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Supreme Court avoids abortion question, upholds fetal burial measure



FILE PHOTO: The U.S. Supreme Court building is seen in Washington, U.S., March 26, 2019. REUTERS/Brendan McDermid/File Photo

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The U.S. Supreme Court on Tuesday sent a mixed message on abortion, refusing to consider reinstating Indiana's ban on abortions performed because of fetal disability or the sex or race of the fetus while upholding the state's requirement that fetal remains be buried or cremated after the procedure is done. Both provisions were part of a Republican-backed 2016 law signed by Vice President Mike Pence when he was Indiana's governor. The action by the justices comes at a time when numerous Republican-governed states including Alabama are approving restrictive abortion laws that the Supreme Court may be called upon to rule on in the future. In an unsigned ruling, with two liberal justices dissenting, the Supreme Court decided that a lower court was wrong to conclude that Indiana's fetal burial provision, which imposed new requirements on abortion clinics, had no legitimate purpose. The court has a 5-4 conservative majority. While that provision was not a direct challenge to the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion nationwide, the ruling gave anti-abortion

proponents a victory at the Supreme Court, which soon may have to decide whether various state laws violate the rights recognized in that landmark ruling. But the court also indicated a reluctance to directly tackle the abortion issue at least for now, rejecting Indiana's separate attempt to reinstate its ban on abortions performed because of fetal disability or the sex or race of the fetus. The court left in place the part of an appeals court ruling that struck down the provision. Alyssa Farah, a Pence spokeswoman, said he "commends the Supreme Court for upholding a portion of Indiana law that safeguards the sanctity of human life by requiring that remains of aborted babies be treated with respect and dignity."

"We remain hopeful that at a later date the Supreme Court will review one of numerous state laws across the U.S. that bar abortion based on sex, race or disability," Farah added.

The court's ruling on the fetal burial issue noted that in challenging the measure the American Civil Liberties Union and women's healthcare and abortion provider Planned Parenthood did not allege that the provision implicated the right of women to obtain an abortion. "This case, as litigated, therefore does not implicate our cases applying the undue burden test to abortion regulations," the ruling said. Planned Parenthood said in a statement the fetal burial provision was an abortion restriction "intended to shame and stigmatize women and families."

"While this ruling is limited, the law is part of a larger trend of state laws designed to stigmatize and drive abortion care out of reach. Whether it's a total ban or a law designed to shut down clinics, politicians are lining up to decimate access to abortion," added Jennifer Dalven, an American Civil Liberties Union lawyer. The case was one of the court's first major tests in the abortion context following last year's retirement of Justice Anthony Kennedy, who was pivotal in defending abortion rights.

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Editor's Choice



A participant rides a zip line from the second floor of the Eiffel Tower in Paris



French President Emmanuel Macron arrives at a European Union leaders summit after European Parliament elections to discuss who should run the EU executive for the next five years, in Brussels, Belgium May 28, 2019. REUTERS/Piroschka van de Wouw



A U.S. Navy sailor hands his Bible to U.S. President Trump to autograph as he greets sailors after his speech aboard the USS Wasp at JMSDF Yokosuka base in Yokosuka, south of Tokyo



A demonstrator arranges a burning barricade during a protest against the government plans to privatize healthcare and education in Tegucigalpa



U.S. President Donald Trump and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe onboard the Japan's navy ship Kaga on May 28, 2019 in Yokosuka, Japan



The family of Tusla Tuliau pay their respect for service members in remembrance of Memorial Day at the Arlington National Cemetery, in Arlington, Virginia, U.S. May 27, 2019.

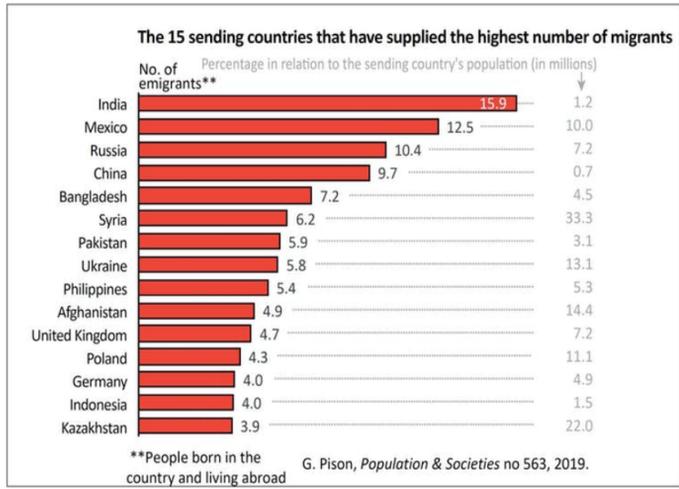


Employees are seen working on a production line of a factory manufacturing composite material products in Nantong



Brexit Party news conference following the results of the European Parliament elections in London

The Countries With The Highest Immigrant Populations



Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

The heated immigration debate could be a critical factor in helping countries to retain a sufficient number of young workers in the economies of the affected countries to support their aging populations.

The control of borders is a serious political problem, but experts are eyeing legal immigration as one solution to a future demographics challenge. As nations age, many will be short of workers to support social programs relied on by the older population.

