginning of the Syrian civil war, his father, a farmer who was not politically active, was arrested at a government checkpoint. He never returned home. A year into his absence, Hesham, then 14, left Damascus for Istanbul, where he lived for eight years. Two of Hesham’s sisters also fled Syria, one settling in Germany and the other in Oman. Hesham’s mother and younger brother remained behind.

When Hesham arrived in Sofia, he went first to Tsar Simeon Street, locally referred to as Arab Street for the many Middle Eastern shops there, to purchase goods for his onward journey. Then the police arrived. They arrested Hesham for illegally entering the country and took him to Busmantsi. After a week, an NGO came with a translator and told him he could either request asylum or remain confined for 18 months. As an asylum seeker, he would be released from detention in a week or so. Hesham immediately applied. He needed to reach his older sister in Germany, whom he had not seen in 11 years.

In preparation for his release, Hesham was asked to roll his fingers across the glassy surface of a portable biometric machine, which uploads fingerprints from every asylum seeker into an E.U. database called Eurodac. This allows a government in one country to check whether someone's fingerprints were originally taken in another. The E.U.-wide system began in 2003 and has been rapidly expanding, part of a renewed effort to track asylum seekers and other migrants through biometrics.

The authorities dropped Hesham at Vrazhdebna Camp, one of three open facilities in Sofia where asylum seekers receive a bed and meals as their claims are processed. Vrazhdebna means "hostile" in Bulgarian; the area surrounding the camp on the city outskirts bears the same name. Guards with guns patrol the inside. Here, as in facilities in Greece, residents have a curfew and cannot have visitors. "I'd go to Germany if I were you," an employee told Hesham, who left the next day. Hesham traversed Serbia, the Czech Republic and Austria, entering Germany a few weeks later.

After reaching Saxony-Anhalt, where his sister lives, Hesham went straight to the police and requested asylum. The officers confiscated his phone; he never got it back. Hesham was initially assigned to Halberstadt Camp, north of the Harz Mountain range, near his sister, who barely recognized the adult version of her brother. At dinner, she served plates of kibbe, stuffed zucchinis, rice with dumplings, food from their childhoods, while her 4-year-old daughter giggled and stared.

Hesham threw himself into studying German. A local Amazon warehouse offered to hire him once his papers came through. A possible future took shape, though he dared not hold onto any one vision for too long. The memory of giving his fingerprints to the officials inside Busmantsi played on a loop. To quiet the fear of being sent back, he focused on his family. In a photo from those months of waiting, Hesham grins, holding his niece as she makes a peace sign with tiny fingers.



Makeshift privacy curtains hung in a facility bathroom.

**Hesham had come** to Germany at the wrong time. “We are limiting irregular migration to Germany,” the chancellor at the time, Olaf Scholz, told the magazine *Der Spiegel* a few months before Hesham arrived. “Too many people are coming,” he said, adding, “We have to deport people more often and faster.”

After four months in Germany, Hesham received notice that he would be deported to Sofia. The police arrest refugees in the middle of the night so they cannot flee. Hesham spent several months couch-surfing with friends, hoping he could wait out the order. In January 2025, the police found him and put him on a commercial flight to Sofia. Once aboard, Hesham protested that he didn’t wish to return and the pilot refused to take off. The authorities released him, and Hesham went back into hiding. Two weeks later, when he went to renew his ID card at the local immigration office, the police were waiting. They did not let him pack a bag or pick up his belongings. After Hesham was captured, his sister cried for a week. She told her daughter that Hesham had gone on a long trip.

Deportations are difficult for the German government to execute. They require an agreement with the receiving country, as well as infrastructure — detention facilities, extra police officers, arrangements with commercial airlines or private carriers — that the United States has built up over two decades. Deportations are humiliating and sometimes violent. Some men are subjected to airport strip and body-cavity searches. Deportees are sometimes handcuffed and shackled; some are restrained with belts. Pilots have at times refused to fly, as happened with Hesham, after realizing refugees are onboard against their will, resulting in 342 canceled flights in 2024 alone.

