

## Empathy and attitudes toward protecting migrants from criminal violence\*

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### Abstract

Migrants in Latin America are increasingly vulnerable to organized crime violence while *en route* to their destination. Public opinion regarding how to address this problem varies. While many residents of countries along migration routes support policies protecting migrants from organized crime, others oppose them. What explains this variation? To investigate this, we draw on nationally representative survey data from one of Latin America's most important migrant corridors, Mexico, where sustained criminal violence makes migrants vulnerable to criminal predation *en route*. We integrate insights from theories of helping refugees amid political violence with studies about aiding migrants amid peace to develop and test hypotheses about an understudied research phenomenon, protecting migrants amid large-scale criminal violence. We argue that attitudes toward protecting migrants are influenced by feelings of empathy. We test hypotheses related to two conduits of empathic perspective-taking: crime victimization and imagining one could become a victim in the future. We find these channels of perspective-taking are positively associated with support for migrant protective policies among crime victims and non-victims alike. Our research reveals new information about immigration policy attitudes in criminally violent contexts and advances knowledge about the public endorsement of policies to preserve migrant rights and dignity.

**Keywords:** migration, violence, crime, public opinion, Mexico, emotions

In 2018, tens of thousands of migrants<sup>1</sup> collectively trekked from the Guatemala - Mexico border, through Mexico, to the United States (US). Compared to traveling alone or in small groups, caravanning afforded the migrants a level of protection (Torre Cantalapiedra & Nava, 2020). In addition to experiencing abuse from security and immigration officials, migrants traveling this route face increasingly rapacious organized crime groups who profit from robbing and kidnapping for ransom, among other predations (Brigden, 2018; Díaz de León, 2023). Migrant perils in Latin America have been exceptionally visible in recent years. In 2010, for example, 72 Central and South American migrants were kidnapped by *los Zetas* crime group and executed en masse in northern Mexico (Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos, n.d.).

Threats to migrants' safety while traveling through criminally violent spaces in Mexico, Central America and elsewhere in Latin America are clear. However, public opinion about how to address this problem is not. In fact, attitudes toward migrants are predominantly antagonistic. In a 2019 survey, for example, 64% of Mexicans surveyed identified migrants as a public burden with 39% indicating they believe migrants commit more crimes than natives (Washington Post and Reforma 2019). In the face of such disapproval, what explains the relative few inclined to *help* migrants?

Conventional explanations suggest attitudes toward immigrants are shaped by political identities (Bohman, 2011; Fussell, 2014; Sides & Citrin, 2007), religious ideology (Knoll, 2009), cosmopolitanism (Haubert & Fussell, 2006), and ideas about immigrants' economic impacts (Burns & Grimpel, 2000; Citrin, et al., 1997; Espenshade & Hempstead, 1996; Esses, et al., 1998; Mayda, 2006; Olzak, 1992; Palmer, 1996; Scheve & Slaughter 2001), among other factors. Meanwhile, a growing body of evidence points toward an alternative channel through which attitudes toward immigrants are shaped: empathy. A small collection of studies finds that imagining oneself in the shoes of immigrants and refugees may motivate helping behaviors and attitudes. Thus far, this research is conducted in either the US or in contexts of civil war in European and African settings. Yet in Latin America, much migration is due to *criminal violence* and many migration routes traverse active criminal conflicts. This differs from the US and civil

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<sup>1</sup> We use the term "migrants" when discussing those traveling through Latin America with the goal of settling outside their country of origin to seek a better life. This term is broad enough to include those with diverse economic, social and political motives, and those traveling *through* a country but not settling there.

war because, regardless of their motivations for migrating, those traveling through criminal conflict require continued protection from violence *during migration*. Protecting migrants from criminal predation *en route* is largely dependent on the political will and policy arrangements of individual states and, in turn, the policy preferences of their citizens. In this paper, we pivot our analytical lens to this unique, yet increasingly common research context. Amid large-scale criminal violence, what explains variation in citizen endorsement of policies to protect migrants in transit?

We draw particular attention to the question of empathic perspective-taking. In criminally violent contexts, we argue that empathic perspective-taking occurs through two primary channels: crime victimization and empathic victimization, that is imagining oneself as a potential victim. Both forms, we argue, foster empathic concern for migrants facing criminal predation which, in turn, motivates support for protecting them from harm. We test this hypothesis via nationally representative survey data from one of the region's most important and violent migrant corridors, Mexico. We leverage individual-level variation in the degree to which respondents have experienced or can imagine themselves experiencing criminal violence like that suffered by Central American migrants transiting through Mexico, and willingness to donate money to a state-led migrant protection program. Through this, we investigate whether and to what degree empathic perspective-taking is associated with willingness to protect migrants at one's own expense. While individual disposition to donate is low overall, we find that empathic perspective-taking is positively correlated with readiness to incur those costs, all else equal.

Understanding citizen policy preferences is important because policy is shaped in part by public opinion. The idea that elected leaders' choices reflect citizen preferences underlies most conventional theories of electoral democracy (Arrow, 1963; Dahl, 1971; Downs, 1957) and empirical evidence suggests public opinion shapes how democratic leaders make policy decisions (see Shapiro, 2011; Wlezien & Soroka, 2021 for a review). Public opinion also influences which issues draw policymakers' attention because electoral incentives push leaders to prioritize issues that are salient with voters (e.g., Jones, 1994; Jones & Baumgartner, 2005; Shapiro, 1998). Understanding citizen support for protecting migrants from criminal abuse *en route* is especially necessary. The rates of migrants crossing through areas of criminal conflict in Latin America are

increasing in step with the intensity of criminal predation therein. Our research reveals new information about which citizens are more likely to support policies to protect migrants in that environment and, by implication, whether and how such policies may become attractive to political leaders. By investigating the particular relationship between empathic perspective-taking and policy support, meanwhile, we advance knowledge about public interest in preserving the rights and dignity of migrants.

The paper proceeds as follows. We first recount prevailing theories about the correlates of immigration attitudes and review new evidence of a link between empathy and attitudes toward migrants and refugees. We then present our argument and hypotheses, positing that empathic perspective-taking is associated with support for migrant protection policies, all else equal. Next, we describe the Mexican research context and our empirical strategy. We then report and discuss our results. To conclude, we address the theoretical and policy implications of our findings.

### **Existing research**

Attitudes toward migrants among residents of receiving countries are generally unfavorable (Cornelius & Rosenblum, 2005, p. 104). In the economic environment, evidence suggests concerns about immigrants' impact on the national economy and on the individual-level economic status of natives generate anti-immigrant sentiment (Burns & Grimpel, 2000; Citrin, et al., 1997; Espenshade & Hempstead, 1996; Esses, et al., 1998; Mayda, 2006; Olzak, 1992; Palmer, 1996; Scheve & Slaughter, 2001). Politically, variation in attitudes toward immigrants is associated with partisan identities and political ideologies (Bohman, 2011; Fussell, 2014; Sides & Citrin, 2007). Scholars likewise propose social variables and conditions that shape attitudes toward immigrants. For example, while anti-immigrant sentiment tends to increase with age (Chandler & Tsai, 2001; Citrin, et al., 1990; Espenshade & Calhoun, 1993; Ford, 2011; Heath & Tilley, 2005), pro-immigrant sentiment tends to rise with educational attainment (Espenshade & Calhoun, 1993; Fetzer, 2000; Hainmueller & Hiscox, 2007). Certain religious ideologies are associated with greater immigrant acceptance (Knoll, 2009), as is a more cosmopolitan view of one's place in the world (Haubert & Fussell, 2006). Finally, one set of arguments maintains that regular and frequent social interaction with immigrants is associated with more favorable attitudes (see Paluck, et al., 2019 and Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006 for a review).

