



**MMC Latin America
and the Caribbean**

QUARTER 2 2025

A wide-angle photograph of a vast, flat, yellowish-brown landscape, likely a high-altitude plain or tundra. In the background, a range of rugged, snow-capped mountains stretches across the horizon under a clear blue sky. A small town or village is visible at the base of the mountains. In the foreground, several people are walking across the flat landscape, some carrying backpacks. The overall scene suggests a remote, high-altitude environment.

Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: Latin America and the Caribbean

This Quarterly Mixed Migration Update (QMMU) covers the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region. The core areas of focus include mixed migration dynamics within South America, mixed movements from this part of the region towards North America, and mixed migration in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. Depending on the quarterly trends and migration-related updates, more attention may be given to some countries over the rest.

The QMMUs offer a quarterly update on new trends and dynamics related to mixed migration and relevant policy developments in the region. These updates are based on a compilation of a wide range of secondary (data) sources, brought together within a regional framework and applying a mixed migration analytical lens. Similar QMMUs are available for all MMC regions.

MMC is a global network engaged in data collection, research, analysis, and policy and programmatic development on mixed migration, with regional hubs in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Latin America, and a global team based across Copenhagen, Geneva and Brussels.

For more information on MMC and the quarterly updates from other regions, visit mixedmigration.org and subscribe to the [MMC newsletter](#) to receive our latest research. Follow us on Bluesky [@mixedmigration.org](#), on X [@Mixed_Migration](#) and LinkedIn [@mixedmigration-centre](#).

MMC's understanding of mixed migration

"Mixed migration" refers to cross-border movements of people, including refugees fleeing persecution and conflict, victims of trafficking, and people seeking better lives and opportunities. Motivated to move by a multiplicity of factors, people engaged in mixed migration have a range of legal statuses as well as a variety of vulnerabilities. Although entitled to protection under international human rights law, they are exposed to multiple rights violations along their journey. Mixed migration describes migrants travelling along similar routes, using similar means of travel – often travelling irregularly, and wholly or partially, assisted by migrant smugglers.

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Photographer: Maria Gema Cortes

Daily migrants crossing through one of the driest places in the world, trying to irregularly cross the border from Bolivia into Chile.

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Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: Latin America and the Caribbean

Quarter 2 - 2025

Key Updates

- **Efforts by the US administration to rewrite immigration law and policy face legal challenges.** In its first months in office, the new administration has made sweeping changes to US law and policy, as covered in the [first Quarterly Mixed Migration Update of 2025](#). Now, the administration is facing a range of legal challenges to those changes, including demands to [restart](#) the refugee resettlement programme and a Supreme Court [suspension](#) of use of the Alien Enemies Act while the issue is adjudicated.
- **Attempts to enter the US remain low, but Canada expects an increase.** Encounters at the US Southern border [remained](#) low, but entries to Canada from the US increased, driven in particular by the [revocation](#) of temporary protected status and humanitarian parole.
- **Mexico struggles with stranded migrants.** A recent [IOM study](#) indicated that seven in ten migrants stranded in Mexico following the immigration changes in the US wish to stay in the country, with asylum applications likely to rise in the southern city of Tapachula, where many migrants are [stranded](#). However, the uncertainty of [funding](#) for refugee protection systems in the country, including an estimated 87% of UNHCR's support, raises questions about the sustainability of this strategy.
- **An increasing number of Nicaraguans are being subjected to de facto denationalisation,** with the government of Nicaragua failing to issue travel documents or refusing them entry. With the US revoking status and the country increasingly unwilling to take its nationals back, more individuals [risk](#) being caught in limbo.
- **A new crackdown on Haitian immigrants in the Dominican Republic sees a significant [increase](#) in deportations,** fear, and rights abuses as Dominican business leaders express trepidation over the economic impact of mass deportations.
- **Chile tightens immigration policy, [extending](#) border militarisation measures** to cut irregular arrivals and considering restrictions on birthright citizenship.
- **Argentinian President Milei issues a [decree](#) intended to tighten immigration control,** restricting access to services, adding additional requirements for immigration statuses, and making it easier to remove people. Critics argue that Milei lacks the authority to implement these changes, which should be made by the legislature.

Regional Overview*



The Caribbean



*The information in the map refers to selected updates and does not represent all mixed migration flows in and out of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Mixed Migration Regional Updates

Mixed migration movements in North America

US Border encounters remain low

The [US Customs and Border Protection](#) reported 8,382 apprehensions along the southern border in April and 8,725 in May 2025, relatively similar to the 8,347 in February and only somewhat higher than the 7,182 in March, indicating that the decreases seen in the first quarter of 2025 are being maintained. These are the [lowest levels](#) since monthly estimates began to be made available in 2000.