Robust immigration has buoyed the populations of the U.S., U.K. and other developed nations, keeping them from shrinking for now. But a number of aging countries don't have enough immigration to replace their population as their fertility rates continue to plummet.

"Young and working-age immigrants do this directly as they integrate in a country's society and economy, and they also contribute to population growth when they have children."

— Irene Bloemraad, sociology professor and director of the University of California Berkeley's Interdisciplinary Migration Initiative

The U.S. is unlikely to see any population decline over at least the next couple of decades because of immigration. Sustaining the population is crucial for maintaining strong economic growth and supporting baby boomers' social and health care needs.

"Immigration is no 'silver bullet' by itself: it can slow an aging population, but it would be impossible to reverse it with current or even slightly higher immigration numbers in most countries," Bloemraad says.

If the expected number of children per woman of childbearing age drops in the U.S. from 1.76 to 1.5 or 1 — well below the replacement rate of 2.1 — no amount of immigration can compensate, Richard Jackson, president of the Global Aging Institute, tells Axios.

Demographers report a link between falling fertility rates and the incidence of populism, which in many countries has coincided with strong anti-migrant resistance.

A closer look by country:

The U.S.: The proportion of immigrants

recently reached a more-than-100-year high. The Trump administration, however, has made it harder for high-skilled workers to get visas and proposed stricter penalties for student visa overstays, in addition to the headline measures it has taken against undocumented immigrants.



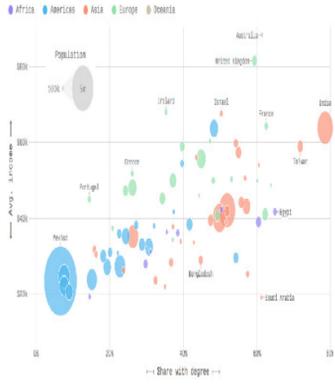
Japan: Immigrants make up only 2% of the population, with fertility rates declining and immigration highly unpopular. Its foreign-born population has grown by 40% just since 2013, according to the Migration Policy Institute. But that's still far from the 10% share of the population needed to halt shrinkage.

Germany has a similar fertility rate to the U.S. The country has seen a surge of Syrian immigrants, but anti-migrant politics have followed, threatening Chancellor Angela Merkel's hold on power.

In China, population growth and fertility rates have fallen significantly since the 1980s — in large part due to its birth limits, which has left the country with an aging population, a shortage of working-age citizens, and millions more men than women. China is now considering ending its birth limits and seeking to attract some high-talent immigrants, the New York Times reported.

Looking Ahead: Mass immigration to developed nations with aging populations would have global economic, social and political impact. The effects would be felt by countries immigrants are leaving in the form of lost human capital, and by those in which they're arriving, with both economic benefits and possible social discord.

Related The Immigrant Groups That Make The Most Money Income And Education Among U.S. Foreign-Born Average Income And Share With A College Degree, 2017



How to read the chart (above), via Axios visual journalist Chris Canipe: The circles represent each country's population in the United States. Those on the lower left tend to have smaller average annual incomes and are less likely to have college degrees. Those in the upper right have the highest average incomes and are more likely to have degrees.

The lighter circles (center and right) — representing Asian countries — are spread wider across the chart than circles of other colors, indicating higher inequality.

Asians tend to be among the best-educated immigrants to the U.S., and also land in some of the most lucrative careers. But, according to U.S. Census data, the image of privilege is true for only some Asians.

The bottom line: Data shows that income inequality is greater among Asian immigrants than for those arriving from anywhere else.

Indians on average earn \$64,000 a year, and 78.6% have college degrees.

But ... Compare that to Afghans (\$22,000), Nepalis (\$25,000) and Laotians (\$32,000). (Courtesy axios.com)

Trump Demands To Be Paid Back For Immigrants' Use Of Public Benefits



President Trump issued a memo last Thursday evening that could require citizens or legal residents in the U.S. who sponsor immigrants — often-times family members — to pay back the government for any public benefits used by the immigrants they've sponsored.

Why it matters: For more than two decades, anyone who files for a green card for a family member or other immigrant must pledge financial responsibility if that immigrant uses public benefit programs such as food stamps or Medicaid. Many immigration lawyers have assured people that the law is rarely, if ever, enforced, according to former DOJ immigration lawyer Leon Fresco. That could change.

Trump has ordered government agencies to establish rules over the next 90 days that would force immigrant sponsors to reimburse the government for immigrants' use of means-tested federal benefit programs.

In 180 days, Trump asked the State Department and Department of Homeland Security to determine whether Americans who are "delinquent on the sponsor's reimbursement obligation" are able to sponsor future immigrants.

Between the lines: Not all green card holders are even eligible for these benefit programs. Many programs require immigrants to have had a green card for more than 5 years. It is unclear how many people the new enforcement rules would impact. (Courtesy axios.com)

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透過美南 聯繫世界

作為美國最大的華人傳媒集團，堅持不懈是一種態度，專注敬業是一種精神，服務華人社區40年是一種成就。

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Facebook removed more than 3 billion fake accounts from October to March, twice as many as the previous six months, the company reported last Thursday.