More recent works investigate one variable these conventional explanations miss, empathy. Empathy refers to a set of cognitive and affective processes through which one comes to comprehend another's feelings from their perspective and develop concern for their wellbeing. Psychologists establish a robust, positive association between empathy, pro-social attitudes and helping behaviors (Batson, 1991; Batson, et al., 1981; Krebs, 1975).<sup>2</sup> Migration and conflict scholars have adopted this theoretical logic to explain variation in patterns of helping among migrant- and refugee-receiving populations. These accounts emphasize empathic perspective-taking in particular. Perspective-taking refers to imagining oneself in the shoes of another and envisioning how the other might feel given their situation (de Waal 2008, p. 218). With few exceptions, these accounts follow a similar theoretical logic that underscores shared histories of suffering: among residents of migrant-receiving countries, having past experiences of hardship like those experienced by migrants and refugees facilitates empathic perspective-taking which, in turn, expedites favorable attitudes and behaviors toward them (cf. Ghosn, et al., 2019). Hartman and Morse (2018), for example, show that Liberians who experienced civil war violence hosted more refugees and expressed more positive views of those fleeing political violence in Côte d'Ivoire. This was particularly true after research participants engaged in perspective-taking by reflecting on their own civil war experiences. Turkoglu, et al. (2022) yield consonant findings in Turkey, where members of the Kurdish minority are more likely than the general Turkish population to help and to hold favorable attitudes toward Syrian civil war refugees. Here, the shared experience of social and political oppression among the Kurdish minority facilitates perspective-taking with refugees facing like conditions.

Others use a comparable logic to explain pro-social attitudes and behaviors outside conflict zones. Williamson, et al. (2021) find that prompting US citizens to reflect on their personal immigrant history produces more inclusionary attitudes toward present-day immigrants. Sirin, et al. (2016), meanwhile, argue that a shared background of discrimination makes minority populations in the US more likely to express empathy for undocumented immigrants than the majority Anglo population. In turn, these same populations are more likely to support immigrant rights. Knoll

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<sup>2</sup> We avoid the term "altruistic" because there is debate about whether empathically-motivated helping is altruistic or egoistic (see Cialdini, et al. 1997).

(2009) posits a similar claim about support for liberal immigration policy among US religious minorities.

Much less is known about whether and to what effect individuals without such shared experiences credibly take the perspective of migrants or refugees. In the US context, Newman, et al. (2015) show that more empathetic individuals respond more positively to humanitarian cues regarding immigration, but do not interrogate how that empathy is generated. Adida, et al. (2018), meanwhile, show that asking Americans to imagine themselves in the shoes of Syrian refugees increases the likelihood of writing a letter urging the US President to receive them. Since most Americans have not experienced civil war violence, their results suggest that perspective-taking in general, regardless of whether it is shepherded in by shared experiences, or not, has at least a modest, positive effect on helping behaviors, though more research is necessary.

### **Our contribution: Empathic foundations of immigration attitudes in criminal contexts**

We enrich and advance this body of knowledge in three ways. First, we shed light on attitudes toward immigration policy during large-scale criminal violence, a research context that is increasingly common but which neither conventional explanations nor empathy-based accounts consider. Empathy-based studies are particularly limited, largely representing three research settings: civil war and refugee flows in Europe and Africa and US citizen attitudes toward immigrants and refugees. While political unrest persists and migration during peacetime remains relevant, much migration now takes place amid criminal conflict, especially in Latin America. Understanding attitude formation in criminally violent contexts is important because residents may think about whether and how to help migrants in ways that deviate from either civil war or peacetime settings. For example, we know that individuals view refugees and asylum-seekers more favorably than immigrants in general (O'Rourke & Sinnott, 2006). In the absence of civil war, however, residents of transit countries may not perceive migrants as asylum-seekers. In fact, migrants in transit may not be asylum-seekers despite requiring protection from violence *en route*. Residents of transit countries may likewise perceive migration in the absence of civil war as a choice, rather than forced expulsion. They may thus hesitate to protect migrants who, knowing the risks of criminal predation *en route*, chose to make the journey anyway. Indeed, perceptions about whether those in need are responsible for their hardship shapes attitudes about their

“deservingness” (van Oorschot, 2000). Residents of criminally violent transit countries may also resist extending protections to migrants whilst residents’ security needs are not met. Furthermore, the question of helping migrants in transit merits special academic attention because their temporary presence may change how residents perceive migrants’ impact on or contributions to the country, with consequences for residents’ willingness to provide aid.

Second, we contribute to knowledge about the politics of empathically-motivated helping. Others interrogate the relationship between empathy and humanitarian assistance (Pagano & Huo, 2007), wealth distribution (Feierherd, et al., 2017), civic engagement (Bell-Martin, 2019), caution and concern during the COVID-19 pandemic (Fischer, et al., 2023), and, as described above, pro-migrant attitudes and behaviors. We provide additional evidence from an important issue area not yet addressed, migration amid criminal violence. We advance existing knowledge about the empathic foundations of attitudes toward migrants specifically by presenting new evidence of empathically-motivated helping among those who do not share similar experiences. Existing accounts emphasize empathic links forged by shared suffering, but we show that imagining oneself in the shoes of the sufferer is broadly associated with willingness to protect migrants from harm, even among those without relevant past experiences. This is in line with limited evidence from the United States (Adida, et al., 2018). To our knowledge, we are the first to uncover this same link in Latin America and within a context of criminal violence.

Third, we bring additional scholarly attention to migrant-receiving countries in the Global South. As others note, existing research on public attitudes toward migrants and immigration policy tends to center wealthy, industrialized democracies of the North, even though Southern countries receive a significant share of the world’s in-transit population (Hartman & Morse 2018, p. 733; Turkoglu, et al., 2022, p. 4). We address this oversight by providing additional evidence from one particularly important Global South case, Mexico.

### **Theoretical logic: Empathizing with migrants**

Our theoretical premise for empathy-based helping in criminal contexts builds on existing psychology research showing a positive association between empathy and pro-social attitudes and behaviors (Batson, 1991; Batson, et al., 1981; Krebs, 1975). We argue that empathizing with

migrants transiting through criminal spaces is associated with greater willingness to protect them from criminal predation, all else equal. Like others, we emphasize the role of empathic perspective-taking. We depart from existing accounts by theorizing two separate channels of perspective-taking, thereby accounting for empathic processes with and without the medium of similar experiences. We argue that perspective-taking in criminal contexts occurs through two chief conduits: crime victimization and empathic victimization. While the first is likely among victims of organized crime, the latter is likely among non-victims. In either form, adopting the perspective of crime victims cultivates empathic concern for migrants transiting through criminally violent spaces and, consequently, greater willingness to protect migrants from criminal predation. We elaborate on each of these points in turn.

Empathy refers to the ability to feel emotions that approximate another's and develop concern about their circumstances (Batson, 1991). Empathy is facilitated by perspective-taking, that is adopting the perspective of another and imagining how they might feel given their situation (de Waal 2008, p. 218). Perspective-taking can assume several forms. It includes imagining oneself in another's shoes and considering how the other person might feel. It also includes imagining oneself facing a similar circumstance and reflecting on how that experience would feel (Batson, et al., 1997).

Perceiving similarities between oneself and another facilitates adopting their perspective (Krebs, 1975; Stotland, 1969; cf. Batson, et al., 2005). Conflict and migration scholars place special importance on similar experiences of suffering or persecution (Hartman & Morse, 2018; Knoll, 2009; Sirin, et al., 2016; Turkoglu, et al., 2022; Williamson, et al., 2021). However, shared experiences are not necessary. Perceiving similar demographics, behaviors and interests exacts a like effect (Batson, et al., 1996).

