

# INHOSPITABLE

*How U.S. Immigration Policy is  
Harming the Hospitality Sector*



**UNITE**HERE!



## INTRODUCTION

The American hospitality industry is quietly entering a crisis. Despite a boom in tourism worldwide, and major travel events like the World Cup on the horizon, the U.S. market is stagnating. Growing signs point to the detrimental impact of actions from the White House, including political statements from government officials creating a fear of discrimination. These are reinforced by highly visible videos and photos of military occupations in major American cities and ICE agents rounding up immigrants en masse. Actions like these are making the U.S. inhospitable — putting our nation's spot as the #1 global tourism economy in jeopardy.

This report identifies three major trends affecting hospitality since Trump took office that signal a crisis in the industry:

1. Fewer people are traveling to the United States despite a worldwide boom in tourism
2. Employment is down in the tourism and hospitality sector
3. Hotel revenue is almost flat, growing at its slowest ever rate outside of recessionary periods and 2020.

But unlike 2020, there is no global pandemic shutting down the country. Unlike 2008, there is no stock market collapse eviscerating tourist and business travel. Instead, the U.S. hospitality industry is suffering today from the current administration's policies and political vitriol. Weakness in the industry has real consequences for the millions of workers who keep it running, and creates a ripple effect in cities across the U.S. that rely on tourism to support the local economy.

**The U.S. hospitality industry is suffering today from the current administration's policies and political vitriol.**

White House policies are harming the industry, and the people who work in it, in several ways. Thousands of people with protected immigration status working in hospitality have suddenly lost work authorization. In Miami, one of many cities where this has played out, U.S.-born UNITE HERE members who are still on the job have endured harder shifts and employers have faced increased overtime costs. At the airport, workers carry an additional burden as they worry about the safety consequences of understaffing. But this is not just a supply-side issue: the Las Vegas Strip is experiencing a substantial decline in revenue because Canadian and other international tourists are coming much less frequently. In cities like Washington, D.C, where the administration used military

deployments as a show of force, there have been marked impacts on the health of the local hospitality industry.

This report pulls together key numbers and examples that together sound the alarm about what is happening in our nation's 1.6 trillion-dollar<sup>1</sup> hospitality industry. It highlights some of the places which have experienced the most acute harm, but these are merely the canaries in the coal mine. The conditions in the hospitality sector, and for the millions of workers who depend on it, will only worsen while these policies persist.

## THE NATIONAL PICTURE

### *Despite a Global Boom, U.S. Tourism is Down*

2025 was a record year for tourism globally, but the United States is a glaring exception. In May 2025, the World Travel and Tourism Council reported<sup>2</sup> that “the U.S., the largest Travel & Tourism sector in the world, is the only country among 184 economies analyzed by WTTC and Oxford Economics, forecast to see international visitor spending decline in 2025.” The UN reported<sup>3</sup> that international tourism was up 4% in 2025, whereas the U.S. International Trade Association tracked a 2.5 million decline in trips by international visitors, which at -4.2% is the first negative change since 2020.<sup>4</sup> In September, the most recent data we have available, there was a 5.5%, or \$1.2 billion, decline in spending by international tourists when compared with September 2024.<sup>5</sup>

“Overall travel spending fell 1.8% year over year in November. ... Inbound overseas travel declined 3.5% in November... Continued declines in international visitation have contributed to a widening gap between travel imports and exports: **the net travel trade deficit expanded to more than \$6 billion in September.**” -U.S. Travel Association, 1/6/26.<sup>6</sup>

## AT A GLANCE

### **2.5 million decline**

in trips by international  
visitors in 2025

### **5.5%, or \$1.2 billion, decline**

in September of 2025  
compared to the previous  
September (the most recent  
month for which we have data)