Deportations from the US fall short of targets

Donald Trump came into office promising the biggest deportation in US history. However, the numbers do not seem to indicate that this is materialising. The administration reported that they had deported 200,000 in the first four months in office, lower than the [reported](#) 257,000 deported by the Biden administration between February and May 2024. The Mexican government [data](#) show a similar pattern, receiving 39,000 deportees between February and April this year, as compared to 52,000 in the same months of 2024.

The numbers, however, must be put in the context of the near-total shutdown of the US southern border. Under the Biden administration (and prior administrations), many deportees were returned shortly after crossing the border. Since fewer are crossing the border, the US administration is focusing on arresting and deporting individuals within the US. The number of daily migrant arrests under the US administration so far is about double the [average](#) for the past 10 years, and the number in immigration detention [has increased](#) by 30%. However, none of this adds up to the numbers previously deported, much less the figures promised by Trump on the campaign trail.

Removal of US citizen children

In April, three US citizen children [were removed](#) with their parents to Honduras. The lawyers for the families say that the mothers were not given the option of leaving their children in the US, although authorities claim that the mothers requested that the children be sent with them. Deporting US citizens is not permissible under US law, but in the past, US citizen children have at times travelled with deported parents if the parents so requested. In the April cases, however, the deported parents were not given any opportunity to consult the other parent or lawyers, and a petition by one father to take custody of the child was ignored.

Returns of wrongly deported individuals

In a few cases, the US administration has facilitated the return of deportees who were found to have been wrongly deported. In early June, a Guatemalan man was returned after being deported to Mexico without due process, despite expressing a fear of return there. Secretary of State Rubio is [reportedly](#) also

negotiating for the return of a Venezuelan man who was deported to El Salvador “by accident”. Kilmar Ábrego García, the Salvadoran man who was sent with a group of Venezuelan prisoners to El Salvador’s CECOT prison, was returned to the US to face [human trafficking charges](#).

Harsh US policies increase arrivals in Canada

[7,540 asylum claims](#) were made at Canada’s land borders between January to April 2025, as [compared](#) to 5,750 in the same period last year. The [increase](#) was particularly felt in Quebec, where some border points showed a nearly fourfold increase compared to the prior year. Asylum seekers include Haitians affected by the recent withdrawal of temporary protected status (TPS). With an [estimated](#) 1.1 [million](#) TPS holders facing uncertain status, more are expected to seek refuge in Canada, even though the 2023 US-Canada [safe third country agreement](#) will block most claims. Advocates [argue](#) for the agreement’s repeal amid harsher US border policies, and the Haitian community in Montreal is [mobilising](#) to support these new arrivals.

Migrants remain stranded in Mexico

As many migrants attempt to return or move South to other countries, others are remaining in Mexico—roughly seven in ten, according to a new [IOM report](#). Tens of thousands are [stranded](#) in Mexico, 8,000 to 10,000 of them [in and around Tapachula](#) in the south. For those willing to return, a lack of funds and documentation or the fear of the consequences of return and conditions there (specifically in the case of Venezuelans) prevent them from doing so.

Others, primarily Cubans and Haitians, are applying for [asylum](#) in Mexico. The newly opened [office](#) of COMAR, the refugee agency in Tapachula, now receives the most applications nationwide. Many of the asylum seekers [complain](#) that long delays in processing their applications bar them from access to work. [Some advocates](#), however, question whether the asylum seekers want to stay in Mexico long term or ultimately attempt to migrate to the US again. Many migrants, having left their countries of origin to escape gang violence, face similar threats in Mexico and struggle to integrate or earn enough to make ends meet.

Mixed migration dynamics in Central America

Migrants en route to the US intercepted in Guatemala

Guatemala has intercepted [a bus carrying 88 migrants](#), mostly Haitians and Cubans, but also including Eritrean and Uzbek nationals, headed north towards the US border. The migrants were detained. The movement was one of the very few still observed moving northward.

Increasing numbers of Nicaraguans subject to de facto denationalisation

As reported in the [first Quarterly Mixed Migration Update of 2025](#), the government of Nicaragua refused entry to 160 nationals who had lost their status in the US, but were refused return based on a law allowing the government to refuse entry to nationals who it deems a security threat. A new [report](#) released by the UN Group of Experts in April indicates that this is part of a larger pattern of de facto denationalisation. Although the early cases of formal denationalisation affected high-profile activists, recent cases are affecting ordinary citizens. A local watchdog has [documented](#) 349 cases in which migrants have been refused return. In other cases, the government has refused to issue passports, which can complicate access to immigration status and increase vulnerability.