In contexts of criminal violence, we posit that perspective-taking occurs through two principal channels: crime victimization and empathic victimization. *Crime victimization* (hereafter, victimization) refers to experiencing criminal abuse firsthand or within the family. We posit that victimization among residents of criminally violent spaces facilitates adopting the perspective of migrants transiting through said spaces and, consequently, developing empathic concern for them.



As prior evidence of “empathy born of violence” suggests (Hartman & Morse, 2018), this occurs when crime victims see their experience with abuse reflected in the ordeals of migrants facing similar threats. Experiencing organized crime abuse in the past facilitates adopting the perspective of migrants facing similar dangers in the present because the threats migrants face *en route* are akin to the predation many residents of criminally violent spaces endure and emanate from the same or similar criminal organizations. Victims are thus acutely well-positioned to adopt and comprehend the migrants’ perspective because they already know what it is like to fall prey to crime.

We further posit a second conduit of perspective-taking most likely for those without prior victimization experience, *empathic victimization*. Empathic victimization refers to imagining that the criminal abuse experienced by others could happen to you or your loved ones. Psychologists establish that imagining one might face a similar situation or condition in the future generates empathic ties with the present suffering of another (Galinsky & Moskowitz 2000, p. 709). In the absence of criminal victimization, we posit that imagining criminal abuse could happen to you generates a distinct set of perceived similarities between migrants and non-victim residents of transit countries. Whereas victims generate empathic ties through shared suffering, non-victims generate empathic ties through perceiving their shared potential for suffering.

The distinction between real and empathic victimization implies differences in the information available to individuals during perspective-taking. Victims draw on firsthand experience about how the victimized think and feel. Non-victims rely on how they *imagine* experiencing criminal abuse might feel. This, we argue, should produce variation in the saliency of perspective-taking and, consequently, the magnitude of the relationship between either conduit of perspective-taking and willingness to protect migrants. Specifically, we anticipate the magnitude of the relationship between victimization and endorsement of migrant protective policies will be greater than the relationship between empathic victimization and policy support.

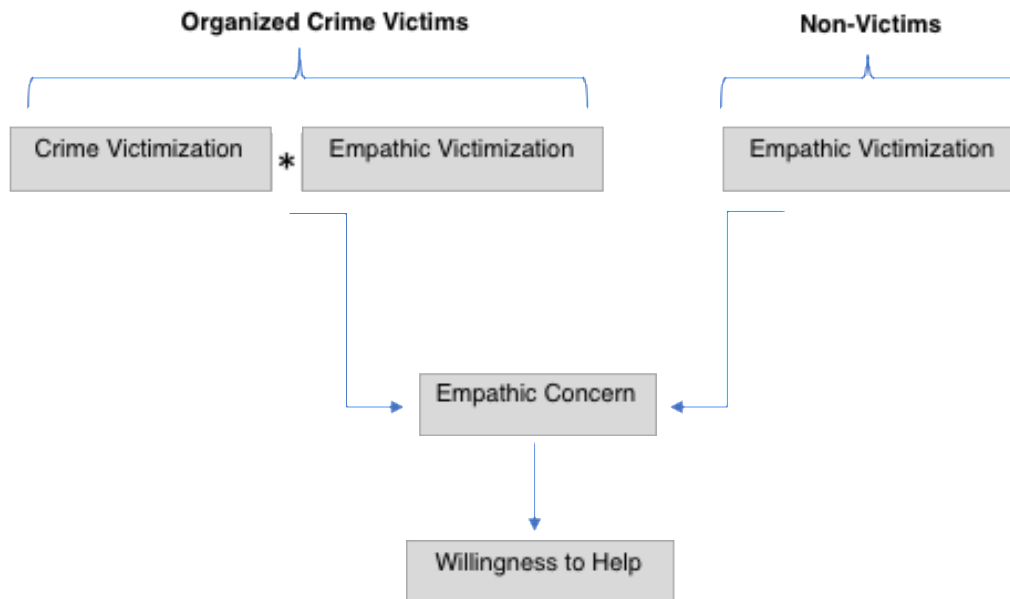
Note that victims may have their own experience with criminal predation *and* exhibit empathic victimization, that is imagining that violence befalling someone else could happen to them in the future. To account for this, we theorize interaction effects between crime victimization and

empathic victimization. We postulate that victims imagine organized crime targeting them more readily than non-victims because they draw on concrete experiences and firsthand information with which to imagine themselves in the place of a potential victim. We thus anticipate a larger coefficient between empathic victimization and support for migrant protections among those who already experienced criminal abuse (victims), relative to those who did not (non-victims).

We visualize our argument in Figure 1. Our argument yields four primary hypotheses:

- H1:** There is a positive association between crime victimization and willingness to protect migrants from organized crime violence, all else equal.
- H2:** There is a positive association between empathic victimization and willingness to protect migrants from organized crime violence, all else equal.
- H3:** The magnitude of the relationship between crime victimization and willingness to protect migrants is greater than the magnitude of the relationship between empathic victimization and willingness to protect migrants, all else equal.
- H4:** Willingness to protect migrants from criminal violence is greater among victims who also exhibit empathic victimization, relative to non-victims who exhibit empathic victimization, all else equal.

**Figure 1.** Empathy-Based Helping amid Criminal Violence



Source: Authors' own design.

## **Research context**

As part of the migrant corridor “with the highest number of migrants in transit in the world,” Mexico is a global thoroughfare for migrants entering the US (International Organization for Migration, 2015) and receives a significant share of the world’s asylum seekers (International Federation of the Red Cross, 2022, p. 2). Alongside these migration patterns, Mexico has experienced large-scale criminal violence for more than 20 years. This violence results from competition between major organized crime groups and between these groups and state security forces. The rates of death and disappearances associated with the conflict rival or surpass many civil wars with an estimated 360,000 deaths and an additional 79,000 disappeared since 2006 (Council on Foreign Relations, 2022). Mexican nationals experience that violence in several ways (see Bell-Martin, 2019, pp. 37 - 61 for an overview). Notably, citizens are often targets of kidnappings for ransom, violent extortion, disappearances, and murder.

These are the same types of criminal predation that migrants transiting through Mexico experience. While organized crime has increased its extraction of “human wealth” via extortion and kidnapping of civilians in Mexico writ large (Trejo & Ley, 2020, p. 2), migrants are particularly vulnerable. Experts estimate that about 5% of the migrant population passing through Mexico at any given time experiences kidnapping (Yates & Leutert, 2020, p. 297). Migrants are also easy prey for violent robbery, sexual assault, and other offenses. US “Remain in Mexico” policies aggravate migrant victimization by forcing migrants destined for the US to wait out their immigration proceedings in Mexico, where they are unsafe.

We examine variation in support for policies to protect Central American migrants in particular. This population is of special interest because Mexico receives a significant number of migrants originating in Central America each year. The majority of asylum seekers in 2022 originated in Central America and the Caribbean (Human Rights Watch, 2022) and more than half of immigration officials’ interactions with irregular migrants that year were with people from Central America (Unidad de Política Migratoria, Registro e Identidad de Personas, 2022, p. 33). Moreover, public attitudes toward Central American migrants in Mexico are largely hostile (Ruiz, et al., 2020, p. 43). This makes our evidence of empathically-motivated support for protecting Central American migrants from crime particularly compelling.

## **Empirical strategy**

We test our hypotheses about empathic perspective-taking and preferences for migrant protection via the National Survey on Organized Violence (ENVO) (Schedler, 2014). The questionnaire registered citizens' experiences with and concerns about organized crime violence; their attitudes toward victims, criminals and the state; attitudes about state and society responses to criminal violence; and a range of general political attitudes and demographic characteristics. The survey was carried out between October 26 – November 30, 2013 through face-to-face interviews with 2400 Mexican nationals aged 18 and older. The primary sampling units were electoral sectors. It reflects a complex survey design that is nationally representative of the Mexican population and stratified by five levels of violence, as defined by the average municipal-level homicide rate from 2009 - 2011. The margin of error is +/- 2 percent with a 59 percent rejection rate and confidence at 95 percent.