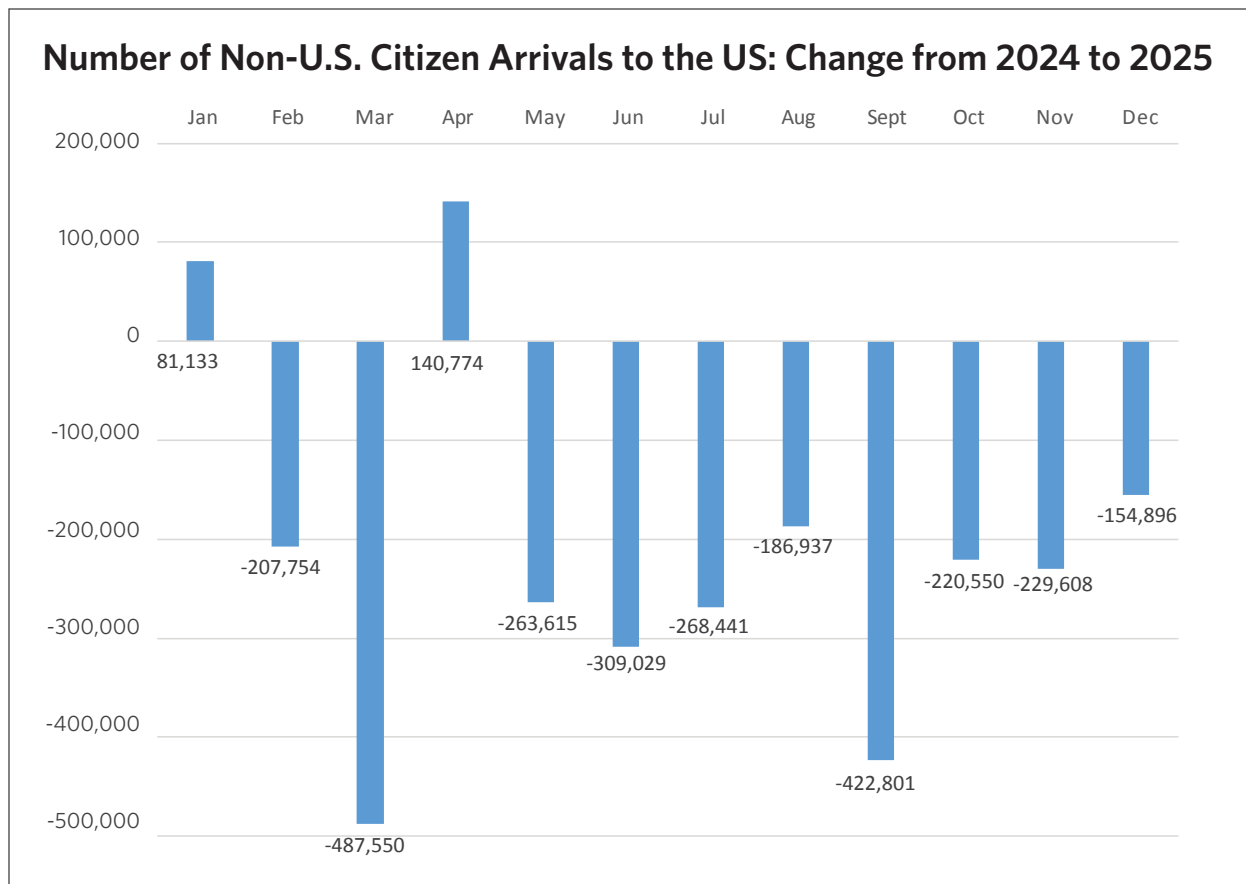
Travel trade deficit expanded to

### **more than \$6 billion.**

The travel trade deficit is  
the difference between what  
international travelers spend in  
the U.S vs what U.S. travelers  
spend abroad

### **98,000 fewer people**

were employed in Leisure and  
Hospitality in December 2025  
than at the same time in 2024:  
6.1% unemployment versus  
5.4% at the same time in 2024



Source: International Trade Administration I-92 data.

[www.trade.gov/us-international-air-travel-statistics-i-92-data](http://www.trade.gov/us-international-air-travel-statistics-i-92-data). Accessed January 23, 2026.

## ***“A Self-Inflicted Injury”***

Surveys of travelers, industry sources, and government travel advisories all suggest that the decline in U.S. tourism is, in the words of one Seattle tour operator, a “self-inflicted injury.”<sup>7</sup> A survey by Skift Research found that around 46% of international travelers are less likely to visit the U.S. due to its current leadership, and another report<sup>8</sup> by Skift emphasized how “political polarization, an affordability crisis, and global resentment toward America” are major factors influencing perceptions. Aggressive immigration enforcement, increased visa fees, and “inflammatory rhetoric” were cited by Aviation Source News as major factors.

Hotel companies are also starting to take note. At a session at the American Hotel and Lodging Association conference addressing the challenges of balancing engagement with FIFA and the government, Marriott International President and CEO Tony Capuano said:

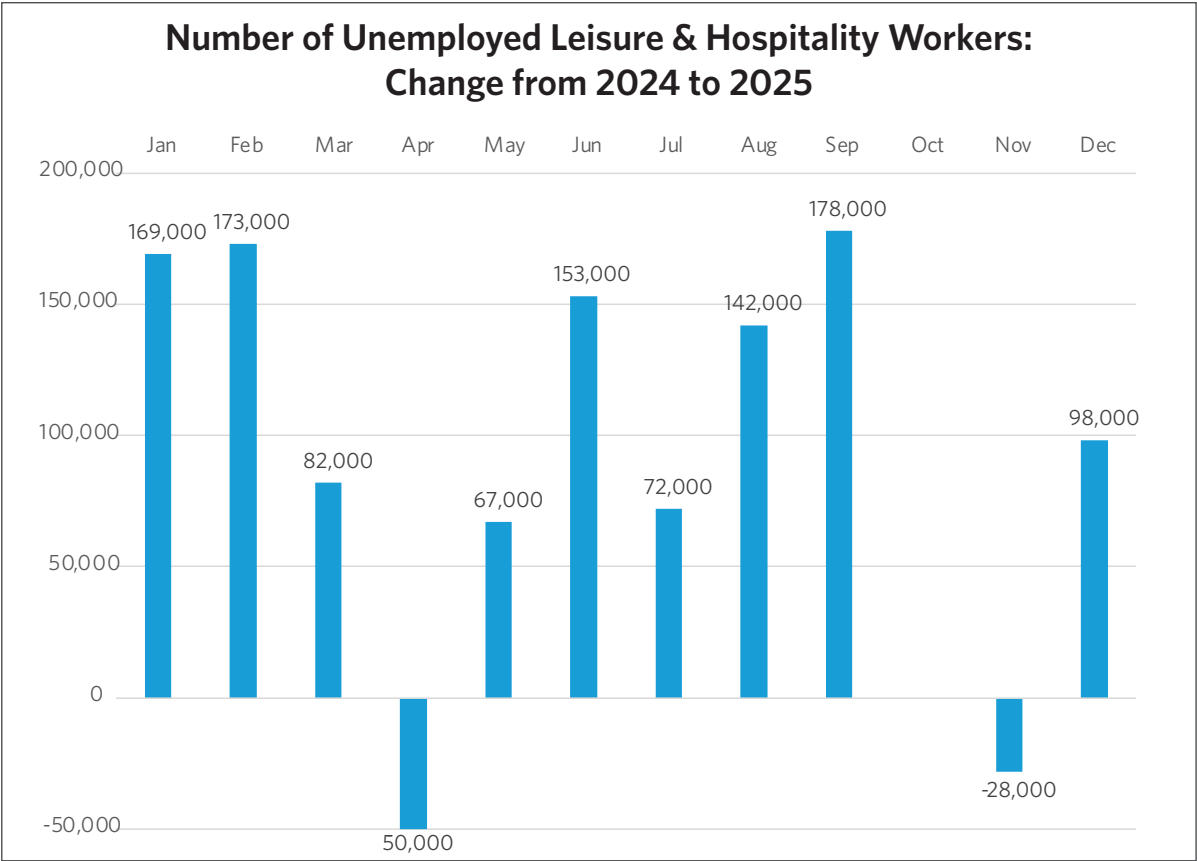
*“There may not be a more significant global sports event that draws the world and the eyes of the world, and when you have visitors asking legitimate questions about what their experience*