Costa Rica approves fewer asylum applications

Recently released [figures](#) for the first quarter of 2025 in Costa Rica show that only 2.8% of asylum claims have been accepted, down from 6.3% in the first quarter of the previous year. With only 10 staff to cover 224,000 applications for asylum, the refugee unit is [clearly overwhelmed](#).

Deportees to Costa Rica still in search of solutions

In early April, the [Costa Rican immigration authorities](#) reported that 16 of the migrants who had been deported from the US to Costa Rica in February (see [the first Quarterly Mixed Migration Update of 2025](#)) had applied for asylum. They were given documentation and the right to work while their cases were being considered. An additional 94 were reportedly still waiting at the Migrant Attention Centre (CATEM) for a country to receive them. Six [escaped](#).

Meanwhile, the [Global Strategic Litigation Council](#) filed a complaint before the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, alleging that the rights of 81 children among the deportees were violated through a lack of access to counsel and conditions that amount to indefinite detention. Following the filing of this case, [the Costa Rican government](#) announced that it would give the migrants “humanitarian” permits to stay in the country for 90 days, during which they could either seek asylum or find other options to remain. [Human Rights Watch](#) called on the Costa Rican government to give those who remain immediate work authorisation, housing, and other assistance, while also allowing them to apply for asylum.

US-supported deportations from Panama continue

In July 2024, Panama and the US signed an agreement under which the US would pay for charter flights and airline tickets to return migrants in Panama ([covered in the second Quarterly Mixed Migration Update of 2024](#)). Between August 2024 and June 2025, Panama deported [2,044 migrants](#) under this agreement, with over half being [Colombian nationals](#) (1,242). According to the [US administration](#), these deportations have cost about \$14 million. In late June, the US and Panama [renewed](#) the agreement, hailing it as a success in preventing arrivals to the US.

Panama recently [promised](#) that it would facilitate access to flights to Colombia for Colombians, as well as Ecuadorians and Venezuelans with residency in Colombia upon request.

Migration through the Darién all but ceases

In April, the [Panamanian authorities](#) reported only 73 crossings through the Darién (travelling south-north), 13 in May and only 10 in June, a staggering decrease from 29,259, 30,747 and 31,049 in [April, May and June 2024](#). [The Red Cross in Colombia](#) reports that it has seen a 70% decrease in the number of transit migrants accessing its medical services compared to last year. On the Panamanian side, users have gone from 1,500 a day to only about 40. This trend is also visible in Colombia. In Turbo and Necoclí, the entry points to the Darién, 2,925 migrants were [recorded](#) in the first five months of the year, a decline of 98% compared to the same period in 2024.

In response to the stark decrease in crossings, in April, the Panamanian president, [José Raul Mulino](#), declared that the Darién migration crisis was almost completely solved. Two months later, [Mulino expressed concern](#) about the increase in the reverse migratory flow (north-south), reporting that between January 2025 and that date (in the second week of June), the Panamanian government had detected 11,810 people attempting to reach South America.

Returns by boat from Panama to Colombia

Over the last few months, migrants have been moving along other routes to avoid the Darién. North-south movements are increasingly made by boat (see [the first Quarterly Mixed Migration Update of 2025](#)), although many lack the reported [\\$220-\\$280](#) needed to pay for the passage. Most recently, the Panamanian government facilitated the [passage](#) of 109 migrants from the port of Colón to La Miel on the border with Colombia.

Mixed migration dynamics in South America

New patterns of movement stretch capacity to respond in Colombia

Although the number of those moving south is significantly less than the total previously moving north, aid groups [say](#) that the 40 to 100 migrants arriving per day in small towns like Miramar and Palenque strain limited resources. In Colombia, these people are being received in areas not accustomed to high migration. A recent report by an [ombudsman](#) shows that migrants often book passage to Buenaventura, but are then abandoned in Jurado or Bahía Solano, on the coast. It is [estimated](#) that between 20 and 40 people arrive per day in Jurado, the northernmost town in Chocó, from Panama. As this is a new route, and Jurado is a small border town, there is little capacity to respond. Similar issues arise in [Bahía Solano](#), where 32 arrivals were recorded in just a few days in April. Migrants included children and individuals with mental health needs, which is hard for the locality to meet. Those arriving in Chocó are also vulnerable to the depredations of armed groups.

French Guiana and Surinam see increased migration

In April, the French NGO [Cimade](#) released a report highlighting dysfunctions in the asylum system in French Guiana, the French department with the [second highest](#) number of asylum applications in 2024, after Paris. The largest nationality is Haitians. Problems highlighted included a lack of process to ensure protection was extended to those most in need and excessive use of detention in camps, which lack basic sanitation and have reported cases of leprosy.