Our main dependent variable is willingness to endorse migrant protection policies. To measure this, we analyze responses to the following question: “On their way through Mexico, migrants from Central America are easy prey for organized crime. Imagine that Mexican authorities could grant them protection, yet each Mexican family would have to pay a monthly contribution of 50 pesos. Would you support this measure?”<sup>3</sup> We analyze dichotomous Yes (1) and No (0) answers. Our primary independent variables are two paths of perspective-taking: crime victimization and empathic victimization. To measure crime victimization, we create a dichotomous variable in which (1) indicates that the respondent or someone in their family has experienced one of the following: kidnapping for ransom; extortion; murder; or disappearance. We focus on these because they are most similar to the crimes experienced by migrants passing through Mexico. We exclude home and auto robbery because migrants in transit are not likely to experience these.

To measure empathic victimization, we analyze responses to the following question: “When talking about the murders attributed to organized crime, how much do you agree with the following

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<sup>3</sup> “Los migrantes de Centroamérica son presas fáciles para el crimen cuando atraviesan por México. Imagínese que las autoridades mexicanas pudieran darles protección a los migrantes centroamericanos, pero cada familia mexicana tendría que pagar 50 pesos por mes. ¿Usted apoyaría esta medida?” 50 pesos is equivalent to approximately \$3.90 US dollars according to the average exchange rate at the time of the survey.

statement? As a matter of fact, it could happen to all of us, including my family and friends, that the *narcos* (drug traffickers) kill us.” This corresponds to other measures of perspective-taking leveraged in the Mexican criminal context. Schedler (2016) uses this same survey question to measure respondents’ ability to “adopt the virtual perspective of victims” (p. 1056). It also reflects qualitative evidence from Bell-Martin’s (2019) study, in which interviewees expressed feelings of vicarious vulnerability after imagining that a crime victim “could have been me” and that the violence suffered could happen to them or their loved ones. In the present data, responses were measured on a scale of 0 – 3, where 0 signifies “Disagree a lot” and 3 signifies “Very much agree.” We consider responses indicating “I agree somewhat” and “I very much agree” as indication that the respondent can imagine themselves facing similar threats. We consider responses indicating “I disagree somewhat” and “I disagree a lot” as indication that the respondent does not easily adopt the perspective of a potential crime victim.

We utilized multiple imputation to address missing data using library Amelia in R (Honaker, et al., 2011). Without imputation, our analyses would be limited to 1071 observations of the possible 2400 (see A3 in the Appendix). To estimate individual willingness to support migrant protective policies, we include the complex survey design in binary logistic regressions. In addition to estimating models among the full survey sample, we estimate models for four different subgroups within the sample: victims only, non-victims only, those who report empathic victimization, and those who do not. This allows us to explore our theoretical intuition that empathic concern is not exclusive to individuals with shared experiences of suffering (i.e., victims), but is instead accessible to anyone who can imagine themselves in the shoes of the sufferer, including those without such hardships (i.e., non-victims). By including this non-victim subsample in our analysis, we provide a hard test of the empathy thesis by testing perspective-taking within the population theoretically least likely to credibly imagine themselves in the shoes of victims. Descriptive statistics are available in Table A1 in the Appendix. Results are weighted by strata.

### **Results and discussion: Who supports migrant protections?**

Table A2 in the Appendix displays the results of six binary logistic models reflecting the complex survey design. The first estimation, identified as “All”, shows, among the full survey sample, the statistical relationship between our two perspective-taking measures, crime victimization and

empathic victimization, on willingness to contribute 50 pesos monthly to state-led programs protecting Central American migrants. The second estimation, labeled “Interactive”, shows the same estimation, plus an interaction term between crime victimization and empathic victimization. The third column, “Victims only”, tests the same model with a subsample of victims only, whereas the fourth column, “Non-Victims only” shows the same model with the corresponding subsample. Finally, the last two columns “Empathic only” and “Non-Empathic only” show results derived from two different subsamples of those who do and do not report empathic victimization.

In addition to the explanatory variables related to perspective-taking, other known correlates of attitudes toward migrants are displayed, including democratic and authoritarian ideals, political ideology, partisanship, importance of religion, religious affiliation, concerns about security and the economy, age, gender and education. We also analyze regional fixed effects of living along Mexico’s northern and southern national borders, relative to the rest of the country. In addition to confirming the relevance of shared suffering emphasized by existing accounts, our results point toward a broad potential for empathic perspective-taking among those without shared suffering. Empathic victimization is positively and significantly correlated with willingness to endorse migrant protection policies for the full survey sample, among victims and, crucially, among non-victims. In what follows, we discuss various aspects of these results in greater detail.

We theorize that having experienced the same types of organized crime violence migrants face (kidnapping for ransom, extortion, murder and disappearance) facilitates perspective-taking which, in turn, motivates willingness to protect migrants from crime ( $H_1$ ). The observable implications of this argument are borne out in the data. Among the full survey sample, those who reported experiencing these crimes are more likely to contribute 50 pesos to protecting Central American migrants, all else equal. The probability that an organized crime victim is willing to contribute 50 pesos to protect migrants is 40 percent. In contrast, the likelihood that their non-victim peers support this same initiative decreases by 8 percentage points at just 31 percent (see bottom left quadrant of Figure 2).

We further argue that perspective-taking is not limited to those with shared experiences of suffering, but instead is available to anyone who can credibly imagine themselves in the shoes of

migrants facing organized crime. Specifically, we hypothesize that empathic victimization, or imagining oneself facing similar threats in the future, is positively associated with support for migrant protection policies, all else equal (H<sub>2</sub>). Our analysis confirms this hypothesis. Among the full survey sample, empathic victimization is positively associated with willingness to contribute to migrant protections. Whereas those who can imagine organized crime violence befalling them have a 38% probability of agreeing to contribute 50 pesos to protect migrants, those who do not imagine they could be killed by organized crime are just 30% likely to agree, all else equal (see upper left quadrant of Figure 2).

To interrogate the relationship between empathic victimization and support for migrant protections further, we carry out these same tests again but restrict our sample first to crime victims only and then to those who are not crime victims (“Victims” and “Non-victims” columns in Table A2). We theorize empathic victimization is primarily relevant for understanding policy endorsement among non-victims because they lack the firsthand experience produced by lived crime victimization. While victims can draw on real experience to adopt the perspective of migrant victims, non-victims draw exclusively on imagined, future experiences. Our results remain consistent with our theory and provide additional evidence in support of H<sub>2</sub>. While baseline probabilities of support are higher among victims relative to non-victims, we find a positive and significant association between empathic victimization and willingness to contribute 50 pesos to migrant protection programs among both subsamples (see upper middle and upper right quadrants of Figure 2).

Our results likewise support H<sub>3</sub>. Recognizing that lived crime victimization may provide a more credible perspective-taking exercise than empathic victimization, we posit that the magnitude of the relationship between crime victimization and support for migrant protections is greater than that between empathic victimization and the same policy attitudes, all else equal. Across our models, the data are consistent: crime victimization always presents a larger magnitude than empathic victimization, though empathic victimization remains consistently positive and significant.

Finally, we analyzed an additional model interacting crime victimization with empathic victimization to estimate their joint association with support for migrant protection policies (H<sub>4</sub>).