*will be coming through customs and immigration those are big impediments to optimizing what should be a home-run opportunity for the lodging industry.”<sup>9</sup>*

By July 2025, over a dozen<sup>10</sup> countries had issued updated travel advisories for travel to the U.S., including Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, and the United Kingdom, according to Conde Nast Traveler. Looking forward to 2026, Adam Sacks, the president of Tourism Economics, told<sup>11</sup> reporters that he did not believe the expected increase in US-bound World Cup travelers will offset the US tourism decline of 2025.

**Fewer and Harder Hospitality Jobs**

In December 2025 (the most recent date for which we have available BLS data), there were 98,000 fewer people employed in Leisure and Hospitality than at the same time in 2024. This translates to a 6.1% unemployment rate at the end of 2025 compared to 5.4% rate at the same time last year.<sup>12</sup>



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Table A-14.  
<https://www.bls.gov/webapps/legacy/cpsatab14.htm>. Accessed January 23, 2026.



There are both supply and demand side explanations for this job loss. On the demand side, fewer tourists mean fewer jobs. The U.S. International Trade Administration says that “every 40 international visits supports 1 U.S. job.”<sup>13</sup>

A decline in the overall number of immigrant workers employed by the industry accounts for some of its supply side crunch. According to both the U.S. Travel Association and the American Hotel and Lodging Association,<sup>14</sup> travel supported the jobs of 15 million U.S. workers in 2024, and directly created eight million jobs, with approximately one-third of those workers immigrants.

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It is critical to understand that not all workers impacted by these changes are without legal status. The White House has put work authorization for over two million immigrant workers in deep uncertainty.<sup>15</sup> This includes individuals from countries like Honduras and Venezuela, whose Temporary Protected Status was revoked, and countries like Cuba and Haiti, whose status under the CHNV parole program has been similarly altered.

In taking away these individuals’ ability to work legally, the Trump administration’s immigration policy affects not only the lives of those who were directly impacted, but also their families, communities, and co-workers. There are both fewer immigrants in the workforce, and at the same time the jobs of their U.S.-born co-workers have become harder and more dangerous.

UNITE HERE members in hotels report having to work longer shifts to cover for their colleagues whose TPS or CHNV parole was revoked. Longer shifts burden employers as well, as they must provide overtime pay when an employee works over 40 hours in a workweek (as well as over 8 hours in a day in some states). UNITE HERE members in airports in Miami talk about their concerns with airline safety and working conditions as they scramble to fill the gap left by immigrant co-workers who’ve lost status. In this way, the White House’s immigration policy is in fact harming the U.S.-born workers it purports to protect.

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## ON THE BRINK OF A “HOTEL RECESSION”

Declining international tourism and staffing challenges are already impacting U.S. hotel business. Jan Freitag, National Director for Hospitality Market Analytics at CoStar Group, recently suggested that the U.S. lodging industry could be entering a “hotel recession.”<sup>16</sup> He went on to say: “normally, if GDP grows, we’d be seeing room demand increases, and we’re just not seeing that in the number of rooms sold right now.” Freitag cites declining international visits to the U.S. as one of the causes.

RevPAR, or revenue per available room, is the key metric hotels use to assess the health of the market. According to a recent story in *Travel Weekly*:

*“CoStar reports year-to-date U.S. RevPAR growth through August at **just 0.2%, the lowest level on record outside of recessionary periods and 2020**, the year the pandemic struck. Average daily rate growth of 1% is similarly weak, lagging inflation in 23 of the past 36 months.”<sup>17</sup>*

Looking more closely at hotel data tells an even more troubling story. Half of all major U.S. markets reported year-over-year declines in bookings in late 2025. The outcome was most notable at economy hotels, where demand was down nearly 3% year-over-year in 2025.<sup>18</sup> For luxury hotels, the opposite was true: they saw a nearly 3% increase in demand year-over-year in 2025.

