A dramatic photograph showing the silhouettes of a group of people, likely migrants, running across a border at night. The central figure is in mid-stride, carrying a large backpack, with arms outstretched. Other figures are visible in the background, some running and some walking. The sky is dark blue with some clouds, and the ground appears to be a flat, open area.

MIGRATION IN MEXICO IN TIMES OF TRUMP: THREATS AND SUBORDINATION

<https://apnews.com/article/noticias-4d3fa65c24cb124boof8475dcd373228>

MAY 2025

SIGNOSVITALES
EL PULSO DE MÉXICO



Is a non-profit, non governmental organization that is structured by a Council built up of people with an outstanding track record, with high ethical and professional level, which have national and international recognition and with a firm commitment to democratic and freedom principles.

The Council is structured with an Executive Committee, and Advisory Committee of Specialists and a Communication Advisory Committee, and a Executive Director coordinates the operation of these three Committees.

One of the main objectives is the collection of reliable and independent information on the key variables of our economic, political and sociocultural context in order to diagnose, with a good degree of certainty, the state where the country is located.

Vital Signs intends to serve as a light to show the direction that Mexico is taking through the dissemination of quarterly reports, with a national and international scope, to alert society and the policy makers of the wide variety of problems that require special attention.



Weak or absent pulse can have many causes and represents a medical emergency.

The more frequent causes are the heart attack and the shock condition. Heart attack occurs when the heart stops beating. The shock condition occurs when the organism suffers a considerable deterioration, which causes a weak pulse, fast heartbeat, shallow, breathing and loss of consciousness. It can be caused by different factors.

Vital signs weaken and you have to be constantly taking the pulse.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Maria Amparo Casar

Enrique Cardenas*

Julio Frenk

Maria Elena Morera

Alejandra Palacios

Federico Reyes Heróles

Jorge Suarez Velez

Duncan Wood

Carlos Lascurain

Executive Director & Prosecretary

*President 2024–2026



ADVISORY COMMITTEE SPECIALISTS

Ruben Aguilar Valenzuela

Eduardo Backoff

Mariana Barraza Llorens

Rosanety Barrios

Juan Carlos Belausteguigoitia

Carlos Bravo Regidor

Jose Antonio Caballero

Mariana Campos

Victor Carrion Rodriguez

Jose Ramon Cossio

Salomon Chertorivsky

Katia D'Artigues

Luis De la Calle

Gabriela Dutrenit Bielous

Carlos Elizondo Mayer-Serra

Marco Antonio Fernandez

Luis Foncerrada Pascal

Ricardo Fuentes Nieva

Rogelio Gomez Hermosillo

Luis Raul Gonzalez Perez

Eduardo Gonzalez Pier

Eduardo Guerrero

Tonatiuh Guillen

Carlos Heredia

Gonzalo Hernandez Licona

Alejandro Hopet

Carlos Hurtado

Maria Eugenia Ibarraran

Edna Jaime

Sandra Ley

Sergio Lopez Ayllon

Carlos Mancera

Regina Martinez Casas

Lorenza Martinez Trigueros

Ivonne Melgar

Lourdes Melgar Palacios

Alfonso Mendoza

Manuel Molano

Lourdes Morales

Adela Navarro Bello

Veronica Ortiz Ortega

Tony Payan

Jacqueline Peschard

Jose Antonio Polo Oteyza

Alejandro Poire

Casiopea Ramirez

Dario Ramirez

Francisco Rivas

Raul Rojas Gonzalez

Jose Roldan Xopa

Hernan Sabau

Pedro Salazar Ugarte

Roberto Salinas Leon

Jose Sarukhan Kermez

Sylvia Schmelkes

Jaime Sepulveda

Carlos Serrano H.

Eduardo Sojo

Francisco Suarez Davila

Miguel Szekely

Brenda Valderrama Blanco

Gustavo Vega Canovas

Lilia Velez Iglesias

Hector Villarreal Ordoñez

Luis Carlos Ugalde

Pablo Zarate



TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERAL INTRODUCTION 8

CHAPTER 1. THE NEW UNITED STATES MIGRATION POLICY 14

- 1.1 Deportation strategies, laws, border controls:
national security justifies everything 15
- 1.2 Implications of the new US anti-immigration policy
22
- 1.3 Migration as a bargaining tool 28

CHAPTER 2. MEXICO' REACTIONS: BETWEEN ALLIGNMENT AND CONTAINMENT POLICY (2006-2024) 30

- 2.1 Evolution of Mexico's migration policy stands 31
- 2.2 Allignment: recent initiatives by the Claudia
Sheinbaum administration in response to US
policies 40
- 2.3 Militarizing the border: the role of the National
Guard in managing migratory flows 45

CHAPTER 3. THE CONSEQUENCES FOR MIGRANTS: WHAT ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS? 48

- 3.1 The nullification of human rights on both sides of the
border 51
- 3.2 On the US side: risks and threats 55
- 3.3 On the Mexican side: migration containment and
abuses against migrants 58
- 3.4 Effectiveness of Mexican institutions in insuring
security and respect for human rights: Comar and
INM 62
- Conclusions 69

CHAPTER 4. THE SOCIAL EFFECTS OF MIGRATION 70

- 4.1 Return migration: realities of labor reintegration 72
- 4.2 Labor market: immigrantes in the US and the impact
of mass deportation 76
- 4.3 Social programs: Do they help migrants? 82

4.4 The role of Central America 87

Conclusions 92

CHAPTER 5. ON THE FINANCIAL PATHWAYS 93

Introduction 94

5.1 The trail of the long journey 95

5.2 At the origin of excess, doubts begin: boom and collapse 102

5.3 A monster that consumes cash 106

5.4 Contamination of the Mexican financial system 108

5.5 Traveller, there is a path: the road is made by paying 110

Final thoughts: when transnational criminal organizations turned south 114

CHAPTER 6. THE ECONOMICS OF MIGRATION ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER 116

Introduction 117

6.1 Imbalances, conflict and migration 118

6.2 The routes of resistance: economic or labor dependency (reciprocal) 122

6.3 Balance of payments: tourism and border workers 134

6.4 Tourists arrivals to Mexico 138

Final thoughts: the balance in the US labor market arrived by plane 143

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS 145

STATISTICAL ANNEX 151

REFERENCES 158

GENERAL INTRODUCTION



<https://publica.prensa-latina.cu/pub/estados-unidos-mexico-borde-en-crisis> ; <https://mexico.as.com/actualidad/que-divide-a-mexico-con-guatemala-estos-son-los-ocho-cruces-fronterizos-entre-ambas-naciones-n/>

« GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The migration phenomenon between Mexico and the United States is a central issue in both countries' domestic and international politics. In recent decades, the migration policies of both governments have been marked by security-focused approaches, containment strategies and the growing militarization of their borders. Over the years, this phenomenon has had a profound impact on migrants' lives, local communities, financial flows, the empowerment of transnational criminal organizations and the bilateral relationship between both nations. Within this context, the present document analyzes the current and historical dynamics of migration between Mexico and the United States, focusing on the migration policies

implemented by both countries over the years, as well as the effects of this phenomenon on migrants and the economy.

The analysis is divided into six chapters that address different dimensions of this complex phenomenon. Each chapter examines a crucial aspect of the migration issue, from the migration policies implemented by the United States to the social and economic consequences for migrants and communities on both sides of the border. In addition, relevant statistical data is included to quantify the impact of these policies and migration trends over time.

In recent decades, the migration policies of both governments have been marked by security-focused approaches, containment strategies and the growing militarization of their borders

THE FIRST CHAPTER focuses on the radical shift in U.S. migration policy under the administration of Donald Trump. Since taking office in 2025, Trump has implemented a set of executive orders that reinforced border control measures, linking migration to national security. This approach led to the reactivation of programs such as “Remain in Mexico” and the militarization of the border. These measures have also involved the criminalization of migrants, who have been labeled as “invaders” and stripped of their fundamental rights. Statistically, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) reported a significant decrease in apprehensions, with 11,709 border encounters in February 2025 —the first full month of Trump’s term— compared to 189,913 in February 2024. Still, the mass deportations announced by the U.S. president have not occurred in the early months of his administration. On the other hand, a relatively new phenomenon has emerged as a result of the new anti-immigration policies: reverse migration. After failing to reach the United States, many migrants are now returning to their country of origin or heading to a third safe country.

THE SECOND CHAPTER analyzes Mexico’s responses to U.S. pressure and the migration policies imposed from the north. Throughout the administrations of

Felipe Calderon, Enrique Peña Nieto and Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (Lopez Obrador), Mexico has adopted a containment stance, implementing policies such as the Southern Border Plan and strengthening the National Guard at the southern border. During Calderon and Peña Nieto’s terms, Mexico detained over 2 million migrants, with a record high of 223,000 detentions in 2017. With this, Sheinbaum seems poised to reach another record. In just her first two months, the Mexican government detained 349,625 migrants. Meanwhile, the “Remain in Mexico” policy, implemented in 2019, resulted in the deportation of over 70,000 migrants to Mexico, highlighting Mexico’s dependency on U.S. migration policy. Both past and current administrations have aligned themselves with the demands of the northern neighbor. Particularly during the administration of Lopez Obrador and now under Sheinbaum, this evident alignment has contradicted the official narrative that seeks to highlight Mexico’s sovereignty, while at the same time resulting in an unprecedented militarization of migration policy.

CHAPTER THREE examines the impact of migration policies on the human rights of migrants under an anti-immigration policy never before seen. Restrictions imposed by the United States —such as the detention

1. Radical shift in U.S. migration policy under the administration of Donald Trump.

2. Mexico’s responses to U.S. pressure and the migration policies imposed from the north.

3. The impact of migration policies on the human rights of migrants under an anti-immigration policy never before seen.

of migrants and the lack of access to adequate legal procedures— have created an environment of violence, abuse, kidnapping, extortion and exploitation, where human rights virtually disappear for migrants on both sides of the border. The right to seek asylum, the principle of non-refoulement and the right not to be arbitrarily detained are among the rights violated under the current anti-immigration regime. In addition to human rights violations in both the U.S. and Mexico, Mexican authorities also fall short when it comes to humanitarian protection. Even migrant detention centers in Mexico have come under scrutiny due to the living conditions of the migrants held there and the human rights abuses that occur—some of which have resulted in the deaths of migrants within those facilities. The challenge includes more than 925,000 people who "Remain in Mexico" in an irregular situation and are exposed to various dangers and threats. The chapter highlights the growing militarization of migration management in Mexico, which has created a harsh and hostile environment for migrants.

CHAPTER FOUR addresses the social implications of migration in both Mexico and the United States. Topics include return migration and the realities of labor reintegration in Mexico, which has had mixed effects on local communities in both the short and long term.

Likewise, an analysis is provided of the U.S. labor market and the economic impact of mass deportations, which—if carried out—would cost our northern neighbor over \$300 billion (USD). It is also worth noting that GDP could drop by one percentage point per year under the most ambitious plan (8.3 million deportations) and the U.S. could suffer an annual contraction of up to 7%. The chapter also analyzes social programs aimed at assisting migrants in Mexico, their capacity for social inclusion and the role of Central America.

CHAPTER FIVE explores the economic and financial dimensions of migration, focusing on irregular transit. Using financial data, the chapter begins by analyzing the migration routes from southern to northern Mexico, many of which —given their territorial nature— overlap with routes used for other illicit activities, such as fuel theft. Although there are various entry points into Mexico, evidence shows that just seven municipalities along the international border between Chiapas and Guatemala account for more than 80% of the phenomenon in question. The importance of containment policies and the strengthening of Mexico's main criminal organizations (Jalisco New Generation Cartel and Sinaloa Cartel) are highlighted as key factors in the rise of the black market for

4. The social implications of migration in both Mexico and the United States.

5. Explores the economic and financial dimensions of migration, focusing on irregular transit.

human smuggling. We estimate that profits for transnational organized crime exceeded \$6 billion (USD) (a historical record) in 2023, a year in which more than 600,000 migrants paid intermediaries over \$9,000 (USD) on average in an attempt to cross the border. In this regard, these organizations have capitalized on various international crises (violence and poverty), exploited the international financial system, and have chosen Mexico as their base of operations. As a result, this report shows that, over the past six years, these financial flows have contaminated Mexico's financial system to a greater extent than in the past.

FINALLY, CHAPTER SIX completes the analysis of migration in the economies of Mexico and the United States by addressing two key aspects: regular migration patterns and their impact on the U.S. labor market, as well as the current account of Mexico's balance of payments. This chapter explores the most recent changes in migration patterns resulting from the containment policy initiated during Donald Trump's first term. These changes reveal a clear segmentation of the migration market (by nationality) and the limits of a more severe (restrictive) migration policy. Mexican nationals have increasingly opted for institutional channels, thereby affecting the current account through international travel (i.e., tourism)

and cross-border labor. For its part, the U.S. government has not closed access to these institutional channels; on the contrary, it has strengthened them. Thus, the analysis goes beyond the issue of remittances. The chapter also highlights the importance of the migrant population in sectors such as agriculture, construction, and certain (non-specialized) services, contributing to the fact that, in 2022, the U.S. labor market did not overheat.

This document offers a comprehensive analysis of migration between Mexico and the United States, divided into six chapters that address topics ranging from the migration policies implemented by both countries to the social, economic and human rights implications for migrants. The statistical data included throughout the report provide a clear and precise view of the magnitude of the migration phenomenon, reflecting both the progress and limitations of current policies.

6 The analysis of migration in the economies of Mexico and the United States by addressing two key aspects: regular migration patterns and their impact on the U.S. labor market, as well as the current account of Mexico's balance of payments.

This document offers a comprehensive analysis of migration between Mexico and the United States, divided into six chapters that address topics ranging from the migration policies implemented by both countries to the social, economic and human rights implications for migrants.



1. THE NEW UNITED STATES MIGRATION POLICY



NOTHING BY FORCE, EVERYTHING THROUGH REASON; TRUMP SIGNS A DECREE at [www. https://www.bbc.com/mundo/articles/cly4z9o9yyqo](https://www.bbc.com/mundo/articles/cly4z9o9yyqo) // www.swissinfo.ch/spa/trump-firma-un-decreto-para-sacar-a-eeuu-del-consejo-de-derechos-humanos-de-la-onu/88828853

1. THE NEW UNITED STATES MIGRATION POLICY

1.1 DEPORTATION STRATEGIES, LAWS, BORDER CONTROLS: NATIONAL SECURITY JUSTIFIES EVERYTHING

Following his inauguration as the 47th President of the United States on January 20, 2025, Donald Trump signed a total of 21 executive orders on his first day in office, most of them focused on immigration. Through these actions, the president aimed to fulfill from day one, many of his campaign promises related to reducing the illegal entry of foreigners into the country, sealing and reinforcing the border and deporting undocumented migrants.

It is important to highlight that during his first term; Trump had already embraced an anti-immigration rhetoric. Although this did not result in more deportations than under his predecessor Barack Obama, it did lead to a strengthened border with Mexico and the implementation of the “Remain in Mexico” program, which forced asylum seekers to stay in Mexico, effectively turning it into a de facto third safe country (Signos Vitales, 2024).

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States has increasingly strengthened the national security capacities of its immigration agencies. As a result, the Department of Homeland Security

During his first term, Trump had already embraced an anti-immigration rhetoric, which lead to a strengthened border and the implementation of the “Remain in Mexico” program, which forced asylum seekers to stay (Signos Vitales, 2024).

(DHS) was created, and the trend of framing immigration policy within a security context has steadily evolved since then. Through the Patriot Act, the U.S. set the objective of preventing future terrorist attacks, resulting in border closures and—coercively—turning Mexico into a key component of its control, containment and prevention policy (Signos Vitales, 2020). That said, what stands out in the early months of Trump’s second term is not only a more aggressive anti-immigration discourse than during his first administration, but also the firm linkage of immigration with U.S. national security, marking a turning point where migration is now defined, more than ever before, as a threat to national security.

This is reflected in both the executive orders and the actions taken since then. In at least seven of the executive orders issued on January 20, 2025, the president justifies his migration restrictions, deportations, the deployment of armed forces and the cancellation of asylum procedures on the basis of an “invasion” and the need to protect the American population from it (see Table 1). These provisions not only equate all undocumented migrants with “invaders,” but in doing so, strip them of their fundamental rights, criminalizing them immediately and systematically.

In Trump’s second term he uses not only a more aggressive anti-immigration discourse but also the firm linkage of immigration with U.S. national security, marking a turning point where migration is now defined, more than ever before, as a threat to national security.

The declaration of a “National Emergency” proclaimed under Executive Order EO 14156 led to the immediate deployment of 1,500 soldiers and marines to the border on January 22, 2025 (Department of Defense, 2025). This represented an increase of over 60% in military presence along the southern border (Yousif, 2025). On March 1, 2025, Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth announced another deployment of 2,500 to 3,000 troops (Neumann, 2025) and by mid-March, several reports indicated the presence of approximately 9,500 military personnel at the Mexico-U.S. border (Isacson, 2025a).

TABLE 1. EXECUTIVE ORDERS LINKING MIGRATION TO NATIONAL SECURITY 1/2

EXECUTIVE ORDER (EO = ORDER NUMBER)	CONTENT LINKING MIGRATION WITH NATIONAL SECURITY
<i>Guaranteeing the States protection against invasion.</i>	<p>Declaration of an invasion on the southern border and indefinite suspension of the entry of undocumented people into the United States under any circumstances, justified under the argument of an “invasion.” Prohibition of requesting asylum on the border with Mexico.</p> <p>The order requires a report every 90 days from the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State, on whether resumption of the refugee program is in the best interests of the United States.</p>
<i>Protecting our borders (EO 14165).</i>	<p>Cancellation of the CBP One asylum program of the United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to protect borders from "invasion." Under this program, nearly 900,000 people had regularly safely entered the United States from Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua, Mexico, Haiti, and Ukraine. Ordering the Secretary of Homeland Security to resume the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP).</p> <p>The resumption of the MPP forces non-U.S. citizens who lack the documentation required for admission to wait in Mexico pending their deportation proceedings. In addition, the use of physical infrastructure such as walls and barriers that allow total control with the help of the army or navy in border control is authorized.</p>
<i>Clarifying the Militarys role in protecting the territorial integrity of the United States (EO14167).</i>	<p>Use of Armed Forces on the border. Order that authorizes the military to seal the border against “illegal mass migration.”</p>

TABLE 1. EXECUTIVE ORDERS LINKING MIGRATION TO NATIONAL SECURITY 2/2

EXECUTIVE ORDER (EO = ORDER NUMBER)	CONTENT LINKING MIGRATION WITH NATIONAL SECURITY
<i>Declaring a National Emergency at the Southern Border of the United States (EO 14156).</i>	Declaration of National Emergency on the Southern Border of the US
<i>Protecting the American People against invasion (EO 14161).</i>	Order to the Secretary of Homeland Security to enforce immigration laws, including the use of expedited deportation, crack down on sanctuary jurisdictions, and expand detention centers. By defining invaders, criminals, threats to national security and public safety, mass deportations may be supported by the US military for expulsions. Creation of national security task forces to manage deportation operations in 50 states.
<i>Protecting the United States from foreign terrorists and other National security public safety threats (EO 14161).</i>	Implementation of new, stricter selection and vetting processes for non-US citizens who wish to enter the US or who are already in the country. Within 30 days of the date of the order, the Secretary of State and other federal agencies must evaluate all visa programs regarding national security and recommend measures to protect the American people.
<i>Designating cartels and other organizations as foreign terrorist organizations (EO 14157).</i>	Include Mexican cartels and gangs on the list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTO).

Source: In-house elaboration with information from The White House, 2025, U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, 2025 and Federal Register, 2025.

On the U.S. side, it is important to note that the National Guard and military forces have been operating at the border since the George W. Bush administration, in support of civilian agencies and without direct confrontations between soldiers and civilians (WOLA, 2025). In fact, WOLA reports that approximately 23,000 military personnel were already stationed at the border prior to Trump's inauguration (Isacson, 2025a). Nonetheless, this new executive order declaring a border emergency has resulted in the subsequent deployment of specialized units, clearly reinforcing the militarization of the border and blurring the line between civilian and military functions in migration matters. Moreover, the national emergency status could allow Trump to deploy military forces not only against migrants, but also against U.S. citizens participating in political protests related to immigration (WOLA, 2025).

The militarization of the border is further emphasized by another executive order, EO 14167, titled Clarifying the Role of the Military in Protecting the Territorial Integrity of the United States. This order "clarifies the role of the military in protecting the territorial integrity of the United States" (Federal Register, 2025). This undoubtedly further opens the door to potential confrontations between the military and civil society.

The declaration of a national emergency status could allow Trump to deploy military forces not only against migrants, but also against U.S. citizens participating in political protests related to immigration (WOLA, 2025).

Finally, the same executive order also authorizes the continuation of border wall construction and the creation of other physical barriers with the aim of preventing the entry of undocumented immigrants.

Another migration policy reactivated through an executive order under the justification of national security is the "Remain in Mexico" program. Officially known as the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP), this program was first implemented during Trump's first term and required asylum seekers arriving at the U.S. southern border to wait in Mexico while their cases were processed. During its implementation, the program affected 75,000 migrants but was suspended in 2022 (Ventas, 2025). Under the new executive order Protecting Our Borders (EO 14165), the program was reactivated in January 2025, while the CBP One

asylum program was canceled, potentially designating Mexico once again as a third safe country.

On the other hand, while deportations have been a core feature of several U.S. presidential administrations, many of Trump's new executive orders not only signal that deportations will be a fundamental component of his immigration policy, but also justify them on the grounds of protecting U.S. citizens from an invasion (EO 14159) and from any internal or external aggression. During the Biden administration, a total of 1.5 million deportations were reported, while Obama's first term recorded 2.9 million deportations (Yousif, 2025). Unlike previous administrations' approach to deportations, where expedited removals were limited to areas within 100 miles (160 km) of U.S. borders and applied only to individuals unable to prove a valid asylum claim or reason for remaining, the new strategy allows for deportations from anywhere within U.S. territory —even for undocumented immigrants who cannot prove they have been in the country for more than two years (Yousif, 2025).

Additionally, under the executive order Designating Mexican Cartels and Other Organizations as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (EO 14157), the president ordered the Secretary of State to designate sever-

al Mexican cartels and criminal gangs as terrorist groups. Subsequently, on February 20, Secretary of State Marco Rubio officially designated eight criminal organizations as “Foreign Terrorist Organizations.” The list of cartels, officially published in the Federal Register, includes six Mexican cartels:

- » The Sinaloa Cartel
- » The Jalisco New Generation Cartel
- » The United Cartels
- » Los Zetas
- » The Gulf Cartel
- » La Nueva Familia Michoacana Cartel

This list also includes the MS-13 gang and the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua (Department of State, 2025). In several press conferences, the Trump administration left no doubt that this designation is a central part of its strategy to reinforce the border with Mexico, asserting that these groups create social unrest in the country and are complicit in the illegal crossing of people. Strategically, by gaining greater control over the cartels and the borders, the administration clearly links the issue of migration to national security. Backed by this narrative and the corresponding legal actions, to date it has been reported that the U.S. has flown 18 spy planes over the border with Mexico and

The new strategy allows for deportations from anywhere within U.S. territory—even for undocumented immigrants who cannot prove they have been in the country for more than two years (Yousif, 2025).

has deployed two U.S. Navy ships: the USS Gravelly off the Mexican coast of the Gulf of “Mexico” (America) (Camhaji, 2025) and the USS Spruance in the Pacific (Shelton, 2025). The Pentagon stated that the ships are intended to support the U.S. Border Patrol and Coast Guard in both U.S. and international waters (Wallace, 2025), providing additional capacity and expanding the geographic reach of military capabilities in coordination with the Department of Homeland Security (Shelton, 2025). These deployments underscore the militarization of border controls under the justification of national security.

In connection with the above, on March 14, the president invoked the Alien Enemies Act of 1798 to deport 238 Venezuelan migrants allegedly linked to the criminal group Tren de Aragua. This law, which had only been applied three times prior—most notably during World War I and World War II—allows the president to detain and deport individuals without due process when the country is at war with a “hostile nation or government,” or when a foreign state has “committed, attempted, or threatened” an invasion or “predatory incursion” into U.S. territory (Isacson, 2025b).



Image: American spy planes at the Gulf of California at <https://etcetera.com.mx/nacional/avion-espia-tres-embarcaciones-mexico-sheinbaum/>

As of the writing of this report, no official information has confirmed that all deported individuals were part of the criminal group. On the contrary, Secretary of State Marco Rubio defended the deportation without providing clear information about the individuals involved, stating:

If one of them turns out not to be [a member of Tren de Aragua], then they're simply in our country illegally (...), but they weren't supposed to be in our country in the first place (Ortiz Blanes, 2025).

This highlights that the new migration policy, treats all undocumented immigrants as enemies of the state. Ultimately, the use of a wartime law to deport individuals under the justification that the country is at war with foreign enemies once again reveals how national security arguments are taking on unprecedented dimensions in U.S. immigration policy.

1.2 IMPLICATIONS OF THE NEW U.S. ANTI-IMMIGRATION POLICY

As previously analyzed, President Trump, under the justification of national security, has moved forward during the first months of his term to reform key parts of the U.S. immigration system, including how migrants are processed and deported from the country. Less than 100 days since the first executive orders were issued, it is important to assess the impact of the new —reactivated— U.S. migration strategy.