When deporting refugees to other E.U. countries, German courts must consider appeals on several grounds: whether sending someone back would cause serious harm or lead to torture; whether the person has certain family ties in Germany or serious medical conditions. Refugees are often not deported to Greece, because mistreatment there has been well documented. Conditions in Bulgaria are less well known. “Almost all of them are sent back, regardless of what happened to them in Bulgaria,” says Stephan Reichel, who coordinates church asylum in Germany.

In 2024, the German government submitted some 75,000 deportation requests to other E.U. countries, but little more than half were approved; only 5,740 individuals were deported within the bloc. Chancellor Frederick Merz has vowed to close that gap. Germany has poured millions of euros into building detention centers. Four deportation centers opened this year; one near the Polish border can house 250 people.

‘IT WAS ONE OF THE WORST DAYS OF MY LIFE.’

The day of Hesham’s deportation in late February, the police came before the sun rose. The officials that day were respectful. He was not handcuffed. He was given food and water. In the end, there were

only four other passengers, three Syrians and one Afghan, all men, flying to Sofia on a private plane. The shame colored everything. “It was one of the worst days of my life,” Hesham told me later.

Upon arrival in Sofia, the Bulgarian authorities took Hesham to Busmantsi. It would be harder to leave this time. Bulgaria had long served as a transit country for refugees heading north, but it remained shut out of the full rights afforded E.U. members for failing to control immigration. So it began violently policing its borders. In 2025, after scaling up detention and tightening border security, it was finally admitted to the Schengen Area, which allows freedom of movement among member states. To assist its operations, the European Union has, over the past decade, granted the country hundreds of millions of euros for additional immigration control. Under the pact, Bulgaria has also received 90 million euros; the interior ministry is creating two new detention centers and expanding Busmantsi and Lyubimets. At Busmantsi, Hesham was informed that his asylum file was closed. Hesham lodged a new claim and after a month was transferred back to Vrazhdebna Camp. During his asylum interview, he suspected that his translator was not interpreting correctly, but he had no way to prove it, just a bad feeling. A rejection came two months later; it stated that Hesham had migrated for economic reasons. It was true that Hesham wanted, desperately, to start working, but his main reason for leaving Syria was fear for his safety. After Hesham’s father was abducted, his family’s house was bombed.

Under Bulgarian law, you can appeal an asylum rejection twice. Hesham needed a lawyer to file an appeal within 14 days. At the time, the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee a nongovernmental organization, provided legal aid to asylum seekers; a tall, thin man with glasses told Hesham he would process his paperwork. The committee does not give out private contact details for its lawyers, and all Hesham had was a generic email address. He did not even know the lawyer’s name. A few weeks later, some officials came to the camp and asked residents for their IDs. When they saw Hesham’s, they took his residency permit away and told him to report to the camp office. Inside, the officials locked the door. Then the police arrived. They arrested Hesham and drove him back to Busmantsi.



The laundry machines that were once here have been gone, according to detainees, for more than two years. They wash their clothes on the floor or in the sinks.



Typical rations. Food is subject to spoilage, especially in hot weather.

A few days later, Hesham saw his lawyer by chance in a meeting room set aside for legal-aid consultations. “Why didn’t you file my appeal?” Hesham demanded. The man, Hesham told me, said “he forgot.” Hesham was in disbelief: “How can you call yourself a lawyer? How could you forget?” Hesham recalled that the man became agitated and began speaking in Bulgarian. Hesham walked out. (The Bulgarian Helsinki Committee said it does not comment on individual cases because of attorney-client privilege, and denied that actions on their part led to Hesham’s detention.)