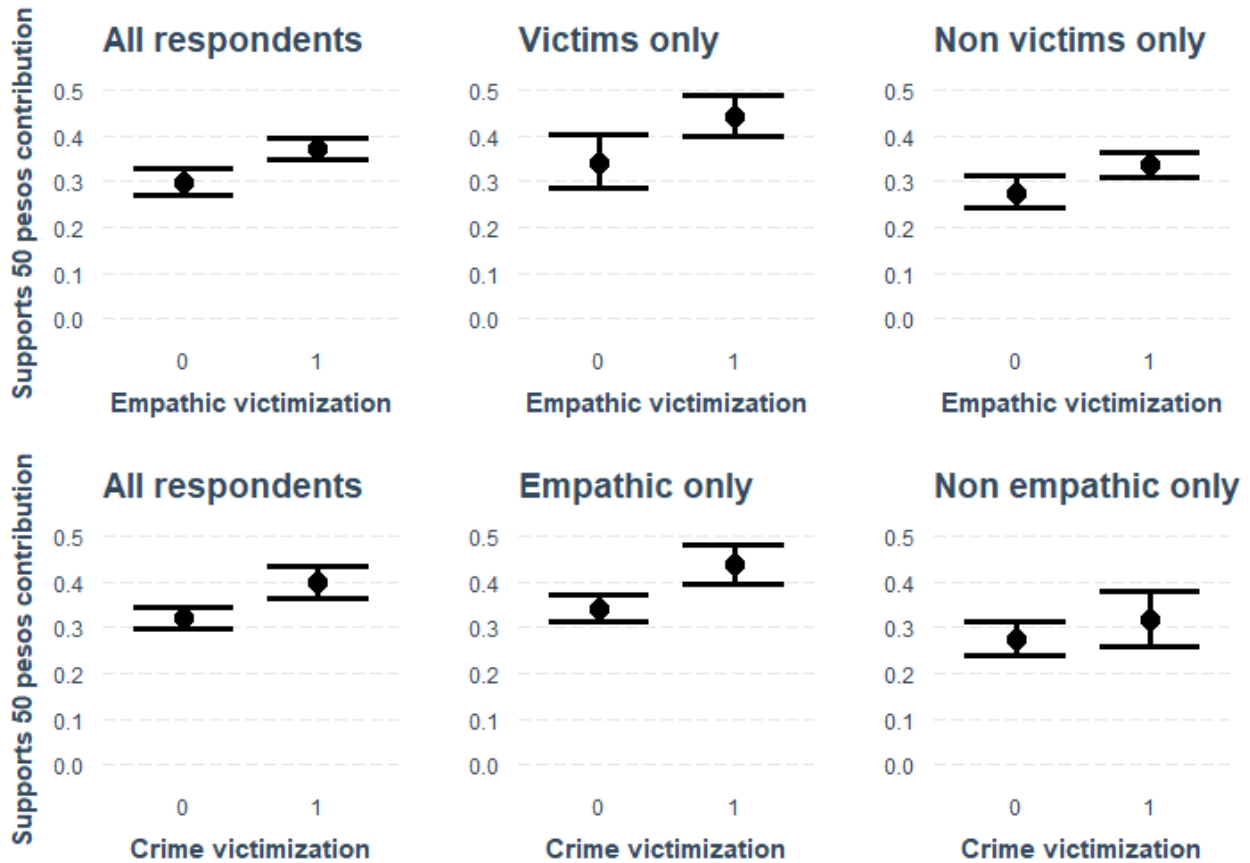
We theorize that experiencing criminal abuse provides firsthand information that makes empathic victimization particularly salient. Therefore, the joint association of victimization and empathic victimization with willingness to help migrants should be greater than either victimization or empathic victimization alone. As the “Interactive” column in Table A2 shows, the interaction shows no statistically significant results. Nevertheless, our subsample analyses reveal other important insights into the potential dynamics between lived victimization and empathic victimization. When we limit our analyses to the subsample of individuals who report experiencing empathic victimization, we find that crime victimization remains significant and positively correlated with willingness to contribute 50 pesos to migrant protection programs. Yet when we isolate our analyses to those who do not display empathic victimization, being a crime victim ceases to be associated with this same policy preference (see Table A2). This new piece of evidence lends further support to the empathy thesis by suggesting that the ability to empathically imagine oneself in the shoes of another, rather than victimization alone, plays an essential role in motivating the pro-social attitudes we observe. Indeed, our results suggest that imagining the crimes experienced by others could happen to you may activate support for migrant protections among crime victims and non-victims alike while lived victimization in the absence of such empathic visualization does not.

In sum, our primary results confirm our hypotheses  $H_{1-3}$  related to the positive association between two channels of empathic perspective-taking, crime victimization and empathic victimization, and support for protecting migrants from criminal violence. Our findings regarding empathic victimization persist when we isolate our analyses to non-victims, who lack the shared experience of suffering central to existing accounts. This indicates an alternative path to empathic concern not yet fully explored by existing conflict and migration research. Whereas existing accounts emphasize the preeminence of perspective-taking through shared suffering, our evidence suggests the pro-social benefits of empathic concern extend beyond those with similar experiences and are instead accessible to anyone who can credibly imagine themselves in the shoes of the sufferer. This implies a much broader population for whom empathic concern and, consequently, pro-migrant policy preferences are possible. We do not find support for the joint association of victimization and empathic victimization with support for migrant protections ( $H_4$ ). After exploring the subsample results discussed above, however, we suspect that, for victims, there are



additional relevant empathic links generated by imagining oneself as a potential future victim that victimization independent of this does not adequately explain.

**Figure 2.** Predicted Probability of Willingness to Support Migrant Protections



Source: Authors' calculations, data from Table A2. Dots are probability means and lines are 90 percent confidence intervals, using library jtools in R.

An alternative interpretation of our results is that our measures of perspective-taking – crime victimization and empathic victimization – measure some other relevant variable, such as fear of crime. Indeed, we can imagine that crime victims may be more fearful and risk-sensitive. It is also plausible that imagining crime might befall you or your loved ones generates anxiety. We are confident our results reflect perspective-taking rather than fear or anxiety alone. Most evidently, there is no theoretical reason to surmise that fear of crime motivates the type of helping attitudes we observe. In fact, existing evidence associates concerns about crime and security with

unfavorable, exclusionary attitudes toward immigrants and refugees (Braithwaite, et al., 2019; Fitzgerald, et al., 2012; Hatemi, et al., 2013; Hellwig & Sino, 2016; Lahav & Courtemanche, 2012; Mayda, 2006; Ward, 2019; Wike & Grim, 2010). Our data mirror these findings. We show that those who identify Mexico's criminal conflict as a top national concern (measured as concern about drug trafficking and drug violence) are less likely to donate 50 pesos to migrant protection programs than those who did not identify conflict-related problems as top concerns, all else equal (see Table A2).

Alternative indicators of fear or anxiety likewise do not explain our results. We analyzed how frequently respondents report talking about crime in their households, assuming that those who discuss crime more frequently are more concerned about it. Consonant with our prior results, we find a weak, negative correlation indicating that speaking more frequently about crime is associated with decreased willingness to endorse migrant protection policies, all else equal. We further analyzed perceptions of local insecurity under the logic that those who perceive their city is unsafe will feel more susceptible to crime. We find no significant relationship between this and support for migrant protection policies. Finally, we analyzed concerns about national-level public insecurity and again, we find a weak, negative relationship between those who identify insecurity as a top concern and willingness to protect migrants, though the significance falls away for the victims and non-victims subsamples. This evidence suggests that what we measure as perspective-taking is likely distinct from fear or anxiety about crime and echoes existing research showing that attitudes born of security anxieties tend to motivate anti-immigrant sentiment, not the beneficent attitudes we observe.