“Overall the hotel industry is not doing well,” Freitag said in a recent interview. “Foreign travel is down, group bookings are decelerating, and lower- and middle-income travelers are struggling. Everything is more expensive, they don’t have as much money and obviously travel and vacation are the very definition of what’s discretionary.”<sup>19</sup>

This tracks with a broader trend in the U.S. economy. As Moody’s chief economist Mark Zandi recently wrote: “The data also show that the U.S. economy is being largely powered by the well-to-do. As long as they keep spending, the economy should avoid recession, but if they turn more cautious, for whatever reason, the economy has a big problem.”<sup>20</sup>

**“There are two economies in the U.S. right now, and they are moving in different directions.”**  
—*Wall Street Journal*

The *Wall Street Journal* reports that: “There are two economies in the U.S. right now, and they are moving in different directions. For high earners and many older Americans, the economy looks robust... For many others, momentum has stalled or reversed.”<sup>21</sup>

What’s happening today in hotels is a microcosm of what is happening in the broader U.S. economy: The rich are



getting richer and spending more, but everyone else is struggling. Meanwhile, luxury hotels are serving fewer guests at higher prices and with potentially lower levels of service due to staffing shortages.

## THE CANARY IN THE COAL MINE

UNITE HERE members pride themselves on providing first-class hospitality to visitors who cross the thresholds of their airports, hotels, convention centers, casinos, and other workplaces. But these places have instead become inhospitable to both visitors and workers alike. Across the board, the U.S. hospitality industry is suffering because of Trump's immigration policies and ongoing political vitriol. These have upended the industry on multiple fronts, resulting in fewer visitors, fewer available workers, and a hotel industry in which only luxury properties can thrive. Together, this is a recipe for disaster for a critical economic sector.

While this report focuses on the hospitality and tourism industry, it is undoubtedly not the only U.S. industry that has been and will be negatively impacted by immigration policies that scare away visitors and target both immigrant and U.S. born workers alike. So long as these policies persist—or if newer, harsher versions of them are put into effect—the viability of critical industries and of the U.S. economy at large remain at risk.

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### **CASE STUDY: WASHINGTON, D.C.**

D.C.'s hospitality industry has been hit hard by the Trump administration's policies, particularly the deployment of the National Guard and the aggressive federal crackdown on immigration. Industry leaders attest that their business has been harmed by the unnerving presence of the troops and the administration's public rhetoric framing D.C. as dirty, dangerous, and plagued by violent crime. Travel data group Tourism Economics projects a 6.5%<sup>22</sup> decline in international tourism in D.C. for 2025, a potential multimillion-dollar blow to the local economy.

For D.C. restaurants, the impact of Trump's policies was immediate and harsh. Data from the online reservation platform OpenTable shows a roughly 30% drop in reservations in the days following the announcement of the federal takeover, after eleven consecutive months of year-over-year increases in reservation numbers.<sup>23</sup> Axios reported in August that business following the crackdown held steady in suburban locations but fell dramatically in D.C. A restaurant owner in the 14<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood, which has seen high levels of aggressive enforcement, said his Saturday business was harmed by detention and a checkpoint in the area.<sup>24</sup>

Hotels in D.C. have also seen a sharp decline in business following Trump's takeover. Meade Atkeson, regional director of operations for Sonesta Hotels in D.C., told DC News Now<sup>25</sup> in August that travel in some neighborhoods was down by as much as 20% since the beginning of the federal crackdown, and Thomas Penny, president of Donohoe Hospitality Services, says August and September were the worst months of the year for the company. *The Washington Post* reported in August that a note to Marriott investors attributed a 1.5% decrease in RevPAR (Revenue Per Available Room) to decreasing demand from government and small business clients and that hotels were even lowering rates in an effort to bring back visitors.<sup>26</sup>

### **GREG VARNEY'S Experience Working at a D.C. Restaurant**

Greg has been working as a line cook at St. Anselm in NoMa for more than a year, after almost 4 years in the industry in total. Working alongside dishwashers, line and prep cooks, he has witnessed firsthand the economic effects of both the mass layoffs of federal workers and the deployment of National Guard and federal agents, including ICE, onto the streets of D.C. The raids have targeted individuals regardless of legal status, creating burdens that extend beyond Latino workers and residents who face racist profiling. Even as a white man born in Alaska, the measures against immigrants weigh greatly on Greg and have only made work more difficult and stressful.

"A year ago, our weekends would have 450-500 covers per night, now at best we do around 250 as mass layoffs of federal employees and

fear of federal agents discourage diners eating out.

"This has made my own job doubly hard and stressful. Especially during the occupation, there was an intense and palpable fear in the kitchen. People had family members who were taken. We all now jerk our heads up whenever we hear sirens, even in a city like D.C. where it's common. I've had to come in when I wasn't scheduled because of the increase of call-outs among staff. We are all trying to watch out for each other, but it feels like we've basically taken on a second shift due to this occupation and raids in D.C. streets."