Suriname is also increasingly emerging as a [transit route](#) to French Guiana, especially Cubans seeking to apply for political asylum and from there access the European Union. Suriname is concerned that continuing movements may lead to tensions with France.

Political rhetoric drives xenophobia in Peru

In April, [Peruvian Congressman Edwin Martinez](#) called on the executive to deport individuals using extremely harsh xenophobic language. Occurring as they did against a backdrop of violence in Peruvian cities, the comments stirred other incidents of xenophobia, with a 554% increase in xenophobic conversations online. There is particular concern that the Congressman's call might lead to violent acts.

Argentina displaces the US as the destination of choice for Ecuadorians

According to statistics recently published by the [Ecuadorian Ministry of Interior](#), about 7,754 Ecuadorians have departed for Argentina from January to May 2025 and not returned, making it the most favoured destination for Ecuadorians, replacing the US, which was the leading destination until 2024.

Mixed migration movements in the Caribbean

Conditions in Haiti are worsening as deportations increase

New crackdown on Haitians in the Dominican Republic

[Dominican President Luis Abinader](#), who ran on a promise to control immigration and has been pushing deportations since he came into office, announced a new package of restrictive immigration measures in early April, including acceleration of the construction of the border wall, deporting convalescents from hospitals, an increase in immigration personnel, a "Dominicanisation" of employment, and higher wages to encourage the hiring of Dominicans. 1,500 new soldiers will be [deployed](#) along the border, bringing the total force to 11,000. There are also [proposals](#) to reform the employment codes to increase sanctions on employers who recruit undocumented Haitians. Sanctions may also be imposed on landlords who rent to irregular immigrants.

To facilitate deportations, the government has constructed a [detention camp](#) near the tourist hub of Punta Cana, where many Haitians work. On just the first day of the operation, [the government](#) announced that

it had deported 130 women and children, including pregnant women and new mothers, sometimes from hospitals. The Dominican College of Physicians has denounced the move as [discouraging necessary medical care](#). There are [reports](#) of unaccompanied infants, pregnant women, and those who have just given birth being deported, as well as accounts of women being sexually assaulted by Dominican immigration officials.

Since the measures were announced, many children are [fearful](#) of going to school, and workers are afraid of going to work, whether or not they have papers. With nearly 80% of all construction workers being Haitian, this could severely disrupt the Dominican economy. This has led some business leaders to [call](#) for the regularisation of Haitian workers.

Nonetheless, a recent Gallup poll [released](#) in June reveals some popular support for these actions. Sixty four percent of Dominicans say that they are “very concerned” about the situation in Haiti, and 92% say that the Dominican Republic should not accept any more refugees.

Haiti is near the “point of no return”

[The UN](#) has warned that Haiti is nearing a “point of no return”, when gang violence and lack of public confidence could cause a descent into “complete chaos”. As of June, there are [estimated](#) to be more than 1.25 million people (1,287,593) displaced, a 24% increase over December 2024 and constituting 11% of the total population. Of these, more than three-quarters (77%) are in the provinces, compared to only 23% in the capital.

The [UN](#) has called for urgent assistance to avoid a complete collapse. A Kenyan-led and UN Security Council [authorised](#) mission has been deployed, but at under 50% of its intended strength, it has not been successful in turning the tide on gang violence.

Haitians deported from Jamaica

In May, 42 Haitian migrants were [repatriated](#) shortly after landing in Jamaica without access to an asylum hearing. The migrant rights group [Freedom Imaginaries](#) issued a statement calling on the government to refrain from returning the group. The move was also decried by the Jamaican human rights group [Stand Up Jamaica](#) as both “racist” and a violation of Jamaica’s international human rights commitments.

Migrant bodies wash ashore in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Authorities in St. Vincent and the Grenadines found [11 bodies](#) washed ashore on Canouan Island. Some in the boat had Malian passports, but the advanced state of decomposition of the bodies made their full identification difficult.

Venezuelans intercepted trying to enter Curaçao

[The Dutch immigration authorities](#) on 21 May reported that they intercepted a boat carrying 10 Venezuelans who sought to enter Curaçao irregularly. The authorities also reported the previous week that seven Venezuelans were intercepted attempting to enter Aruba.

Policy and legal updates

Update on regularisation processes and integration-related policies in the Americas

Ecuador explores renunciation of migration agreement with Venezuela

President Noboa is [exploring](#) whether or not approval from the National Assembly is needed to pull out of a migration agreement with Venezuela that allowed Venezuelan nationals to access temporary residency in Ecuador. Noboa argues that the lack of funding among international organisations such as IOM and UNHCR, which previously supported Venezuelan migrants, is making it impossible to continue with the agreement. Noboa also cancelled a programme aimed at regularising Venezuelans in March (see the [first Quarterly Mixed Migration Update of 2025](#)).