ENCOUNTERS AT THE MEXICO-U.S. BORDER

One of the immediate outcomes of the anti-immigration policies has been the reduction in migrant arrivals at the Mexico-U.S. border. In other words, with the increasing militarization of the border and heightened border controls, the Trump administration has repeatedly claimed that apprehensions at the Mexico-U.S. border have reached a record downward trend. It is worth noting that this downward trend was already observable following Trump's election in November 2024: the number of Border Patrol encounters dropped from 301,891 in December 2023 to 96,036 in December 2024. Following Trump's inauguration, in February 2025 —his first full month in of-

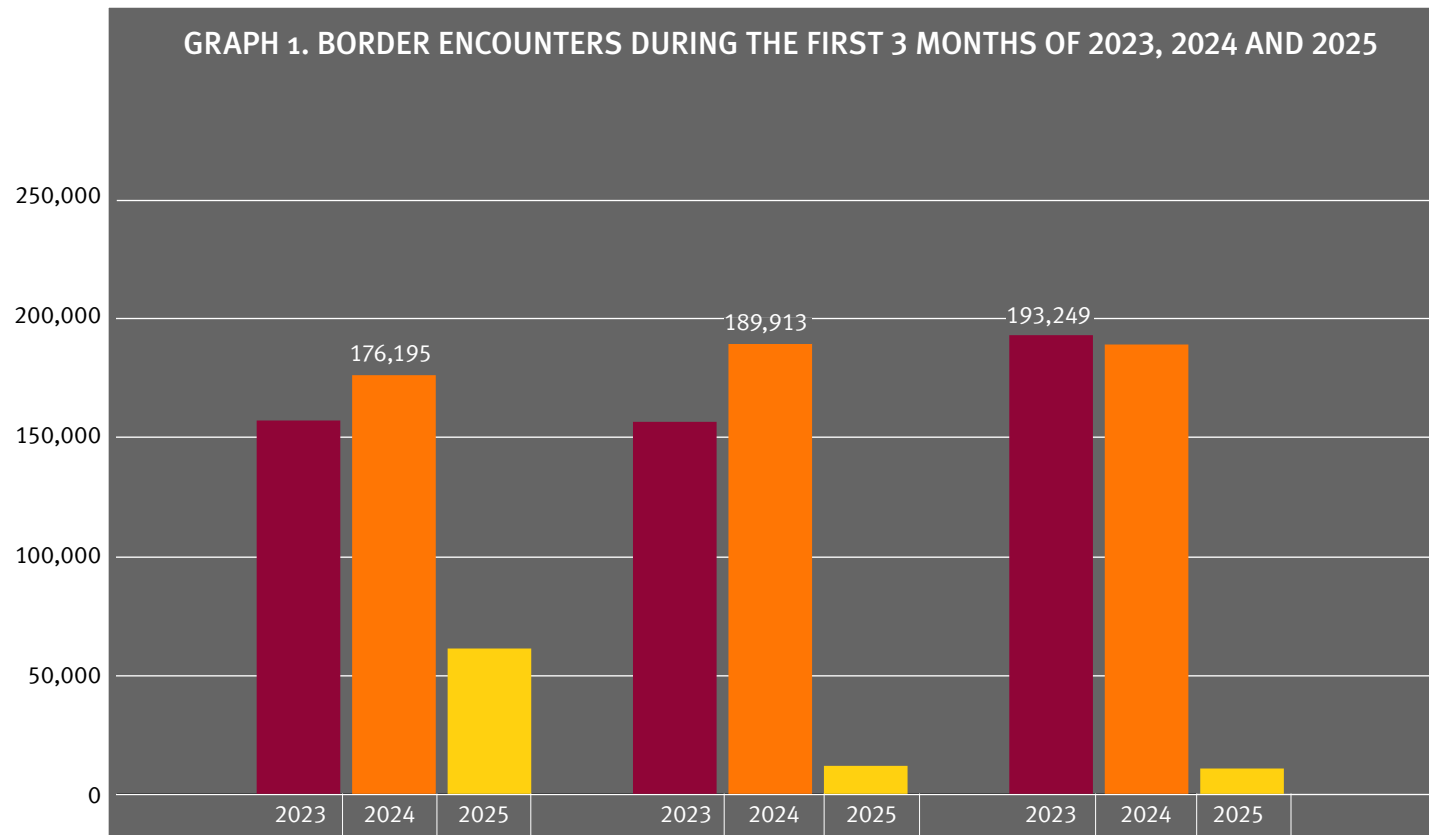
fice —the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) reported a total of 11,709 migrants apprehended at the southern border (CBP, 2025). In comparison, the same month in 2024 saw a total of 189,913 encounters between border enforcement agents and migrants. By March 2025, CBP reported a total of 11,017 border encounters, similar to the previous month. In contrast, March 2024 saw a total of 189,359 apprehensions (CBP, 2025).

Several news reports suggest that Trump’s strategy, along with the strict executive orders, is clearly contributing to fewer individuals attempting to cross the border and, consequently, fewer detentions. However, it is important to note that the decline in illegal crossings began even before Trump’s inauguration. Experts indicate that this trend is partly due to apprehensions taking place within Mexican territory to prevent migrants from reaching the U.S. border (Montoya-Galvez, 2025) (Graph 1).

In addition to the significant reduction in illegal border crossings, a new migration flow phenomenon has been observed since February. After failing to reach their goal of entering the United States, migrants are now returning to their country of origin or relocating to a third safe country—migrating from north to south.

According to information from the government of Panama, in February 2025 alone, the country recorded the entry of 2,000 migrants via the border with Costa Rica (Orjeda, 2025). Similarly, throughout March and April, Mexico witnessed demonstrations involving approximately 2,000 Venezuelan migrants requesting humanitarian flights to return to their country (Zuñiga, 2025). Experts indicate that this reverse migration has also been accelerated by the growing number of migrants within U.S. territory who have opted for “self-deportation,” a government policy introduced following the elimination of the CBP One program. This policy encourages individuals without legal status to voluntarily leave the United States. According to data from the Migration Policy Institute, from March 2025 to the present, the CBP Home application (which replaced the CBP One app) has registered a total of 5,000 migrants who have reported themselves for self-deportation (Chrishti & Bush-Joseph, 2025). In addition, investigative reports reveal that the Trump administration has notified over 500,000 migrants — originally from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela, who had entered legally during the Biden administration¹— to self-deport by April 24, 2025.

1 In 2013, the Biden administration announced the “Processes for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans and Venezuelans” (CHNV) program, which allowed certain people from these



Source: In-house elaboration with information from CPB, 2025.

DEPORTATIONS

That said, it is noteworthy that the Trump administration has been slow to release its deportation figures, although it has disclosed its arrest and detention numbers, which have increased compared to the Biden administration (Ainsley & Strickler, 2025). Data from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), published on March 14, 2025, report that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) arrested a total of 32,809 undocumented migrants in the first 50 days of the Trump administration (Department of Homeland Security, 2025). Of these, 14,111 individuals had criminal convictions, 9,980 had pending criminal charges, 44 were foreign fugitives, and 1,155 were under ICE suspicion of belonging to a criminal group (Department of Homeland Security, 2025). In comparison with arrests under previous administrations, DHS reports that a total of 33,242 arrests were made during the entire year of 2024 (Department of Homeland Security, 2025). However, DHS also indicates that the 724 daily arrests by ICE during early February 2025 were 4.7% lower than the daily average of 759 arrests throughout fiscal year 2024. Nonetheless, the Trump

four countries without criminal records to come to the United States for a period of two years to live and work legally, using a legal mechanism known as “humanitarian parole.”



Image: "Border agents of the USA reject asylum solicitors at entrance gates" at <https://www.latimes.com/espanol/eeuu/articulo/2023-05-22/agentes-fronterizos-de-eeuu-rechazan-a-solicitantes-de-asilo-en-los-puertos-de-entrada>

administration has argued that the strategy has been effective from the start of its term. During the entire fiscal year 2024, ICE deported 271,484 immigrants—an average of 742 per day. Between January 26 and February 8, 2025, ICE deported a total of 9,705 individuals, an average of 693 per day during that 14-day period (Track Immigration, 2025). According to more recent data from Track Immigration, by March 8 the daily average had dropped to 661 deportations. This represents a 10.9% decrease compared to Biden’s daily average of 742 during the same period.

With regard to deportations specifically to Mexico, experts indicate that the majority have taken place via land routes, though no verifiable figures are available, as the responsible agencies on both sides of the border have not published official information. On the other hand, in terms of air deportations, on February 26, U.S. Border Patrol Chief Michael W. Banks announced via his account on the social network X that a total of 14 repatriation flights had been carried out, returning 1,650 migrants to Mexico². As of March 7, CBP reported that during the first 50 days of the Trump administration, an average of 135 migrants per day had been deported to Mexico by air (Rivera, 2025), amounting to a total of over 6,000 deportees. On the Mexican side, it is notable that during the March 3 morning press conference, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum reported a total of 19,663 deportations from the U.S., of which 15,611 were Mexican nationals and 4,025 were of foreign origin (Isacson, 2025a).

While the existence of different figures reported by various sources is notable in itself, what stands out even more is that the mass deportations publicly announced and declared by President Trump do not yet appear to have materialized. It is important to highlight that with fewer migrants attempting to enter the

² <https://x.com/USBPChief/status/1894885154172153936>

U.S. illegally, direct deportations from the border have decreased. Consequently, national security agencies have shifted their focus to arresting undocumented migrants already inside U.S. territory. In summary, although mass deportations had not occurred by the time this report was completed, Trump's new immigration policy has undoubtedly proven effective in other areas, such as reducing the number of encounters and confrontations at the Mexico-U.S. border.

ASYLUM REQUESTS AND THE "REMAIN IN MEXICO" PROGRAM

As previously reported by Signos Vitales, the "Remain in Mexico" program was first implemented in 2019 during Trump's first term (2017–2021), affecting between 71,000 and 75,000 asylum seekers who were required to "Remain in Mexico" while their U.S. asylum claims were processed (Signos Vitales, 2024). While the program was later canceled under the Biden administration, data from the American Immigration Council indicate that only 521 out of 40,000 applicants (1.24%) were granted asylum under Trump, with that number rising to 732 by the time the program ended in 2021 (American Immigration Council, 2025). Meanwhile, Mexico had effectively become a third safe country (Signos Vitales, 2024).

The mass deportations publicly announced and declared by President Trump do not yet appear to have materialized. It is important to highlight that with fewer migrants attempting to enter the U.S. illegally, direct deportations from the border have decreased. Consequently, national security agencies have shifted their focus to arresting undocumented migrants already inside U.S. territory.

Since the immediate reactivation of the program was announced on January 20, 2025, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum has repeatedly expressed her opposition to it, denying that Mexico agreed to receive asylum seekers rejected or processed by the U.S. (El Economista, 2025). As of the writing of this report, there is no official information confirming whether the program is currently active or what the supporting figures might be. Likewise, the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (Comar), has not published data on asylum applications in Mexico since December 2024 (Government of Mexico, 2024), adding to the lack of transparency surrounding asylum issues. Meanwhile, media reports indicate that the number of asylum applications in Mexico has increased (Linthicum, 2025), and the office of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Mexico, received a total of 2,862 applications for the Assisted Voluntary Return Program between January and February 2025 (Diaz, 2025). This number of individuals arriving in Mexico from the United States seeking help to return to their countries of origin is more than triple the number of applications recorded during the same period in 2024 (Diaz, 2025).

In summary, regarding the impact of the executive orders that have eliminated the opportunity to re-

quest asylum from within the United States, there is currently insufficient evidence to conclude that Trump's new anti-immigration policy has resulted in a full reactivation of the "Remain in Mexico" program or in an increase in asylum requests from migrants seeking to stay in Mexico. Nonetheless, IOM figures may suggest that the number of individuals wishing to return to their countries of origin could rise in the coming months.

Mexico has received a total of 2,862 applications for the Assisted Voluntary Return Program between January and February 2025 (Diaz, 2025). This number of individuals arriving in Mexico from the United States seeking help to return to their countries of origin is more than triple the number of applications recorded during the same period in 2024 (Diaz, 2025).

1.3 MIGRATION AS A BARGAINING TOOL

By declaring migration, a matter of national security through various executive orders signed during the first 100 days of his government, the Trump administration has not only placed migration at the center of its agenda, but has also weaponized it as a bargaining chip with several Latin American countries. Panama and Costa Rica have served as key transit countries, offering stopovers for deportation flights involving migrants from nations that the United States cannot repatriate directly because those countries refuse to receive them. Between January 20 and February 28, Panama received three flights carrying approximately 300 non-Panamanian migrants, while Costa Rica registered the arrival of 200 individuals from Asia, the Middle East, and Africa (Rojas, 2025). Of the migrants sent to Panama, 187 have since returned to their countries of origin, while 112 remain in Panamanian territory.

What stands out in both cases is the fact that Costa Rica and Panama agreed to receive undocumented migrants deported from the U.S. following tariff threats. In Panama's case, the Trump administration has not hidden its demand to take control of the Panama Canal. While the details of these agreements

between the U.S. and these countries have not been made public, the flights received at the request of the United States clearly reflect an effort by Central American nations to ease constant pressure from Washington. Moreover, these operations undoubtedly demonstrate a new tactic by the Trump government—one not only aimed at relieving overcrowded U.S. detention centers and increasing deportations, but also at manipulating migration in exchange for guarantees and loyalty from other countries. Although still a relatively new practice with few cases, questions are already emerging regarding the responsibilities of the receiving countries, as well as the rights of migrants in transit and the duration of their stay in these nations.

In Mexico's case, the use of migration as a bargaining chip mirrors the strategy applied with other countries, as the U.S. government has imposed tariffs on Mexico, claiming it has not done enough to curb irregular migration and fentanyl trafficking at the border (Ruiz Soto & Selee, 2025). While Trump had already used tariff threats to demand stricter migration controls during his first term—resulting in Mexico increasing enforcement and implementing the "Remain in Mexico" program in 2019 (Signos Vitales, 2024)—the dynamics of negotiations with

The Trump administration has not only placed migration at the center of its agenda, but has also weaponized it as a bargaining chip with several Latin American countries.

the Sheinbaum administration in 2025 have become stricter, high-profile and inflexible.

In January 2025, President Trump announced a 25% tariff on all products imported from Mexico (The White House, 2025). This threat was paused in early February after President Sheinbaum agreed to deploy an additional 10,000 members of the National Guard to the U.S. border to focus on drug trafficking and assist in migration control efforts (Brewer & Walsh, 2025). The tariff suspension agreement remained in place until April 2, when Trump announced that Mexico would only face tariffs on products that do not comply with NAFTA. On the other hand, the already tense bilateral relationship has also been affected by the designation of several Mexican cartels as terrorist organizations by the U.S., as well as the deployment of spy planes and the USS Gravelly and USS Spruance ships off the Mexican coast—developments that have clearly intensified tensions in Mexico-U.S. negotiations.

In summary, less than 100 days into the Trump administration, U.S. immigration policy has been characterized by an anti-immigrant narrative combined with executive orders that frame migration as a national

security issue. Although mass deportations have not occurred due to the effective closure of the border between Mexico and the United States, arrests and deportations across U.S. territory—as well as the instrumentalization of migration as a bargaining chip with other countries, continue to form a fundamental part of US immigration policy.

Less than 100 days into the Trump administration, U.S. immigration policy has been characterized by an anti-immigrant narrative combined with executive orders that frame migration as a national security issue.



2. MEXICO'S REACTIONS: BETWEEN ALIGNMENT AND CONTAINMENT POLICY (2006-2024)



THE ARMY IS ADDED TO CONTROL; MEXICO DEPLOYS THE NATIONAL GUARD AT THE BORDER WITH US.

at <https://elpais.com/us/migracion/2025-04-15/el-ejercito-se-suma-al-control-de-la-inmigracion-instalara-una-base-en-la-frontera-con-mexico-para-detener-a-migrantes.html>; <https://www.latimes.com/espanol/mexico/articulo/2025-02-06/mexico-despliega-nuevo-contingente-de-la-guardia-nacional-en-la-frontera-con-eeuu>

«2. MEXICO'S REACTIONS: BETWEEN ALIGNMENT AND CONTAINMENT POLICY (2006–2024)

2.1 EVOLUTION OF MEXICO'S MIGRATION POLICY STANCE

Migration is a complex and evolving phenomenon that has significantly influenced both Mexico's domestic and foreign policy. Its geographic location—adjacent to the world's largest migration destination—has placed the country in a strategic position, making it not only a transit territory but increasingly a destination country for migrants. This situation has required diverse institutional responses in a context shaped by social, economic, and security factors at both national and international levels.

Within this context, the Mexican state's capacity to develop a coherent migration policy has been undermined by the fragility of its institutions. The lack of long-term planning, the inconsistent political commitment of key agencies and the absence of solid implementation mechanisms have prevented a structural response to the migration phenomenon. Although important legal and institutional progress has been made—such as the 2011 Migration Law and the strengthening of the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (Comar)—these advances face serious operational, budgetary and oversight limitations. In day-to-day practice, the tension between human

rights discourse and migration control actions reflects a gap between intention and implementation that hinders the consolidation of a comprehensive migration policy.

Finally, the visible subordination of Mexico's migration decisions to U.S. pressure has deepened the contradictions in the country's stance. Through bilateral agreements and containment measures implemented at Washington's request, Mexico has assumed a role that contradicts the humanitarian principles embedded in its legal framework. The deployment of security forces, the increase in migrant detentions and the acceptance of policies such as "Remain in Mexico" reveal a reactive migration policy shaped by the asymmetric relationship with its northern neighbor. Thus, the country finds itself navigating a path where international human rights commitments co-exist with a geopolitical logic that, in practice, often conditions—and at times contradicts—those commitments.

FELIPE CALDERON'S POSITION 2006–2012

Felipe Calderon's administration was one of the first to approach migration from a security and control perspective, shaped by the context of the so-called War on Drugs. During his term, migration was viewed not only as a social and economic phenomenon, but also as a national security issue, leading to a tightening of policies toward migrants. In terms of migration flows, Mexico recorded an increase in the number of undocumented migrants crossing the country to reach the United States throughout Calderon's administration.

According to official data from the Ministry of the Interior (Segob), approximately 200,000 undocumented migrants crossed through Mexico annually between 2007 and 2012 (Segob, 2018). It is important to note that, particularly due to pressure from the United States—first under the George W. Bush administration and later under Barack Obama—the Calderon administration was compelled to increase migration enforcement within Mexican territory, resulting in record numbers of detentions. Between 2007 and 2012, the Mexican government detained approximately 500,000 undocumented migrants, with the year 2010 marking a record high of 160,000 detentions (CNN, 2024).

Mexico has assumed a role that contradicts the humanitarian principles embedded in its legal framework. The deployment of security forces, the increase in migrant detentions and the acceptance of policies such as "Remain in Mexico" reveal a reactive migration policy shaped by the asymmetric relationship with its northern neighbor.

On the other hand, the United States also pressured Mexico to improve bilateral cooperation on migration issues. As a result, Calderon proposed to the U.S. government the Merida Initiative, a bilateral cooperation agreement that included security and migration assistance under the principle of shared responsibility. Although the Merida Initiative focused primarily on combating drug trafficking and organized crime, it also influenced Mexico's approach to migration control, as it emphasized, among other priorities, enhanced border security (Saenz, 2008; Padinger, 2021).

In the face of mass detentions and a surge in reports of migrant kidnappings (Chabat, 2010), Calderon's administration was widely criticized by human rights organizations due to the violence and abuse committed by migration authorities and criminal actors such as drug cartels. Ultimately, the scandal known as the San Fernando massacre —where 72 migrants were kidnapped and murdered— served as the “final push” that led to the approval of the Migration Law in 2011 (Rosas, 2011).

The law proposed a more comprehensive approach to the migration phenomenon and prioritized the protection of human rights. Additionally, it established

the formal creation of a Center for Evaluation and Trust Control to assess the personnel of the National Institute of Migration (INM), as well as the implementation of sanctions for migration authorities who violate migrants' rights (Ramos, 2011). Other legislative advances approved during Calderon's administration with a human rights-based approach to migration included the Refugees and Protection Law³ and the General Law to Prevent, Punish, and Eradicate Crimes in the Matter of Human Trafficking and to Protect and Assist Victims⁴.

Calderon's administration was widely criticized by human rights organizations due to the violence and abuse committed by migration authorities and criminal actors such as drug cartels.

The Merida Initiative was a bilateral cooperation agreement that included security and migration assistance under the principle of shared responsibility.

³ Published in the DOF 01/27/2011

⁴ Published in the DOF 06/14/2012.

ENRIQUE PEÑA NIETO'S POSITION

2012–2018

Containment policies and migrant detentions continued throughout Peña Nieto's six-year term. Between 2013 and 2017, figures from the Ministry of the Interior (Segob) and the Global Detention Project indicate that approximately 690,000 undocumented migrants were detained in Mexican territory, with 2017 marking a record year with 223,000 detentions (Galvan, 2019). Other sources report up to 823,000 detentions (Soto, 2025).

As with the previous administration, Mexico's bilateral dynamic with the United States during this period was defined by the strong influence and pressure from the latter in shaping, planning, implementing and monitoring migration policies. This reality has unfortunately become a constant and a key factor in the formulation of Mexican migration policy. One of the most significant initiatives in this context was the Southern Border Plan (Plan Frontera Sur) launched by Peña Nieto in 2014 (Government of Mexico, 2014). This plan was presented as an effort to protect migrants entering and transiting through Mexico; however, in practice, it led to an increase in military operations along Mexico's southern border to reduce the

flow of migrants trying to reach the U.S., and subsequently resulted in a sharp rise in migrant detentions—mostly of individuals from Central America.

At the same time, several reports from civil society organizations indicated that through so-called “rescue operations,” the majority of detentions resulted in migrants being returned to their country of origin (Galvan, 2019). As a result, the Peña Nieto administration deported more migrants from Mexico than the number of deportations carried out by the United States. According to WOLA, between October 2014 and April 2015, U.S. Customs and Border Protection detained 70,448 individuals, while Mexican authorities detained 92,889 Central American migrants during the same period (Lopez Magallon, 2015). Other civil organizations, such as Fundar and SinFrontera, confirm in a report that Peña Nieto's administration deported more migrants than the U.S. between 2013 and 2017, with 604,355 migrants removed—most of them to Central America (Galvan, 2019).

Meanwhile, the agency responsible for overseeing the Southern Border Plan, the Coordination for Comprehensive Attention to Migration on the Southern Border (CAIMFS), was dissolved just one year after its creation. Complaints filed with Mexico's National

Civil society organizations such as Fundar and SinFronteras reported that Peña Nieto's administration deported more migrants from Mexico than those carried out by the United States between 2013 and 2017, with 604,355 migrants removed—most of them to Central America (Galvan, 2019).

•

Human Rights Commission regarding alleged human rights violations committed by Mexican immigration officials totaled 1,617 between December 2012 and June 2015 (Fundar, 2015). This handling of migration clearly shows that Peña Nieto pursued a migration policy heavily influenced by the United States under the justification of national security, sidelining the human rights dimension in official discourse.

Additionally, it is important to highlight that Peña Nieto was the first Mexican president during Trump's first term, which marked the beginning of an even stricter migration approach starting in 2017. While Trump's policies had a greater impact during the Lopez Obrador administration, the shift toward a tougher migration policy had already begun in Peña Nieto's final years. Specifically, the Trump administration adopted a "Zero Tolerance" policy, which involved criminally prosecuting all individuals who crossed the border illegally and led to the separation of migrant families—aimed at penalizing adults while children were held separately. Furthermore, the Trump government pressured Mexico with threats to halt the northward flow of migrants. Through public statements, Trump suggested that if Mexico did not control migration flows, he could send more U.S. military forces to the border or suspend cooperation

in other areas, such as trade. Although such threats did not immediately materialize, U.S. pressure remained constant.

As a result, Peña Nieto found himself compelled to further strengthen security at Mexico's southern border. While approximately 5,000 Federal Police officers had already been deployed to the border under the Southern Border Plan since 2014, an additional 1,500 officers were deployed in 2017 to monitor and control migration flows, and this deployment remained in place until 2019 (Infobae, 2019). This once again resulted in an increase in detentions: in 2017, Mexico detained over 100,000 migrants, and between 2018 and October 2019, more than 160,000 (Rodriguez Calva, 2019). Although the administration changed in December 2018, news reports indicate that most of the 160,000 detentions recorded during those 22 months occurred during Peña Nieto's final year in office.

U.S. pressure to contain migration remained constant.

Peña Nieto found himself compelled to further strengthen security at Mexico's southern border. 1,500 officers were deployed in 2017—additionally to 2014's 5,000 Federal Police officers—were deployed to monitor and control migration flows, and this operation remained in place until 2019 (Infobae, 2019).

ANDRES MANUEL LOPEZ OBRADOR'S POSITION 2018–2024

As seen in the previous administrations of Calderon and Peña Nieto, Mexico's migration policy was shaped by U.S. pressure and orders. This was primarily carried out through migrant detention policies framed under a national security approach, which had become a dominant and predictable practice on the part of the northern neighbor.

With his bold and defiant rhetoric, the arrival of Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador led many to believe that this situation might change. Lopez Obrador promised to reduce migration flows through regional cooperation for development and to uphold, at all times, the human rights of migrants (Signos Vitales, 2021). However, the facts told a different story. Full alignment with U.S. policies continued and human rights were not respected.

