

Socialism: A Case Study on Venezuela

Discussion Guide



THE POLICY
CIRCLE®

Let's review

At the start of each discussion, review the conversation ground rules for returning and new members alike to set the stage for active participation by all. You may want to use a timer as you go around the room. And don't forget to decide who will take notes and post a discussion recap.

- **Be open and curious:** Everyone has a unique perspective, so listen and be prepared to hear a different point of view. Remember, you do not need to share your political affiliation; this is a discussion and exchange of ideas, not politics.
- **Be respectful and engaged:** Be sure that everyone has a chance to speak before adding a second comment or perspective. Encourage each other's participation.
- **Be focused and concise:** Keep the conversation centered on the issue and the Insight.

The "Table-it" Rule: If the group has gone off-topic but the area is of interest, the group can table the conversation and save it for another time to be addressed in a different manner.

Let's begin

Each member is invited to answer the following questions in a **two-to three-minute reaction** to the Insight:

- Introduce yourself, and share what "lens of care" you wore when reviewing this Insight (e.g., personal, professional, community, state, nation, global)?
- What did you find most interesting or surprising from reading the Insight? What matters?

Spread the word: facts to share during your discussion

- Venezuela ranks [among the least economically free](#) countries globally, reflecting weak property rights, currency controls, and state intervention.
- [Inflation in Venezuela was over 680 percent](#) in 2025.
- [Nearly 8 million Venezuelans have fled the country](#), making this one of the largest displacement crises in the world.
- Venezuela [consistently has contested elections](#). In 2024, [election monitors concluded](#) that the opposing party, led by Nobel Prize winner [Maria Corina Machado](#), won. However, Nicolás Maduro remained in power.

Let's discuss

Below are 3 questions for the group to consider and discuss, or choose your own.

- **Community:** What are the key steps to returning Venezuela to prosperity? Should the U.S. or other countries and organizations get involved?

- **Local, State, or Federal Government:** What is the role of the government in assisting humanitarian concerns in Venezuela, and towards displaced Venezuelan citizens?
- **Business:** Price controls, nationalized property, and brain drain are all impacting businesses and prosperity in Venezuela. What environment do entrepreneurs need to succeed and provide value to consumers?

Let's act

1. **Take it local. Talk to your neighbors** about socialism and its impact on communities, and share information with friends, colleagues, and family. Identify opportunities to work with other community members in your area.
2. **Explore the impact of foreign policy decisions in your community.** Keep track of [bills in Congress related to Venezuela](#), and stay up to date with information from the [House Foreign Affairs Committee](#) and the [Senate Committee on Foreign Relations](#). Organize a community gathering on aid, policy, and what your tax dollars support in foreign countries.
3. **Investigate community programs** in your state or municipality. Identify programs or policies that affect migrants or refugees in your community. On your state or municipal website, try searching for “immigration” or “refugees” in the search bar, or use AI.
4. **Research your elected representatives' positions** on foreign policy, specifically in Latin America. You can find contact information for federal, state, and local government officials [here](#). Your state or municipality's website will also include information on how to contact leaders. Try looking at the drop-down menu for a *Government* tab.
5. **Establish a relationship with your legislators.** It's easy to establish a relationship with your legislators. Start by introducing yourself. You can also learn to write to your representatives or set up a meeting with a legislator on [The Policy Circle website](#).
6. **Consider writing a letter to the editor or an op-ed discussing the situation in Venezuela in your local paper.** Learn how on [The Policy Circle website](#).

Next Steps for Your Circle

- **Post a Recap:** Summarize your discussion to share thoughts with members not present, and share planned actions from group members. Designate who will post a meeting recap on your circle page.
- **Decide on your next meeting topic.** Want to discuss a related topic at your next meeting? Suggestions include:
 - [Socialism Brief](#)
 - [Free Enterprise and Economic Freedom Brief](#)
 - [Immigration Brief](#)
- **Dive Deeper into the issues.** If this is an area you would like to pursue further, consider taking possible steps to influence policy. The Policy Circle offers resources to [develop a message about your issue](#) and [organize a petition](#) to amplify your voice and raise awareness. Don't miss our [latest events](#) that help you dive deeper on this issue and more.