




# Reporting on Immigration from the border to the heartland

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SPJ regional conference  
Sept. 16, 2023  
Albuquerque



# Presenter Moderator

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Zita Arocha, journalist, educator  
and immigration project  
consultant

Poynter



# Presenter

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Lauren Villagran, immigration reporter

El Paso Times



Poynter.

# **“Understand U.S. Immigration from the Border to the Heartland”**

**<https://poy.nu/Understanding-Immigration>**

**A Poynter e-learning course brought to by Catena Foundation**

Poynter.

“Understand U.S. Immigration from the Border to the Heartland.”

*Course is appropriate for journalists, news editors, educators, student journalists, and anyone else interested in learning how the U.S. immigration system works and what the latest pertinent issues are. Offered at no cost.*

## **E-Learning course modules/topics:**

- **Covering the U.S.-Mexico border**
- **Immigration in the heartland**
- **Immigration practices post-911; the rise of “crimigration”**
- **Immigration polls, language use, debunking myths**
- **Refugees, asylum and immigration reform**
- **Legal immigration and how it works (Coming in October)**

DEFINE  
AMERICAN

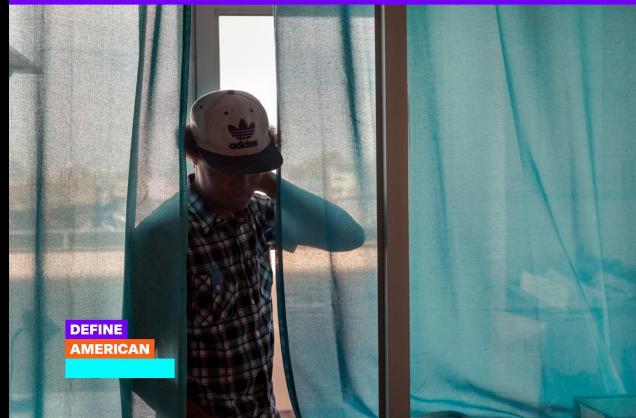
# Reporting on Immigration Today:

The risks and responsibilities of  
covering undocumented sources

## Quoting Immigrants:

A Media Toolkit for  
Anonymous Sources

2022 Edition



Journalism Partnerships 2022

# Summary of Recommendations

- 1 Push for the highest level of attribution. But understand when to back reasons why immigrant sources—many who are fleeing persecution—don't feel comfortable using their full name, including fear of retaliation, concern it could hurt their legal case, and trauma.
- 2

There are ways to verify a source's identity and to show your audience that the source is credible without using a full name.

3

Migrant children deserve the same consideration for anonymity as any other child.

4

- 5 Communicate with the source about when and where the story will run.
- 6

Ask sources if they have questions for you.

7

Protect data that could identify sources in photographs.

8

Remember that sources are 'doing us a favor' by talking to journalists.



DEFINE  
AMERICAN

Download the Toolkit Here!



<https://defineamerican.com/research/immigration-reporting-toolkit/>

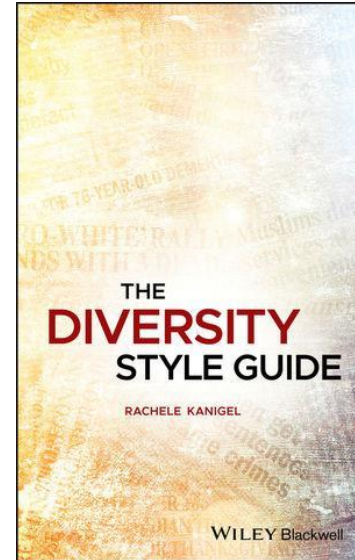
## Resources for immigration journalists from, The Diversity Style Guide

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### By Rachele Kanigel

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# Be aware of ever-changing language around immigration and immigrant communities

Pay attention to changes in The AP Stylebook and other style guides.



Home / AP Stylebook / immigration, migration

## immigration, migration ☆

Political rhetoric and high passion are a large part of discussions and debate about migration and immigration worldwide. Language that is both neutral and accurate is essential in news coverage. At the same time, be aware that definitions or perceptions of some terms can vary around the world. Globally, for example, there is no uniform legal definition of the term *migrant*. Be as specific as possible in describing an event, and provide both specific detail and broader context.

Governments around the world limit access to border operations, making it harder to know the reality of what is going on. Describing current restrictions helps explain gaps in what we know and why.

Some guidance on language:

**crisis** Use caution and judgment in deciding whether to call a specific immigration or migration situation a crisis, a vague and subjective term.