During his six-year term, U.S. migration policy was managed under two presidential administrations: Donald Trump (2018–2021) and Joe Biden (2021–2024). Lopez Obrador's purported intention to establish a migration policy grounded in Mexico's legal, constitutional and international commitments to the human right to migrate ultimately failed due to sus-

tained pressure from the United States throughout his presidency. The result was a continuation—and even a hardening—of the containment approach that had characterized the migration policies of the two previous administrations (Signos Vitales, 2021).

In 2019, after facing threats of tariffs on Mexican products, the Mexican government signed a new migration agreement with the United States, in which it committed to increasing migration enforcement and expanding the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP), also known as the "Remain in Mexico" program. This entailed that the Mexican government would guarantee access to employment, healthcare and educational opportunities for individuals who were required to "Remain in Mexico" while awaiting a decision on their U.S. asylum claims. With this agreement, Mexico unequivocally—and contrary to the Mexican president's promise—became a *de facto* Safe Third Country⁵.

By September 2019, just three months after the agreement was signed, the Mexican administration

In 2019, after facing threats of tariffs on Mexican products, the Mexican government signed a new migration agreement with the United States, in which it committed to increasing migration enforcement and expanding the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP), also known as the "Remain in Mexico" program.

⁵ Safe Third Country is a term that is based on the principles of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. It implies that a country can refuse to grant asylum to a person and refer them to a third country that is considered "safe". In this case, those migrating to the US from the south would have to first request asylum in Mexico.

had already accepted 39,000 migrants from the United States who were awaiting the outcome of their asylum cases —four times more than the number received between January and June 2019 (Signos Vitales, 2024). By the time the program was temporarily suspended in 2021, reports indicated that approximately 70,000 people had been returned to Mexico under the MPP. President Biden briefly reinstated the program, which resulted in 7,505 migrants being sent back to Mexico between December 2021 and August 2022 (American Immigration Council, 2024). The U.S. Supreme Court ultimately struck down the order to reinstate the MPP under the Biden administration, officially ending the program in October 2022.

As a result, the number of undocumented migrant detentions in Mexico reached record levels under Lopez Obrador's administration: from January 2019 to August 2024, Mexican authorities reported 2,720,412 detentions, representing a 230% increase compared to Peña Nieto's term and a 434% increase compared to Calderon's (Soto, 2025). A key feature of migration management under Lopez Obrador was the involvement of the National Guard in containment operations. It is important to note that the National Guard became the armed enforcement branch of the National Migration Institute (INM), functioning as the exec-

The number of undocumented migrant detentions in Mexico reached record levels under Lopez Obrador's administration: from January 2019 to August 2024, Mexican authorities reported 2,720,412 detentions, representing a 230% increase compared to Peña Nieto's term and a 434% increase compared to Calderon's (Soto, 2025)

utor of an increasingly militarized migration policy. As reported in previous Signos Vitales reports, this policy shifts also resulted in numerous human rights violations —contrasting starkly with the administration's rhetorical emphasis on migrant welfare (Signos Vitales, 2024).

Ultimately, despite its supposed effort to negotiate U.S. pressure, Lopez Obrador's migration policy mirrored those of his predecessors due to forced alignment with the “demands” of the northern neighbor, revealing a clear dependency on U.S. priorities. What distinguished Lopez Obrador's six-year term from those of Calderon and Peña Nieto was the administration's disorderly and contradictory narrative, the proliferation of human rights violations and the intensification of migration policy militarization (Signos Vitales, 2024).

In summary, it is evident that all migration policies implemented under previous and current administrations have been guided by a security-based approach that fails to address the structural problems of migration. It is clear that Mexico's securitized migration policy has been largely driven by political and economic pressures from the United States, resulting in a detention-centered strategy and, ultimately, alignment with U.S. interests and priorities. While militarization was first introduced under Calderon—alongside internal pressure that led to the creation of human rights protections for migrants—under Peña Nieto, the first Mexican president to face Donald Trump, stricter migration policies led to even deeper involvement of the armed forces in migration enforcement. With the arrival of Lopez Obrador, the creation of the National Guard marked a key turning point—not only in the militarization of migration policy, but also in its internalization—clearly contrasting with a misleading narrative focused on human rights.

What distinguished Lopez Obrador's six-year term from those of Calderon and Peña Nieto was the administration's disorderly and contradictory narrative, the proliferation of human rights violations and the intensification of migration policy militarization (Signos Vitales, 2024).



Image: "The shift in Mexican migration policy" at <https://nuso.org/articulo/de-las-puertas-abiertas-al-ya-no-son-bienvenidos/>

TABLE 2. MIGRATION POLICIES OF MEXICO BY SIX-YEAR PERIOD

ADMINISTRATION	IMMIGRATION POLICY
<p>Felipe Calderon Hinojosa</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Merida Initiative » Immigration Law » Refugee and Protection Law » General Law to prevent, punish and eradicate crimes in human trafficking and for the protection and assistance of victims.
<p>Enrique Peña Nieto</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Southern Border Plan (Frontera Sur Plan).
<p>Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Stay in Mexico » Deployment of the National Guard on northern and southern borders.
<p>Claudia Sheinbaum</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Support Program for Mexicans in the United States » Mexico program embraces you » Deployment of 10,000 National Guard elements.

Source: In-house elaboration with information from the Government of Mexico 2006–2024.

2.2 ALIGNMENT: RECENT INITIATIVES BY THE CLAUDIA SHEINBAUM ADMINISTRATION IN RESPONSE TO U.S. POLICIES

In 2025, President Donald Trump's administration has implemented a series of immigration and national security policies that have directly affected Mexico. These measures include the reactivation of the "Remain in Mexico" policy, the declaration of a national emergency at the southern border and the designation of Mexican cartels as terrorist organizations. In addition, deportations have intensified—even in areas previously considered sensitive—and programs such as Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for certain countries, have been suspended (Gonzalez, 2025).

In response, the Mexican government, led by President Claudia Sheinbaum, has adopted various initiatives to address the implications of these policies. Mexico successfully negotiated the exclusion of Mexican products from the new U.S. –imposed tariffs, preserving key trade benefits. Additionally, security measures along the border were reinforced and significant fentanyl seizures were achieved— aiming to demonstrate Mexico's commitment to combating

drug trafficking and to maintaining stable relations with the U.S. government (Guillen & Suarez, 2025).

These actions reflect Mexico's efforts to balance external pressures with the protection of national interests and sovereignty. Nonetheless, they also appear intended to satisfy U.S. expectations in order to gradually navigate the new and ongoing demands placed on Mexico. But in reality, how has Sheinbaum approached the migration issue? Since October 1, 2024, President Claudia Sheinbaum's migration policy has been marked by a narrative of sovereignty, while a series of actions-outlined-below have been implemented.

BETWEEN THE NARRATIVE OF A SOVEREIGN NATION AND UNSTRUCTURED ACTIONS

Since Trump's election in November 2024 and amid constant threats of mass deportations, Sheinbaum's administration has projected a narrative aimed at resisting the anti-immigrant rhetoric coming from the U.S. Even months before Trump's inauguration, her daily press briefings had already signaled that migration would be a central issue in the months to come. While Sheinbaum has attempted to ease the growing pressure, her rhetorical approach has emphasized

In 2025, with Trump's administration, the reactivation of the "Remain in Mexico" policy, the declaration of a national emergency at the southern border and the designation of Mexican cartels as terrorist organizations is implemented.

that migration is an opportunity to “build bridges between the governments (of Mexico and the U.S.) and the people” (CNN, 2024), and that it will be a fundamental component of Mexico-U.S. relations.

At the same time, Sheinbaum has made efforts to highlight the contributions of Mexicans to the U.S. economy and to express her administration’s openness to receiving returning nationals. Her messaging has increasingly taken on a nationalist tone. In what resembled a campaign-style message to Mexican citizens, for example, during her January 4, 2025 morning press conference, the president emphasized the importance of remittances and the essential role of Mexican migrants in the United States:

We say that they are heroes and heroines of the nation and we will always defend them because a Mexican, wherever they are, must be respected—because Mexico must be respected, as we are a free, sovereign and independent country (Forbes, 2025).

In line with her narrative, Sheinbaum proceeded to announce several migration-related measures. Among the first, announced in December 2024, was the Support Program for Mexicans in the United States, which included the creation of a Center for

Information and Assistance to Mexicans (CIAM) to provide legal aid, and an “Alert Button” system available as of January 2025 to notify family members in the event of an imminent deportation (Government of Mexico, 2024b). She also announced the strengthening of Mexico’s consular network in the U.S.—already the largest in the world with 53 consulates. However, this announcement contrasts with fiscal reality: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ 2025 budget was in fact reduced from 9,994 million pesos to 9,294 million (Camhaji, 2024), raising questions about the feasibility of these proposed initiatives.

In another high-profile announcement, in December 2024, Sheinbaum unveiled a plan for comprehensive reform of the National Migration Institute (INM), aiming to refocus it on supporting human mobility and protecting migrants’ rights. With this, Sheinbaum stated that INM director Francisco Garduño would be replaced by former Puebla governor Sergio Salomon Cespedes (Gordoa, 2024). As reported in Signos Vitales, Garduño had faced strong criticism for the 2023 fire at a migrant detention center in Ciudad Juarez that left 40 people dead. His legal case remains unresolved (Signos Vitales, 2024), and, more than four months after Sheinbaum’s announcement, Garduño still heads the INM. These facts clearly indicate that

While Sheinbaum has attempted to ease the growing pressure, her rhetorical approach has emphasized that migration is an opportunity to “build bridges between the governments (of Mexico and the U.S.) and the people” (CNN, 2024), and that it will be a fundamental component of Mexico-U.S. relations.

the narrative of a new migration policy under Sheinbaum has not materialized in practice.

Sheinbaum's administration has repeatedly stated that it is prepared for the potential mass deportations promised by Donald Trump. Indeed, on January 28, 2025 —after Trump's return to the presidency— Sheinbaum announced the "Mexico te abraza" ("Mexico Embraces You") program (Government of Mexico, 2025). As part of this so-called national strategy, nine temporary shelters in border cities were newly equipped to receive deported nationals. Additionally, Sheinbaum announced that deported migrants would be eligible for the Wellbeing Card (Tarjeta del Bienestar), providing 2,000 pesos (100 USD) to help cover transportation costs back to their place of origin within Mexico. However, the program has been criticized by civil society organizations and experts who argue that the measures are poorly structured and open the door to potential overuse of the military. Moreover, the program does not address the deportation of non-Mexican migrants, adding to the uncertainty.

Lastly, the program's estimated budget raises serious concerns about its feasibility. Experts argue that the federal budget for 2025 is insufficient to cover the projected costs. Based on the 2024 figure of 190,491



Image: Sergio Salomon Cespedes receives the post as the head of INM from Francisco Garduño at <https://eldiaoficial.com/2025/04/formalizan-ingreso-de-sergio-salomon-cespedes-al-inm/>



Image: "Migrant Center in Coahuila receives more than 580 people repatriated with the program "Mexico embraces you" at <https://elheraldodesaltillo.mx/2025/05/06/recibe-centro-migrante-en-coahuila-a-mas-de-580-personas-repatriadas-con-el-programa-mexico-te-abraza/>

The program's estimated budget raises serious concerns about its feasibility. Experts argue that the federal budget for 2025 is insufficient to cover the projected costs.

repatriated Mexicans, the estimated cost exceeds 9,500 million pesos annually, while annual affiliation to the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS) would cost 2,285.9 million pesos and the Wellbeing Card would account for 380.9 million pesos (Ruiz-Healy, 2025). As of March 3, the Sheinbaum administration reported having issued 5,063 Wellbeing Cards. Although Trump's promised mass deportations have not yet occurred, the necessary budget could grow significantly if deportations increase.



Image: Detentions at the border at <https://mundo-oriental.com/cifras-r-cord-m-s-de-40-000-personas-llegan-legalmente-a-ee-uu-en-junio-mientras-detenciones-en-frontera-bajan-id4440/>

THE OTHER REALITY: DETENTIONS AND MILITARIZATION PERSIST

While the Sheinbaum administration's narrative has focused on a nationalist sensationalism surrounding migration —promising to protect the human rights of both deportees and migrants transiting through Mexican territory— the facts tell a different story. Between October 1 and December 3, 2024, the Government of Mexico detained 349,625 migrants, which represents an average of 5,234 detentions per day, according to a statement from Mexico's Secretariat of Security and Citizen Protection. This figure surpasses the daily average of detentions reported between July and August 2024 —3,416 detentions per day, according to the last official figures available under the administration of former President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (CNN, 2024). It also represents more than half the total number of detentions recorded during the entire six-year term of Felipe Calderon.

On the other hand, from January 2025 through the time of this report, it has not been possible to determine how many migrants have been detained, as the federal government has not updated the figures. A monthly bulletin of migration statistics dated March 2025 states that “the data on people in irregular sta-

Between October 1 and December 3, 2024, the Government of Mexico detained 349,625 migrants, which represents an average of 5,234 detentions per day, according to a statement from Mexico's Secretariat of Security and Citizen Protection. This figure surpasses the daily average of detentions reported between July and August 2024—3,416 detentions per day.

tus (previously: detained persons) will be delayed in being updated” (Segob, 2025c). Similarly, the website of the Ministry of the Interior (Segob) explains that the page containing data on detained migrants no longer exists: “It is possible that it no longer exists on the site, has changed location or is temporarily unavailable.” (Segob, 2025). This lack of information hinders the analysis of the migrant detention situation in Mexico and casts doubt on Sheinbaum’s narrative regarding her supposed human rights–centered approach.

IMAGE 1. SCREEN SHOT FROM
THE “MONTHLY BULLETIN 2025”

III. Personas en situación migratoria irregular (antes, extranjeros presentados y devueltos)
El dato de Personas en situación migratoria irregular demorará en actualizarse debido a un proceso de reestructuración

Source: Segob, 2025c. Last access: 8 April, 2025.

Likewise, in February 2025, Sheinbaum announced the deployment of 10,000 members of the National Guard to the U.S. border to contain migration and combat organized crime. This deployment came in response to new threats from Trump to impose 25% tariffs on Mexican products. In short, in her attempt to showcase the Mexican courage she so often invokes in reference to Trump, President Sheinbaum’s narrative has been marked above all by ambiguity, failing to address the structural problems underlying migration. Furthermore, there is no doubt that the lack of



Image: "Mexico deploys 10 thousand military agents at the border with the U.S." at <https://www.prensalibre.com/fotogalerias/internacional/mexico-despliega-10-mil-agentes-militares-en-la-frontera-con-estados-unidos/>

data on detention events is becoming an increasingly serious issue. This lack of transparency creates uncertainty in the current context, as U.S. President Donald Trump once again pressures Mexico to curb irregular migration through military deployment (Soto, 2025). Finally, Sheinbaum's government continues to react to the policies, threats and demands of its northern neighbor; resulting not only in the need to design a short-term action framework, but also giving continuity to non-strategic immigration measures and in the continued militarization of migration already established in previous administrations (Graph 2)

Sheinbaum's government continues to react to the policies, threats and demands of its northern neighbor; resulting not only in the need to design a short-term action framework, but also giving continuity to non-strategic immigration measures and in the continued militarization of migration already established in previous administrations

2.3 MILITARIZING THE BORDER: THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL GUARD IN MANAGING MIGRATORY FLOWS

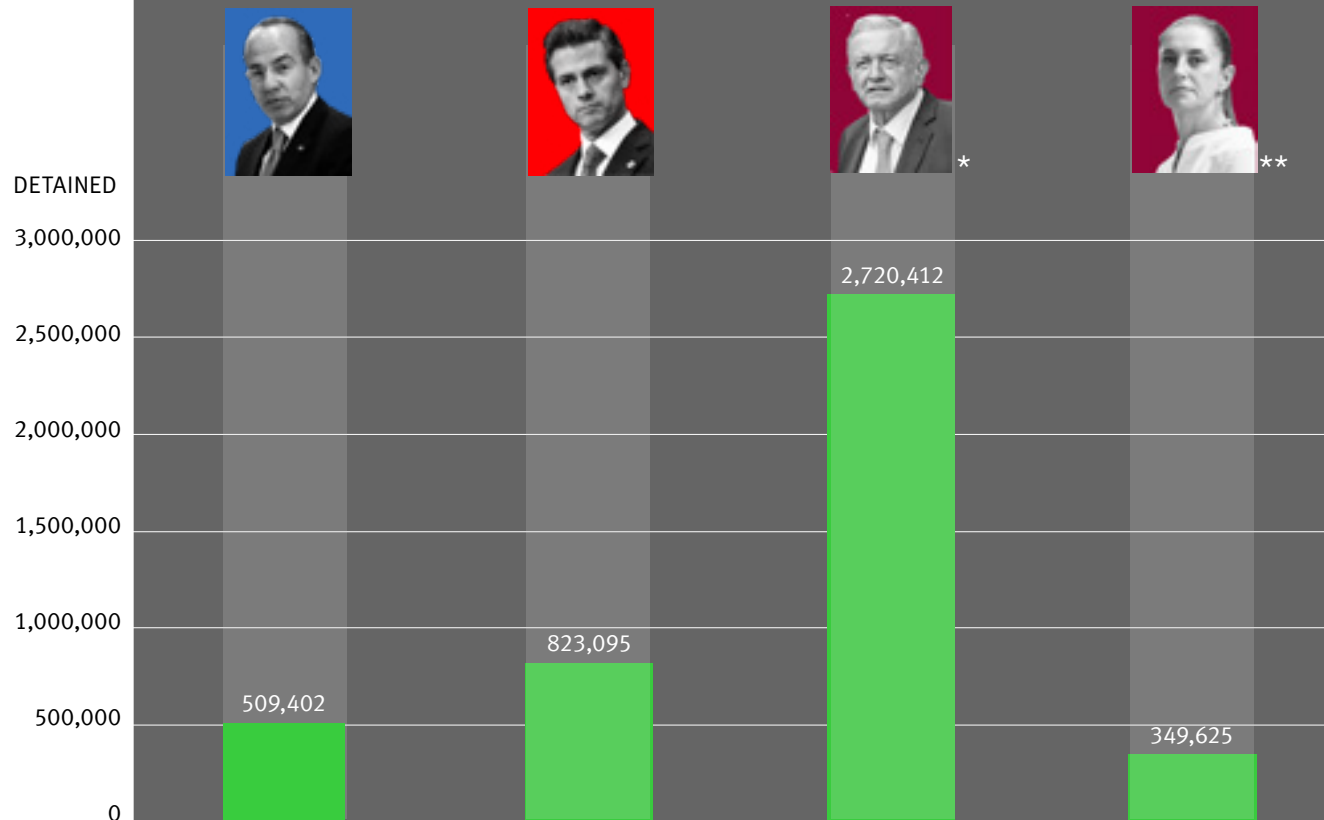
As previously mentioned by Signos Vitales and throughout this report, the securitized approach to Mexican migration policy has been a constant over the last three presidential terms. In this context, the National Guard has played a leading role in managing migration policy since its creation in 2019. This has resulted in the militarization not only of the country's borders but of the migration issue as a whole.

In the early months of 2019 —the first year of the National Guard— the Mexican government deployed 25,000 National Guard troops to both the southern and northern borders to halt the flow of irregular migrants and prevent human trafficking and organized crime related to migration (Signos Vitales, 2024). Ten thousand National Guard troops patrolled Mexico's southern border with Guatemala and 15,000 were stationed along the northern border. Alongside this deployment, the National Guard detained approximately 81,000 migrants—35,000 more than the military had detained during the same period in 2018. According to official data, between September 2020 and June 2021 alone, the National Migration Institute

The securitized approach to Mexican migration policy has been a constant over the last three presidential terms.

The National Guard has played a leading role in managing migration policy since its creation in 2019.

GRAPH 2. DETENTIONS OF FOREIGN MIGRANTS IN MEXICO BY ADMINISTRATION



* Data from Lopez Obrador's six-year term are available until August 2024.

** The number of arrests during Sheinbaum's six-year term includes only the first two months of his government (from October 1 to December 4, 2024).

Source: In-house elaboration with information from CNN, 2024.

(INM) detained 128,000 migrants. Of these, 104,789 migrants (82%) were apprehended by operations conducted by the National Guard and the Army (Urte, 2024). By September 2022, the number of soldiers, marines and National Guard members had risen to 46,916, with a total of 345,584 people detained, marking a historic record with a 126% increase (Urte, 2022).

It is worth noting that despite the termination of the "Remain in Mexico" program in 2022, the number of detentions of migrants with irregular status at the borders did not significantly decline, indicating that militarization had become internalized regardless of reduced pressure from the United States. In fact, Mexico appears to have accelerated the pace of migrant detentions. According to data from the Ministry of the Interior, the number of detentions in the early months of 2023 hovered around 145,014, while in the same period of 2024, 481,025 detentions were recorded (Rojas, 2024b). Furthermore, as of mid-2024, 17 out of 32 offices of the National Migration Institute were headed by retired military personnel (Signos Vitales, 2024).

The most recent official deployment of the National Guard occurred with the dispatch of 10,000 troops to the northern border in February 2025, as a result of

negotiations between Sheinbaum and Trump. However, at no point during her administration has the Sheinbaum government disclosed the exact number of deployed troops, continuing the same smoky handling of information seen under her predecessor. Press reports suggest that the current number of National Guard members conducting control and detention operations on both of Mexico's borders ranges between 25,000 and 80,000.

In summary, it is clear that the militarization of migration in Mexico has largely been a response to U.S. demands, with Washington pressuring Mexico to reduce the number of migrants reaching the shared border. Consequently, control policies and militarization have been framed by agreements and pressure from the U.S., which has made migration a key issue in its bilateral agenda. Nevertheless, the militarization of border control took a drastic turn under the Lopez Obrador administration with the creation of the National Guard, embedding military presence into migration enforcement. While this militarization continues today, Sheinbaum's rhetoric has also maintained a discourse focused on respect for human rights. However, as shown, her government has clearly prioritized cooperation with the United States in order to avoid sanctions and economic repercussions.

At no point during her administration has the Sheinbaum government disclosed the exact number of deployed troops.

Press reports suggest that the current number of National Guard members conducting control and detention operations on both of Mexico's borders ranges between 25,000 and 80,000.

In this context, it is important to highlight that due to her political discourse, Sheinbaum has been perceived by some sectors as a skilled negotiator, especially in dealings with the United States. However, the actions of the current government presented here reveal that its positions on migration policy have not stemmed from a sovereign strategic agenda, but rather from reactions to measures imposed by the U.S. president. Sheinbaum continued the deployment of the National Guard to the borders in response to Trump's tariff threats. She accepted —despite denying it in her official narrative— the new framework of migration cooperation, including the "Remain in Mexico" program. Finally, she implemented programs within Mexican territory that confirm a pattern of reacting to U.S. demands instead of promoting a migration policy grounded in her own principles. These reactive decisions, characteristic of the foreign policy of the Fourth Transformation, clearly reflect a posture that has avoided confrontation with Washington—even when doing so has meant compromising fundamental principles of migrant protection.



Image: Trump threatens with tariffs at <https://www.huffingtonpost.es/economia/trump-aranceles-si-cuando-que-consecuencias.html>

The actions of Sheinbaum's government reveal that their position on migration policy have not stemmed from a sovereign strategic agenda, but rather from reactions to measures imposed by the U.S. president to avoid sanctions and economic repercussions.



3. THE CONSEQUENCES FOR MIGRANTS: ¿WHAT ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS?



MIGRATION CRISIS IN USA: "DANGEROUS" OVERCROWDING AT THE DETENTION CENTERS; FEDERALES AUTHORITIES STOP HUNDREDS OF MIGRANTS at: <https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-internacional-48856400> // <https://www.vozdeamerica.com/a/mexico-autoridades-federales-detienen-cientos-de-migrantes/4886632.html>

3. «THE CONSEQUENCES FOR MIGRANTS: WHAT ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS?

THE CONSEQUENCES FOR MIGRANTS: WHAT ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS?

The border between Mexico and the United States is governed by a wide range of international legal norms and its oversight is crucial to the bilateral relationship. Part of this oversight, legal respect and sovereignty involves border control and determining who is allowed to enter the territory (Becerra, 2021). However, the current context, marked by the declaration of an anti-immigrant policy in the U.S., along with the political and social atmosphere at Mexico's northern border; reveals an unprecedented polarization. Hate speech has found fertile ground and its

main target has become the migrant community —including Mexicans. The relationship between Mexico and the United States has traditionally been a space for consensus-building, cooperation, and negotiation strategies. Topics such as security, trade, the environment, health and many others have long formed part of the bilateral agenda. Today, migration policy and its effects have taken center stage as a critical issue in the public spotlight due to the human rights violations caused by current anti-immigrant policies.

Migration policy between Mexico and the United States has expanded beyond traditional matters to include military and national security concerns,

Migration policy between Mexico and the US, along with the political and social atmosphere, reveals an unprecedented polarization where hate speech has found fertile ground and its main target has become the migrant community.

framed by transboundary challenges such as terrorism, mass refugee flows, unregulated migrant trafficking, poverty and economic or environmental crises—all now seen as risks to humanity and sovereign nations (Laborie, 2011). Migration and mobility are human rights that must be guaranteed by states based on principles of respect, solidarity and non-discrimination (CNDH, n. d.). Although principles and guidelines for the protection of vulnerable migrants' human rights have been established by the UN (UNHCR, 2018), the degrading treatment of deported migrants under the Trump administration not only violates fundamental rights, but also defies the basic principles of human dignity recognized globally (Clacso, 2025).