In addition to the impact on existing institutions, further development in the hospitality industry has stalled as a direct result of Trump's policies. In October, an affiliate of local gas station magnate Joe Mamo requested a two-year extension from the Zoning Commission on entitlements for a planned hotel franchise in the Mt. Vernon Square neighborhood on the basis that continuing work on the project was untenable under present economic conditions. The filings state that these policies have "negatively impacted international travel to the U.S. overall and Washington, D.C. specifically" and "[the] visible presence of the National Guard has also created an atmosphere that discourages both domestic and international leisure travelers."<sup>27</sup>

On the week that National Guard troops appeared on the streets of Washington, D.C., restaurant reservations dropped 7%.<sup>28</sup> By late summer 2025, Washington, D.C. hotel performance dropped significantly more than other jurisdictions in the DC metropolitan region. In terms of overall regional resident spending, the gap between resident spending in the District versus the DMV region widened, with the former seeing a twofold decrease in spending during the time of the National Guard deployment compared to non-DC DMV resident spending.<sup>29</sup>

### **RHONDA STEWARD'S Experience Working at a D.C. Hotel**

Rhonda has been working in housekeeping at hotels in Washington D.C. for fourteen years. She's a public space attendant at the Marriott Marquis, which is next door to the Washington Convention Center.

"I've never seen anything like what we're experiencing now. With the Trump administration's federal layoffs, business has slowed—federal workers aren't coming in for meetings, a lot of the government contractors who used to fill our hotel have gone. As a public space attendant, I spend a lot of time in the lobby, and the foot traffic from international tourists has gone way down. We were even laid off for two weeks over Christmas.

"I've had to use so much more leave last year, probably 3-4 extra weeks, just to make up for

the lost hours and pay my bills. The problem is, I'm burning through my leave just to survive financially, which means I don't have any left when I'm actually sick or need time off to rest.

"I hurt my knee in the snow and just kept going in because I was scared to use up more leave. I'm worried because even with using all my leave, it won't be enough to cover the gaps in 2026—it'll run out by the end of the year. I'm just waiting for the president to finish up his term so things can hopefully go back to normal."



## CASE STUDY: LAS VEGAS

In Las Vegas, the hospitality industry has seen a dramatic decline over the past year, reversing gains that led to historical levels of visitation and visitor spending on the Las Vegas Strip prior to 2025.

The head of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitor Authority told local reporters last August that “Some of the decisions that our administration has made around international relations has caused a drop in tourism, that has happened for Canada. Our international visitation is actually pretty flat. But that is making up for a 20+% drop in tourism from Canada.”<sup>30</sup>

### SHALEAH TAYLOR, Guest Room Attendant and Culinary Union Member for 13 Years

“I’ve been in Las Vegas for 23 years, and I’ve worked as a guest room attendant for 13 years. I love my job, but right now, a lot of us are worried.

“You can feel that business has slowed down. People are spending less, and some of my coworkers who depend on tips are seeing a real drop. Even a 10 percent decrease makes a difference when you are living paycheck to paycheck. For working people, that affects how we pay bills, how we buy groceries, and how we take care of our families.

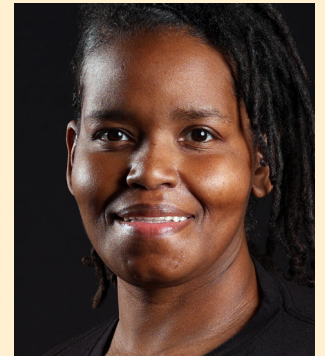
“The cost of living keeps going up, but our pay does not always keep up with it. Groceries are more expensive. Gas is more expensive. Everything costs more, and it feels like we are constantly trying to catch up. A lot of us are nervous about job security, about our hours, and about what happens if things slow down even more.

“I’m also a shop steward, so I work all day and then still have union work to do. Some days I do

not get home until 7 or 8 at night. By the time I get home, it is late, and you are still trying to cook, take care of family, and hold everything together. It can be exhausting, but we do it because we have to.

“On top of that, there is so much chaos at the national level. It feels like politicians are arguing while working people are the ones paying the price. We just want stability. We want to feel secure in our jobs. We want to know that if we work hard, we can take care of our families and live with dignity.

“I am proud of being a Culinary Union member. The union gives us a voice and protection in uncertain times. But what we need right now is leadership in D.C. that understands what workers are going through, protects our jobs, and stops playing games with our livelihoods.”



According to the LVCVA's recently released year-end report,<sup>31</sup> the total number of visitors to Las Vegas declined by 7.5% in 2025, dipping below 40 million for the first time since 2023 and reaching "the lowest annual total since 2021".<sup>32</sup> Air passenger traffic decreased by 5.9% through the year. Not surprisingly, Strip hotel occupancy dropped from 86.4% to 83.2%, a decrease that was mirrored by a decline in RevPAR of 8.2%.

The decline of tourism in Las Vegas is reflected in the public financial reports of the major Las Vegas casino companies, which saw their Strip operations' property EBITDA decline from 3% to 10%

### **RHODORA BARRY, Master Cook at the Flamingo and Culinary Union Member for 25 Years**

"My name is Rhodora Barry. I've worked at the Flamingo as a master cook for 25 years, and I've been a Culinary Union member for 25 years, going on 26 this March.

"Right now, I think the Las Vegas economy is not good. Honestly, it's going to suck. There are a lot of layoffs, restaurants are cutting days, and schedules are being reduced. Some places on the Strip are only open four or five days a week, and many of my coworkers are losing hours.