From his cell, Hesham searched for a private lawyer in Sofia. One wanted a minimum of 1,500 euros. He didn’t have the money. Hesham had only one friend in Sofia, a fellow Syrian who brought him some clean T-shirts and socks.

After his deportation, Hesham appealed his case in Germany, but as time went on, it seemed unlikely a court would allow him to return. Schreiber, the advocate with the Munich Refugee Council, told me that the only person she knew who had been allowed back into Germany was an elderly Syrian woman receiving cancer treatment. Although a German court ruled the deportation illegal, she had to pay for her return flight.

One of the hardest things for Hesham about life in Busmantsi was the waiting. He had nothing to fill his days and longed to return to his work as a tailor. As a boy, he spent hours after school in a Damascus factory, slicing shapes with an electric blade. Each fabric had a different feel. Hesham loved black velvet,

with its density and plushness, the most. In Istanbul, he had designed suits and dresses, sharing the drawings with his sister. Now the future was a blank, dreamless space.

He found it impossible to escape the almost casual violence that he and the men I spoke with regularly witnessed. One day, a group of guards dragged the Afghan man from solitary confinement and beat him with an iron rod. Another man was punched in the face. Detainees told me that the guards knew where there were missing surveillance cameras — near the laundry room, for instance — and assaulted people there. Last year, a Syrian man in his mid-30s named Ahmad was locked inside Busmantsi, even though he had a valid German residence permit, making it legal for him to travel. Ahmad, who suffers from psychosis, was put in solitary confinement. His sister told me that the guards beat him so brutally after he resisted his deportation that he could not walk for five days. (The Bulgarian Interior Ministry, which oversees the Migration Directorate that runs Busmantsi and other centers, declined to comment on individual cases, and the Migration Directorate did not respond to a request for comment.)

Medical care inside Busmantsi is either inadequate or absent. In 2021, an 83-year-old Armenian woman was brought to Busmantsi; she died five hours later from heart failure. A review by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture found a pattern of factually inaccurate medical information. All the recorded vitals of detainees were the same. All the medical intake forms said “no complaints” and “language barriers.”

The longer someone stayed inside Busmantsi, the more reality deteriorated. “People in the cell have told me I cry in my sleep,” Hesham said. Visits are limited to 30 minutes, but many inmates never had a visitor. Some of the people isolated for mental-health conditions had not arrived that way. Suicidal ideation is common in immigration detention facilities around the world, increasing in proportion to the length of time detained, but no one wanted to speak on the record for fear it would harm their chances of release.

### ‘RETURNING HOME MIGHT BE DIFFICULT, BUT A COUNSELOR CAN HELP YOU.’

A week after I first visited Busmantsi, I arrived for my appointment with Hesham. I pushed the doorbell at the designated time, hearing a sharp chime on the other side. Some five minutes later, the door swung open into a courtyard surrounded by tall metal walls. This time I noticed the U.N. Refugee Agency registration sign that hung near the entrance. Under the list of rules was: “You do not have the right to choose the European country where you want to live and receive international protection.”

*Continúa...*

I was ushered into a ground-floor room that functioned as a visitors' center. At last, Hesham appeared. Dressed in an oversize purple T-shirt, with a few pimples on his cheeks and wispy facial hair, he could have been a sleep-deprived graduate student. A female guard eyed us from the corner. On the wall were Frontex posters. "Thinking of returning home?" read one, beneath which was a telephone number. "Returning home might be difficult, but a counselor can help you," another read. From January to September 2025, Frontex sent its "return specialists" to conduct 744 meetings with detainees, a spokesman told me.

Since Hesham and I first made contact, the guards had yanked him out of his cell three times and put him in the room where we were now sitting. Officials pressured him to return to Damascus, once kicking him in the leg, he said. The authorities slid across a document in Bulgarian and told him to sign. He declined. Tacked to a corkboard on the back wall was a Frontex notice on how to file a complaint.