Brazil accepts resettled refugees

In April, the first 18 Afghan refugees were [welcomed](#) to Brazil as part of a new community sponsorship initiative, [begun](#) in March to provide humanitarian visas, assistance with housing, and access to public services for Afghans. The programme, run in cooperation with the NGO Panahgah, is expected to welcome 500 people per year. In a context in which global commitment to resettlement is waning (there were only 31,281 resettlement spaces available globally in 2025, compared to 195,069 in 2024), Brazil's [embrace](#) of the practice raises hopes that new safe havens can be found.

Uruguay extends access to residency

In April, Uruguay [extended](#) the deadline to apply for an ongoing residency programme until November 2025. The programme can be accessed by those who entered the country through a formal border point before 23 May 2024, applied for asylum, and have some type of community tie, whether through work, family, or study. Family ties include having a mother, father, spouse, or legally recognised partner or child who is a permanent resident. The [mechanism](#) is intended to offer regularisation to an estimated 20,000 migrants, mostly Cubans, in the country. It is also intended to help the national refugee commission relieve a backlog of some 24,000 cases.

Paraguay received 15,000 requests for residency in 2025

Paraguay [reported](#) in May that 15,000 residency applications had been received between January and May 2025, putting the country on pace for an increase over the 28,464 permissions it issued in 2024. Brazilians made up 60% of all applicants, followed by Argentinians, Germans, and Bolivians.

Nicaragua moves to end dual citizenship

The Nicaraguan legislature, which is dominated by the ruling Sandinista Front, [voted](#) in mid-May on a constitutional amendment which would prohibit dual nationality. The measure provides that any Nicaraguan obtaining citizenship of another country would automatically lose their Nicaraguan citizenship, and that anyone obtaining Nicaraguan citizenship would automatically lose their prior citizenship. The measure will need to be approved again in next year's legislature before it can take effect.

Chile looks to reform birthright citizenship

Lawmakers in Chile are [considering](#) a reform that would restrict access to citizenship for the children of immigrants born in the country. These individuals could, under the new proposed law, access citizenship only at the age of 18 and on the basis of continued ties with the country. It would leave children without access to Chilean citizenship and its protections throughout their formative years, and would create heavier evidentiary burdens for those seeking to assert citizenship.

Modifications to immigration policies in the region

New travel ban imposed by the US

As reported in the [first Quarterly Mixed Migration Update of 2025](#), on 30 January, President Trump issued an executive order instructing government agencies to compile a list of countries that should be banned from travel to the US. In early June, the [list](#) of countries was released, fully restricting entry of nationals from 12 countries, including Haiti, and partially restricting others, including Venezuela.

In mid-June, the administration circulated a [memo](#) proposing expansion of the travel ban to an additional 36 countries (including Egypt), although these countries were being given 60 days to take action to avoid imposition of the ban. Concerns that could [prompt](#) listing included failure to produce reliable documents, fraud, having large numbers of citizens overstaying, and refusing to cooperate with the US in receiving deported nationals. Several Caribbean nations, including Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Lucia, were included. The ban is anticipated to [block](#) the issuance of at least 34,000 immigrant visas per year.

Colombian Constitutional Court upholds the rights of transit migrants

The Colombian Constitutional Court [issued](#) a judgment protecting the rights of transit migrants. The case involved three Cameroonian women who were ruled inadmissible and returned to Cameroon in February 2024 without due process or examination of their possible need for international protection. The court not only [ruled](#) that this action violated international legal prohibitions on the return of individuals to situations where their lives or rights might be in danger, but also made [recommendations](#) to avoid repetition of the incident, including that Migración Colombia revise its protocols; that legislators regulate the situation of

transit migrants, a category whose legal rights are weak; and that Migración Colombia create simple know-your-rights materials and make them available to migrants.

Argentina moves to tighten immigration controls

President Javier Milei [issued Decree 366/25](#) in May, making significant modifications to the 2004 national migration law No. 25.871. The modifications make deportations easier, restrict migrants' access to healthcare, and add more requirements for obtaining permanent residency or citizenship. The decree also excludes those with irregular status from accessing tertiary education, [breaking](#) with a 70-year tradition allowing free education to all. The [measure](#) also allows for the deportation of individuals without notice and opportunity to regularise their situation, and in cases where there are "well-founded suspicions of crimes," even if there has been no conviction.