"I think part of this is what's happening nationally, especially immigration enforcement and tariffs. People from other countries are scared to travel, and political fighting with countries like Canada is hurting tourism. Because of that, we are losing customers, and workers feel the impact.

"Gasoline has gotten a little cheaper, and I'm OK with that. But everything else is still expensive. Electricity is going up. Groceries are expensive. Utilities are skyrocketing. We have had to cut back on our budget, especially groceries. Before, we could buy whatever the kids

wanted. Now we limit food, cut out soda, eggs, and other items, and I even remind my kids not to waste food because it costs so much.

"I personally have not been laid off because I have seniority, but I still see many coworkers struggling with fewer hours and less income. Even if it doesn't hit me directly, it hurts to see others affected.

"My husband and I own our home, but my children are struggling. One of my daughters pays \$2,200 a month to rent a two-bedroom apartment. Another has a mortgage of over \$3,000 a month for a small home. Young families in Las Vegas are being stretched too thin.

"I think we need policies that help working families, lower grocery costs, and support local businesses. We need an economy that works for regular people, not just corporations or politicians."



through the first three quarters of 2025.<sup>33</sup> To counter the decline in visitors from Canada, a private casino operator in Downtown Las Vegas recently announced that its casinos would start accepting Canadian dollars on par with U.S. dollars, effectively offering a 27% discount to patrons showing up with the northern currency.<sup>34</sup>

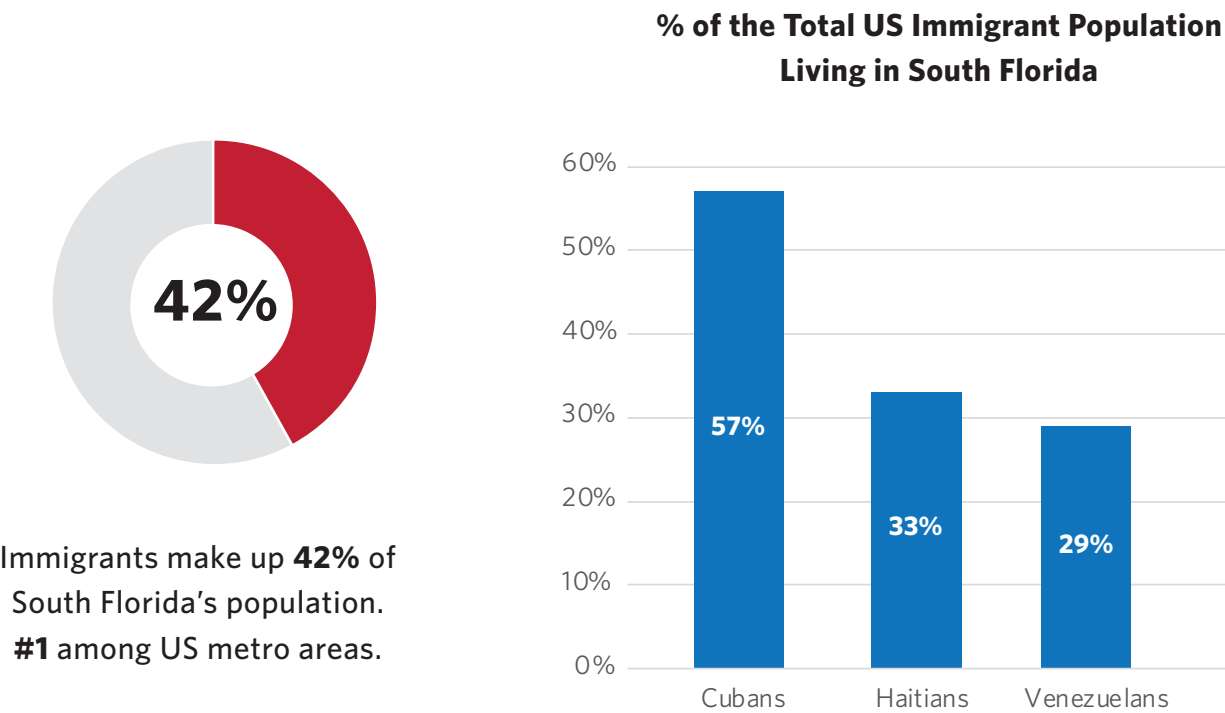
**CASE STUDY: MIAMI**

*"I don't think we've ever, as a country, seen such a huge number of people losing their immigration status all at once. Seeing well over 1 million people lose their work authorization in a single year is a really huge event that has ripple effects for employers and communities and families and our economy as well."*

*—Julia Gelatt, associate director of the U.S. Immigration Policy Program at the Migration Policy Institute, as quoted by WLRN Public Media on December 29, 2025.<sup>35</sup>*

The Trump administration's anti-immigrant policies are not just destructive to individual immigrants and their families—they threaten the U.S. economy and the economies of those cities and industries that depend on largely immigrant workforce. There may be no metropolitan area harder hit than South Florida and Miami, "an immigrant city."