### ***Additional findings***

We find that awareness about the risks migrants face in Mexico is positively associated with willingness to contribute 50 pesos monthly to protect them. Compared to survey respondents who report hearing nothing about migrant kidnappings, those who report hearing a lot about migrant kidnappings are more likely to endorse protecting migrants in all estimations. However, this result is not merely a function of media consumption. In fact, engagement with the news is negatively associated with willingness to endorse migrant protections in four out of our six estimations (see

Table A2). This suggests that, at the time of the survey, information about migrants in the media was communicated through a particular lens that depressed pro-social, helping attitudes. Reports from the time of the survey indicate media frequently linked Central American migrants with negative stereotypes and portrayed migrants “as creating problems, not as a vulnerable population in need of support” (Maureen Meyer, Washington Office on Latin America, as qtd. in Narcia, 2015, p. 85). More recent accounts suggest Mexican media portrayals now emphasize the vulnerability of Central American migrants but still frequently fail to humanize them (Severino & Salas, 2022; Torre Cantalapiedra, 2019).

In line with existing evidence that antagonistic attitudes toward migrants increase with age, we find that age is always negatively correlated with willingness to contribute to migrant protection programs, all else equal. Similarly consonant with existing evidence, we find that degree of religiosity is weakly and positively associated with support for migrant protections (Knoll, 2009). Catholics, however, are significantly less likely to endorse contributing 50 pesos to protecting migrants relative to respondents with no religious denomination, all else equal. This is curious because a large share of the migrant-serving shelters and organizations along the Central America – Mexico migration route are run by Catholic charities. Why are Catholics in this survey opposed to helping migrants in transit despite real-world evidence to the contrary? We suspect the relationship we document is not an expression of Catholics’ willingness to help migrants overall, but instead their willingness to contribute to *state-led programs* in particular. Our dependent variable measures willingness to donate to governmental initiatives. Yet, given the prominence and availability of Catholic charitable organizations, in addition to the Church’s complicated historical relationship with the Mexican state, Catholics interested in helping migrants may consider *church-led programs* a more worthy investment.

We do not find evidence that concerns about migrants’ economic impact are associated with willingness to protect Central American migrants. Conventional explanations emphasize anxiety about the national economy in general and about migrants taking scarce jobs and resources from natives in particular. However, recent studies argue the relationship between economic anxiety and anti-immigrant sentiment is more complicated and less stable than previously understood (Burns & Gimpel, 2000; Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014). Our findings support this latter view. Across all

available indicators, including household income and whether the respondent expressed worry about national-level poverty or unemployment, economic anxiety is not consistently correlated with willingness to protect migrants. In fact, income is only negatively associated with donating to migrant protections among the subsample of respondents who reported empathic victimization. Conversely, unemployment is positively associated with supporting migrant protections exclusively among crime victims. These findings reflect the aforementioned suggestions of a more complex relationship between economic anxiety and immigration attitudes. Future research would benefit from interrogating the relationship between economic anxieties and helping migrants *en route* specifically. Since they are not settling permanently, citizens may calculate potential long-term economic impacts of migrants in transit differently than migrants expected to settle in-country.

In our sample, neither gender, education, nor political ideology are associated with willingness to endorse migrant protections, save for a weak association among sympathizers of *el Partido de la Revolución Democrática* (PRD) within the subsample of respondents who do not report empathic victimization. Others find authoritarian leanings are associated with anti-immigrant sentiment (Kokkonen & Linde, 2022; Peresman, et al., 2021). While we do not observe a significant relationship between preferences for authoritarian government and willingness to protect migrants, we do find a positive and significant relationship between preferences for democracy and support for migrant protections, in line with existing accounts.

We also analyzed whether willingness to contribute to migrant protection programs varies by geographic zone. We delineated three regions: states along Mexico's northern border with the US, states along the country's southern border with Guatemala and Belize, and non-border states. Compared to non-border states, residing along Mexico's southern border is associated with refusal to protect migrants from crime. Residing along Mexico's northern border rather than a non-border state, in contrast, is associated with willingness to support migrant protections. While additional research is needed, one possible explanation is that residents of northern border states perceive helping Central American migrants as a natural and short-term step to facilitating their eventual move to the US. Residents of Mexico's southern border, in contrast, may perceive migrants just beginning the trek through Mexico as needing more long-term assistance. Due to their location

along key migration channels from Central America, southern border residents may also view Central American migration flows as particularly taxing on local populations.

Finally, we acknowledge two potential sources of omitted variable bias. We argue that identifying similarities between oneself and another facilitates perspective-taking. However, the data do not allow us to measure whether survey respondents have their own migration experience. We are also unable to measure the frequency of personal interactions between survey participants and migrants. Existing accounts suggest frequent, repeated interactions may engender accepting attitudes while occasional, chance interactions may aggravate anti-migrant sentiment (see Paluck, et al., 2019 and Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006 for a review). We capture limited aspects of these by analyzing whether or not a survey respondent knows someone who has migrated away from Mexico due to crime. We do not reveal a statistically significant association between this and willingness to protect migrants. As discussed above, we also measure awareness about migrant hardship. This could serve as an imperfect proxy if those who interact with migrants are more aware of their experiences. We find a positive and significant correlation between this and willingness to protect migrants.

If either omitted variable were correlated with support for migrant protections, the estimators we present would be inflated. We would not, however, expect the significance nor direction of the relationship we find between empathic perspective-taking and policy preferences to change. It is unlikely that personal interaction with migrants can fully explain why those who imagine themselves in the shoes of crime victims and actual crime victims - neither of which requires experience with migration nor migrants - are consistently more likely to support policies to protect migrants from crime. It is more conceivable that being a migrant and personal interactions with migrants work in tandem with, rather than replace, the empathic processes we uncovered in the present study.

## **Conclusion**

In this paper, we investigate the relationship between empathic perspective-taking and public support for protecting migrants from criminal predation. We explore this via survey data from Mexico, an important migrant transit corridor where migrants are targets of organized crime. We

find that two conduits of perspective-taking, criminal victimization and empathic victimization, are positively associated with support for migrant protection policies. Our evidence demonstrates that the power of perspective-taking is not exclusive to those with a shared experience of suffering but is in fact available to anyone who can credibly imagine themselves in the shoes of the sufferer.

Our findings complement work by others analyzing the correlates of immigration policy preferences and their empathic foundations. We build on existing research about the empathic consequences of shared suffering and advance knowledge further by uncovering the political import of perspective-taking through channels other than shared experiences. We test these theories in a new research context, the criminally violent migration corridor. Through this, we shed light on an important but insufficiently addressed research topic, immigration policy in criminally violent contexts, and reveal a previously unrecognized source of variation in citizen policy preferences therein, empathic perspective-taking.

Understanding public willingness to protect migrants from violent crime is meaningful in Latin America, where large-scale criminal violence is increasingly prevalent and migration flows occur alongside and through criminally violent spaces. Mexico is one such case. The present study lays important groundwork for future research on the politics of immigration policy in other Latin American countries where dynamics of migration and organized crime intersect in similar ways, like Guatemala, El Salvador, Ecuador or Honduras. Future studies should consider at least three new questions implied by our findings. First, researchers might leverage causal tests. Our correlational findings imply a propitious synchrony between perspective-taking and pro-migrant public policies, but the degree to which perspective-taking directly generates these attitudes in criminally violent contexts remains uninvestigated. Researchers may also interrogate whether and to what effect empathy can be artificially primed, particularly in a policy setting. Is inviting someone to imagine themselves in the shoes of another sufficient to produce the types of policy support we measured? Investigators may likewise interrogate the role of empathic representation in the media. Existing research establishes the political consequences of media frames for immigration attitudes (Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2009; Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014, pp. 233 - 234). We find that empathic concern for migrants is inversely correlated with media

consumption, raising important questions about whether, how, and for whom the media is most likely to use empathy-stimulating or empathy-depressing frames.