I asked if he had more to say about the detention conditions. "You've already seen it yourself," Hesham said, gesturing to the room. He pressed his thumb to his lip as if quieting himself. "I don't need to say anything more." In the corner, the guard tilted her head and snapped a selfie.



The Busmantsi detention facility, with Sofia, the Bulgarian capitol, in the background. Credit...The New York Times

**Under the European Union's** new migration pact, it has become easier for governments to detain asylum seekers, like holding anyone deemed a national security risk or a threat to public order. According to Diana Radoslavova, who founded the Center for Legal Aid — Voice in Bulgaria in 2009, this will only render the situations many refugees already find themselves in more precarious.

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One of her clients, Abdulrahman al-Khalidi, a Saudi human rights activist, entered Bulgaria seeking asylum. Though his case is still open, he has been held in Busmantsi for more than four years, well beyond the legal limit, because Bulgaria's national security agency labeled him a threat. The authorities have bounced al-Khalidi between the refugee agency and the Interior Ministry section of the facility, threatening to deport him to Saudi Arabia. A Sofia court has ordered him released three times; each time, the Bulgarian government has refused. The Bulgarian ombudsman stated that it would be best if another European country, like France or Germany, gave al-Khalidi asylum. So far none has offered.

When it comes to people like Hesham, the biggest question is the misuse of detention, Radoslavova said. The use of detention in the absence of active removal proceedings violates E.U. law, and under Bulgarian law, rejected asylum seekers can only be detained for the purpose of deportation for 18 months. But Bulgaria cannot force Syrians to return to their home countries, because it has no agreement with the government of President Ahmed al-Sharaa. "If you know that this person cannot be forcibly returned," she said, "why do you detain them for 18 months?"

Once people with rejected asylum claims are released from Busmantsi, they have no access to health care, subsidized housing or social services. Over the past year, Radoslavova has been contacted frequently by German advocates, dismayed to find that clients deported to Bulgaria are destitute. Families have difficulty enrolling their children in school or finding a place to live. When I asked the German Interior Ministry if it had considered halting deportations to Bulgaria because of conditions there, a spokeswoman referred me to the Bulgarian government.

Daniel Mitov, Bulgaria's interior minister, defended the lack of alternatives to detention. He told me that if asylum seekers were free, they would head north, and then other European countries would call and say: "Well, you have allowed these individuals to cross illegally through your territory. Now we're going to get them back to you, and it's your problem." Mitov pointed out that the border between Bulgaria and Turkey was the second-busiest in the world, after the U.S.-Mexico border. The European Union has sent hundreds of Frontex police officers to assist local forces and [piloted a new surveillance system with drones](#). Even the Americans, Mitov said, were helping the Bulgarian border police: The Interior Ministry coordinated its efforts with the U.S. Embassy and Washington. Bulgaria shares the biometrics of people who enter the country illegally with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE); the biometrics are run through databases at the Department of Homeland Security, Department of Justice and Department of Defense. (The State Department spokesman in Sofia confirmed that the United States shares equipment, training and advice with Bulgaria, calling it a "close and effective relationship" on border operations).

‘QUITE OFTEN, THE PEOPLE WHO STAY THERE DO NOT APPRECIATE THE ENVIRONMENT.’

As for the conditions inside Busmantsi, Mitov blamed the refugees. “Quite often, the people who stay there do not appreciate the environment,” he remarked dryly. “You’re saying that people staying inside damage the facility?” I asked. “Yes,” he said. “The human traffickers are giving them advice to treat the facilities in ways that afterward they can complain.”

Across the European Union, Ukrainians have been received very differently from Syrians, Afghans and others. In 2022, as Ukrainians fled Russian bombs, the Bulgarian government rented empty hotels along the Black Sea to house them. The bloc contributed money for private housing and language classes. Kiril Petkov, then the prime minister, explained the government’s logic: “These people are Europeans,” he told journalists. “These people are intelligent. They are educated people.” He added: “This is not the refugee wave we have been used to, people we were not sure about their identity, people with unclear pasts, who could even have been terrorists.”