In 2023, 6% of all immigrants in the U.S. (about three million) were living in South Florida.<sup>36</sup> Immigrants make up nearly 42% of the total population there, the highest proportion in the country. It is also home to the largest Haitian and Cuban diaspora communities in the world, and the largest





Venezuelan community in the country. These groups were among those most impacted by the revocation of TPS and CHNV Parole, which left them with a near-impossible choice: remain in the U.S. without authorization and without the ability to provide for their families, or return to face an uncertain—and quite possibly dangerous—situation in their native country.

The abrupt cancellation (or threatened cancellation) of certain TPS designations and CHNV Parole likely led to near-immediate impacts on the South Florida workforce. On a state level, Florida's labor participation rate—the percent of the population that is currently working or looking for work and one possible indicator of a reduction in the number of immigrant workers—saw a steady decline in the second

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half of 2025, falling to 57.5% in November.<sup>37</sup> This was the lowest percentage since February 2021, when the world was still recovering from the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Such a downturn may have devastating consequences for the area's hospitality industry, which depends on immigrant workers to function. South Florida's hospitality workers union, UNITE HERE Local 355, represents workers in the region's hotels, airports, sports stadiums, and casinos. The union estimates that 90% of its 7,000 members are immigrants, and many come from mixed-status families.

*"Without immigrants, South Florida doesn't exist. Immigrants are essential to our way of life, to our economy, to hotels, restaurants, and basic health structures."*

*—Paul Christian Namphy, Lead Organizer at the Family Action Network Movement, a Miami-based advocacy group, as quoted by WLRN Public Media on January 14, 2026.<sup>38</sup>*

Many members of Local 355 work in airport concessions or airline catering at the Miami International Airport, an important international travel hub that generates employment for about 37,000 workers.<sup>39</sup> These members have already been impacted by cuts to TPS and CHNV parole, including about 10% of workers at both airport concessionaire Areas and airline caterer LSG Sky Chefs. Such numbers are concerning as these workers do more than feed airline passengers and crew: they are on the front lines of ensuring the safety of every individual who passes through the airport or onto an aircraft, and they receive special training on security protocols, food safety, and operational awareness.

At the same time, the loss of so many immigrant workers in South Florida may also have the unintended consequence of negatively impacting a portion of the industry that is on the upswing: the luxury hotel market. Nationwide, demand for luxury hotels is outpacing demand for economy hotels, and Miami is among those cities leading the increase in luxury offerings.<sup>40</sup> Such hotels require a higher staff-to-guest ratio, but finding enough staff members may prove to be a challenge for employers: over 65% of the region's hotel workers are foreign-born—the highest percentage among U.S. metro areas and more than double the national average of 31%.<sup>41</sup>

### **FILENE'S Experience Working at the Miami International Airport**

Filiene Julien has worked for airline caterer LSG Sky Chefs at the Miami International Airport for seven years. She is a driver, which means she works directly on the airport tarmac and aboard airplanes to provide airline passengers and crew with necessary food, beverages, and other essential items.

"There is a lot of pressure in this job because any kind of slowdown can lead to a flight delay. American Airlines is our biggest client here, and we've been told that they will fine Sky Chefs for every delay to an international flight."

"I know of many Sky Chefs workers who have lost their jobs recently because of changes to their immigration status. It's impacted all kinds of different departments for us, from drivers to precheck. For the drivers, losing some of our coworkers has meant that there aren't enough of us to cover all the international flights. Before this happened, we would only be assigned to work two flights per day, but now we have to do three, sometimes four flights. It used to be an eight-hour shift, but now it can be 12 hours or more. There are times I've arrived at four in the morning and still haven't

gone home by ten at night.

"It's tiring work to load the heavy carts into the trucks, drive them to the plane, unload the dirty carts and trash, then load the full carts for a long-distance flight of hundreds of passengers and crew members. Those of us who cater the international flights also have special Customs and Border Patrol regulations that we have to follow to secure and properly dispose of trash that comes into the country on international flights.

"I love my job, and also, I do this extra work because I don't have a choice: I have six kids to support at home. But it's getting harder and harder as we lose co-workers. We're already working so hard to cover for being short-staffed, and we could lose even more if the administration is allowed to cancel TPS for Haitians. It's time for my co-workers with TPS to have a pathway to citizenship. No one should have to live in fear not knowing what is going to happen to them."



In a recent interview, Miami mayor-elect Eileen Higgins had this to say regarding the situation:

*"We have this politics of trickle-down hatred that are coming from the federal government, and in our case, sadly, our state government. And that has created a whole new environment here in Miami.*

*...Not only is this mean and cruel and inhumane, it's just simply bad for the economy."*<sup>42</sup>

## ■ CASE STUDY: SEATTLE

Overseas and Canadian visitation to the U.S. has seen a decline in 2025 due to concern over the Trump administration's actions and Seattle is no exception. With Seattle's proximity to the border, Canadians make up the majority of international visitors to the city – 73% in 2024.<sup>43</sup> In 2025, visitation to Seattle has seen a sharp decline, and hotel metrics have gone negative for the first time since the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic.

*"We understand the reports of Canadian travelers adjusting their plans due to the current political situation," Michelle McKenzie, marketing director for State of Washington Tourism<sup>44</sup> –Axios, 9/16/2025*

The *New York Times* reported that "Canadians are keeping up their efforts to boycott travel to the United States," citing Canadian government statistics that October 2025 saw a 24% decline in air travel and 30% decline in car travel to the U.S. compared to the same time a year ago.<sup>45</sup>

### EMILIO'S Experience Working at the Edgewater Hotel

"When I came to Seattle I started working at the Edgewater Hotel. I am a housekeeper. At first I was working 4 or 5 days. They started cutting my hours in October. I never expected my hours to get cut like this. My coworkers say it has never been this slow before. There was one month I didn't get any work at all, not even one day. Sometimes when I come to work they take rooms away from me and send me home early.