Our findings are important because public opinion influences which public policies are developed and pursued. This suggests several policy implications. Rather than try to persuade public opinion through staggering crime statistics, leaders and activists should invest in campaigns that feature migrants' personal stories and highlight those aspects with which a broad audience is likely to identify. Likewise, organizations and groups seeking public endorsement of pro-migrant initiatives should consider elevating particularly relatable migrant stories in the public eye rather than the most shocking. Finally, local governments, non-governmental organizations and activist groups may consider promoting empathy-based educational programs to help citizens practice perspective-taking. One Mexico-based civil society organization, *Despierta, Cuestiona y Actúa*, leads such workshops with students, public servants and police cadets.<sup>4</sup> The activities invite participants to experience firsthand the difficulties migrants face, engage real-life migrant stories, see photographs of the migratory experience, and, finally, imagine how they might feel if compelled to walk in the migrants' shoes.

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<sup>4</sup> See <https://www.dcamexico.org/puentes.pdf>.

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## APPENDIX

Table A1. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Support Central American migrants	0.35	0.48	0	1
Empathic victimization	0.66	0.47	0	1
Crime victimization	0.32	0.47	0	1
Only involved can be killed	1.82	1.03	0	3
Concern about poverty	0.33	0.47	0	1
Concern about unemployment	0.17	0.38	0	1
Concern about national insecurity	0.17	0.37	0	1
Concern about local insecurity	1.46	0.91	0	3
Concern about drug war	0.11	0.31	0	1
Talk about crime	1.25	0.92	0	3
PID PAN	0.12	0.32	0	1
PID PRI	0.26	0.44	0	1
PID PRD	0.08	0.27	0	1
L-R Ideology	5.80	2.59	0	10
Support for democracy	0.57	0.50	0	1
Support for authoritarianism	0.22	0.41	0	1
Woman	0.51	0.50	0	1
Age cohorts	2.01	0.77	1	3
Education	4.03	2.23	0	8
Income	6.81	3.08	1	13
Importance of religion	2.24	0.92	0	3
Catholic	0.76	0.43	0	1
Protestant-Evangelical	0.10	0.30	0	1
North	0.19	0.40	0	1
South	0.04	0.19	0	1
Know someone who moved b/c crime	0.27	0.45	0	1
News consumption	6.66	3.38	0	15
Aware crimes v migrants	1.80	0.98	0	3

Source: Authors' calculations, data from ENVO (2013) with survey sampling design (ESTRATO variable as weight using library survey), 2,400 respondents using multiple imputation via library AmeliaView in R (King et al 2001).

Table A2. Estimations of Willingness to Support Migrant Protections

	All	Interactive	Victims only	Non-victims only	Empathic only	Non-empathic only
	Coef(SE)	Coef(SE)	Coef(SE)	Coef(SE)	Coef(SE)	Coef(SE)
Empathic victimization	0.32 ** (0.11)	0.28 ** (0.13)	0.43 ** (0.19)	0.29 ** (0.13)		
Crime victimization	0.34 ** (0.11)	0.25 (0.19)			0.41 ** (0.14)	0.2 (0.21)
Only involved can be killed	-0.03 (0.05)	-0.03 (0.05)	0.01 (0.09)	-0.05 (0.06)	-0.04 (0.06)	-0.05 (0.10)
<i>Economic Concerns</i>						
Concern about poverty	-0.11 (0.14)	-0.10 (0.14)	0.13 (0.25)	-0.23 (0.16)	-0.14 (0.17)	-0.08 (0.25)
Concern about unemployment	0.05 (0.16)	0.05 (0.16)	0.56 ** (0.28)	-0.20 (0.19)	-0.07 (0.19)	0.27 (0.28)
<i>Security Concerns</i>						
Concern about natl. insecurity	-0.30 * (0.17)	-0.30 * (0.17)	-0.37 (0.29)	-0.29 (0.20)	-0.35 * (0.21)	-0.36 (0.29)
Concern about local insecurity	0.01 (0.06)	0.01 (0.06)	-0.11 (0.10)	0.04 (0.07)	0.01 (0.07)	-0.08 (0.10)
Concern about drug war	-0.51 ** (0.19)	-0.50 ** (0.19)	-0.17 (0.31)	-0.70 ** (0.24)	-0.51 ** (0.23)	-0.62 * (0.33)
Talk about crime	-0.12 ** (0.06)	-0.12 ** (0.06)	-0.24 ** (0.11)	-0.07 (0.07)	-0.12 * (0.07)	-0.13 (0.11)
<i>Political Identification</i>						
PID PAN	0.24 (0.16)	0.24 (0.16)	0.29 (0.28)	0.20 (0.20)	0.33 (0.21)	0.06 (0.27)
PID PRI	-0.09 (0.12)	-0.09 (0.12)	0.09 (0.22)	-0.17 (0.15)	-0.12 (0.15)	-0.06 (0.23)
PID PRD	-0.14 (0.20)	-0.14 (0.20)	-0.57 (0.35)	0.01 (0.23)	0.01 (0.24)	-0.61 * (0.34)
L-R Ideology	0.02 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)	0.01 (0.04)	0.02 (0.02)	0.04 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.04)
Support for democracy	0.22 * (0.12)	0.21 * (0.12)	0.03 (0.24)	0.33 ** (0.14)	0.18 (0.15)	0.39 * (0.23)
Support for authoritarianism	-0.16 (0.15)	-0.16 (0.15)	-0.17 (0.29)	-0.17 (0.19)	-0.15 (0.19)	-0.08 (0.27)
<i>Religion</i>						
Importance of religion	0.13 ** (0.06)	0.13 ** (0.06)	0.26 ** (0.10)	0.06 (0.08)	0.05 (0.07)	0.34 ** (0.12)
Catholic	-0.47 ** (0.16)	-0.47 ** (0.16)	-0.69 ** (0.29)	-0.36 * (0.19)	-0.33 * (0.19)	-0.75 ** (0.27)
Protestant - Evangelical	-0.17 (0.21)	-0.17 (0.21)	-0.23 (0.38)	-0.10 (0.26)	0.08 (0.26)	-0.63 (0.40)
<i>Demographics</i>						
Woman	-0.09 (0.10)	-0.09 (0.10)	-0.13 (0.18)	-0.02 (0.12)	-0.04 (0.12)	-0.21 (0.18)



Age cohorts	-0.21 ** (0.07)	-0.20 ** (0.07)	-0.12 (0.13)	-0.24 ** (0.08)	-0.18 ** (0.09)	-0.22 * (0.12)
Education	-0.04 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.05)	-0.05 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.05)
Income	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.03 (0.03)	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.05 ** (0.02)	0.04 (0.03)
Know someone who moved	-0.04 (0.12)	-0.04 (0.12)	0.01 (0.18)	-0.07 (0.17)	-0.05 (0.15)	0.07 (0.20)
News consumption	-0.04 ** (0.02)	-0.04 ** (0.02)	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.05 ** (0.02)	-0.03 (0.02)	-0.07 ** (0.03)
Aware crimes v migrants	0.20 ** (0.05)	0.20 ** (0.05)	0.30 ** (0.10)	0.16 ** (0.06)	0.11 * (0.06)	0.42 ** (0.10)
<i>Region</i>						
North	0.47 ** (0.12)	0.47 ** (0.11)	0.55 ** (0.19)	0.41 ** (0.15)	0.48 ** (0.14)	0.40 * (0.20)
South	-0.33 ** (0.14)	-0.34 ** (0.14)	-0.33 (0.32)	-0.35 ** (0.16)	-0.33 * (0.18)	-0.35 (0.25)
Empathic X Victim		0.14 (0.23)				
Intercept	-0.17 (0.38)	-0.14 (0.38)	-0.34 (0.66)	0.06 (0.47)	0.31 (0.44)	-0.56 (0.71)
Deviance	2962.1	2961.7	872.9	2058.1	1999.5	931.0
Respondents	2400	2400	695	1705	1577	823
Pseudo R2 McFadden	0.05	0.05	0.08	0.04	0.05	0.08

\*\* p < 0.05; \* p < 0.1

Source: Authors' calculations, data from Table A1. Binary logistic models with survey sampling design (ESTRATO variable as weight) using a quasibinomial estimation. \*\* p < 0.05; \* p < 0.1

### A3. Multiple imputation

We utilized multiple imputation to address missing data using library Amelia in R (Honaker, et al., 2011). Multiple imputation corrects for missingness without altering observable relationships in the data and minimizes potential bias associated with other techniques. Amelia library leverages bootstrapping and an Expectation – Maximization algorithm with importance sampling (EMis). Without imputation, our analyses would be limited to 1071 observations of the possible 2,400.

