RÉSUMÉ

We provide econometric evidence that Hispanic citizens receive significantly longer sentences in the US Federal Criminal Justice System when there is an increase in the number of illegal aliens apprehended along the southern border. Apprehensions increase the salience of Hispanic ethnic identity, which is associated with persistent negative stereotypes in the US. The absence of any effect for Hispanic non-citizens is inconsistent with an alternative explanation that apprehensions could induce more negative
attitudes towards Hispanic defendants in general, irrespective of their citizenship status. In line with statistical discrimination, our estimated effect is only at play for defendants without a heavy previous criminal record, and it is larger for defendants whose age, gender and level of education are close to the typical Hispanic immigrant.

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