In *Signos Vitales* (2020), we have previously shown how political decisions have compromised migrants' human rights. We also highlighted how Mexican border cities, along with immigration stations and temporary shelters, were under extreme pressure from the high number of migrants arriving from the south, the poor living conditions they endured, and the human rights violations they faced. In this section, we analyze how containment policies affect individuals on both sides of the border, the effectiveness of Mexico's migration policies and the strengths and weak-

nesses of institutions like the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (Comar) and the National Migration Institute (INM), along with the specific incidents and impacts on migrants' rights.

3.1 THE NULLIFICATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER

To understand the nullification of human rights along the Mexico-U.S. border, it is essential to examine the political, social and economic context that frames migration between the two countries. We begin by acknowledging that the reasons for migration are varied and complex. Since ancient times, human beings have been in constant movement for multiple reasons: in search of work or better economic opportunities, for education, family reunification, or to flee natural disasters, conflict, persecution, terrorism and human rights violations or abuses (UN, n. d.).

Within the social context between Mexico and the U.S., we are witnessing a new era of migration processes—both in terms of urban mobility (its dimensions and composition) and state policies (extreme and radical anti-immigrant measures). Today's migratory tendencies between both countries present a dual profile: on one hand, migration is motivated by the need for

The degrading treatment of deported migrants under the Trump administration not only violates fundamental rights, but also defies the basic principles of human dignity recognized globally (Clacso, 2025).

refuge⁶, and on the other, it is met with an extreme anti-immigrant ideology that manifests in radical exclusionary policies driven by state actions and government initiatives that reflect an unprecedentedly harsh and exclusionary stance (Guillen, 2025).

Data show that anti-immigrant policies and initiatives endanger the rights of over 15.4 million undocumented immigrants in the United States (Center for Immigration Studies, 2025). It is also worth noting that the Mexico–U.S. migration corridor⁷ is the largest in the world⁸ (McAuliffe & Oucho, 2024). Despite the fact that both countries have enacted various national

6 A person in a refugee situation is considered to be someone who, being a foreigner, due to well-founded fears (persecuted for reasons of race or religion, gender, nationality, internal conflicts or any violation of their human rights, for which reason they are outside their country).

7 According to the Organization for World Migration, migration corridors represent an accumulation of migratory movements over time and offer a snapshot of the evolution of migration patterns (McAuliffe and Oucho, 2024).

8 The second extends from the Syrian Arab Republic to Turkey and is mainly made up of refugees displaced by the civil war in the Syrian Arab Republic. The bilateral corridors between Russia and Ukraine rank third and fifth in the list of the largest corridors in the world, which is due to various reasons (in particular, for example, displacements from Ukraine as a result of the Russian invasions in 2014 and 2022). When analyzing the migration trend we find that the US is the main destination along with Germany and Saudi Arabia; while India, Mexico and Russia are the main countries of origin of international migrants (McAuliffe and Oucho, 2024).

Data show that anti-immigrant policies and initiatives endanger the rights of over 15.4 million undocumented immigrants in the United States (Center for immigration Studies, 2025).

immigration provisions⁹ and are parties to numerous international treaties and instruments recognizing migrants' rights¹⁰, human rights violations continue to occur on both sides of the border.

Mexican authorities have been unable to protect the right to life and security of asylum seekers and refugees in the country. This was evidenced by the deaths of at least 40 people (with another 29 injured) in a fire at a migrant detention center in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, in March 2023. Additionally, the arbitrary detention of at least 87,000 migrants was documented between 2021 and 2022 along Mexico's southern

9 Established in the Constitution (Art 1, Art 2, Art 11) and in the different laws (Refugee Law, Migration Law, Mexican Foreign Service Law, Federal Law to prevent and eliminate discrimination, among others) (UNAM, s. f).

10 Such as the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Their Families; the Convention on Temporary Asylum; the American Convention on Human Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (among others) (UNAM, s. f).

and northern borders. Even the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR, 2023a) has documented and received reports of the unnecessary or disproportionate use of force in Mexico. There have also been indications of a direct link between abuses against migrants—such as forced disappearances and killings—and organized crime, often with the complicity of law enforcement, investigative personnel and other authorities.

In the United States, prevention tactics based on deterrence, aimed at curbing migration at the Mexico-U.S. border, have led to an increase in deaths and disappearances. Over the past 30 years, it is estimated that between 10,000 and 80,000 people have died at the border and thousands have gone missing—mostly migrants of Latin American origin. This reveals how U.S. law enforcement tactics exacerbate the crisis of mass death and disappearance in border zones (Coalición de Derechos Humanos & No More Deaths, 2023). In at least 91 of the 456 emergency cases reported to the migrant crisis line, the incidents involved a Border Patrol pursuit and scatter. Approximately 1 in every 5 emergencies involved individuals being chased by Border Patrol agents (Devereaux, 2022).



Image: "Mexico, USA and Canada celebrate the first anniversary of the trade agreement T-MEC" at <https://www.aa.com.tr/es/econom%C3%ADa/m%C3%A9xico-eeuu-y-canad%C3%A1-celebran-el-primer-aniversario-del-tratado-comercial-t-mec/2290669>

In the political and economic context, the interdependence between the two countries largely stems from geographic proximity and long-standing trade agreements. Evidence shows that migration often becomes the main point of contention in trade relations. During his first term, Donald Trump's administration highlighted the power asymmetry between the two nations. One of his first moves was to demand the renegotiation of NAFTA, threatening to withdraw the U.S.

from the agreement if Mexico and Canada refused. The outcome of this threat was the replacement of NAFTA with the USMCA, which Trump described as the “fairest trade deal ever negotiated”¹¹ (Signos Vitales, 2020).

From his time as a candidate, the current U.S. president labeled Mexican immigrants as criminals—an unfair and reductive characterization that has permeated much of his public rhetoric. His narrative was centered on xenophobia, accompanied by the fulfilled promise of building a wall along the border with Mexico. In the first 24 hours of his second term in January 2025, Trump signed a series of executive orders under his America First agenda, aimed at transforming immigration policy and foreign aid. Human rights organizations have already warned of arbitrary and indiscriminate detentions in the U.S. and the Mexi-

can consular network issued a preliminary report revealing the scale of xenophobia during Trump’s first month back in office. Between January 20 and February 5, 2025, 667 attacks against Mexican nationals were reported —surpassing the total reported in all of 2024 (402) and 2023 (246) (Mendez, 2025).

Indiscriminate detentions in the U.S. and the Mexican consular network issued a preliminary report revealing the scale of xenophobia during Trump’s first month back in office. Between January 20 and February 5, 2025, 667 attacks against Mexican nationals were reported—surpassing the total reported in all of 2024 (402) and 2023 (246) (Mendez, 2025).

¹¹ The USMCA was not intended to be symmetrical in terms of rights and obligations, an issue that, to a certain extent, Trump achieved both with the modification of the rules of origin and in the labor section, which establishes that the implementation of Mexican labor policy will be supervised by American observers. In this way, around 37 thousand Mexican export companies would be subject to supervision by US observers. Companies will be obliged to legitimize collective contracts and will be under scrutiny to comply with the rules of origin that require them to pay higher salaries to a percentage of workers (Signos Vitales, 2020).

3.2 ON THE U.S. SIDE: RISKS AND THREATS

Truly addressing human rights violations requires a critical review of the ways in which migrant rights are being undermined. The anti-immigrant policies violate at least three key rights under international migration law in the context of deportation threats:

- » Right to seek asylum and international protection: Anyone fleeing persecution or violence has the right to seek asylum in another country.
- » Right to non-refoulement: No migrant should be returned to a country where their life is at risk.
- » Right not to be arbitrarily detained: Detention must be exceptional, used only for legitimate reasons and carried out with respect for dignity and rights.

These policies lead to the forced separation of families, particularly with the potential reinstatement of programs like "Remain in Mexico"¹², which sends asylum seekers back to Mexico, placing them at risk of kidnapping, extortion, rape, and other abuses—thereby violating their right to seek asylum in the United States (Human Rights Watch, n. d.). Another

¹² The "Remain in Mexico" Program was applied on the northern border between Mexico and the US. It was originally launched in January 2019 under the first Trump administration and was restarted by Biden on December 6, 2021 (Human Rights Watch, n. d.).

example of violations against migrants and refugees was the enforcement of "Title 42"¹³, which ended in May 2023. The policy prohibited non-citizens from entering the U.S. via land borders under the guise of public health protection, effectively blocking asylum procedures and the identification of those in need of international protection—actions inconsistent with state obligations (IACHR, 2023).

In addition, major changes are expected for programs like Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which protects individuals who entered the U.S. illegally as children. While DACA does not provide formal legal status or a pathway to citizenship, it does allow for driver's licenses, Social Security numbers and work permits. Unfortunately, in January 2025, a series of appeals challenged the program, arguing that parts of DACA violate U.S. immigration law by granting unauthorized benefits. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals paused its decision regarding current DACA recipients, and a further court ruling is pending to determine whether renewals and work permits under

¹³ The application of the "Title 42" order prohibited the entry of non-citizens into the land borders of the United States based on the interest of public health, at the same time it prevented access to the asylum procedure and the identification of possible international protection needs, which is contrary to its State obligations (IACHR, 2023).

The anti-immigrant policies violate at least three key rights:

- » *Right to seek asylum and international protection*
- » *Right to non-refoulement*
- » *Right not to be arbitrarily detained.*

DACA will continue (National Immigrant Justice Center, 2025). Another area at risk involves the Safe Mobility Offices¹⁴ (SMOs), which are intended to expand legal pathways to the U.S. (and other countries) for refugees and migrants in South and Central America. These offices allow refugees and migrants to apply for resettlement, family reunification, humanitarian parole and temporary work permits (Mixed Migration Centre, 2024).

In that same vein, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) terminated the 2023 designation of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Venezuelan nationals, affecting the validity of Employment Authorization Documents (EADs), even though Venezuela was among the countries covered¹⁵ under this temporary immigration relief granted by the U.S. Government. This measure was designed to assist individuals who cannot safely return to their countries of origin due to ongoing armed conflict, natural disasters or other extraordinary and temporary conditions¹⁶ (USCIS,

¹⁴ In the second quarter of 2023, the US Government announced the opening of Safe Mobility Offices as part of its regional strategy to manage mixed migration in the Americas.

¹⁵ Afghanistan, Cameroon, El Salvador, Haiti, Nepal, Syria, Venezuela, Ukraine, among others.

¹⁶ TPS beneficiaries and eligible individuals are not removed from the US and will not be detained by the Department of



Image: "USA deports people from Venezuela" at <https://www.france24.com/es/am%C3%A9rica-latina/20250210-gobierno-de-maduro-anuncia-que-dos-vuelos-con-migrantes-deportados-de-ee-uu-va-rumbo-a-venezuela>

2025). Part of the justification lies in the fact that TPS beneficiaries were aware that this status has always been granted as a temporary measure and that those under TPS may adjust their status if they meet the eligibility requirements of other immigration programs (IACHR, 2025).

Another threat lies in the Central American Minors Program (CAMP), which offers eligible children and certain family members the opportunity to obtain

Homeland Security (DHS). Recipients can also seek work in the US, using an employment authorization document (EAD) and obtain authorization to travel.

refugee status and potential resettlement in the United States. The program is aimed at unmarried minors under 21 years of age who are nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala or Honduras. An additional political measure affecting migration and human rights was the cancellation of the CBP One app, which allowed users to schedule appointments to request entry into the United States. This app was deactivated on January 20, 2025, leading to the immediate cancellation of all scheduled appointments. Furthermore, the refugee resettlement program was suspended, impacting individuals who had already been approved for resettlement in the U.S. The implementation of these and other executive orders restricts access to fair procedures for determining refugee status (IACHR, 2025).

Ultimately, Donald Trump had previously demonstrated a clearly anti-immigrant stance, which he is now reinforcing through the declaration of a national emergency at the border. This has led to the militarization of the border (with deployments of the Army and Navy) and the establishment of an extreme national security framework. This shift has contributed to a legal redefinition of migrants—from “right less individuals” to criminals. The containment of the border is evident in the data that highlight efforts to

reduce migrant arrivals to the U.S. As mentioned in previous sections, there has been a marked decline in encounters between U.S. Border Patrol and migrants at the Mexico-U.S. border: from over 300,000 encounters in December 2023 to 96,000 in the same month of 2024 and down to just 11,000 in February 2025 (U.S. Customs and Border Protection, 2025). U.S. immigration policy must be guided by a deep understanding of the root causes of migration and the impact of its anti-immigrant policies. Fair treatment, access to due process and respect for human rights are key variables in the implementation of policies that, in many cases, jeopardize the stability and very lives of migrants.

Fair treatment, access to due process and respect for human rights are key variables in the implementation of policies that, in many cases, jeopardize the stability and very lives of migrants.

3.3 ON THE MEXICAN SIDE: MIGRATION CONTAINMENT AND ABUSES AGAINST MIGRANTS

As previously noted, the government of Donald Trump has moved from rhetoric to anti-immigrant policies that, through state actions and government initiatives, establish an unprecedentedly radical, exclusionary and anti-immigrant stance (Guillen, 2025). These policies exert pressure on Mexico to reinforce containment measures on its side of the border. To grasp the scale of the challenge, it is essential to describe the context. Mexico is the second-largest country of origin for migrants (after India), while the United States is the top destination for international migrants worldwide (McAuliffe & Oucho, 2024). This highlights the significance of the relationship between the two nations. In Mexico, nearly half of those in irregular migration status come from South America (52%)¹⁷ and many of them face serious —often

¹⁷ In 2024 in Mexico, 52.2% of people in an irregular immigration situation come from South America; 27.9% from Central America and 10% from the Caribbean Islands. The number of events of people in an irregular migratory situation in Mexico is 925,085 in 2024. The nationalities that reported the most people (presented and analyzed) in 2024 were Venezuela (266,846), Ecuador (92,487), Honduras (74,220), Guatemala (67,486), Colombia (59,434) and El Salvador (56,300) (McAuliffe and Oucho, 2024).

deadly— risks. Criminal violence, political instability and poverty remain among the main drivers of irregular migration in the sub region, placing migrants at risk of extortion, sexual violence and family separation, among other dangers.

According to data from the 2023 UNHCR Mixed Movements Monitoring Report, 82% of migrants transiting through Guatemala, Mexico, Costa Rica, and Panama intended to reach the United States, while only 9% had Mexico as their destination (UNHCR & WFP, 2023). This confirms that the U.S. is the final destination for most. Similarly, a survey conducted among 251 migrants in public shelters in Mexico found that 71% aimed to reach the U.S. and 39% intended to stay in Mexico (IOM, 2023a; IOM, 2023b). There is also documented evidence of a practice on the Mexican side known as *el carrusel* (the carousel), in which foreign nationals apprehended at checkpoints, highways, buses or trains during organized raids are transported to southern Mexico, only for many to make their way back north again (Rodriguez, 2025).

Since Mexico is carrying out fewer deportations (54,728 in 2023 compared to 16,474 in 2024)¹⁸, and

¹⁸ 91% of the people returned by the Mexican authorities to their countries come from Central America, mainly from Guatemala (51%) and Honduras (38.2%) (Migration Poli-

Mexico is the second-largest country of origin for migrants (after India), while the United States is the top destination for international migrants worldwide (McAuliffe & Oucho, 2024)

the U.S. is implementing a strict containment-based migration policy, the result is a growing population of irregular migrants in Mexico (see Graph 3). According to INM'S administrative records there were 1,234,698 records (not necessarily an equal number of persons) of irregular migrants, while there were 778,907 records in 2023 (Government of Mexico, 2024a). Also, such population is in constant movement, a flow figure rather than a "stock". That means a greater challenge for the country in its efforts to address and support a growing migrant population (Graph 3).

As if that weren't enough, a series of conditions threaten the human rights of people in Mexico. In 2023 alone, at least 1,148 migrants lost their lives along migration routes in the Americas and the Caribbean. The main causes of death were drowning (398), vehicle accidents (290), exposure to harsh environments combined with lack of proper shelter, food or water (150), acts of violence (81), accidental deaths (76), illnesses combined with lack of access to health care (36) and mixed or unknown causes (117). Most of these deaths occurred at the Mexico–U.S.

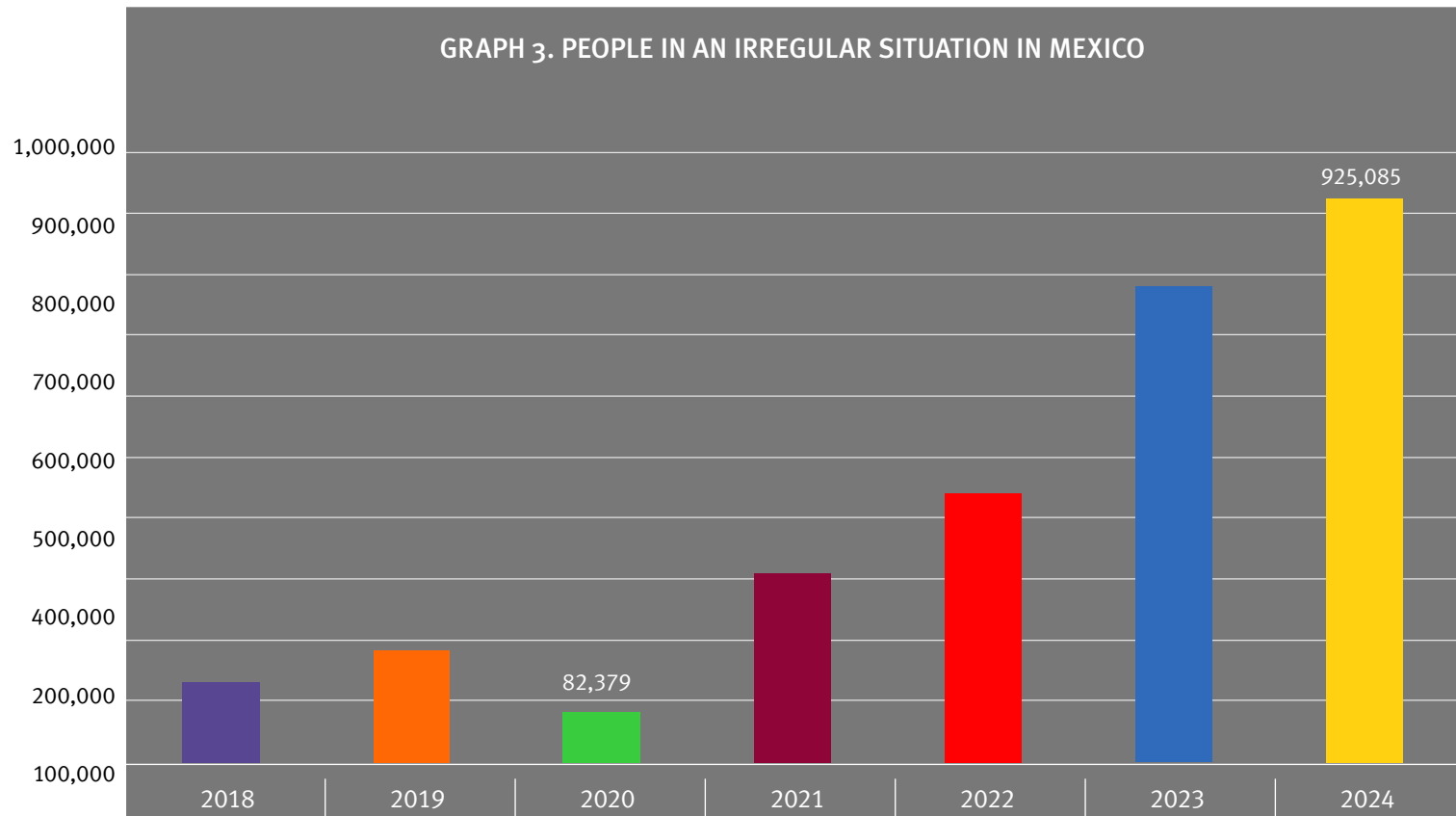
cy Unit, 2024). For 2025, data from the National Migration Institute indicate that "it will take time to update due to a restructuring process," which does not allow the data to be followed up (Migration Policy Unit, 2025).

border (533), from the Caribbean to the U.S. (75), in the Darien Gap (42) and from the Dominican Republic to Puerto Rico (41) (IFRC, 2024).

Another major tragedy faced by migrants involves disappearances and deprivation of liberty. The International Organization for Migration's (IOM) Missing Migrants Project has documented at least 11,056 cas-



Image: "Militaries killed six young people in Nuevo Laredo" at <https://liderweb.mx/militares-masacran-a-seis-jovenes-en-nuevo-laredo-uno-sobre-vive/>



0 Source: In-house elaboration with data from the Gobierno de Mexico (2024a).

In 2023 alone, at least 1,148 migrants lost their lives along migration routes in the Americas and the Caribbean. The main causes of death were: drowning, vehicle accidents, exposure to harsh environments combined with lack of proper shelter, food or water, acts of violence, etc. Most of these deaths occurred at the Mexico-U.S. border (533).

es of missing persons in the Americas region between 2016 and 2025 (IOM, n. d.). In 2024, Human Rights First published a report documenting that at least 2,500 individuals were survivors of kidnappings and other violent attacks against asylum seekers and migrants stranded in Mexico. Targeted attacks against migrants and asylum seekers reportedly increased by 70% in certain areas of Mexico. The same report notes that people waiting for asylum appointments in Mexico had difficulty attending due to growing persecution by the Mexican government, including efforts to arrest, detain and transfer them to southern Mexico (Human Rights First, 2024). Authorities carried out nearly 830,000 migrant apprehensions between January and July 2024 —the highest number ever recorded. Another report documented sexual abuses against migrants in Mexico by the National Guard and/or attempted kidnappings by criminal groups (Human Rights First, 2023).

The dangers do not end once migrants enter Mexican territory. The journey from Mexico's southern to northern borders presents not only geographic challenges but also a series of lethal risks. Complications range from cultural barriers to the legal uncertainty surrounding migration status. Mexico's challenges

continue to grow in light of its inability to protect migrants throughout a process that increasingly leaves them vulnerable to threats from illegal networks.

Targeted attacks against migrants and asylum seekers reportedly increased by 70% in certain areas of Mexico.

People waiting for asylum appointments in Mexico had difficulty attending due to growing persecution by the Mexican government, including efforts to arrest, detain and transfer them to southern Mexico (Human Rights First, 2024).

3.4 EFFECTIVENESS OF MEXICAN INSTITUTIONS IN ENSURING SECURITY AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS: COMAR AND INM

The responsibility of ensuring the protection of rights related to legal assistance, safety and humanitarian protection falls on the institutions in charge of the migration agenda in Mexico. The Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (Comar) was established in 1980 to develop agreements with international organizations focused on addressing the needs and issues of the refugee population¹⁹ on a temporary basis. Beginning in 1984, Mexican authorities, in cooperation with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and civil society organizations, provided housing, food assistance and social services to refugees, most of whom were Guatemalan at that time (UNHCR, n.d.1).

Since then, UNHCR in Mexico has worked collaboratively to provide aid to asylum seekers and refugees²⁰, offering technical and financial support to Co-

¹⁹ A person in a refugee situation is considered to be someone who, being a foreigner, due to well-founded fears (persecuted for reasons of race or religion, gender, nationality, internal conflicts or any violation of their human rights, for which reason they are outside their country).

²⁰ Some of UNHCR's support is: Information about the pro-

cedure before Comar and procedures with the INM; Free legal assistance; Temporary support to cover basic needs through the Humanitarian Assistance Program; Guidance to access health services, among others (UNHCR, n.d.2).

mar in key areas such as interpreting refugee status determination standards, improving the quality of interviews and legal evaluations and safeguarding the integrity of the asylum process (UNHCR, 2024). Nowadays, these and other essential supports in the face of humanitarian crises are at risk. The return of Donald Trump includes the cancellation of 83% of the programs funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID²¹) (AFP, 2025). This threatens vital resources and services for thousands of asylum seekers in Mexico. In other words, there is a real threat of eliminating USAID funds earmarked for technical assistance and development projects often implemented in partnership with UNHCR and other organizations. These cuts undermine decades of progress in humanitarian aid, effectively dehumanizing and condemning thousands of people to suffering—

cedure before Comar and procedures with the INM; Free legal assistance; Temporary support to cover basic needs through the Humanitarian Assistance Program; Guidance to access health services, among others (UNHCR, n.d.2).

²¹ In fiscal year 2024, USAID received more than \$58.3 million for its operation, but in 2025 this figure decreased to only \$10.7 million. In 2024, Mexico received 13.8 million dollars. A total of 8.7 million for the UNICEF MEX-CEN 2024 Humanitarian Action Appeal for Children (HAC) and an additional 5 million for strengthening the humanitarian response for vulnerable people in situations of human mobility in Mexico (Foreign Assistance, s. f).

Analysis of Comar's implementation reveals systemic practices of obstruction, discouragement and immobilization that, under a containment logic, frequently hinder or outright prevent effective access to international protection (Torre, Paris & Gutierrez, 2021).

or even death²². Such measures hinder the ability of UNHCR and other agencies to carry out protection and assistance operations in Mexico and globally²³.

The importance of these supports lies in their role in helping refugees integrate into the formal economy through programs like the Local Integration Program (PIL), which has enabled contributions of up to 187 million pesos annually in taxes. This represents the opportunity for a fresh start made possible through the efforts of UNHCR and local and federal authorities. Although the law grants Comar the responsibility to process refugee recognition requests and clearly provides the legal framework for granting protections (Government of Mexico, 2016), analysis of its implementation reveals systemic practices of obstruction, discouragement and immobilization that, under a containment logic, frequently hinder or outright prevent effective access to international protection (Torre, Paris & Gutierrez, 2021).