Nearly all of the removals were identified and deleted before they had a chance to become "active" users of the social network. In a new report, Facebook said it saw a "steep increase" in the creation of abusive, fake accounts. While most of these fake accounts were blocked "within minutes" of their creation, the use of computers to generate millions of accounts at a time meant not only that Facebook caught more of the fake accounts, but that more of them slipped through.

As a result, the company estimates that 5% of its 2.4 billion monthly active users are fake accounts, or about 119 million. This is up from an estimated 3% to 4% in the previous six-month report.

The increase shows the challenges Facebook faces in removing accounts created by computers to spread spam, fake news and other objectionable material. Even as Facebook's detection tools get better, so do the efforts by the creators of these fake accounts.

The new numbers come as the company grapples with challenge after challenge, ranging from fake news to Facebook's role in elections interference, hate speech and incitement to violence in the U.S., Myanmar, India and elsewhere.

Facebook also said Thursday that it removed 7.3 million posts, photos and other material because it violated its rules against hate speech. That's up from 5.4 million in the prior six months.

The company said it found more than 65 percent of hate speech on its own, before people reported it, during the first three months of 2019. That's an improvement from 52 percent in the third quarter of 2018. Facebook is under growing pressure to combat hate on its platform, as material continues to slip through even with recent bans of popular extremist figures such as Alex Jones and Louis Farrakhan.

Facebook employs thousands of people to review posts, photos, comments and videos for violations. Some things are also detect-

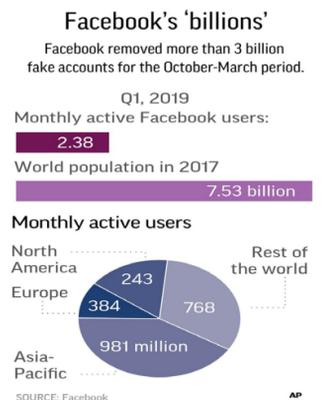
Facebook Removes Over 3 Billion Fake Accounts In 6 Months



File photo above dated July 16, 2013, shows a sign at Facebook headquarters in Menlo Park, Calif. Facebook stated in a last Thursday, May 23, 2019, report, that it removed more than 3 billion fake accounts from the service in the October-March period, although it doesn't say how many it may have overlooked. The report comes as Facebook grapples with challenges ranging from fake news to its role in elections interference, hate speech and incitement to violence in the U.S., Myanmar, India and elsewhere. (Photo/AP)

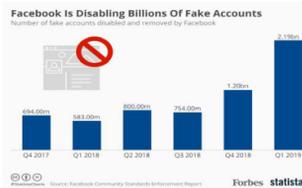
Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

ed without humans, using artificial intelligence. Both humans and AI make mistakes and Facebook has been accused of political bias as well as ham-fisted removals of posts discussing — rather than promoting — racism.



A thorny issue for Facebook is its lack of procedures for authenticating the identities of those setting up accounts. Only in instances where a user has been booted off the service and won an appeal to be reinstated does it ask to see ID documents.

While some have argued for stricter authentication on social media services, the issue is thorny. People including U.N. free expression rapporteur David Kaye say it's important to allow pseudonymous speech online for human rights activists and others whose lives could otherwise be endangered. Dipayan Ghosh, a former Facebook employee and White House tech policy adviser who is currently a Harvard fellow, said absent greater transparency from Facebook there is no way of knowing whether its improved automated detection is doing a better job of containing the disinformation problem.



"We lack public transparency into the scale of disinformation operations on Facebook in the first place," he said.

And even if just 5 million accounts escaped through the cracks, Ghosh added, how much hate speech and disinformation are they spreading through bots "that subvert the democratic process by injecting chaos into our political discourse?"

"The only way to address this problem in the long term is for government to intervene and compel transparency into these platform operations and privacy for the end

consumer," he said. Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg has called for government regulation to decide what should be considered harmful content and on other issues. But at least in the U.S., government regulation of speech could run into First Amendment hurdles.

And what regulation might look like — and whether the companies, lawmakers, privacy and free speech advocates and others will agree on what it should look like — is not clear.

Of the 3.4 billion accounts removed in the six-month period, 1.2 billion came during the fourth quarter of 2018 and 2.2 billion during the first quarter of this year. More than 99 percent of these were disabled before someone reported them to the company. In the April-September period last year, Facebook blocked 1.5 billion accounts.



Facebook attributed the spike in the removed accounts to "automated attacks by bad actors who attempt to create large volumes of accounts at one time." The company declined to say where these attacks originated, only that they were from different parts of the world.

Starting with this report, Facebook is disclosing how it deals with the sale of "regulated goods" — that is, drugs and firearms. Facebook prohibits the purchase, sale or gifting of firearms, as well as drugs including marijuana, which is legal in some states and countries. The company said it "took action" on 1.5 million cases involving drugs and 1.4 million involving firearms. This generally means removing the material from Facebook but can also involve suspending users or adding warning screens to videos showing objectionable content. (Courtesy apnews.com)

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