Detainees often hang sheets on their beds in an attempt at privacy.

As the migration pact comes into full force this summer, countries will have even more flexibility in how they treat those seeking asylum. One provision relies on what is known as the legal fiction of “non-entry”: states can claim someone is not on European territory despite having crossed the border, creating liminal spaces where they can argue that E.U. law does not apply. Those interviewed and rejected for asylum in these borderlands are no longer guaranteed legal representation.

**In late October**, Busmantsi guards notified Hesham and some 80 other detainees — mostly Syrian and Moroccan men — that they would be moved to the Lyubimets detention center, just 18 miles from the Turkish border. They did not tell them why.

*Continúa...*

Hesham packed his few belongings and traveled three hours south by bus. A few days later, a delegation from the European Commission toured an almost empty Busmantsi to see if it met E.U. standards. Abdulrahman, who later requested to be transferred to Lyubimets, spoke with members of the mission, as Bulgarian officials hovered nearby.

In Lyubimets, a vast facility that includes accommodation in metal shipping containers, the food was still inedible, but the room that Hesham shared with 20 men was cleaner. Hesham and the others were more isolated, though, because it was harder to receive visitors from Sofia. After two weeks, officials called Hesham into a room and told him they were offering 150 euros for him to return to Syria, promising another 700 euros upon arrival.

Hesham refused. Every week, when his mother called, she begged him to come home, but he didn't think Syria was a country he could live in yet. After the fall of the Assad regime, some prisoners were released, but there was no information about Hesham's father, one of many men who were still missing. On Jan. 1, Hesham turned 27. As one day of confinement followed another, Hesham thought back to advice his father had given him, encouraging him to study. He was a feisty kid, not as interested in school as his sisters, who pursued degrees in law and chemistry. Hesham was sorry that he hadn't yet lived up to his father's vision. Maybe there was still time. If he could make it 11 more months, he would be free by his next birthday — but what that freedom would look like remained uncertain.

**A correction was made on Feb. 18, 2026:** *An earlier version of this article referred imprecisely to the work of the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee, a nongovernmental organization. The legal aid that they provided to asylum seekers was not undertaken as part of a contract with the Bulgarian government. Additionally, while the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee denies that it was responsible for the outcome in Hesham's case, it does not deny involvement in the case altogether.*

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*A version of this article appears in print on Feb. 22, 2026, Page 24 of the Sunday Magazine with the headline: Hard Time.*

# The New York Times

## El Times

19 de febrero de 2026

*Bienvenidos a The World, un boletín sobre la actualidad internacional.*



Por [Katrin Bennhold](#)

**Buenos días a todo el mundo.** Es uno de los dilemas definitorios de nuestro tiempo: las tasas de natalidad están disminuyendo y los países occidentales dependen cada vez más de la mano de obra migrante. Al mismo tiempo, hay una reacción negativa contra los migrantes en las urnas que lleva no solo a los populistas, sino también a muchos partidos de la corriente *mainstream*, a restringir el número de personas que migran a sus países y a aumentar las deportaciones.

Pero un país está haciendo algo diferente: España está dando a cientos de miles de migrantes indocumentados la oportunidad de quedarse y trabajar y, al menos hasta ahora, ha evitado una reacción negativa masiva en contra. Hoy mi colega Amanda Taub explica los motivos.



Un puesto de comida venezolana en Madrid. Finbarr O'Reilly para The New York Times

## LA SOLUCIÓN ESPAÑOLA A LA INMIGRACIÓN

Por Amanda Taub

Pocos temas tienen más carga política que la migración. Aunque muchos países se enfrentan a una disminución de la mano de obra, aceptar a un gran número de migrantes entraña el riesgo de una reacción negativa de los votantes e inestabilidad política.