If quoting others who use the word *crisis*, ask for specifics about what is meant. There could be a humanitarian crisis if the numbers grow so large that officials cannot house the migrants safely or in sanitary conditions. Migrants may face humanitarian crises in their home countries. In theory, there could be a security or a border crisis if officials lose control of the border, allowing people to enter unencumbered in large numbers. But, in general, avoid hyperbole in calling anything a *crisis* or an *emergency*.

**TEACHING TOPICS: IMMIGRATION, MIGRATION**

People (72)

**NOTES FROM THE AP EDITORS**

March 24, 2017: Entry added to the stylebook.  
September 6, 2017: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program instead of Deferred Action for Child Arrivals program and define usage of the word Dreamer.  
April 27, 2018: Expanded our guidance on the term "Dreamer" and added guidance on the term "chain migration."  
June 1, 2022: Entry completely revised and updated.

**ASK THE EDITOR: IMMIGRATION, MIGRATION**

In February 2017, someone asked about the use of undocumented as an adjective, as in "undocumented immigrant." The response was that...

## 2. Identify gatekeepers in immigrant communities.

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Seek out trusted religious leaders, teachers, community activists and merchants.

Ask them to introduce you to others in the community.

## Congolese community leader draws African immigrants to Westbrook judo program

Maine Public | By Ari Snider  
Published January 21, 2022 at 4:16 PM EST



▶ LISTEN • 4:19



### 3. Read ethnic newspapers and community media outlets.

Look for story ideas, sources and perspectives that you might be missing.



The screenshot shows the homepage of El Tecolote, a community journalism outlet. At the top, the logo features the name "EL TECOLOTE" in a stylized red font with a black and white graphic of a teardrop and wings below it, and the tagline "51 YEARS OF COMMUNITY JOURNALISM" in a red banner. To the right of the logo are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Below the logo is a navigation menu with links for HOME, NEWS, ARTS & CULTURE, MULTIMEDIA, PODCASTS, COMMUNITY, COMMENTARY, SURVEY 2021, ABOUT, ENGLISH, and ESPAÑOL. A search icon is also present. The main content area features a large article titled "Cultivating community: The Mission's latest Black-and-Brown-owned cannabis dispensary" under the "COMMUNITY" category. The article includes a photo of three men (the Tapia brothers) and text indicating it was written by Sage Bliss-Rios Mace on July 14, 2022. On the right side of the page, there are three call-to-action buttons: "Donate to El Tecolote!" (red), "Purchase a Newspaper Subscription!" (yellow), and "Join our Newsletter Today!" (teal). Below these buttons is a featured article snippet for "DIEGO RIVERA" with the subtitle "Vive su América" and a date of July 16th.

## 4. If you don't speak the language, take a class.

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Even if you can't conduct an interview in the language, a few words of greeting can make sources feel at ease.



Programs

5. Discuss with sources how they want to be identified.

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If you're not naming sources who are undocumented, be careful to avoid other details that may "out" them.



## Immigrant Nation, Divided Country

Are illegal workers stealing jobs and destroying the fabric of American society? Or are they energizing the U.S. economy and keeping the American dream alive? Maria Hinojosa goes inside the lives of four families on the front lines of the growing debate over illegal immigration.

RESOURCE:

[Pew Center](#) and  
[Pew Hispanic](#)  
Center

**Both contain a wealth of information, research studies, and demographic data about immigration patterns, ethnic makeup of communities, language use and public attitudes on immigration.**



RESOURCE: U.S.  
Census American  
Community Survey  
(ACS)

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Search for a wealth of data on immigrants and ethnic groups here by census tract, zip code, etc. with facts about education, work, age, sex, language use, housing, number of people in households, even national origin.

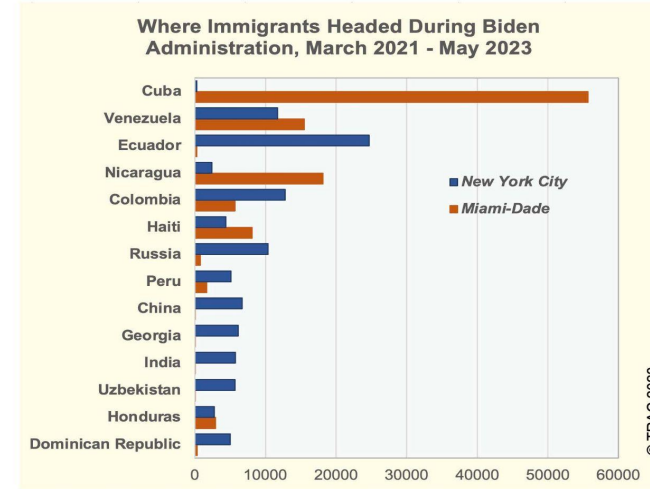
**HOT TIP**

<https://censusreporter.org/> It compiles census data in an easy to understand and use format. It produces usable tables and charts. Great shortcut for busy journalists.