The measure was explicitly justified based on the US administration's actions, arguing that it was likely that some of the migrants who have been deported from the US would seek to settle in Argentina. Activists have criticised the measure, [saying](#) that such changes require legislative action. Others also [pointed out](#) that it indiscriminately accuses migrants of causing instability and criminality. Only 6% of the Argentinian prison population is [made up](#) of foreigners, and those with criminal convictions were already subject to expulsion under the previous law.

Chile extends militarisation measures on the border

In May, Chilean Senators [voted](#) for the ninth time to extend the applicability of the Decree DFL 1 "for the protection of border areas," passed in February 2023 and covered in the [first Quarterly Mixed Migration Update of 2023](#), for an additional 90 days. The measure allows for the temporary militarisation of several northern zones. The Chilean Secretary of State noted that the measure had led to a 33.8% [decrease](#) in population movements since it was first passed.

Along Chile's long northern border with Bolivia, it is [estimated](#) that 30 to 40 migrants per day cross a cold landscape of mud and stagnant water to try to enter Chile irregularly. Beginning in March, Chile adopted a [new policy](#) which allows authorities to "redirect" migrants back across the Bolivian border. The change is intended to control this movement, but advocates [worry](#) that it may push vulnerable migrants to more remote crossings where they face increased danger.

Chile's new child policy includes refugee and immigrant children

On 23 April, Chile published its [new national child policy](#) and an accompanying eight-year plan of action. The policy and plan include all children in Chile, regardless of their immigration status. The policy creates a protection protocol for migrant children and adolescents with incomplete or no documentation.

Suriname adopted a national migration plan

[The national migration plan](#) was developed by an inter-Ministerial Committee in cooperation with IOM and aims to facilitate “safe, orderly and humane” migration. It is also being proposed as a model for the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Modifications to asylum processes in the region

Changes to US asylum processes

In addition to suspending asylum applications at the border reported in our previous issue, several additional steps have been discussed or undertaken in this quarter. First, the House Judiciary bill (currently under consideration) would impose [mandatory fees](#) of \$1,000 for the initial application, \$500 every year that it remains pending, and \$550 every six months to get and retain work permits. This could put applying for asylum financially out of reach for vulnerable individuals.

In addition, an 11 April [memo](#) issued by the Executive Office for Immigration Review, which oversees immigration judges, allows adjudicators to drop “legally deficient” asylum cases without a hearing. Justified in the framework of efficiency and reducing the backlog of cases, the measure is unclear as to what might be a “deficient” application. If interpreted to include [simple omissions or deficiencies](#), it would particularly penalise unrepresented asylum seekers, who often find the procedures confusing. Recent information that [asylum denial rates](#) have increased by 80% increases these concerns, although more analysis is needed to fully understand the reasons.

The administration also moved to restart a programme that required asylum seekers to wait in Mexico while their asylum cases were adjudicated. However, in April, a district court in California granted [a stay](#) in response to immigrant rights advocates who argue that it violates their First Amendment right to advise their clients.

Another proposal under discussion would [restrict access to work authorisation](#) for asylum seekers in the US. Currently, asylum seekers are eligible for work permits once their cases have been pending for 180 days. The new proposal would block any new work permits from being issued until cases are resolved in an average of 180 days. Even after that, asylum seekers would have to wait until their cases had been pending for a year. Without access to legal work, asylum seekers will be vulnerable to poverty and exploitative work.

US refugee resettlement remains suspended

At the end of January, President Trump issued an Executive Order ending the refugee resettlement programme. The decision was challenged in the courts and, in late February, a district court judge ordered the administration to [restart](#) the programme, at least for those who had been cleared by the date of the order. Three months later, however, the programme remains suspended, with the administration claiming that it faces logistical difficulties. This argument is undermined by the reality that 59 Afrikaners from South Africa without prior approval were resettled in the same time frame.

Canada is considering a significant asylum reform

A new immigration bill, Bill C-2 or the “Strong Borders Act,” in Canada would make significant changes to the asylum process. The new bill would [impose](#) a one-year filing deadline, after which asylum claims would not be referred to the Immigration and Refugee Board for adjudication. Those crossing from the US would have only 14 days to make a claim. If they fail to do so, they could be [returned](#) without a hearing. It would also [authorise](#) the government to suspend new applications “for matters of public health or national security” and make it easier for status to be revoked. It would also allow increased surveillance of online activity and make the sharing of information with other governments easier. In mid-June, [a coalition](#) of more than 300 Canadian groups held a press conference opposing the bill, [accusing](#) the government of threatening human rights and the rights of refugees and migrants in the country.