El resultado: muchos países ricos se esfuerzan por mantener fuera a los migrantes, incluso cuando [las personas a cargo de los bancos centrales](#) y los [economistas](#) instan a una mayor inmigración para complementar la oferta de mano de obra y aumentar los ingresos fiscales.

Es un dilema aparentemente inextricable. Pero España, que tiene una de las tasas de natalidad más bajas de Europa y una mano de obra nacida en el país cada vez menor, puede haber encontrado una forma de salir de ese callejón sin salida.

El mes pasado, su gobierno de centro-izquierda dijo que daría a cientos de miles de migrantes indocumentados [una vía para obtener un estatus legal](#).

Borja Suárez Corujo, secretario de Estado de la Seguridad Social y Pensiones de España, dijo en una entrevista que la migración era el único camino a seguir para que la sociedad española se mantenga y progrese.

Sin embargo, el Partido Popular, de centro-derecha, dijo que la medida desbordaría los servicios públicos. Una portavoz de Vox, el partido de extrema derecha español, afirmó que ataca la identidad española.

Cambiar de política podría seguir siendo una apuesta arriesgada en un país donde el apoyo a Vox en las encuestas ha pasado de cero a casi el 20 por ciento en la última década.

Pero el gobierno español se ha apoyado en una amplia coalición social, que incluye a muchos líderes empresariales y a la Iglesia católica, para promulgar una estrategia que resulta ahora políticamente impensable en Estados Unidos y en muchos otros países ricos.

### Evitar los desencadenantes

España ha permitido durante mucho tiempo que los migrantes indocumentados obtengan el estatus legal a los pocos años de llegar, si pueden demostrar que tienen raíces en la comunidad a través del empleo, la familia o los lazos sociales. Los ciudadanos de muchos países latinoamericanos han podido viajar a España con exenciones de visa o visas turísticas, y luego quedarse.

*Continúa...*

Desde 2019, casi el 40 por ciento de todos los nuevos puestos de trabajo en España han sido ocupados por migrantes, según las estadísticas del gobierno.

“Vinimos a España a trabajar, no a pedir ayudas ni a depender de nadie”, dijo Marita González, de 35 años, quien llegó de Perú como turista con sus dos hijas y se quedó. “Necesitamos trabajar, y para eso necesitamos papeles”. Actualmente gana 750 euros al mes cuidando a dos personas de edad avanzada.



La cosecha del pimiento del piquillo en Lodosa, España. Jesus Diges/EPA, vía Shutterstock

La política migratoria relativamente liberal de España, que incluye la reciente amnistía, evita algunos de los principales desencadenantes del sentimiento antimigrante.

More in Common, un grupo de investigación política que estudia la polarización en Estados Unidos y Europa, ha presentado datos que dan a entender que el apoyo público a la inmigración suele basarse en dos cosas: la gente debe creer que la inmigración está bajo control y que los migrantes contribuyen a la economía y a los intereses nacionales.

El gobierno y los defensores de la inmigración han enmarcado la nueva amnistía como una medida “conforme al marco legal” que incorporará a más personas a la economía formal, donde pagarán impuestos y estarán sujetas a obligaciones legales.

## **La percepción de control**

Los datos de More in Common muestran que cuando la gente siente que sus fronteras no son seguras, el apoyo a la inmigración disminuye. En Estados Unidos, la percepción de que el presidente Joe Biden perdió el control sobre la frontera sur impulsó la hostilidad hacia la inmigración, dijo Tim Dixon, director ejecutivo del grupo.

La forma en que los migrantes indocumentados entran en un país influye mucho en la opinión pública. La vasta frontera entre Estados Unidos y México puede ocasionar temor a una inmigración incontrolable cuando aumentan los cruces.