Documented obstacles faced by asylum seekers in Comar include limited access to application proce-

dures, long wait times, restrictions on movement and freedom, abandonment of cases and lack of due process. These challenges have worsened with the increase in asylum applications (see Graph 4), which strain institutional capacity and hinder proper case management and resolution. This results in missed deadlines, phone interviews often without qualified interpreters, attempts by Comar staff to dissuade applicants from obtaining legal representation, short-notice interview appointments and poorly reasoned decisions from a legal standpoint, among other irregularities (Sin Fronteras, 2016).

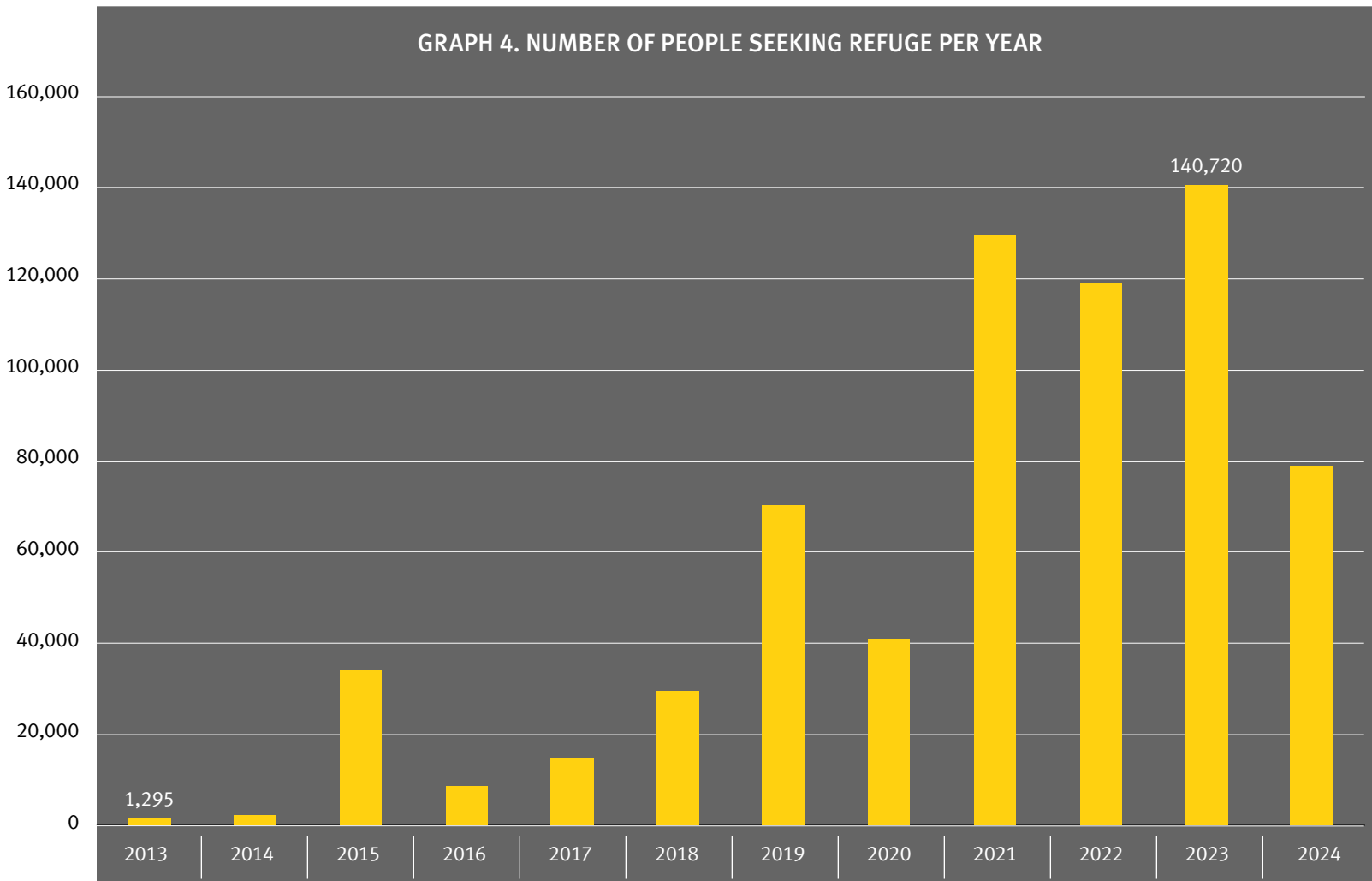
With the support of the United Nations Refugee Agency, Comar expanded from four offices to thirteen in 2024. However, the system remains overwhelmed. More than 140,000 people applied for refugee status in Mexico that year —the highest number in the country’s history²⁴. In the same period, the agency processed fewer than 26,000 applications. Although Mexico granted refugee or complementary protection status in 74% of cases, access to and the efficiency of the application process continue to pose serious challenges (Human Rights Watch, 2025). In this sense, the National Migration Institute (INM) is man-

Evidence points to INM's negligence ranging from mismanagement of immigration procedures to the improper use of immigration documents —resulting in human rights violations. In fact, the number of complaints filed with the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) rose from 714 in 2019 to 2,493 in 2023 (Imumi, 2024).

²² Since 1961, USAID has distributed humanitarian aid through health and emergency programs in 120 countries.

²³ In 2022, UNHCR was able to raise \$59.5 million to address critical protection issues and provide solutions for forcibly displaced populations in Mexico (UNHCR, 2023b).

²⁴ In 2022 there were a total of 119,078 applications and in 2024 78,975 were registered (Comar, 2025)



Source: In-house elaboration with data from Comar (2025).



More than 140,000 people applied for refugee status in Mexico that year—the highest number in the country’s history. In the same period, the agency processed fewer than 26,000 applications (Human Rights Watch, 2025).

Image: "Migrants ask for asylum in Mexico; Comar offices are full of refugee applications." Photo: Cuartoscuro at <https://www.nmas.com.mx/internacional/estados-unidos/migrantes-piden-asilo-mexico-oficinas-Comar-saturadas-solicitudes-refugio-2025/>

dated to “provide all foreign nationals with the necessary means to complete legal, orderly and safe immigration procedures that allow their entry and stay in national territory, under the care of human rights” (Government of Mexico, n. d.). Despite this definition, the INM has demonstrated actions that contradict it. Evidence points to negligence ranging from misman-

agement of immigration procedures to the improper use of immigration documents—resulting in human rights violations. In fact, the number of complaints filed with the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) rose from 714 in 2019 to 2,493 in 2023 (Imumi, 2024).

As previously mentioned, one of the most tragic events involving the INM was a fire that caused the death of 40 migrants at the Ciudad Juárez Provisional Holding Center on March 27, 2023—just meters away from the INM’s office. It is important to clarify that this holding center operated as a migrant detention facility, meaning that the individuals were being deprived of their liberty. Although these facilities are central to implementing the containment and detention-based migration policy, they have become increasingly hazardous spaces for migrants. Civil society organizations have denounced the use of infrastructure designed to punish migrants through torture (Imumi, 2024). In sum, the prevalence of a securitized migration policy—far removed from the protection of human rights—has resulted in actions that expose the abuses and threats to the very lives of migrants at the hands of an institution that, in theory, should uphold their rights.

Among the new government’s attempts to address these many problems was a budgetary adjustment for both institutions (Comar and INM) compared to what had been approved in 2024. In the case of the INM, the budget increased from 897.7 million pesos to 11.171 billion pesos, representing a 489% increase. Meanwhile, Comar’s budget rose from 51.2 million to

The current commissioner of the National Migration Institute (INM), Francisco Garduño, was acquitted in the case related to the fire that killed 40 migrants (not counting over 160 additional deaths recorded in migration stations under his tenure) and despite this, the INM remains unchanged. President Sheinbaum responded by affirming that the legal process “was lawful” and that a new commissioner would take office on May 1st.



Image: "At least 40 deaths in a fire at the migrants detention center at the border between Mexico y and the USA". Photo: Luis Torres/EDE at https://www.eldiario.es/desalambre/indignacion-incendio-murieron-40-migrantes-centro-detencion-ciudad-juarez-matando_1_10078721.html

TABLE 3. MODIFICATIONS TO THE BUDGET FOR ORGANIZATIONS DEALING WITH MIGRANT ISSUES (MILLIONS OF PESOS)

ENTITY (INSTITUTION)	APPROVED PEF 2024	MODIFICATION TO DECEMBER 2024	BUDGET 2025	CHANGE RESPECT TO THE PREVIOUS YEAR
National Migration Institute (INM)	\$1,897.7	\$11,171.4	\$1,700.0	−10,42
Comar	\$51.2	\$107.6	\$47.8	−6,64
Coordination for Comprehensive Migration Care on the Southern Border	\$65.4	\$71.3	\$58.7	−10,24

Source: In-house elaboration with data from SHCP (2024 y 2025).

107.6 million pesos (a 110% increase), and the Coordination for Comprehensive Migration Attention at the Southern Border saw a 9% increase (Table 3).

Despite these efforts, tensions between Mexico and the U.S. persist, and under Donald Trump’s prevailing migration policy, Mexico continues to face significant challenges. On one hand, the current commissioner of the National Migration Institute (INM), Francisco Garduño, was acquitted in the case related to the fire that killed 40 migrants (not counting over 160 additional deaths recorded in migration stations under his

tenure) and despite this, the INM remains unchanged. President Sheinbaum responded by affirming that the legal process “was lawful” and that a new commissioner would take office on May 1st. This situation implies that the INM has not changed its strategy and/or procedures and continues to operate with a logic of migrant persecution, making urgent reforms necessary.

On the other hand, Mexico still faces the ongoing challenge of receiving both nationals and foreigners with dignity and fairness, amid the threat of mass de-

portations of migrants from the U.S. Currently, with the beginning of deportations, the Mexican president announced the “Mexico Welcomes You” strategy, which aims to receive Mexicans returned from the U.S. in a “warm and humane” manner. Mexican nationals expelled from the U.S. may access a card providing 2,000 pesos in support to help them return to their places of origin. Despite the financial impact of this support on public finances, this is one of the few marginal strategies the Mexican government is offering to assist returned nationals.

Mexico still faces the ongoing challenge of receiving both nationals and foreigners with dignity and fairness, amid the threat of mass deportations of migrants from the U.S.



Image: "A month later, while the mexican shelters remain empty at the border, Trump threats have not materialized" at <https://elpais.com/us/migracion/2025-02-20/un-mes-despues-mientras-los-albergues-mexicanos-permanecen-vacios-en-la-frontera-las-amenazas-de-trump-siguen-sin-cumplirse.html>

CONCLUSIONS

The outlook for Mexico under Trump's return to the presidency is markedly more aggressive and adversarial in terms of migration policy. As described throughout this report, the series of statements and actions focused on containment and border control have resulted in repeated violations of the human rights of migrants. President Trump's intentions pose a threat to the rights of at least 15.4 million undocumented migrants in the U.S., while on the Mexican side, containment policies have shown a complete lack of capacity and commitment to preserving the life, integrity, dignity, and safety of those crossing through Mexico.

The migration procedures discussed above reveal the exposure to risk and lack of protection faced by migrants and refugees on both sides of the border. To make matters worse, Mexico's institutional capacities are clearly diminished, and authorities continue to promote a persecution-based migration model. The continued implementation of a containment-based strategy will only perpetuate human rights violations and highlight the government's inability to respond to both domestic needs and bilateral commitments between Mexico and the U.S. It is necessary to close-

ly monitor the tactics employed by both governments at the border. Safe and orderly migration remains an unfulfilled commitment—one that must be guaranteed by States under principles of respect, solidarity and non-discrimination that reflect a genuine commitment to human dignity.

The migration procedures reveal the exposure to risk and lack of protection faced by migrants and refugees on both sides of the border.

Mexico's institutional capacities are clearly diminished, and authorities continue to promote a persecution-based migration model.



4. THE SOCIAL EFFECTS OF MIGRATION



FLOW OF MIGRANTS BY SOUTHERN BORDER CONTROLLED BY THE CARTELS; DEBATE BETWEEN STAYING OR GOING BACK

at <https://www.latimes.com/espanol/california/articulo/2024-11-18/el-flujo-de-migrantes-por-la-frontera-sur-mexicana-ya-esta-controlado-pero-por-los-carteles> / <https://elpais.com/mexico/2025-01-23/los-migrantes-en-la-frontera-se-debaten-entre-regresar-a-su-pais-o-quedarse-en-mexico-aqui-tienes-mas-oportunidades.html>

4. THE SOCIAL EFFECTS OF MIGRATION

In a context where the Mexican economy is immobile and unemployment is rising, the labor reintegration of returning migrants becomes increasingly difficult. One of the many challenges Mexico faces in incorporating returned migrants into the labor market is the country's widespread poverty, job insecurity and high levels of informality. Reintegration into employment is a fundamental aspect of the return process, but it does not end there. The complexity of return migration includes the migrants' profiles, the multiple social and economic issues involved in coming back and the disparities in living standards upon return (Vega & Aguilar, 2023).

Mexican nationals return after living in the U.S. for various reasons: some return for family, health, or emotional reasons; others after deportation proceedings or to avoid them. Increasingly, people return after many years abroad, making Mexico unfamiliar and different to them. Some return alone, while others return as families, bringing U.S.-born children and adolescents with them. These returned populations and U.S.-born individuals are scattered throughout the country. Their characteristics are diverse, as are their needs for social integration. Mexico is an unequal country—returning to a rural area is not the same as returning to a metropolitan city, a border town or a

Reintegration into employment is a fundamental and complex return process: their profiles, the social and economic disparities in living standards upon return (Vega & Aguilar, 2023).

southern state. Each return scenario presents different challenges. The diversity of mobility within Mexico is a reality shaped by persistent deficiencies and needs, with the compass still pointing northward in most cases (Masferrer, 2021a).

Mexico remains an unequal country with a long list of unresolved issues. The analysis of its capacity to meet the needs of its population in the current anti-immigrant context is more urgent than ever. In this section, we analyze the diverse conditions of return migration in Mexico; the realities of labor reintegration; the impact of mass deportations on the U.S. economy; the government's capacity to assist returnees; the existence (or absence) of inclusive social programs and current policies addressing this issue; as well as the role of Central America.

Mexico is an unequal country —returning to a rural area is not the same as returning to a metropolitan city, a border town or a southern state. Each return scenario presents different challenges.

4.1 RETURN MIGRATION: REALITIES OF LABOR REINTEGRATION

Migration between Mexico and the U.S. is not new; it can be explained by a combination of historical, geographic, political, economic and social factors (Durand & Malone, 2002). Beyond trends and migration statistics, attention must be focused on the capacity to respond to the growing needs of this population. People returning after time spent in the U.S. do not constitute a homogeneous group. Moreover, they return to an unequal environment marked by socio-economic and geographic differences that result in varied forms of social, economic, labor or political reintegration (Masferrer, 2021b). These circumstances compel us to ask: How many migrants has the U.S. returned to Mexico? Where are they located? And what are their characteristics?

According to the *Atlas of Return Migration from the United States to Mexico* by El Colegio de Mexico, the number of returning migrants has been decreasing. While the number of returnees rose dramatically nationwide between 2000 and 2010 —from 264,000 to 825,000— it dropped to 448,000 in 2015 and to 381,464 in 2020 (the most recent census data) (Masferrer, 2021a). The analysis notes that in 2015, the

states with the highest numbers of returnees arriving between 2010 and 2015 were: Jalisco (40,000); Michoacan (30,000); Baja California (31,000); Guanajuato (30,000) and the State of Mexico (27,000). Among male returnees, labor precariousness increased, with informal employment rising from 28% in 2000 to 37% in 2015, higher unemployment rates (2% in 2000 to 8% in 2010) and more unpaid work compared to non-migrants (3% of returnees vs. 1.5% of non-migrants in 2015) (Masferrer, 2021a).

Regarding the economic characteristics of return migration, there is evidence that average wages declined for returnees —from just over 8,000 pesos in 2000 to slightly over 6,000 pesos in 2010 and around 5,800 pesos in 2015 (in constant 2015 pesos). This resulted in a narrowing of wage gaps between returnees and non-migrants, although the decline was more pronounced for those returning from the U.S. (Masferrer, 2021a).

Another important factor to consider is the age of returnees. The needs associated with different age groups vary significantly and have a particular impact on the labor market. Masferrer (2021b) analyzed the age characteristics of returnees from 2000 to 2015 and found that their average age increased more than

that of non-migrants (36.3 years for returnees vs. 33.4 years for non-migrants in 2015). This trend is related to the aging of the Mexican population residing in the U.S., longer stays abroad, and more permanent settlement. In fact, the proportion of economically productive adults among returnees rose sharply. The share of returnees aged 35–44 increased from 18.3% in 2000 to 28% in 2015, while those aged 45–54 doubled from 7.4% to 14% during the same period.

The age composition of returnees demands differentiated policies to facilitate reintegration based on their experience and education. Male returnees have



There is evidence that average wages declined for returnees—from just over 8,000 pesos in 2000 to slightly over 6,000 pesos in 2010 and around 5,800 pesos in 2015.

Image: "15 years old Eliasa, hugs his mother" UNICEF/UN0217796/Bindra at <https://www.unicef.org/es/comunicados-prensa/los-ninos-re-tornados-centroamerica-y-mexico-corren-mayor-riesgo-de-sufrir-violencias>

higher labor force participation rates than non-migrants, especially between the ages of 25 and 49 (Masferrer, 2021b). Female returnees, on the other hand, show slightly lower participation rates than non-migrant women, although the gap narrows over time—especially among women aged 30 to 39 (Masferrer, 2021b). These and other differences highlight the importance of understanding the factors influencing the labor market reintegration of returnees in a context of widespread inequality.

Given the series of immigration policy proposals issued by the U.S. government and described in previous sections, by February 2025 Mexico had received 13,400 deported migrants. In addition to this, the announcements of mass deportations threaten at least 12 million migrants of Mexican origin living in the U.S. (BBVA Research, 2024)²⁵. It is therefore essential to understand how return migration would affect Mexico. There is evidence that involuntary return migration can influence income and employment. In other words, the return of Mexican migrants from

²⁵ The population of Mexican origin in the US is made up of the first generation (born in Mexico), the second generation (they were born in the US with a father or mother born in Mexico) and the third generation (they identify as Mexican). In 2023, it is estimated that there will be 12 million first generation population, 14.3 million second generation and 13.6 million third generation (BBVA Research, 2024).

the United States has mixed effects on those who never left Mexico (local residents). In the short term, non-migrants may experience negative wage effects due to the arrival (substitution) of labor by returnees —this occurs only if they work in the same occupations as the returnees. However, in other occupations, non-migrants may see their wages increase. This positive effect is highly localized: it is limited to local non-migrants who work in the same city-industry as the returnees, but in different occupations. In the long term, returnees permanently alter a city's industrial composition by increasing employment levels and contributing skills and capacities to the local industries that hire them (Diodato, Hausmann, & Nefke, 2023).

The implementation of labor strategies by returnees also varies, depending on local labor markets and the extent to which their skills can be transferred to the new employment context (Hagan, Hernandez-Leon & Demonsant, 2015). Research emphasizing the importance of being prepared to return (Cassarino, 2004) highlights the significance of returning with resources, savings and a plan for labor reintegration. However, involuntary return has recently been associated with a lack of occupational and social mobility upon reentering Mexico, not only among those re-

The age composition of returnees demands differentiated policies to facilitate reintegration based on their experience and education.

Participation in the labor market is different between men and women who have returned.

turning to rural areas (D'Aubeterre Buznego, 2012), but also among those returning to urban areas—even with strong English language skills—who end up in precarious jobs such as call centers (Da Cruz, 2018). This is partly a result of widespread job insecurity in the country, low wages, gender inequality and discrimination based on age, ethnicity and social status (Signos Vitales, 2022). All of this stems from a structural problem that affects Mexicans both inside and outside the country, including those who return.

Opportunities for returning with stable employment are limited. Although someone returning to Mexico (a Mexican citizen) has the same rights as those who never emigrated, opportunities are often not equal. The Mexican population faces structural inequalities that pose a challenge for any resident—particularly for returnees, whose family networks and access to information may have weakened. These and other challenges also extend to foreign migrants, Mexican nationals and internal migrants who move or are forcibly displaced for a variety of reasons.

The Mexican population faces structural inequalities that pose a challenge for any resident—particularly for returnees, whose family networks and access to information may have weakened.



Source: "Embassy of the USA confirms deportation flights of Mexican migrants" at <https://www.jornada.com.mx/noticia/2025/02/27/politica/embajada-de-eu-confirma-vuelos-de-expulsion-de-migrantes-mexicanos>

4.2 LABOR MARKET: IMMIGRANTS IN THE U.S. AND THE IMPACT OF MASS DEPORTATIONS

Historically, mobility and migration have faced legal and material containment through policies and government mechanisms that operate under irregular conditions (Bedoya, 2022). However, the new Trump era signals a more radical and powerful profile, with anti-immigrant initiatives promoting a harsher environment for migrants. This occurs despite the fact that U.S. history shows that immigration and naturalized citizens have been a fundamental part of the country's population makeup²⁶.

In recent years, there has been substantial demographic growth in immigration to the U.S., particularly from Latin America (see Chart 5). Latinos increased from 1.33 million or 45.8% of total immigration in 1995 to 3.76 million (57.6%) in 2025. The 6.5 million immigrants who reported having arrived in the U.S. in the three years prior to 2025 represent the largest num-

²⁶With data from 2025 we know that the number of immigrants in the United States has quintupled since 1970. In 2025 there will be 53.3 million people or 15.8% of the total population in the United States, this proportion is greater than that reported during the Great Wave of immigration between 1890 (14.8%) and 1910 (14.7%) (Center for Immigration Studies, 2025).

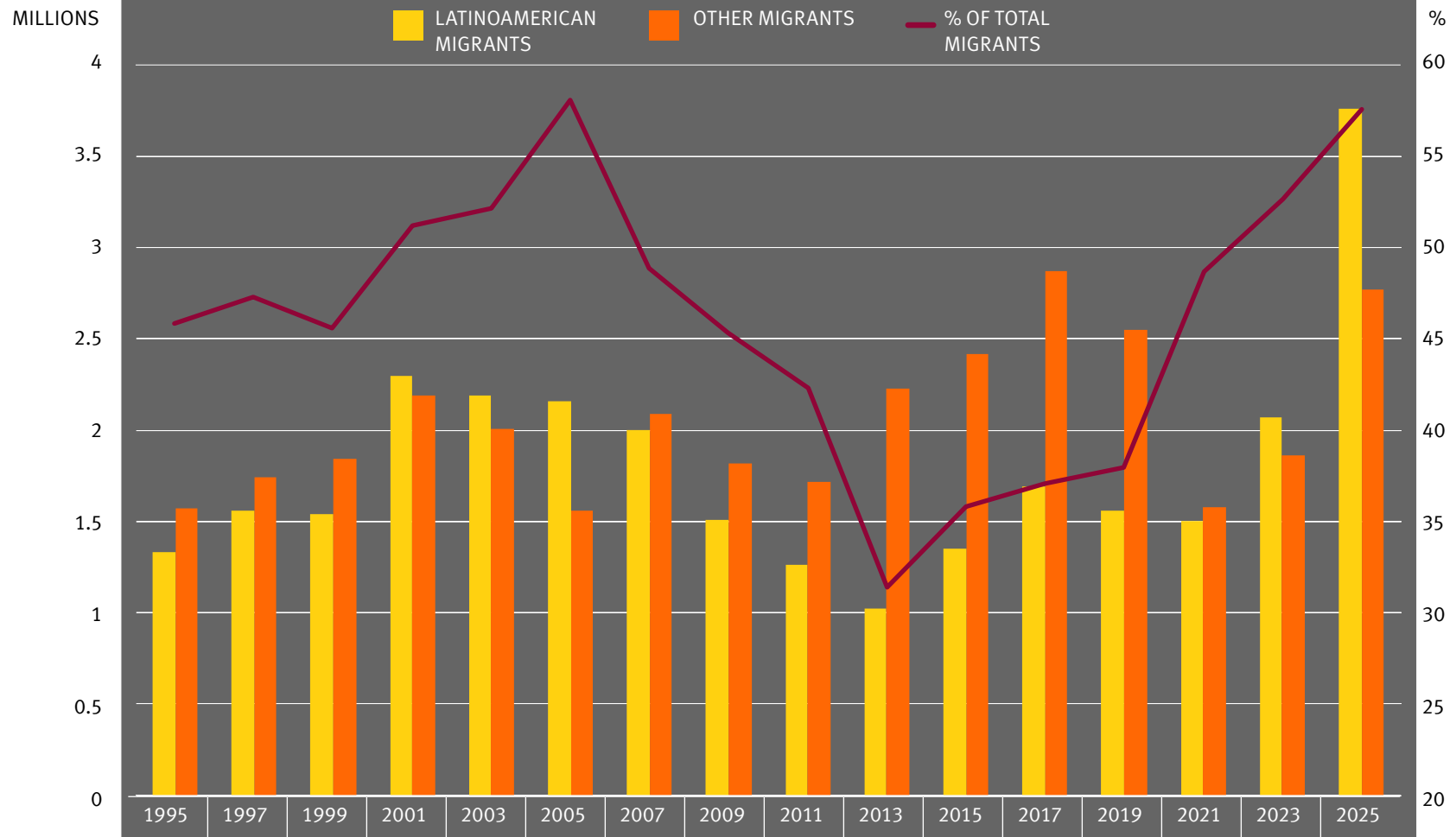
ber of newcomers in any three-year period over the past 30 years (Center for Immigration Studies, 2025). Before the Covid-19 pandemic, immigrants from Latin America accounted for just 38% of all those who had arrived in the previous three years. Therefore, the nearly 3.8 million new arrivals from Latin America represented 58% of all new immigrants in the U.S. in 2025. This marks a significant increase in the context of U.S. immigration history (Center for Immigration Studies, 2025) (Graph 5).