TRAC (Transactional Clearing House at Syracuse University) recently published this report based on their data collection

## Top County Destinations for Asylum Seekers

Published June 21, 2023



Figures 3. Where Immigrants Headed During Biden Administration  
By Nationality: New York City vs. Miami

Complete Numbers For Each State and County Available



A full list of counties immigrants headed to throughout the United States is available in TRAC's free [Immigration Court Filing tool](#). The number of asylum seekers and others by state or by county is available, along with the month they entered, their nationality, gender and age. These data are current through the end of May 2023, and cover each presidential administration back to October 1991.

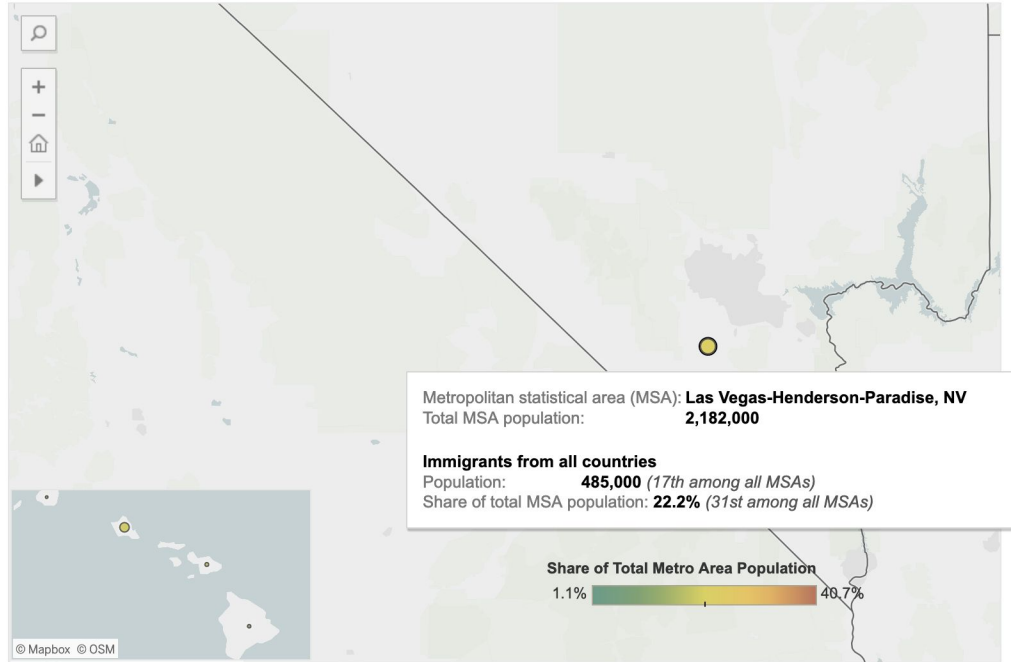
## RESOURCE

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Map immigration patterns and immigrant populations in your city, region or state.



### U.S. Immigrant Population by Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), 2015-2019



## RESOURCE:

# American Immigration Council state fact sheets



WHO WE A

Home » Topics » Economics of Immigration

State by State

## STATE FACT SHEETS

Looking for state specific immigration data and facts?  
Select a state to view one of our Fact Sheets.

Nevada

GO

## WHAT IMMIGRATION MEANS TO NEVADA

**558,170** immigrants make up 19%  
of the state's population.

### IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS INVIGORATE THE ECONOMY

 **\$556,000,000**  
One-quarter of self-employed business owners in Nevada are immigrants. the total annual revenue generated by these immigrant-owned businesses.

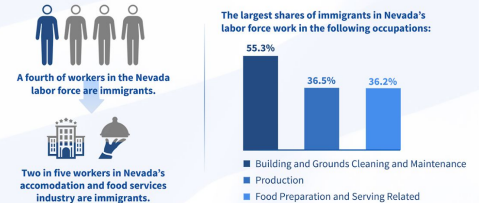
### IMMIGRANTS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF COMMUNITIES



### IMMIGRANT HOUSEHOLDS STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMY



### IMMIGRANTS ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE LABOR FORCE



Poynter.

# Thank you for joining us!

For questions/comments:

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