Costa Rica will not renew its Special Temporary Migration category

Costa Rica will not [renew](#) its Special Temporary Migration category. The category had been used to regularise the status of Cubans, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans who were waiting for resolution of their claims for refugee status and/or who had already been denied. While it was in force, it received applications from 6,679 Nicaraguans, of whom 6,320 were approved. The category, officials said, had become less necessary because the level of movement is under control at the moment. Although the number of migrants in the country has been reduced, there are [concerns](#) that US deportations to Nicaragua could lead to new movements to the country as deportees seek alternative areas of safety. The Temporary Assistance Centre for Migrants (CATEM) has also received [18 asylum applications](#) from deportees from the US already, yet of Chinese nationality.

Brazil expedites consideration of asylum claims based on female genital mutilation

In April, Brazil [renewed](#) a measure expediting the consideration of asylum claims from countries where female genital mutilation is prevalent. The measure, created two years ago, allows such cases to be granted on a prima facie basis, which can reduce processing times from about two years to under a month.

Updates on deportations from the US and reception and reintegration of deportees in the region

US measures to increase deportations

Over the last quarter, the current US administration has continued to work to speed up deportations through a variety of measures, although as noted above, the number of deportations has remained lower than targeted.

The Alien Enemies Act

One measure has been the application of the Alien Enemies Act, under which the US administration claimed that it could deport migrants without a hearing. However, ongoing [reporting](#) and legal actions have raised questions about its appropriateness and efficacy. Following the use of the Alien Enemies Act to deport those alleged to be associated with the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua (as reported in the [first Quarterly Mixed Migration Update of 2025](#)), the US administration sought to expand the provision to include other groups. It [designated](#) the Viv Ansam coalition and the Gran Grif gang (both from Haiti) as foreign terrorist organisations and specially designated global terrorists. The move was justified as necessary to more forcefully address the gangs and their foreign backers. Some Haiti watchers [welcomed](#) the designation as a basis for more forceful action against the gangs, but others expressed [concern](#) about the impact that it might have on financial services countrywide. [NGOs warned](#) that it could negatively impact the delivery of humanitarian aid by undermining the ability of organisations to negotiate access with these gangs, leaving civilians in those areas unable to access aid.

US officials also proposed [expanding the terrorist designation](#) to two Brazilian gangs, Primeiro Comando da Capital and Comando Vermelho, but the Brazilian government opposed this, arguing that they were criminal rather than terrorist organisations and that they had the capacity to address the challenge.

Pushing “self-deportation”

Another programme called [voluntary deportation](#) (or “[Project Homecoming](#)” or [self-deportation](#)) seeks to push migrants to return, against a backdrop of highly publicised immigration roundups and deportations. The programme provides transportation back to the home country and \$1,000 for reintegration expenses for those who choose to participate. It is being promoted by a [multi-million-dollar ad campaign](#). The ads suggest that signing up will exempt participants from bars to re-entry, but practitioners say participants are subject to [bans on re-entry](#) anyhow: three years for those who were without status for less than 180 days, and 10 years for those who were without status for more than a year.

The first 68 Honduran and Colombian migrants [returned](#) this way in late May. Experts say that it is unlikely to have wide appeal, and [worry](#) that vulnerable and frightened migrants might be pressured to accept despite having a legal right (and preference) to stay.

In addition, the US administration has created [a new Office of Remigration](#) with a mission to “return illegal immigrants to their country of origin”, although its role is not fully clear.

Peru established a return protocol

On 10 April, the government of Peru agreed to a [rapid return protocol](#) with the US that enables nationality to be digitally verified. According to Peruvian authorities, this will allow nationals with a final order of deportation to spend less time in detention.

Guatemala opened a new reception centre for deportees

In June, Guatemala opened [a new reception centre](#) for deportees. The centre will give information about rights and link deportees with job opportunities. It will also facilitate return to home communities.