The United States has been popularly known as the “land of opportunity,” which is why millions of people seek to live the so-called “American Dream.”²⁷ As we have analyzed so far, we are witnessing the largest number of immigrants residing in the U.S., coming primarily from Latin America —and particularly from Mexico, which represents 23% of the total immigrant population (Batalova, 2024). Most individuals arrive in the U.S. driven by socioeconomic disparities in their countries of origin, which in turn creates diverse needs and distinct pathways for economic and/

²⁷The American dream is the idea of reaching a promised land to obtain better opportunities in life. This term was created in Europe when, at the end of the 15th century and the beginning of the 16th century, French Protestants saw in the new continent a place to take refuge from the religious disputes of the time (Díaz, 2018).

87.2% of immigrant workers in the U.S. do not hold a university degree and are employed in low-skill job categories such as agriculture, fishing and forestry, cleaning and maintenance and construction (Center for immigration Studies, 2025).

GRAPH 5. EVOLUTION OF THE NUMBER OF IMMIGRANTS IN THE US FROM LATIN AMERICA
IN MILLIONS AND AS A PROPORTION OF TOTAL MIGRATION 1995-2025



Source: Center for immigration Studies (2025).

or labor market integration. This allows us to better understand the sectors in which immigrants are employed within the U.S. labor market.

According to estimates by the Immigration Center, 87.2% of immigrant workers in the U.S. do not hold a university degree and are employed in low-skill job categories (indicated by the orange bars in the following graph). Immigrants tend to account for a higher proportion of workers in low-skill occupations, though they also make up a significant share of workers in some higher-skill occupations (yellow bars). Chart 6 shows that the sectors with the highest concentrations of immigrant labor are agriculture, fishing, and forestry (41%), cleaning and maintenance (39%), and construction (37%) (Center for Immigration Studies, 2025). The commonly cited claim that immigrants only take jobs Americans do not want is not supported by the data. This is because the majority of workers in all occupational categories—including the lowest-paid and least prestigious—are U.S.-born (Center for Immigration Studies, 2025).

Regarding wages in the U.S., the BBVA Migration and Remittances Yearbook (BBVA Research, 2024) reported that the average annual income of a Mexican immigrant was \$25,570 (USD) in 2023 from wages

and salaries²⁸, an amount that, in real terms, is 3.2% lower than the average received in 2020. This means that, in nominal terms, Mexican immigrants earn about three times more in the U.S. than they could in Mexico²⁹. In some sectors, such as manufacturing, the wage gap is even more stark: Mexican workers earn an average of \$2.80 (USD) per hour, while their American counterparts earn \$23.80 (USD) per hour on average (El Economista, 2021).

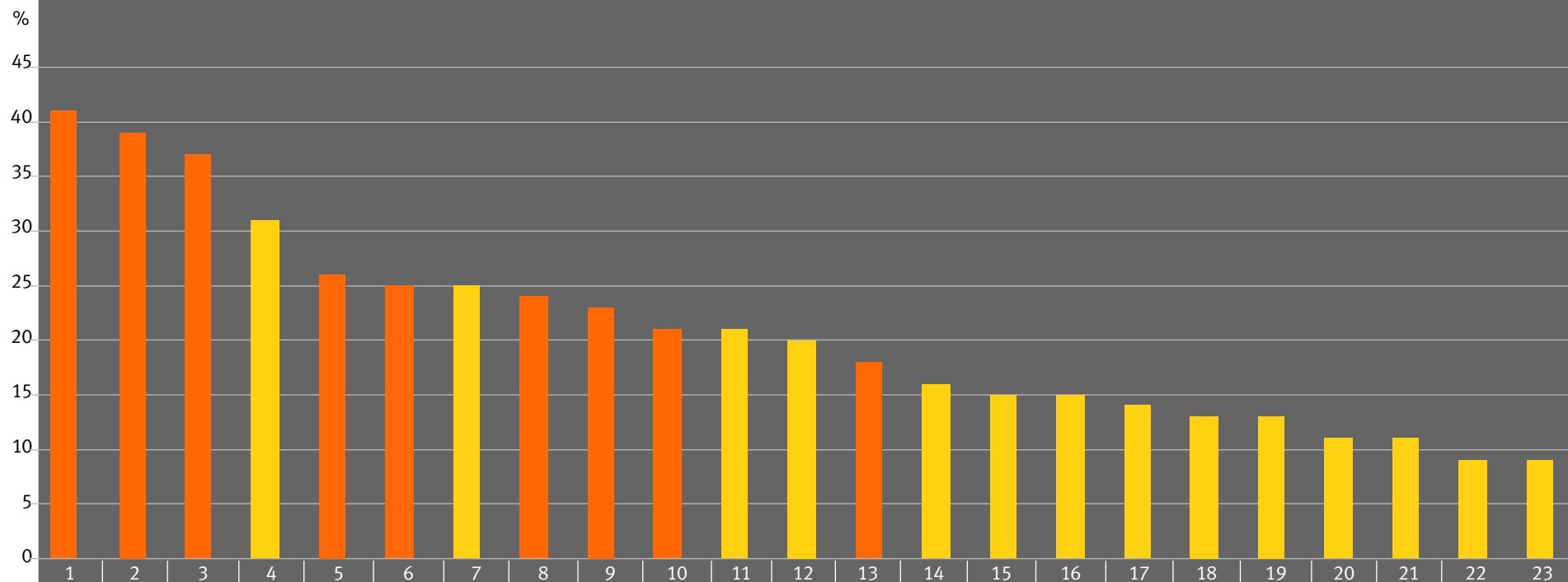
Another inequality faced by Mexican immigrants in the U.S. relates to unemployment rates by gender. In April 2020, the unemployment rate was higher for women (20.7%) than for men (15.0%). The differences between the annual average unemployment rates in 2021 and 2022 were smaller than those observed in 2020 for both genders. By December 2023, the unemployment rate for women was 2.9% and for men, 4.0%. Moreover, of all the newcomers in early 2025, just under half (3.2 million people) were employed. There's no doubt that the recent increase in immigration has provided employers with millions of new

²⁸ This would imply more than half a million Mexican pesos per year (\$533,746). It should be noted that this is a mere nominal comparison in which the costs of living in the countries, inflation, income and other payments must be considered.

²⁹ Data from the National Household Income Expenditure Survey (ENIGH) (INEGI, 2023).

Mexican immigrants earn about three times more in the U.S. than they could in Mexico. In sectors such as manufacturing, the wage gap is even more stark: Mexican workers earn an average of 2.80 USD per hour, while their American counterparts earn 23.80 USD per hour on average (El Economista, 2021).

GRAPH 6. PROPORTION OF EMPLOYED IMMIGRANTS BY CATEGORY IN THE USA



Source: Center for immigration Studies (2025).

CATEGORIES

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Agriculture, fishing, forestry | 13. Installation, maintenance and repair |
| 2. Cleaning and maintenance | 14. Technicians and health |
| 3. Construction and extraction | 15. Sales and related |
| 4. Computing and mathematics | 16. Management |
| 5. Health support | 17. Business and financial |
| 6. Food preparation and related services | 18. Offices and administrative support |
| 7. Life, physical and social sciences | 19. Educational instruction and libraries |
| 8. Production | 20. Community and social |
| 9. Transportation | 21. Arts, design, entertainment and media support |
| 10. Care and services staff | 22. Legal |
| 11. Architecture and engineering | 23. Protection services |
| 12. All occupations | |

workers, but it has also added 3.3 million non-workers to the U.S. population. This is a simple but powerful reminder that immigrants are people —not just workers— and that migration is driven by broader, more complex and interrelated reasons.

One important point to highlight is the critical role of the immigrant community in the U.S. economy. The potential effects of mass deportation do not simply involve removing immigrants from the country³⁰, but also have broader consequences that we will examine below. Although mass deportation is not yet a reality, it is one of the initiatives promoted by President Trump. While it faces legal challenges, if implemented, it could trigger a possible economic, labor and development contraction in the U.S. economy.

According to estimates by the American Immigration Council (2024), the mass deportation of migrants proposed by President Donald Trump would cost over \$300 billion (USD). Regarding the labor market impact, although the immigrant working population represents only 3.3% of the total U.S. population, undocumented immigrants accounted for 4.6% of the employed labor force (7.5 million people in 2022).

³⁰So far in 2025, the US has returned 111,010 people. In 2024 it was 777,580 and in 2023 it was more than one million (1,199,910). (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2025).

The mass deportation of migrants proposed by President Donald Trump would cost over 300 billion USD. It would also affect one million undocumented immigrant entrepreneurs who generated 27.1 billion USD in total business income in 2022 and who also employed American workers.

Mass deportation would also affect one million undocumented immigrant entrepreneurs who generated \$27.1 billion (USD) in total business income in 2022 and who also employed American workers. Approximately 30% of these undocumented entrepreneurs worked in construction, 18.7% in professional services and 16.6% in general services. This group also includes 157,800 undocumented immigrant's entrepreneurs running local businesses that provide essential goods and services in neighborhoods across the country—such as grocery stores, restaurants, clothing shops and gas stations—which have become an integral part of community life and a source of local employment for Americans.

Meanwhile, the Peterson Institute for International Economics (McKibbin, Hogan & Noland, 2024) stated that if Trump fulfills his promises, he could cause significant damage to the financial health of the United States. The report analyzes two scenarios: one in which 1.3 million workers are deported and another in which 8.3 million people are forced to return to their countries of origin. Neither would benefit the U.S.; in the first case, GDP would decline by 1 percentage point annually and in the second, GDP could contract by up to 7% per year. This gives us a clear sense of the economic sectors where immigrants work in the U.S. and the potential impact of mass deportations on the U.S. economy. These changes bring significant challenges for Mexico and raise serious public policy implications. It is therefore necessary to assess the capacities of Mexican institutions and authorities to address the needs of returned migrants.

The importance of the migrant community in American economy is very meaningful. If Trump fulfills his promises, he could cause significant damage to the financial health of the United States.



Images: "Businesses of Mexican entrepreneurs in Brooklyn: facade and interior of 'Nieves Mimi'" at <https://spectrumnoticias.com/ny/nyc/noticias/2019/10/04/sunset-park-en-brooklyn--taquerias--paleterias-y-otros-negocios-de-comida-mexicana>

4.3 SOCIAL PROGRAMS: DO THEY HELP MIGRANTS?

Mexico is gradually becoming a destination country for international migrants. Between 2000 and 2020 (according to census data), the immigrant population in Mexico increased by 123%. The largest international migrant populations were located in Baja California (13%), Mexico City (9%), Chihuahua (8%), Jalisco (8%) and Tamaulipas (6%) (Inegi, n. d.).

In 2024, Mexico recorded the highest number of irregular migrant events ever documented, surpassing the previous 2023 record by 18% (Government of Mexico, 2024a). As of 2024, there were at least 925,085³¹ people in irregular status in Mexico, significantly increasing the demand for state resources and the need to assess the government's capacity to defend their rights and ensure due process. Understanding how many Mexicans are at risk due to current anti-immigrant policies is critical. As mentioned earlier, the population of Mexican origin in the U.S. is categorized into at least three generations: i) those born in Mexico, ii) those born in the U.S. with at least one Mexican-born parent and iii) those who identify as Mexican. In 2023, it was estimated there were 12 million

³¹ 2024 figure.

In 2023 it was estimated there were 12 million first-generation, 14.3 million second-generation and 13.6 million third-generation individuals— implying that at least 26.3 million Mexicans could be affected, including the fragmentation of their families.

first-generation, 14.3 million second-generation and 13.6 million third-generation individuals—implying that at least 26.3 million Mexicans could be affected, including the fragmentation of their families.

In response to deportation announcements and the implementation of anti-immigrant policies, the Mexican government's approach has been framed under the slogan “defend Mexicans first”. The support, however, has been marginal—offering minimal efforts such as free legal advice for vulnerable Mexicans in the U.S. through the Legal Assistance Program for Mexicans via External Legal Advisors in the United States (PALE) (Government of Mexico, 2018). Additionally, a mobile platform was announced to be used by migrants in emergencies, allowing access to the Information and Assistance Center for Mexican

Nationals (CIAM) (Government of Mexico, 2025a). This tool merely provides emergency phone numbers for Mexican consulates, lists migrant rights and offers basic immigration information.

The “Mexico Embraces You” program, part of the repatriation strategy for deported Mexican nationals, was launched to support deported migrants. These individuals can access all federal social programs³² and receive a 2,000-peso card to cover travel expenses back to their communities. The initial phase of this repatriation strategy includes 9 support centers in Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas. According to a press release from the Ministry of Welfare, as of March 3, 2025, only 5,063 Bienestar Paisano cards had been distributed at these centers (Government of Mexico, 2025c), while the number of deported Mexican nationals in need of such support reached 10,485 since February 2025. While these announcements may seem like good news in addressing returned migrants’ needs, there is no truly structured program or strategy aimed at the labor reintegration of returned Mexicans or their families or focused on addressing

³² Program for Older Adults, People with Disabilities, Sowing Life, Women’s Wellbeing, Benito Juarez Universities, The School is Ours, Rita Cetina Universal Scholarship, Scholarships in high school and higher education, etc.

As of March 3, 2025, only 5,063 Bienestar Paisano cards had been distributed at these centers (Government of Mexico, 2025c), while the number of deported Mexican nationals in need of such support reached 10,485 since February 2025.



Images: "App to communicate with the consulate in the USA" at <https://quepasamedia.com/noticias/carolina-del-norte/apoyan-a-inmigrantes-mexicanos-en-emergencias-con-esta-app/>

"Bienestar Paisano card: for 2 thousand pesos for transportation and medical attention at IMSS if you are Mexican" at <https://www.infobae.com/mexico/2025/01/21/tarjeta-bienestar-paisano-como-recibir-2-mil-pesos-y-atencion-medica-en-el-imss-si-eres-migrante-mexicano/>

their socioeconomic shortcomings—despite the wide diversity of needs they face. The government’s support for migrants is marginal, limited to the promotion of existing programs, without addressing their specific or urgent needs. Even less attention is paid to the regional diversities or to impact assessments on people’s well-being in the short, medium or long term. In the following section, we analyze existing migrant-focused programs, their institutional capacities and whether or not they incorporate an inclusive approach.

The government’s support for migrants is marginal, limited to the promotion of existing programs, without addressing their specific or urgent needs. Even less attention is paid to the regional diversities or to impact assessments on people’s well-being in the short, medium or long term.

CAPACITY AND INCLUSION POLICY DIMENSION

The services and resources available to migrants returning to Mexico are essential to facilitate their transition and reintegration into their communities of origin. Policies that lack a multidisciplinary approach can have serious social, political, cultural and health consequences —not only for returnees, but also for receiving families and their communities. A recent study indicated that there were at least 20 return migration policies in effect as of 2021 (Fernandez *et al.*, 2023). These policies are largely limited to informing return migrants of some of the rights they may access upon their return to the country.

Currently, some of these policies are not truly designed with an inclusive support approach from the government; others are no longer in effect or appear vague or ambiguous. The policies that remain are described in the following table. These actions include: ensuring access to official identity documents, promoting educational reintegration programs and offering access to basic health services as an urgent and prioritized need —yet without guaranteeing long-term coverage or program continuity. Although each action has a clear objective, the assistance remains marginal, temporary, basic and far from creat-

TABLE 4. CURRENT POLICIES AND ACTIONS TO CARE FOR MIGRANTS RETURNED TO MEXICO 1/2

POLICY	SECRETARIAT OR RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	OBJECTIVE
Repatriated people in vulnerable situations	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Offer advice and support to repatriated Mexicans.
We are Mexicans	National Migration Institute (INM)	Offer Mexicans who have voluntarily or involuntarily returned to Mexico comprehensive social integration.
Inter institutional Strategy for Comprehensive Attention to the Returned Migrant Population and their Families	National Migration Institute, National Customs Agency of Mexico (ANAM)	Provide support to the returned Mexican population during the three phases of return migration: departure from the host country, and reception and reintegration in Mexico.
Comprehensive Health Care Module for Repatriated Migrants on the Northern Border	United States-Mexico Border Health Commission, Mexican Ministry of Health	Contribute to the protection of the health of returning migrants.
Repatriation Program	National Migration Institute (INM)	Achieve the reintegration of the repatriated Mexican population.
Build your future here: Young People Building the Future for people returning	National Migration Institute (INM) and National Migration Institute (INM)	Implement the Youth Building the Future Program at the national level among young people between 18 and 29 years old who do not study or work, to increase their employability.
Temporary CURP for repatriated Mexican people	National Registry of Population and Identity (RENAPO). Ministry of the Interior (Segob)	Guarantee the right to identity of all people.
Training and Evaluation Programs for Competence Certification purposes	National College of Professional Technical Education (Conalep)	Offer educational training alternatives so that people can continue or carry out their studies at any school in the Conalep System nationwide.

TABLE 4. CURRENT POLICIES AND ACTIONS TO CARE FOR MIGRANTS RETURNED TO MEXICO 2/2

POLICY	SECRETARIAT OR RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	OBJECTIVE
Education without borders	National Institute of Adult Education (INEA)	Provide educational services to people ages 15 and older.
Mexico recognizes your experience	National Council for Standardization and Certification of Labor Skills – Conocer. Ministry of Public Education.	Certify the work skills of repatriated Mexicans.
Open Secondary School	Ministry of Public Education	Allow returning migrants to begin, continue or complete their secondary education.
Guide You better be prepared	National Commission for the Protection and Defense of Users of Financial Services (Condusef)	Guide compatriots about the rights and alternatives that must preserve their assets, protect their assets and, if necessary, transfer their money.
Information for returning Mexicans	National Commission of the Retirement Savings System (Consar)	Guide, receive and respond to requests for information from repatriated and returned Mexicans that allow them to know if they have savings for retirement in Mexico.

Source: In-house elaboration with information from Fernandez, *et al* (2023) and Government of Mexico (s.f).

ing conditions that foster development, substantive equality or equitable integration.

Two important inequities in the current policies described above also stand out: i) the lack of recognition of the diversity of return migrants and ii) the exclusion of receiving families and communities from the reintegration process of returnees (Fernandez *et al.*, 2023). Although these efforts may give the impression that Mexico is genuinely concerned with ensuring dignified treatment for returning migrants, in practice there is a lack of coordinated policies across different levels of government. No consistent programs or projects are being launched to harness the skills acquired by returnees abroad.

There is a lack of coordinated policies across different levels of government. No consistent programs or projects are being launched to harness the skills acquired by returnees abroad.

4.4 THE ROLE OF CENTRAL AMERICA

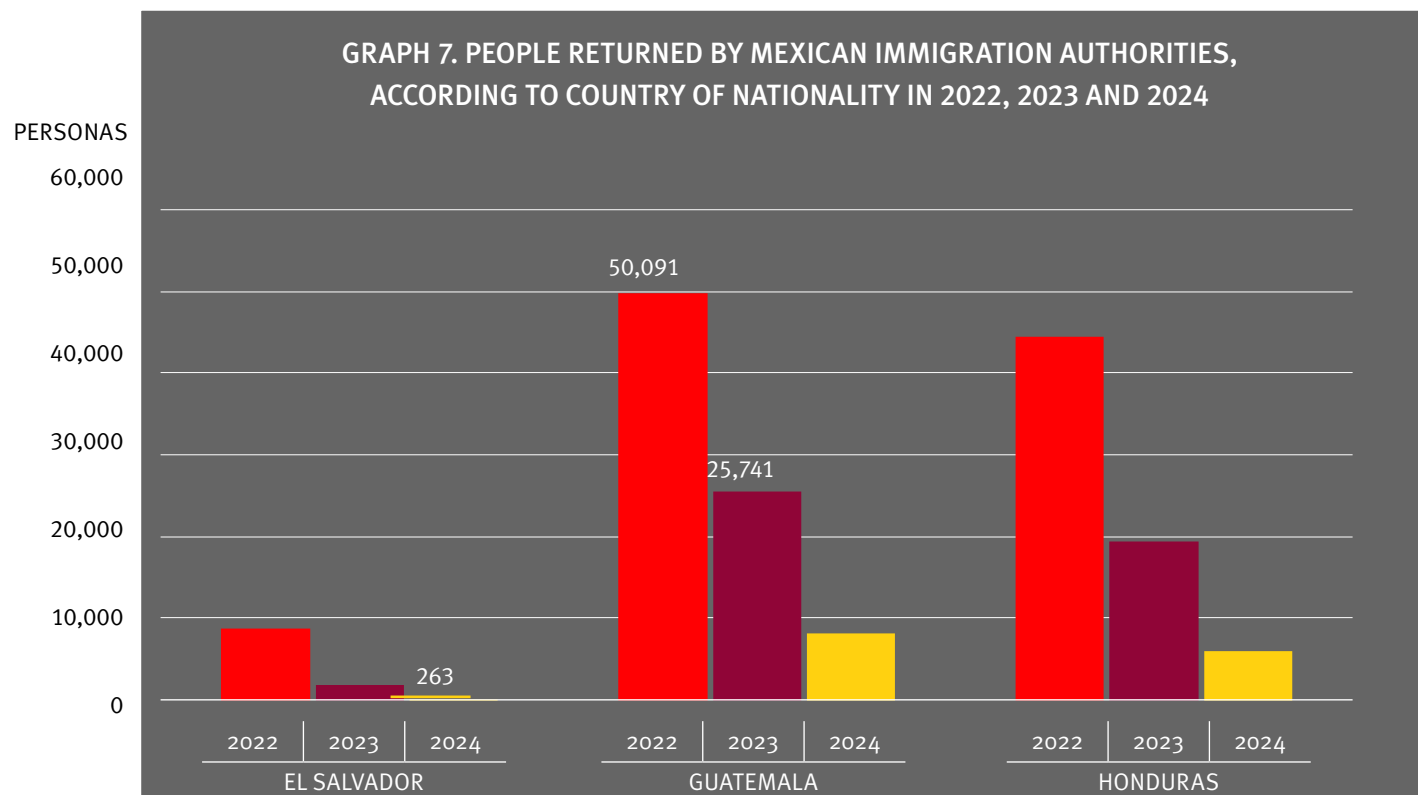
While analyzing all of Latin America is not the main focus of this report, it is necessary to examine the role of Central America, given its significant contribution to the immigrant population in the U.S. on the one hand and on the other, because most of these migrants travel through Mexico on their way to the United States. In 2021, it was estimated that there were 2.2 million people from the “Northern Triangle of Central America” (primarily El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras) living in the U.S. (BBVA Research, 2024). By 2024, the total number of undocumented immigrants from Central America was 1.9 million, accounting for 17.7% of all undocumented individuals in the U.S. Migration from these Northern Triangle countries has become increasingly complex due to the emergence of mixed migration flows, leading to new dynamics of mobility, including the formation of so-called “migrant caravans”, which began in late 2018 from San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Along the route, Salvadorans and Guatemalans joined, forming groups of up to 4,000 people (Government of Mexico, 2019), with the goal of reaching the U.S. —a journey that required crossing Mexico.

In 2023, 15.3% of the irregular population in Mexico was of Honduran origin (118,984 people), 10.4% from Guatemala (81,295 people) and 3.1% from El Salvador (24,182 people). In 2024 (January to August), these proportions declined: 8% were from Honduras (74,220 people), 7.3% from Guatemala (67,486 people) and 6.1% from El Salvador (56,300 people) (Government of Mexico, 2024a). This means that in 2023, nearly one-third (28.8%) of people in irregular status in Mexico came from the Northern Triangle region, whereas in 2024, the figure dropped to 21.4% (Government of Mexico, 2024a). Additionally, data on the number of people returned from Mexico to their countries of origin (Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras) show a steady decline, meaning that these individuals are staying longer in Mexico. Graph 7 shows the decrease in the number of people returned by Mexican immigration authorities to: Guatemala: from over 50,000 in 2022 to just over 8,000 in 2024; Honduras: from 9,011 in 2022 to 263 in 2024; El Salvador: from 44,737 in 2022 to 6,295 in 2024.

In 2023, nearly one-third of people in irregular status in Mexico came from the Northern Triangle region (28.8%), whereas in 2024, the figure dropped to 21.4% (Government of Mexico, 2024a).



Image: "Caravans of immigrants from Honduras on the bridge at the Mexican border of Ciudad Hidalgo (Associated Press)" at https://www.eldiario.es/desalambre/caravana-hondurena-migrantes-causas-causantes_1_1867904.html



Source: In-house elaboration with data from the Government of Mexico (2024a).

In Mexico, the laws and policies implemented to address irregular migration represent a step forward compared to the previous legal framework. However, in many cases these new policies, laws, and measures have failed to fully respond to the serious human rights violations.

As we have shown in previous sections, unfortunately a context persists in which the risks, abuses and vulnerabilities associated with border transit remain a harsh reality. Abusive practices and injustices have even extended to affect children, women and adolescents (Ramirez, 2022). In Mexico, the laws and policies implemented to address irregular migration represent a step forward compared to the previous

legal framework. However, in many cases these new policies, laws, and measures have failed to fully respond to the serious human rights violations they were designed to address and they even maintain provisions and practices that are contrary to Mexico's international human rights obligations regarding migrants and other people in the context of human mobility (IACHR, 2013).