"I have two kids, one 4 years old and the other 10 months old. My wife isn't working, so I'm the sole provider for our family.

"I had to find another job at an industrial bakery, but they also don't give me enough hours. Sometimes I'm working 2 or 3 hours in a shift

over there. Now I'm looking for a third job.

"I feel so stressed. I'm able to work, but I can't find the hours. The rent gives me the most stress. My rent is over \$2000. I'm so worried, because I don't want us to lose our apartment. Food is one thing, I can go without food, but we need to have a roof over our heads. I have to ask my friends to loan me money.

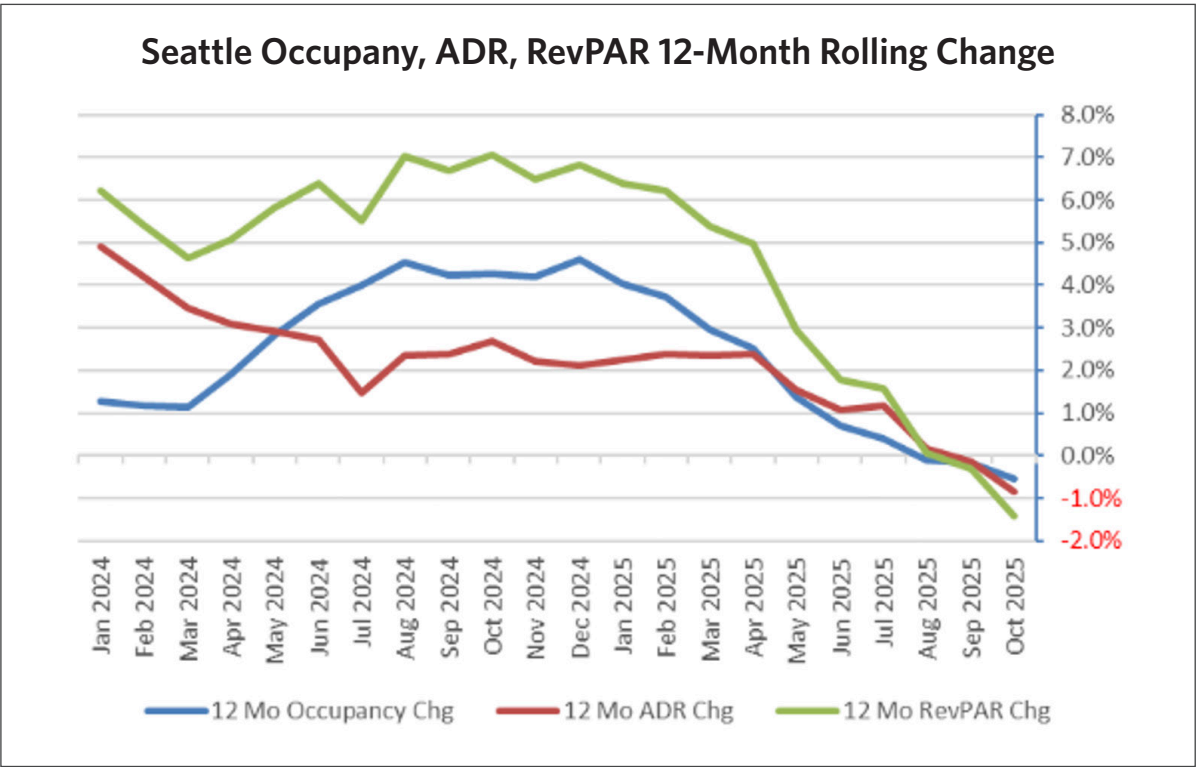
"I'm worried about my kids. I want a good life for my kids. I don't want them to experience all the hardships that I did."



Seattle is a popular tourism destination in the summer, a busy cruise departure port, and home to professional football, baseball, soccer, and hockey teams that draw spectators from far and wide.

Visit Seattle wrote in October 2025, “A recent Tourism Economics<sup>46</sup> forecast **projects a 26.9% decline in international overnight visitation to the city in 2025, the steepest drop among major U.S. destinations.**”<sup>47</sup>

*“The number of southbound border crossings of vehicles licensed in Canada fell nearly 43% year over year in March, and last weekend’s Seattle Mariners series against the Toronto Blue Jays saw thinner crowds than typical for the stand, with fewer Jays-clad fans.” —Puget Sound Business Journal, 5/12/25<sup>48</sup>*



Source: Costar data for Seattle hotel market.<sup>49</sup>

Data shows that Seattle’s hotel market has already felt a significant impact in 2025. Seattle hotel metrics slowed in summer 2025, with 12-month rolling average room rates, occupancy, and RevPAR (Revenue Per Available Room) all going negative in September and October 2025 for the first since the height of the COVID pandemic.<sup>50</sup>

Due to the decrease in visitors, hotel workers in Seattle have been facing reduced hours and layoffs.

## Endnotes

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