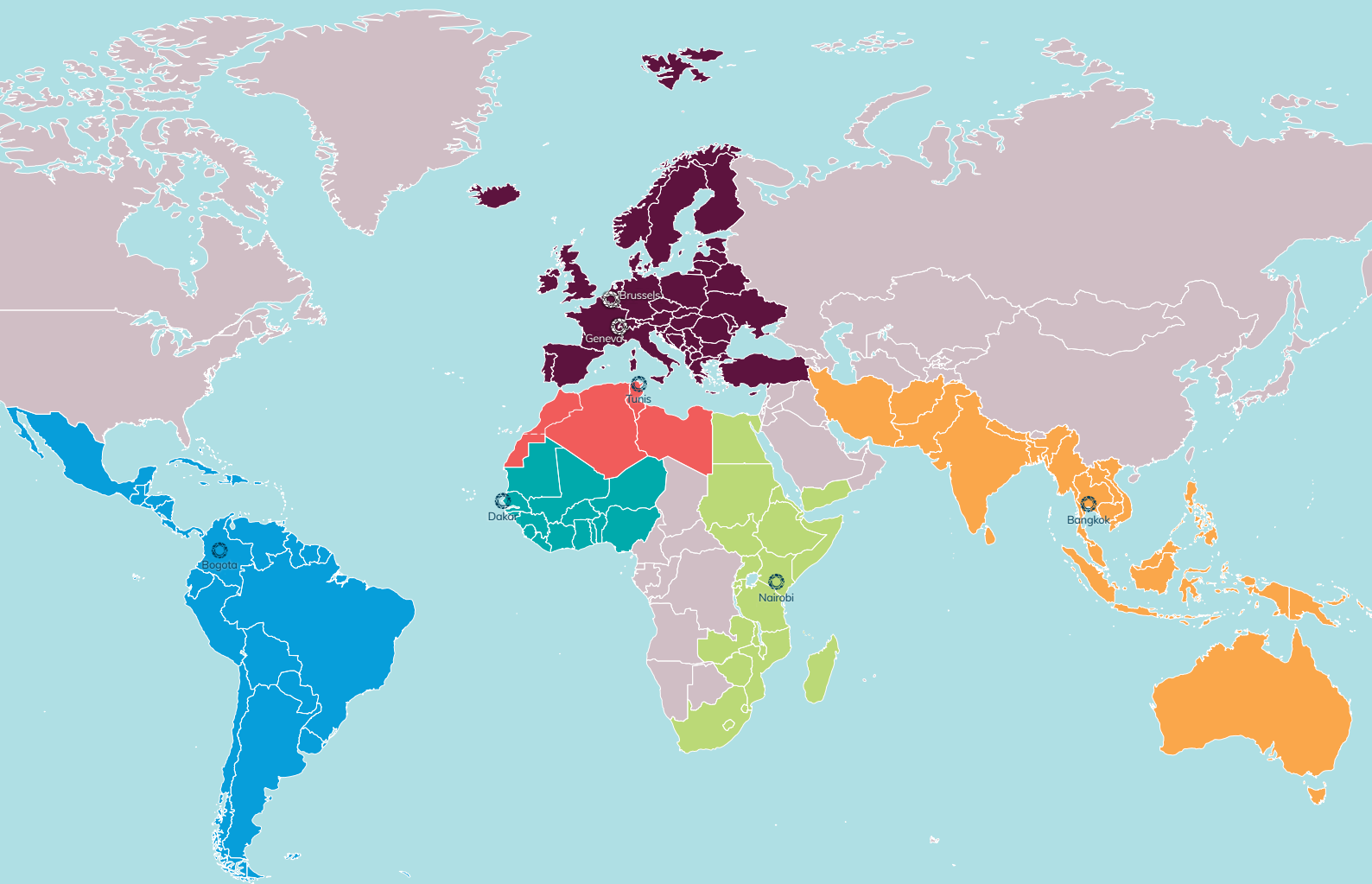
Updates on regional cooperation and bilateral agreements

Colombia and Ecuador have set up mechanisms for enhancing cross-border learning

The initiative, aimed at building the capacity of government ministries on both sides in the area of [protection of child migration](#), sets up technical committees on a range of issues, such as mechanisms for responding to human rights violations.

Several countries reactivate consular ties with Venezuela

Two countries that had severed diplomatic ties with Venezuela following last year's contested elections (as covered in the [third Quarterly Mixed Migration Update of 2024](#)) have re-established ties. For example, in mid-June, the embassy in Montevideo, Uruguay, announced that it would [reopen its doors](#). The embassy will also be available to Venezuelans living in Chile, Argentina, and other countries where diplomatic ties remain. In late June, the governments of Panama and Venezuela agreed to [resume consular services](#) in both countries. The resumption of services allows immigrant communities [to access](#) key documents, such as passports and birth certificates, which can be foundational to accessing immigration status.



MMC is a global network engaged in data collection, research, analysis, and policy and programmatic development on mixed migration, with regional hubs in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Latin America, and a global team based across Copenhagen, Geneva and Brussels.

MMC is a leading source for independent and high-quality data, research, analysis and expertise. MMC aims to increase understanding of mixed migration, to positively impact global and regional migration policies, to inform evidence-based mixed migration responses for people on the move and to stimulate forward thinking in public and policy debates on mixed migration. MMC's overarching focus is on human rights and protection for all people on the move.

MMC is part of the Danish Refugee Council (DRC).

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