We know that irregular migration results from multiple factors that force individuals to seek better living conditions in other countries. Insecurity, violence, natural disasters and a lack of economic opportunities in their home countries are just some of the causes (Centro de Estudios de Guatemala, 2018). Therefore, this section focuses on the role Central American countries have played in coordinating or promoting policies to address migration needs. Between October 2018 and January 2020, Mexican institutions proposed a labor border model based on the modulation of spatial and temporal factors of migrant mobility (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013), conditioning access to employment rights and basic services on residence in certain areas of the country. First, through the linking of the “Estas en tu casa” program to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Oaxaca; then further south, through the deferred issuance of Visitor Cards for Humanitarian Reasons (TVRH) in the municipality of Suchiate, Chiapas; and later with the supposed job offerings of the “Sembrando Vida” program on the Mexico-Guatemala border (Garrapa, 2022).

Both governments pledged to address the root causes of migration through development investments in southern Mexico and Central America by coordinating efforts with regional and international partners, such

As part of Mexico’s actions under the Comprehensive Development Plan (PDI), it only committed 100 million USD toward two programs in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras: one focused on creating agricultural jobs through tree planting and another to combat youth unemployment.

as through the Comprehensive Development Plan³³ (PDI). As part of Mexico’s actions under the PDI, it only committed \$100 million USD toward two programs in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras: one focused on creating agricultural jobs through tree planting and another to combat youth unemployment. However, the U.S. and Mexican governments appear to be operating with different priorities, showing little coordination in matters relating to Central America (Signos Vitales, 2020). There is a clear inconsistency between i) the media-driven narrative about addressing the structural causes of migration through development and investment in southern Mexico and

³³ The intention was to address the structural causes in response to the flows in migrant caravans.



Central America and ii) the actual implementation of economic programs and migration policies that fundamentally respond to dependent international relations and the enforcement of a militarized territorial order. In this regard, there is a historical continuity with the framework described in detail by Villafuerte Solis (2017), which connects the implementation of economic measures favoring foreign capital investment and resource exploitation in Mexico's southern border region with the establishment —beginning in the 2000s— of a national security doctrine inspired by the United States.

It has been observed that people forcibly displaced from Central America have left, are leaving and will continue to leave their countries of origin as long as a social, political, and economic context of violence, corruption and poverty persists—conditions that deny them the opportunity to survive and lead a dignified life. Likewise, they will continue to seek diverse strategies and transit routes through Mexican territory, as containment, detention and deportation measures —along with temporary regularization actions and employment programs framed under an approach of “safe, orderly and regular migration”— have not addressed their concrete needs.

Images: "Sembrando vida": program with which Lopez Obrador plans to stop migration from Central America (and the results obtained in Mexico). Getty Images.

In 2019, president Lopez Obrador agreed with El Salvador president, Nayib Bukele, follow the program at <https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-56853807>

CONCLUSIONS

Return migration remains a persistent challenge for equity in Mexico, requiring a multi-pronged analysis to address the needs of those who return. Whether Mexican or not, rights must be a guaranteed reality and not violated upon setting foot on Mexican soil. The problem lies in the lack of full understanding of the diversity of returnees' needs and the offerings of each region, state or municipality in the country. Challenges do not end when needs arise, and inequalities threaten efforts to address return migration, especially when current policies prove to be non-inclusive. The record number of migrants in transit and the decrease in those returned to their countries demonstrate that, despite efforts to promote safe and orderly migration based on the principles of the Global Compact for Migration, contentious policies have not reduced migratory flows —they have instead increased the risks migrants face. As long as this scenario persists, migration is unlikely to cease; humanitarian assistance and protection will continue to be urgent and improving conditions in countries of origin will remain essential, though insufficient.

Despite efforts to promote safe and orderly migration based on the principles of the Global Compact for Migration, contentious policies have not reduced migratory flows—they have instead increased the risks migrants face.



5. ON THE FINANCIAL PATHWAYS



MIGRATORY WAVE AT THE SOUTHERN BORDER PARTICIPATE IN THE REMITTANCES RECORD
at <https://efe.com/economia/2023-10-04/ola-migratoria-en-la-frontera-sur-de-mexico-participa-del-record-de-remesas/>

5. ON « THE FINANCIAL PATHWAYS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyzes the black market for migration, which operates efficiently with a price mechanism that balances supply and demand within that market. For the analysis, we use financial data from the Mexican banking system, as well as information from money transfer companies. Much of this data was obtained by Signos Vitales through information requests and appeals filed before the now-extinct INAI (National Institute for Access to Information). This information is subsequently combined with surveys from El Colegio de la Frontera Norte and the World Bank on expenses (payments) made by undocumented migrants.

The results show how the Mexican federal government established a large (military and institutional) blockade on the southern border (between Chiapas and Tabasco), especially along the boundary with Guatemala. This blockade was key to understanding the behavior of remittances, unusual cash movements and the increase in bank account openings. At the same time, human traffickers capitalized on the bottleneck formed in southern Mexico and exploited the global financial system to increase their profits year after year—reaching record figures in 2023 (just over \$6 billion USD). The evidence suggests that these profits have very likely contaminated the Mexican financial system and increased the demand for cash in various regions of the country.

The Mexican federal government established a large) blockade on the southern border, which was key to undersanding the behavior of remittances, unusual cash movements and the increase in bank account openings

On the other hand, while a wide range of possible migration routes can be identified, the vast majority originated in seven municipalities in Chiapas (on the international border with Guatemala) and ended in the states of Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas. Unlike other routes, these involve rent extraction by transnational organized crime and territorial control by such groups, which are likely closely linked to other illicit activities, such as fuel theft (known as *huachicol*). In 2023 alone (the peak year), transnational criminal organizations were capable of moving more than six hundred thousand people across the country.

A wide range of possible migration routes can be identified. Unlike other routes, these involve rent extraction by transnational organized crime. Such groups, might be closely linked to illicit activities, such as fuel theft (known as huachicol).

5.1 THE TRAIL OF THE LONG JOURNEY³⁴

According to data from Financiera para el Bienestar (Finabien), between 2018 and 2023, the amount collected by foreigners (residing in Mexico) through remittances increased by 103.6% in real terms. During that five-year period, the total rose from 101 to \$250.6 million (MXN), reaching a historic high. Of this total, 26.2% was collected by U.S. and Canadian citizens (hereafter referred to as North Americans), but the vast majority (73.8%) was collected by individuals from other nationalities. In 2023, remittance payments were made by people from 157 nationalities (excluding Mexican), compared to 115³⁵ in 2018. Both years show overlap for 101 nationalities, and the difference is explained by the increased inclusion of individuals from African, Asian and Caribbean countries.

Despite the 36.5% increase between 2018 and 2023 in the number of nationalities receiving remittances

³⁴ The data contained in this section comes from the information request with folio number 330029324000450 and the review resource RRA 8075/24 prepared by Signos Vitales through the National Transparency Platform (PNT).

³⁵ In 2018, the nationality (NOT DEFINED) of the recipients of remittances for an amount of 1.1 million MXN was not identified. Although the amount is not very significant of the total (0.96% of the total), it is likely that for 2018 the number of nationalities or the amount raised by them is estimated slightly downwards.

in Mexico, by 2023 only 14 countries accounted for 85.4% of all remittances collected by foreigners in Mexico: the United States (\$61.8 million MXN), Venezuela (\$50.6 million MXN), Haiti (\$31.9 million MXN), Colombia (\$14.5 million MXN), Cuba (\$11.3 million MXN), Ecuador (\$10.5 million MXN), Honduras (\$7.2 million MXN), Russia (\$5.2 million MXN), Nicaragua (\$4 million MXN), Argentina (\$3.8 million MXN), Peru (\$3.8 million MXN), Canada (\$3.7 million MXN), El Salvador (\$3 million MXN) and Guatemala (\$2.7 million MXN). In 2018, individuals from these same countries received 66% of all remittances collected by foreigners.

Based on the data, it can be stated that between 2018 and 2023, most foreigners collecting remittances in Mexico came primarily from American states, but the increase in recipient diversity stemmed from Africa and Asia, although these latter regions did not significantly alter the overall composition. Notably, in 2018, remittance recipients from Guatemala, Haiti and Nicaragua were not as prominent as they are today — collectively receiving only \$1.5 million MXN (1.5% of the total). Conversely, among the aforementioned nationalities, Argentinians were the only group to lose significance. In 2018, Argentinians ranked third in remittance receipts in Mexico (\$7.4 million MXN), behind only Americans and Venezuelans.

Between 2018 and 2023, most foreigners collecting remittances in Mexico came primarily from American states; remittances received by Venezuelans in Mexico increased by 419.4% in real terms.

In particular, remittances received by Venezuelans in Mexico increased by 419.4% in real terms over those five years. While remittances to Venezuelans were already notable, their growth has been staggering. Similarly, remittances collected by North Americans in Mexico have also gained relevance. Between 2018 and 2023, real growth in remittance collections by North Americans and various other nationalities was 128.7% and 96%, respectively. Finabien's records show that growth in both cases outpaced the national average and that of Mexican remittance recipients (which grew only 12% in real terms over the same period). Thus, although Mexicans accounted for most of the funds handled through Finabien, their real growth was minimal.

In 2023, the distribution of remittance collections varied between different nationalities and North Ameri-

cans. The former group dominated in half of the Mexican states, with substantially higher amounts. 89.1% (\$162.2 million MXN) of the remittances collected by foreigners from various nationalities were concentrated in ten states:

	2018	2023
Nuevo Leon	62.8%	665.6%
CDMEX	25.9	-15.7
Oaxaca	18.7	1,317.2
Tamaulipas	14.6	984.6
Quintana Roo	13.5	-40.1
Chiapas	10.6	405.1
Sonora	7.2	359.3
Chihuahua	6.1	722.5
Queretaro	2.9	86.8
Jalisco	2.7	-34.3

Between 2018 and 2023, the real growth in remittances received in these states was 665.6%, -15.7%, 1,317.2%, 984.6%, -40.1%, 405.1%, 359.3%, 722.5%, 86.8%, and -34.3%, respectively. Although their contribution was much smaller (1.3% of the total), states such as Zacatecas (1,438.6%), Campeche (283%) and Tlaxcala (249.8%) recorded exceptionally high growth rates and should not be overlooked.

In contrast, Americans distributed their remittance collections more evenly, with 82.2% (\$53.9 million MXN) occurring in half of Mexico's states (16 states in total). Unlike the broader group of various nationalities, Americans recorded a historic peak in 2022 (\$69.4 million MXN), the same year their annual remittance receipts grew by 41.5%.

Although Americans also collected remittances in the 10 states mentioned above, their share was significantly lower in almost all of them and was relatively more important in 16 other states. These include Baja California, Baja California Sur, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Michoacan, Nayarit, Puebla and Yucatan, with 69.3%, 85.1%, 78.4%, 69.4%, 79.5%, 94%, 83.1% and 68.2% of all remittances collected by foreigners, respectively³⁶. Thus, between 2018 and 2023, the notable growth in Nuevo Leon, Oaxaca, Sonora, Tamaulipas, and Chiapas is primarily due to remittances received by various nationalities. Conversely, the growth of remittances collected in Baja California Sur, Jalisco³⁷, and Michoacan has been driven mainly by Americans.

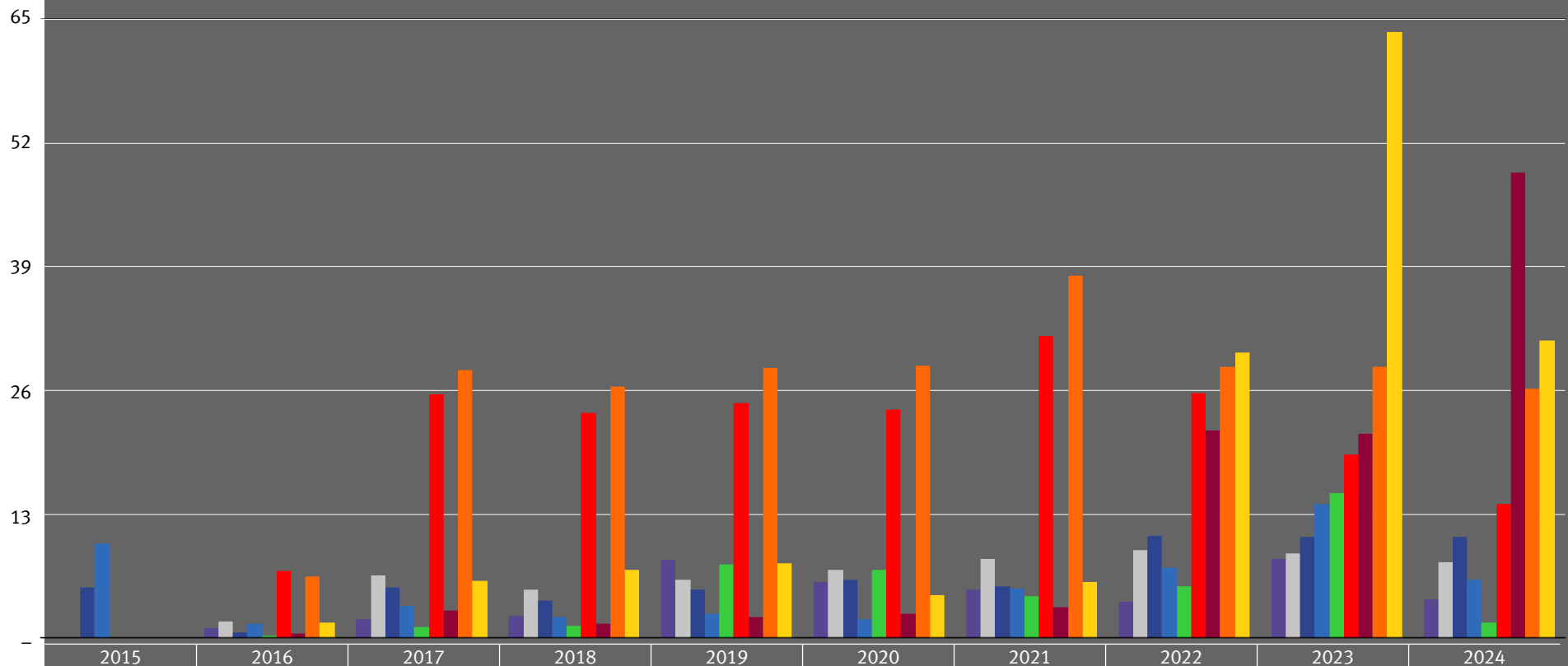
³⁶ The other eight entities are: Aguascalientes (63.6%), Colima (75.8%), Durango (69.2%), Guerrero (53%), Morelos (54.9%), San Luis Potosi (68%), Sinaloa (64.6%) and Zacatecas (63.1%).

³⁷ Between 2018 and 2023, the growth in remittances received by foreigners in Jalisco was 42.1%. The slowdown in growth was caused by negative growth by various nationalities.

89.1% (162.2 million MXN) of the remittances collected by foreigners from various nationalities were concentrated in ten states.

GRAPH 8. COLLECTION OF REMITTANCES FROM FOREIGNERS (VARIOUS NATIONALITIES AND NORTH AMERICANS) IN MEXICO
IN THE NINE ENTITIES WITH THE HIGHEST DEPOSITS (MDP)) 2015 – 2024*

MILLIONS
OF PESOS



*The information for 2024 is an estimate of Signos Vitales based on the information available as of June of the same year.

Source: In-house eaboration with information from the request with file number 330029324000450 and the review resource RRA 8075/24.



As can be observed, since 2016 both Quintana Roo and Mexico City have accounted for a large share of the remittances collected by foreigners in Mexico. In 2018, just these two states concentrated nearly half (49.5%) of all remittances received by foreigners. By 2022, the composition had changed entirely, and they represented only a quarter (25.1%) of the total. This decline in share was driven by a contraction in the amount of remittances received in these two entities—by –33.2% and –11.7%, respectively. However, this decrease was more than offset by accelerated growth in the rest of the country, particularly in other southern and northern states.

A detailed analysis reveals that remittances collected by individuals from various countries have been recorded in 848 municipalities (34.2% of the national total). This figure implies that foreigners have transited through nearly one-third of all municipalities across Mexico's 32 federal entities. From 2018 to 2023, remittance collection by this population group was recurrent in 146 municipalities. Between 2019 and 2023, another 26 municipalities also exhibited this phenomenon continuously. This means that in the past five years, foreigners of various nationalities have consistently collected remittances in 172 municipalities —representing 20.3% of all municipalities

In the past five years, foreigners of various nationalities have consistently collected remittances in 172 municipalities —representing 20.3% of all municipalities where such transactions occurred, covering all states.

where such transactions occurred, covering all states. Additionally, in 68 other municipalities, this phenomenon is more recent, having only been observed since 2022, but showing a steady flow since then.

While the number of municipalities where this phenomenon has been recurrent may seem small (barely one-fifth), in 2023, these municipalities accounted for 161.6 million MXN in remittances collected by people of various nationalities—equivalent to 87.3% of the total for that group. Furthermore, between 2018 and 2023, these 172 municipalities saw a growth of 180.3%, rising from 57.7 million MXN. This growth represents 96.6% of the total variation. In other words, despite the high intermittency of the phenomenon, it can largely be explained by a small number of municipalities and nationalities. In the specific case of Fin-

abien, this phenomenon translates into a substantial amount of money collected by foreigners at a limited number of branches.

A statistical analysis of data provided by Finabien shows that the data is significant enough to explain much of the phenomenon of remittances collected by foreigners in Mexico³⁸. The evidence indicates that, on average, Mexico receives 562.2 MXN in remittances from foreigners for every one peso processed through Finabien³⁹. Based on this, we estimate that between January 2019 and April 2024 (the latest data available from Finabien), remittances collected by foreigners account for 10.2% of all remittances received in Mexico. This amounts to a total of 542.4 billion MXN (\$28.2 billion USD) over that period. In 2023, these transfers reached their highest value, both in absolute and relative terms, totaling \$ 7.9 billion USD—equivalent to 12.6% of all remittances received in Mexico that year⁴⁰.

³⁸The econometric analysis of time series, the model used, as well as the main results, can be seen in the statistical annex.

³⁹This may be because it is only part of the market. In this sense, private companies must be paying foreigners a much larger portion (approximately 562 times the amount transferred through Finabien) of the total remittances. Indirectly it is possible to know the size of the market.

⁴⁰This latter figure results from the payment of 250,585,000 MXN (recorded by Finabien) multiplied by 562.207 million

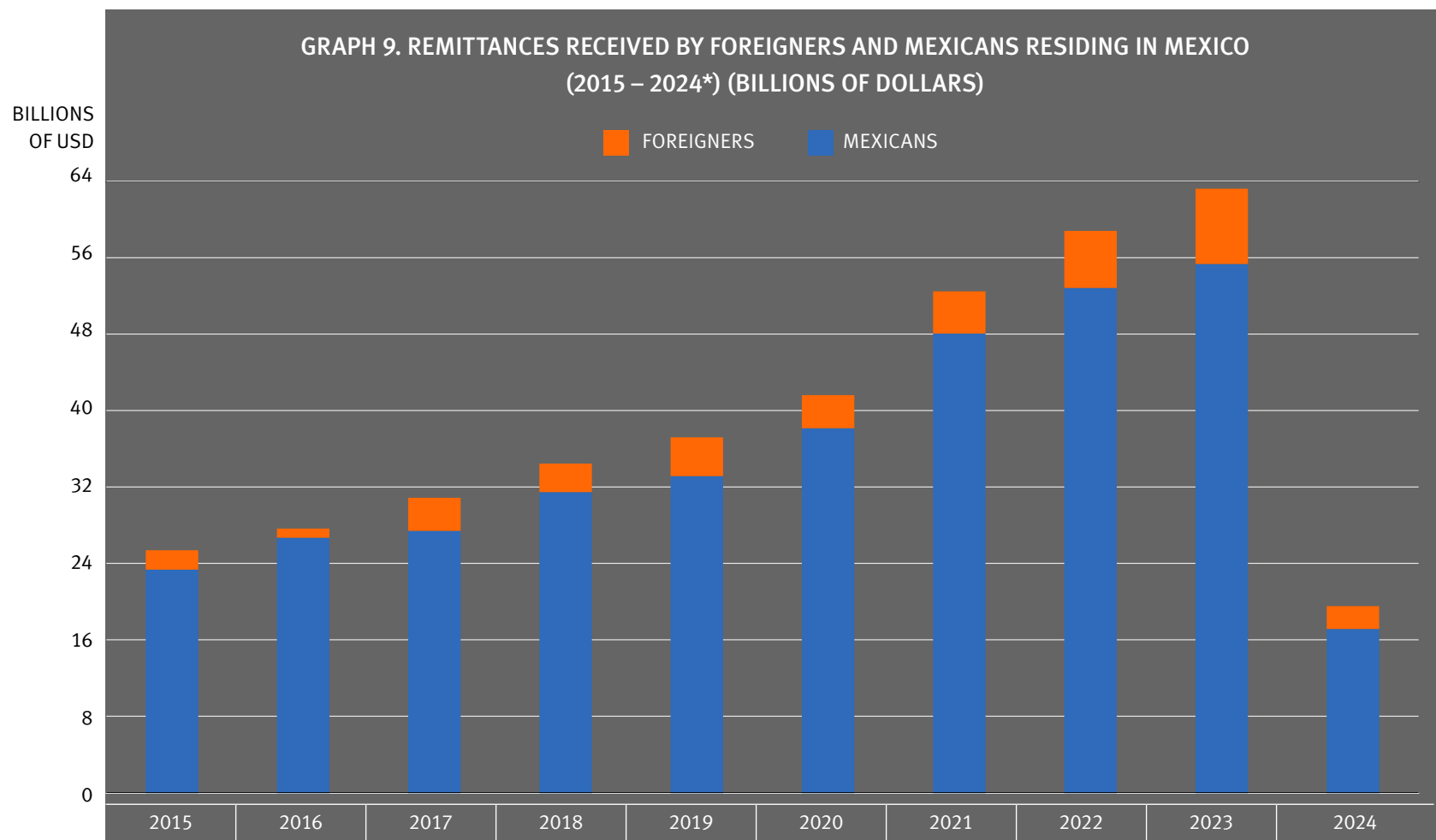


Image: Migrants in a queue waiting to cash remittances in Chiapas at <https://www.jornada.com.mx/noticia/2023/09/27/estados/migrantes-abarrotan-negocios-para-cobro-de-remesas-en-chiapas-1805>

Nor is the phenomenon recent. One year before the start of Lopez Obrador's administration, the remittances collected by foreigners amounted to \$3 billion USD. This means that between 2018 and 2023, the growth was 142%, a rate that nearly triples the growth of remittances collected by Mexicans (56.2%) during the same period.

MXN. The result is then divided by the average exchange rate of the peso against the U.S. dollar.

The evidence indicates that, on average, Mexico receives 562.2 MXN in remittances from foreigners for every one peso processed through Finabien.



Source: Calculations by Signos Vitales based on data from Finabien and Banco de Mexico (n.d.). *Data from January to April 2024.

5.2 AT THE ORIGIN OF EXCESS, DOUBTS BEGIN: BOOM AND COLLAPSE

In this explosion of remittances, the state of Chiapas has played a decisive role. Between 2012 and 2018, the growth in remittances collected in the state and in all of Mexico was 42.2% and 47.7%, respectively. In the following six years (2018–2024), personal transfers in Chiapas accelerated by 393.3%, rising from 845 million (USD) to \$4,168.4 million (USD). The previous year, they reached a historic record of \$ 4,367.3 million (USD), positioning Chiapas as the fourth state with the highest remittance inflows in the country. By the end of 2024, it ranked sixth in importance. Nationally, remittances grew by 88% over the same period (Banxico, n.d.). In other words, between 2018 and 2024, growth in Chiapas was four times higher than at the national level, whereas in the six previous years, it had been slightly lower. Simultaneously, although to a lesser degree, remittance growth also accelerated in all the southern border states of Mexico between 2018 and 2024: Campeche (107.2%), Quintana Roo (131.1%) and Yucatan (119.4%). Tabasco, the other border state, saw its growth accelerate until 2021, after which it began to decline. Between 2018 and 2021, remittance inflows to Tabasco had already increased by 105.1%, a figure comparable to Chiapas’

growth over the same period (129.1%) (Banxico, n.d.). This suggests a degree of convergence in the trends of both states.

Had Chiapas continued its long-term trend, the estimated remittance inflow in 2024 would have been \$1,430.2 million (USD). That would have represented a reasonable growth of 69.3% compared to 2018. In reality, the state received \$4,168.4 million (USD) in 2024 (Banxico, n.d.). This excess amounts to 191.5% above expectations —equivalent to \$ 2,738.2 million (USD)— almost three times what it should have received. The same occurred with the volume of remittances, though to a lesser extent. A higher increase in the total amount, combined with a smaller increase in the number of transactions (207.6% from 2018 to 2024)⁴¹, still substantial, resulted in an unprecedented rise in the average transfer.

Between 2018 and 2024, the average remittance in Chiapas rose from \$347.2 to \$556.9 (USD) per transaction. This amount is 41.7% higher than the national average of \$393 (USD). In other words, while transfers

⁴¹ The information related to the number of operations (volume) at all levels (national, federal entity and municipality or mayor’s office), as well as the estimates derived from it, comes from the information request with folio CTC-BM-39177 made by Signos Vitales.