A diferencia de Estados Unidos, España tiene un número relativamente bajo de solicitantes de asilo que cruzan las fronteras terrestres o marítimas sin autorización. Los migrantes indocumentados suelen llegar legalmente como turistas con exención de visas, y luego se quedan más tiempo. Eso evita que se provoque la sensación de que las fronteras no están controladas, porque el gobierno podría cerrar esa vía en cualquier momento.

Los activistas afirman que el cálido recibimiento español no se extiende a muchos africanos, incluso mientras reconocen que España es un caso atípico en un continente que cierra sus puertas. El país financia, equipa y capacita a Marruecos y otros países para [detener a los migrantes antes de que lleguen a Europa](#) a través de las Islas Canarias, y tiene pasos fronterizos fuertemente fortificados en Ceuta y Melilla, dos ciudades españolas en el norte de África.

## **¿Podría funcionar en otros lugares?**

España tiene algunos atributos únicos, en particular su gran reserva de migrantes potenciales en América Latina, que comparte su lengua y su herencia religiosa. Pero el hecho de enmarcar el debate migratorio en torno a la necesidad de orden de la población sugiere un modelo que podría extenderse ampliamente.

*Continúa...*

Una gran lección: si la gente confía en que el gobierno tiene sus fronteras bajo control, a menudo aceptará altos niveles de inmigración. “Cuando sienten que se ha restablecido el control, entonces lo normalizan”, dijo Dixon.

Australia creó centros de detención en el extranjero para los solicitantes de asilo, lo que provocó las críticas de otros países. Pero una vez que el público se convenció de que el gobierno controlaba sus fronteras, el sentimiento cambió, dijo Dixon. En la actualidad, más del 30 por ciento de la población australiana es nacida en el extranjero.

Dada su conexión con América Latina, España tiene una ventaja difícil de reproducir. Pero Dixon cree que su estrategia —demostrar control sobre las fronteras al tiempo que se argumenta económicamente a favor de la inmigración— puede ofrecer una solución a un problema espinoso que comparten casi todas las naciones ricas.

### PHOTOS FROM THE EDGE

Por David Bacon



**David Bacon Blog** – febrero de 2026

Driving on the frontage road beside Highway 101, just south of Salinas, I was looking for the memorial to the braceros killed in 1963. Fifty eight workers had been riding in the back of a flatbed truck, where their labor contractor had bolted down two parallel benches for them to sit on as they rode to and from the fields. The truck's driver, Francisco Espinosa, couldn't see a train coming at 67 miles an hour, as he inched slowly across a railroad track on Thomas Ranch Road in Chualar. When the lead engine hit the truck, almost all were thrown into the air, many crushed beneath the steel wheels. Thirty two died.

Because they were braceros they were only identified by a number that corresponded to their work contract. It took weeks to know their true names. Over 9000 people came to their funeral in Salinas. Espinosa was charged with manslaughter and acquitted. The grower and labor contractor were never charged, although Southern Pacific Railroad, the Growers Farm Labor Association, Harden Farms and the Myers Corporation were sued and settled for \$1.5 million.

The terrible crash, the anonymity of the workers, and the disgraceful conditions in which they worked and died, all led to a huge outcry. Ernesto Galarza, the longtime opponent of the bracero program, wrote a damning report to Congress, to assign responsibility. That helped end the program two years later. Today two crosses erected at the crash site remember the dead.

As I drove with one eye on the road and another on the tracks, I passed a muddy field. Deep inside I saw a harvest machine with workers spread out around it. I stopped and headed for them, looking for the foreman to ask about taking photographs. At first I thought it was a broccoli field, but when I began walking, trying not to trip on the plants and fall into the mud, I realized they weren't broccoli but broccolini.

I found Joel, the foreman, next to the typical white truck of a field supervisor. After a call to his boss, he said we could take some pictures and gave me a hairnet. Concerned to keep the vegetables free from human contamination, he supplied gloves as well. Joel even offered boots, but by then my shoes were already encrusted with mud.