Since EMis algorithm for multiple imputation is predictive, all analyzed variables were included in the model. Variables were declared as nominal and ordinal, respectively with the corresponding logical bounds. After applying a ridge prior of one percent to address potential numerical instability by limiting covariances among variables toward zero, without changing means or variances, the corresponding iterations and five datasets, we obtained a zero missingness database with the last of the five datasets produced by Amelia.

To estimate individual willingness to support migrant protective policies, we included the complex survey design analysis in binary logistic regressions using the quasibinomial family and weights of the stratified sample, as defined by Schedler (2014). The five strata were defined by levels of violence, as measured by standardized homicides rates.

#### A4. Question Wording and Codes

##### Mexican National Survey on Organized Violence (ENVO)

<http://hdl.handle.net/10089/17069>

##### Dependent variable, Supporting Central American migrants

P51 On their way through Mexico, migrants from Central America are easy prey for organized crime. Imagine that Mexican authorities could grant them protection, yet each Mexican family would have to pay a monthly contribution of 50 pesos. Would you support this measure?

(0) No, (1) Yes, (99) DK/NA

##### Empathic Victimization

P24E When we talk about the murders attributed to the organized crime, how much do you

(0) Disagree a lot, (1) Disagree somewhat, (2) Agree somewhat, (3) Agree a lot, (99) DK/NA

Then, (0) Disagree a lot and Disagree somewhat, (1) Agree somewhat and Agree a lot, (99)

DK/NA

##### Crime Victimization

P26B Kidnapping: Over the past years, has it happened to you or someone from your family

P26C Extortion: Over the past years, has it happened to you or someone from your family

P26D Murder: Over the past years, has it happened to you or someone from your family

P26E Disappearance: Over the past years, has it happened to you or someone from your family

P30 Outside your family, has someone among your friends or acquaintances been murdered

(0) No, (1) Yes, (99) DK/NA

Then, an additive index

##### Only people involved can be killed

P24B When we talk about the murders attributed to the organized crime, how much do you

(0) Disagree a lot, (1) Disagree somewhat, (2) Agree somewhat, (3) Agree a lot, (99) DK/NA

Then, (0) Disagree a lot and disagree somewhat, (1) Agree somewhat and agree a lot, (99)

DK/NA

##### Concern about poverty

Prob\_PG\_\_1 1st mention: Among the problems the country is facing, which are shown on this card, which three worry you the most?

(0) Other, (1) Poverty, (99) DK/NA

##### Concern about unemployment

Prob\_PG\_\_1 1st mention: Among the problems the country is facing, which are shown on this card, which three worry you the most?

(0) Other, (3) Unemployment, (99) DK/NA

##### Concern about national insecurity

Prob\_PG\_\_1 1st mention: Among the problems the country is facing, which are shown on this card, which three worry you the most?

(0) Other, (6) Public insecurity, (99) DK/NA

Concern about local insecurity

P5 Do you think living in your municipality is very, somewhat, a bit or not secure at all

(0) Not at all, (1) A little, (2) Somewhat, (3) Very much, (99) DK/NA

Concern about drug war

Prob\_PG\_\_1 1st mention: Among the problems the country is facing, which are shown on this card, which three worry you the most?

(0) Other, (4) Drug trafficking and (5) Drug violence, (99) DK/NA

How often do you talk about crime?

P11 In your private life, with family, friends, or colleagues, how often do you talk about crime

(0) Never, (1) A little, (2) Somewhat, (3) A lot, (99) DK/NA

Party Identification- PAN

P75 Regardless of the political party you vote for, do you normally consider yourself

(0) Other and none, (1) Very panista and somewhat panista, (99) DK/NA

Party Identification- PRI

P75 Regardless of the political party you vote for, do you normally consider yourself

(0) Other and none, (1) Very priista and somewhat priista, (99) DK/NA

Party Identification- PRD

P75 Regardless of the political party you vote for, do you normally consider yourself to be

(0) Other and none, (1) Very perredista and somewhat perredista, (99) DK/NA

L-R Ideology

P68 In political matters, people often talk of “the left” and “the right”. On a scale 0 to 10

(0) Left, (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (10) Right, (99) DK/NA

Support for democracy

P70 Which of the following statements do you agree with?

(0) For people like me, it makes no difference whether the government is democratic, (1) Under some circumstances, an authoritarian government can be preferable to a democratic one, (3)

Democracy is preferable to any other form of government, (99) DK/NA

Then, (0) For people like me and under some circumstances, an authoritarian government, (1)

Democracy is preferable

Support for authoritarianism

P70 Which of the following statements do you agree with?

(0) For people like me, it makes no difference whether the government is democratic, (1) Under some circumstances, an authoritarian government can be preferable to a democratic one, (3)

Democracy is preferable to any other form of government, (99) DK/NA

Then, (0) For people like me and democracy is preferable, (1) Under some circumstances, an authoritarian government can be preferable to a democratic one

Woman

Sex of interviewee

(0) Male, (1) Female

Age

Edad\_ag Age (three categories)

(1) 18-29 years, (2) 30-49 years, (3) 50 years or more, (99) DK/NA

Education

EDU Which is your highest degree of education?

(0) None, (1) Incomplete primary school, (2) Primary school, (3) Incomplete secondary school, (4) Secondary school, (5) Incomplete high school, (6) High school, (7) Incomplete undergraduate studies, (8) Graduated from university, (99) DK/NA/Doesn't remember

Income

PK Could you tell us how many light bulbs do you have in your home?

Ranging from 1 to 13

Importance of religion

PL Please, could you tell me how important is religion in your life?

(0) Not important at all, (1) A little important, (2) Somewhat important, (3) Very important, (99) DK/NA

Catholic

PM Which religion do you belong to?

(0) Other, (1) Catholic, (99) DK/NA

Protestant - Evangelical

PM Which religion do you belong to?

(0) Other, (1) Protestant / Evangelical / Christian, (99) DK/NA

North

(0) Other, (1) Coahuila, Nuevo León, Baja California, Chihuahua, Sonora and Tamaulipas

South

(0) Other, (1) Campeche, Chiapas, Quintana Roo and Tabasco

Know someone who moved because of crime

P34 Do you know anyone who migrated to the United States or any other country because of the violence

(0) No, (1) Yes, (99) DK/NA

News

P2A TV: How often do you follow the news on television

P2B Radio: How often do you follow the news on the radio

P2C Prensa: How often do you follow the news in the newspaper (print or electronic)

P2D Internet: How often do you follow the news on television on the Internet, Facebook  
P2E Amigos: How often do you learn about the news by talking with friends or acquaintances  
(0) Almost never, (1) A few times a month, (2) A few times a week, (3) Almost daily, (99)

DK/NA

Then, an additive index

Aware crimes v migrants

P12 How much have you heard about the criminal gangs in Mexico that kidnap migrants

(0) Heard nothing, (1) Heard a little, (3) Heard some things, (4) Heard a lot, (99) DK/NA