Walking and joking among the workers, I began to take photographs that would show the way they worked. When I made my corny joke that I'd only take photos of the mas guapo, the handsomest ones, Daniel, Ignacio and Felix all pointed to each other, laughing. Of course we couldn't tell who the good-looking guys were, since they were all masked with bandannas. Everyone wore long plastic aprons to keep their clothes dry in a very wet field, even Daphne, working up on the moving platform.

As the machine slowly trundled along, each person labored in their assigned row. When a field of broccolini is ready to harvest, a crew first goes through it and breaks off the crown of each plant, which looks like a small bunch of broccoli. The crown isn't what the grower wants, however. After it's gone, the plant then puts out thin stalks with a much smaller flower crown at the top. That's the broccolini stalk you see in the supermarket. A field keeps producing these stalks for months, so the crew and the machine go through several times before it's all harvested.

Workers don't need a knife to cut the broccolini stalk. Instead, they break it off as they go down the row, bunching the stalks together into a handful. When the bunch is big enough, they put a rubber band around it. It takes experience to know when you have enough stalks, and all the bunches have to be pretty much identical. These workers knew their job, and could make up their bunches without even seeming to think about it.

The workers closest to the machine threw their bunches up on the steel counter above them as they worked. Some workers were too far away, so they would keep making bunches until they were holding several close to their chest, and then run over to the machine to toss them on board. Up on the moving platform workers like Daphne then packed the bunches into boxes, twelve to a carton. It was a smooth operation, dependent on workers' experience, skill and coordination to make it run.

Broccolini is a hybrid plant, a cross between broccoli as you buy it in the market, and the Chinese broccoli called gai lan. It was first developed in Japan, not by genetic experiment, but by careful cross breeding. The Sakata Seed Company, the Japanese company that produced it, then went into partnership with Mann Packing, a California grower, to plant and market broccolini in the U.S.

I remember Mann Packing from my years in the United Farm Workers. It was one of the first companies where workers voted for the union, after the passage of the Agricultural Labor Relations Act in 1975. The company then had a union contract. As an organizer I'd show it to workers at other companies, an example of what they could win if they fought for one of their own.

I'm not sure what happened to that contract. Perhaps it was one of the many lost in the years when growers got control of the Agricultural Labor Relations Board, and simply stopped negotiating contracts. Mann Packing was bought by Del Monte Fresh Produce in 2018 for \$361 million. Last year the new owners agreed to sell Del Monte's Mann Packing division to Church Brothers Farms. Mann Packing had a union contract with Local 5 of the United Food and Commercial Workers for the workers in its Salinas packinghouse, and the workers there still belong to the union.

The field workers for Church Brothers Farms have no union. The Church brothers, Tom and Steve, are the nephews of Bruce Church, who found a way decades ago to ship lettuce in train cars filled with ice, and made millions. His company in Salinas fought the United Farm Workers for years before finally signing a contract in 1996. By then it was called Fresh Harvest, and later disappeared in a series of corporate mergers. Meanwhile the nephews' new company, Church Brothers Farms bought Mann Packing, and with it, the broccolini.

Joel and the workers were happy to show the way worked, and the human effort it takes to get broccolini onto our dinner tables. Farmworkers know that consumers have no idea how this happens. Although they have to labor in so many layers of clothing and plastic aprons, ironically they feel invisible, or at least unacknowledged. So appreciating the taste of broccolini, somewhat sweeter than regular broccoli, should mean giving credit to them.

In our house, we often cook the broccolini in a pan with a little oil until the stalks start to soften and char a bit. Then we put them on a plate and squeeze a lime and dust the spears with garlic powder. We like a sauce Lillian taught me to make when we first started living together. You start stirring a couple of big spoonfuls of mayonnaise in a small bowl, and slowly add soy sauce and a little sesame oil. It tastes really fine on top of that broccolini. ¡Buen provecho!.

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Continúa...





Continúa...





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## *Boletín de Migración y Refugio*

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