From 2018 to 2024 personal transfers in Chiapas accelerated by 393.3%, rising from 845 million USD to 4,168.4 million USD. In previous year, they reached a historic record of 4,367.3 million USD, positioning Chiapas as the fourth state with the highest remittance inflows in the country.

in Chiapas gained purchasing power (a real increase of 19.8% in MXN), in most of the country the average transfer amount remained below 2018 levels (a real variation of -8.2%). Two economic factors contributed to this: inflation, which outpaced the nominal growth of remittances in pesos, and the appreciation of the peso against the U.S. dollar.

We identified that, historically, this boom has largely been driven by remittance activity in southern border municipalities (bordering Guatemala). Specifically, this involves seven municipalities in Chiapas: Benemerito de las Americas, Cacahoatan, Frontera Comalapa, Las Margaritas, Motozintla, Ocosingo and Tapachula. Between 2018 and 2024, remittances in these municipalities increased by 342.9%. In 2024, these municipalities accounted for 24.2% (or \$1,007.5 million USD) of the total received by the state. The amount is significant, but its importance goes further: remittance activity in these municipalities explains 82.9% of the state's overall trend. It is likely that no other Mexican state of similar size has a handful of border municipalities (7 out of 118 remittance-receiving municipalities in Chiapas) that so heavily determine remittance behavior statewide.

Equally notable are other Chiapas border municipalities —Amatenango de la Frontera, Frontera Hidalgo, La Trinitaria, Maravilla Tenejapa, Marques de Comillas, Mazapa de Madero, Metapa and Union Juarez— which have also received remittances and provide revealing insights. Remittance behavior in these eight municipalities significantly influenced trends in the rest of the state up until the second quarter of 2022. At that point, the border municipalities split into two groups: the aforementioned group, which continued to grow and determined the state's overall trajectory, and a second group that peaked in mid-2022 before collapsing in the third quarter of the same year⁴².

This collapse set the tone for 43 additional municipalities in Chiapas (a total of 51 affected municipalities —nearly half the state). Between 2022 (the peak) and 2024, total remittances in these municipalities fell from \$102.3 million (USD) to just \$11.2 million (USD)—a drop of -89.1% over the period and -95.9% between the second and third quarters of 2022 (Banxico, n.d.). Nearly half the state's municipalities suffered a major and largely unnoticed downturn, though it should

⁴² Although the border municipalities of La Libertad and Tuxtla Chico have also received remittances and have similarly fallen rapidly or resoundingly, they do not maintain a behavior that meets the characteristics of the two aforementioned groups.

Seven municipalities in Chiapas: Benemerito de las Americas, Cacahoatan, Frontera Comalapa, Las Margaritas, Motozintla, Ocosingo and Tapachula remittances in these municipalities increased by 342.9%. In 2024, these municipalities accounted for 24.2% (or 1,007.5 million USD) of the total received by the state.

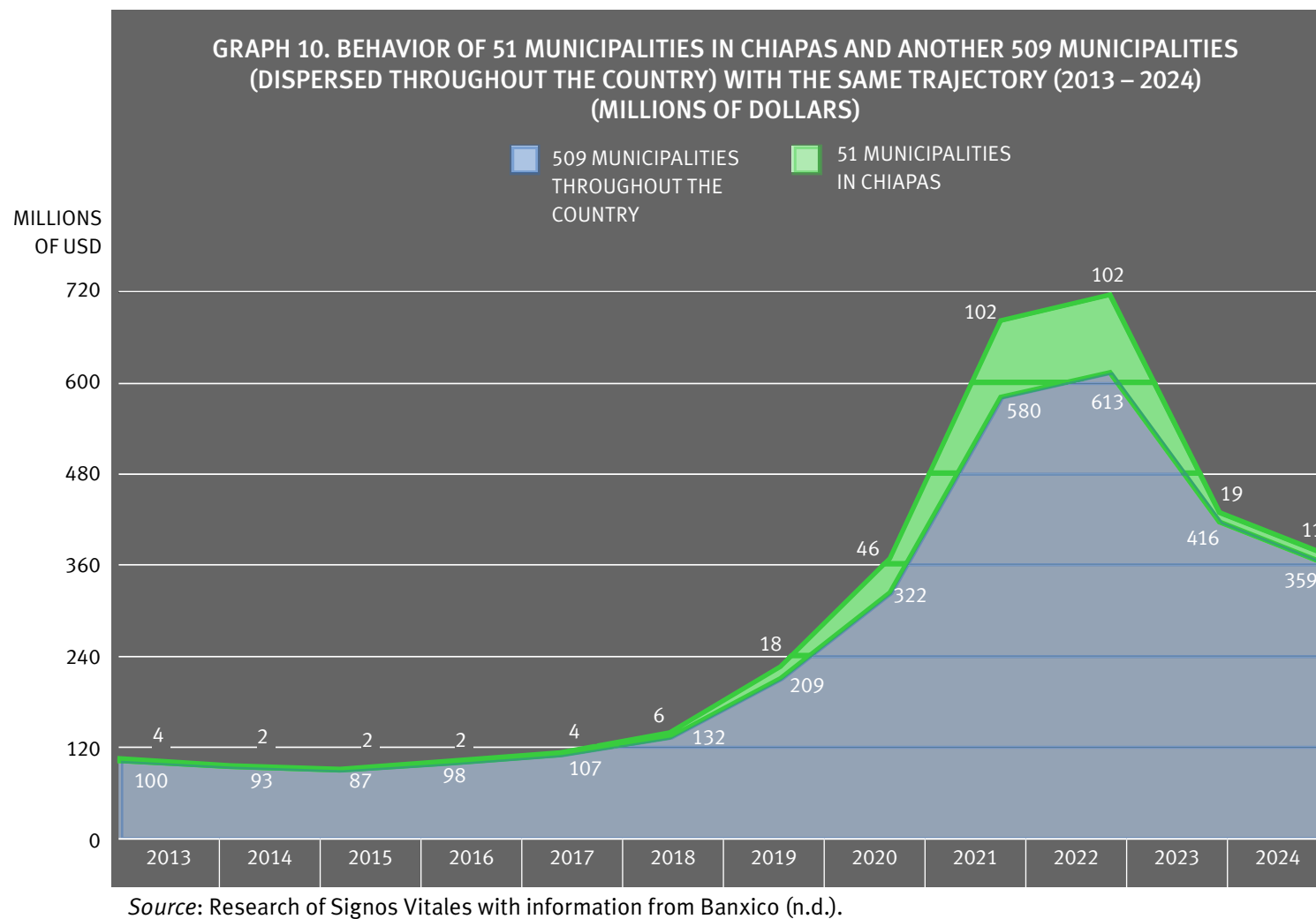
have been evident to financial authorities due to the compensating growth in larger remittance-receiving cities. This event triggered the subsequent deceleration in the state.

The fortune of these 51 municipalities in Chiapas was shared by 509 others across the country. The 560 affected municipalities represent 22.6% of all Mexican municipalities. Remittance trends in these locations followed a similar pattern —boom and collapse— occurring simultaneously across the country, making it resemble a financial contagion rather than isolated incidents. Of the 560 municipalities, a total of 237 nationwide dropped to zero dollars in remittances from one quarter to the next after experiencing exponential growth. Between 2022 and 2024, these 560 municipalities saw a remittance decline of -48.3% (or -\$345.7 million USD, and a sharp -72% contraction between the second and third quarters of 2022 alone (Banxico, n.d.) (Graph 10).

These municipalities are concentrated in 11 states (in addition to Chiapas), accounting for 526 of the 560 municipalities: Oaxaca (202), Puebla (77), Veracruz (61), Tlaxcala (30), Hidalgo (29), State of Mexico (18), Yucatan (17), Guerrero (14), San Luis Potosi (9), Michoacan (9) and Chihuahua (9). However, the source

of the financial loss (in dollars) is even more concentrated. Over the past two years, nine states accounted for 92.7% of the total decline: Mexico City (\$-93.4 million USD)⁴³, Chiapas (\$-91.1 million USD), Oaxaca (\$-36.2 million USD), Puebla (\$-24 million USD), Guerrero (\$-22.6 million USD), Veracruz (\$-18.6 million USD), Hidalgo (\$-17.5 million USD), Michoacan (\$-9.5 million USD) and Tlaxcala (\$-7.5 million USD) (Banxico, n.d.). In general, most of these municipalities are now returning to their long-term trajectories. Concerns about the use and final destination of these financial resources raise further questions—especially since they are presumed to be the main source of income for many families. This collapse also undermines the hypothesis that growth in remittance collection points (i.e., access to financial services) would drive higher remittance volumes, since changes remain negligible regardless of infrastructure.

⁴³ In Mexico City, only the mayor's office of Coyoacan meets the aforementioned characteristics. When analyzed by amount (not quantity) it is in itself the one with the greatest loss.



5.3 A MONSTER THAT CONSUMES CASH

In Mexico, the demand for cash continues to grow year after year. The increase in banknotes and coins in circulation far outpaces the growth of the overall economy: between December 2018 and December 2024, real cumulative growth was 54.5% and 5.2%, respectively (INEGI, n.d.). This suggests that money is circulating at a slower pace nationwide (much more cash for nearly the same volume of transactions). As of February 2025, \$3.2 trillion MXN were in circulation. Due to seasonal factors, the figure peaked at a historic high of \$3.3 trillion MXN in December 2024 (Banxico, n.d.g). As previously noted, high-denomination bills (\$1,000 MXN) have gained significant ground (a 445.5% increase in volume, or \$685.7 billion MXN) (Banxico, n.d.c). Various factors have contributed to this growth, and remittances are of major relevance.

The growth in remittance inflows explains between 8% and 9% of the increase in national demand for cash^{44 45}. There is a strong, long-term positive rela-

⁴⁴ We estimate using a dynamic first differences model that for every million pesos of growth in remittances, the demand for money increases by approximately 659.3 thousand MXN.

⁴⁵ Unless otherwise indicated, the information contained in this section is derived from the information request with folio 330030724000280 and the review resource RRA 9615/24, made by Signos Vitales through the PNT.

tionship between the two variables. However, this does not necessarily hold at the subnational level. Depending on the state, the relationship may be much stronger, weaker or even inverse. Despite the constant inflow of remittances in various states—particularly those with accelerated growth in the past six years—the rise in cash demand may not correlate with remittance volumes at the state level.

Two of the most striking examples, due to their high remittance inflows, are the State of Mexico and Puebla. Between 2018 and December 2023, real cash demand fell in these states by 17.7% (\$–27.3 billion MXN) and 8.1% (\$–9.9 billion MXN), respectively. This means that the net amount of money (cash issued by the central bank minus what is withdrawn) is negative—there are fewer banknotes and coins in circulation. Thus, the relationship between remittances and cash demand is negative. Other states in similar conditions include Nayarit (\$–8.7 billion MXN), Quintana Roo (\$–10.3 billion MXN) and Sinaloa (\$–35.5 billion MXN). Consequently, in these five states, economic growth had to be offset by an increase in the velocity of money.

Puebla stands out when compared to Oaxaca. Historically, both states have shown a long-term relation-

The increase in banknotes and coins in circulation far outpaces the growth of the overall economy: between December 2018 and December 2024, real cumulative growth was 54.5% and 5.2%, respectively (INEGI, s.f.).

ship in their remittance trends⁴⁶. The real difference between the last quarters of 2018 and 2023 was \$2.4 billion MXN (27.1%) in Puebla and \$2.3 billion MXN (25%) in Oaxaca. These figures are fully comparable. Yet, while cash demand in Puebla declined, in Oaxaca it increased significantly (\$49.9 billion MXN or 45.7%).

Meanwhile, most northern states —particularly the more complex economies— saw an increase in cash demand over the same five-year period. Real growth rates in Baja California, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas were 88.7% (\$73.4 billion MXN), 77.1% (\$31.1 billion MXN), 32.4% (\$35.5 billion MXN), 50.1% (\$64.6 billion MXN) and 66.7% (\$47.9 billion MXN), respectively. Similarly, Guanajuato and Queretaro—both in the central region—saw cash demand increase by \$65.4 billion MXN and \$42.8 billion MXN (57.9%), respectively. Despite receiving only \$570.9 million MXN and \$628.1 million MXN in remittances, Nuevo Leon and Baja California recorded some of the largest increases in liquidity in absolute terms.

Mexico City continues to lead the country in total cash flow, though to a lesser extent than in the past decade. The growth was moderate compared to oth-

er central states (27.5%), but it still accounts for the largest share of the national increase in cash demand (31.1%). At this point, it cannot be definitively stated whether local economies (considering their complexity or competitiveness) increased or decreased their cash demand due to the spread of digital payments and financial services. Thus, although in most cases (26 out of 32 states) the relationship between remittances and cash demand is positive, the sensitivity to remittance growth varies by state. In Mexico City, for every \$1 million (MXN) increase in remittances, cash demand rises by \$1.980 million (MXN). In Chiapas, the same remittance increase leads to a cash demand rise of only \$419,100 (MXN). This means that, for Chiapas to match Mexico City's cash growth, it would need 4.7 times more remittances. Jalisco, another key state for remittance inflows, presents a peculiar case in which increased remittance volumes have not been enough to reverse the downward trend in cash circulation.

In most states (26 out of 32) the relationship between remittances and cash demand is positive. However, the sensitivity to remittance growth varies by state.

⁴⁶ In econometric terms it is said that the series are co-integrated.

5.4 CONTAMINATION OF THE MEXICAN FINANCIAL SYSTEM

Just as there are remittances that are collected in cash, many others are credited to bank accounts. These deposits allow the accumulated balances in such accounts to continue growing. Between December 2018 and the same month in 2024, the number of active demand deposit accounts (which allow depositors to withdraw their funds at any time) rose from 59,390,400 to 75,451,200 accounts. In December 2012, there were 51,939,700 such accounts (Banxico, n.d.d). This means that the growth over the past six years was nearly four times higher than in the six previous years (32.3% vs. 9.8%, or 18.8 vs. 4.7 million accounts).

Likewise, in the last six years, the accumulated balances (in current pesos) of these same accounts increased from \$2.3 trillion MXN to \$4.9 trillion MXN (Banxico, n.d.e). The variation in real terms was 35.1%. By the end of 2012, the same balance stood at \$1.6 trillion MXN (Banxico, n.d.e). In the past 12 years, the Mexican economy grew by a cumulative 17.1%, from \$39.4 trillion MXN to \$46.3 trillion MXN (a variation of \$6.9 trillion MXN). In contrast, over the same period, accumulated balances grew by 68.5% (a real

The number of active demand deposit accounts (which allow depositors to withdraw their funds at any time) rose from 59,390,400 to 75,451,200 accounts.

The growth over the past six years was nearly four times higher than in the six previous years (18.8 vs. 4.7 million accounts).

variation of \$1.3 trillion MXN), and nearly two-thirds of this growth (63.9%) occurred between 2018 and 2024, during which time the economy grew by just 5.2% in cumulative terms (INEGI, n.d.).

This phenomenon has enabled the Mexican economy to enjoy substantial liquidity and a financial capital stock not seen before. At this pace, the monetary aggregate M1 (the most liquid one), made up of currency in circulation plus demand deposit accounts, will remain the most relevant. Assuming that this aggregate continues on its current trajectory, by the end of 2030 it will represent 30% of the Mexican economy. That is, there will be far more money in the economy (more currency in circulation) and more financial

resources in demand deposit accounts, even as circulation slows because funds are being stockpiled (accumulated).

One of the problems observed is that the flood of bank accounts overwhelms useful financial information. This phenomenon is also occurring in other sectors of the Mexican financial system. For example, in 2018 Nacional Financiera (NAFIN), through its Cetesdirecto platform, had just 284.8 thousand contracts on record, with a total investment of \$11.7 billion MXN. As of May 15, 2024, the number of contracts had risen to \$2.1 million, and the investment volume exceeded \$147.1 billion MXN. While this may appear to be a success, given that it facilitates access to financial services and other savings and investment instruments, the reality is that 86.7% of those contracts have an average balance of less than \$10,000 MXN. Among them, there are 266.3 thousand contracts with a balance of less than \$20 MXN (less than one dollar). On the other hand, just 290.4 thousand contracts (13.3% of total contracts) account for 87.3% (\$128.4 billion MXN) of the financial investment captured through the platform⁴⁷. Put differently, the

⁴⁷ A contract is closer to one person, since Cetesdirecto users can only obtain more than two contracts when they obtain another contract in the name of a minor.

number of savers in Mexico has grown significantly (664.5%), yet it still represents a small sector of the population —especially in terms of balances above \$442.2 thousand MXN^{48 49}.

This leads to two possible explanations:

- » Remittances were not collected in the location reported in official statistics. This results from distortions generated during the processing of information (by remittance companies and the Bank of Mexico). One of the underlying reasons for this phenomenon is the location of the remittance companies' servers.
- » A large portion of remittance funds was deposited directly into accounts, meaning they were not withdrawn in cash. These phenomena make it more difficult to determine how these funds are spent, their final use, and—most importantly—who the ultimate beneficiaries are.

⁴⁸ The data contained in this paragraph comes from the information request with folio 330022424000235 made by Signos Vitales through the PNT.

⁴⁹ At the end of 2024, the investment level reached \$ 182 billion MXN and 2.4 million contracts

5.5 TRAVELER, THERE IS A PATH: THE ROAD IS MADE BY PAYING

THE BLACK GATE AND THE GATE OF MIGRATION INSTITUTIONS

Chiapas and other states in southern Mexico have shown unparalleled growth not only in the flow of remittances but also in the movement of people. The southern border of Mexico has become the main gateway for millions of migrants in irregular status. Until 2022, the state of Chiapas was the epicenter of detentions of individuals in irregular migration status (152,448 individuals). In the following two years, this number continued to grow, reaching 315,887 events (accumulated from January to August 2024). Meanwhile, since 2023, Tabasco surpassed Chiapas with 290,299 events, and between January and August 2024, the figure rose to 442,365 events. This accelerated and sustained growth is recent and dates back to May 2023. From January 2019 to April 2023, the average number of events recorded in Tabasco was 2,514 per month. Starting in May of that same year and up to August 2024, the average rose to 36,633 events per month.

Year after year, the number of events has continued to rise and is consistently surpassing historical re-

Mexico has shown unparalleled growth not only in the flow of remittances but also in the movement of people. Until 2022, the state of Chiapas was the epicenter of detentions of individuals in irregular migration status (152,448 individuals). In the following two years, this number continued to grow, reaching 315,887 events (accumulated from January to August 2024).

cords. Between January and August 2024, Tabasco, Chiapas, and Baja California alone accounted for 86% of the events. From 2018 to 2024, the number of events in these three states and nationwide grew by 4,947.2%, 693.4%, 1,537% and 907.6%, respectively. These states clearly reflect the strategy pursued by the federal government, at least since 2021. Until that year, more than half of the individuals in irregular status in both Baja California and Tabasco were being referred⁵⁰ to shelters in the DIF network for tempo-

⁵⁰ According to the Glossary for the Use of Migration Statistics (the glossary), “Channelization” refers to foreigners in an irregular migratory situation who were initiated into a Migration Administrative Procedure (PAM) before the National

rary accommodation—82.5% and 57%, respectively. Nationwide, the figure was 40.2% (124,373 individuals). From 2022 onward, and according to the most recent data available, these proportions declined to 35.8% (Baja California), 4.2% (Tabasco) and 22.2% (nationwide).

In contrast, in 2021, only 27.6% of individuals in Chiapas were referred to shelters, while the vast majority (72.4%) were presented⁵¹. This means that, according to the federal government, they were receiving assistance either to regularize their immigration status or to return to their country of origin. From 2022 onward, while the proportion of individuals presented increased in Baja California and Tabasco (or referrals decreased), in Chiapas, the proportion of individuals referred to shelters began to rise, reaching 41.3%. These two scenarios are diametrically opposed, reflecting two different strategies implemented at different times. The referral process may have led peo-

ple traveling in groups (especially families) to remain for longer periods after being split up—initially in Baja California and Tabasco, and later in Chiapas.



Image: "Mexico halts deportations and migrant transfers citing lack of funds" at <https://ap-news.com/article/mexico-immigration-migrants-venezuela-17615ace23do677bb443d8386e-254fbc>

Migration Institute (INM) for not proving their regular immigration status and were channeled to the DIF network shelters for temporary accommodation.

⁵¹ According to the glossary, the "Presentation" is an administrative measure dictated by the INM through which the temporary accommodation of a foreign person who does not prove their immigration status is agreed upon for the regularization of their stay or assistance for their return to their country of origin.

THE PRICE OF ENTRY AND EXIT

According to data from the Survey on Migration at the Northern and Southern Borders of Mexico (EMIF), both Mexicans and foreigners from three countries (Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador) have hired a *coyote*, either during their transit through Mexico or to cross the northern border into the United States. Differences in spending are notable. Individuals from Guatemala are more likely to hire these services. In 2018, 65 out of every 100 Guatemalans used such services. By 2023, the number rose to 68 out of 100. Among those who reported paying in dollars, the average cost of the service increased from \$7,497 (USD) to \$10,750 (USD). Interestingly, a quarter of Guatemalans paid in Quetzales, averaging \$8,470 (USD) (Colef, n.d.).

Between 2018 and 2023, for anyone attempting to cross into the United States from Mexico, the average price (with a coyote) rose from \$4,611 to \$4,996 (USD) (Colef, n.d.). The cost of coyote services at the northern border has decreased in real terms (adjusted for inflation), which may suggest greater competition and a more efficient market. However, the price to cross into the U.S. from Mexico's southern border is between 60% and 115% higher than for those crossing from

the northern border. Assuming free transit through Mexico, the cost of traveling from the southern to the northern border does not even amount to half of the price difference (10,750 minus 5,000 dollars). Thus, it becomes a business with a guaranteed margin of 23%. For many migrants, paying this premium may seem worthwhile, given the rise in security checkpoints and growing insecurity in Mexico. These conditions, in turn, act as incentives for coyotes. Increased insecurity and control measures result in higher prices. Therefore, the rise in violence in southern Mexico, fueled by both local criminal groups and the country's major drug cartels (Sinaloa and Jalisco New Generation), should come as no surprise. The same struggle for market share, generates, among other effects, a rise in the cost of crossing into the U.S.

Although figures and proportions have changed over time, certain trends remain constant: rising prices at Mexico's southern border, price discrimination (based on nationality), and diversification in payment currencies (mainly pesos, Quetzales and U.S. dollars). For some nationalities, use of this service has declined, but that drop has been offset by higher prices. In other words, the industry continues to increase its profits. Greater payment flexibility (diversified currencies) may also help criminal organizations

According to data from the Survey on Migration at the Northern and Southern Borders of Mexico (EMIF), Mexicans and foreigners from three countries (Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador) have hired a coyote, either during their transit through Mexico or to cross the northern border into the United States.

The average price (with a coyote) rose from 4,611 to 4,996 (USD) (Colef, s.f.).

facilitate international transactions. Growth has been significant, and it is very likely that these services are sensitive to exchange rate fluctuations and other risks. In this context, insecurity in Mexico is generating substantial profits for criminal groups—either directly or indirectly.

In addition to these markups, migrants also face various threats, including loss of wealth. According to the same survey, in 2023, 1.5% of migrants were robbed, extorted or forced to perform an activity against their will (such as transporting drugs). Additionally, in 4.3% of cases, the *pollero* (smuggler) abandoned them (Colef, n.d.).

The World Bank has documented that approximately 76.1% of migrants' expenses during their transit through Mexico go toward extortion payments to criminal groups, corrupt institutions, and border crossings. Only 24% is used for current personal expenses (Ratha, D., *et al.*, 2021). Based on this, it is possible to estimate that of the \$7.9 billion (USD) in remittances received by foreigners in Mexico, \$6 billion (USD) went to criminal groups in 2023. This figure becomes plausible when the average fee per crossing is approximately \$9,378 (USD). This suggests there were around 648,271 illegal crossings into the United

States (from Mexico) in 2023 —equivalent to 74 illegal crossings per hour. If over 600,000 people seems like an exaggerated number compared to recorded detentions, it should be clarified that Mexico's armed forces registered at least 2.1 million detentions that same year —twice as many as those recorded by immigration authorities. It is evident that immigration authorities were overwhelmed in many respects, which is reflected, among other things, in the more than 160 deaths reported in immigration detention centers⁵² between January 2019 and July 2024.

The World Bank has documented that approximately 76.1% of migrants' expenses during their transit through Mexico go toward extortion payments to criminal groups, corrupt institutions, and border crossings.

⁵² The National Immigration Institute does not record in official figures the deaths that occurred in the fire at the Cd. Juárez immigration station. However, this figure does consider these deaths.

FINAL REFLECTIONS: WHEN TRANSNATIONAL CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS TURNED SOUTH

The Mexican state allowed the wave of violence in the country's south to grow. Clashes between the Armed Forces and criminal organizations decreased while homicides increased. This phenomenon was even atypical, as in the rest of the country, fewer confrontations usually meant fewer deaths—at least statistically. The dispute among criminal groups in the south, combined with intensified migration control, has driven up the cost of irregular migration crossings into the United States.

As they travel through Mexico, foreign migrants have left an indelible mark through financial operations in more than a third of the country's municipalities (nearly 850). It is worth emphasizing that when public security in Mexico is discussed, the phrase “one-third” has become common—as if it were a constant. And indeed it is, from the moment many territorial crimes coexist in the same geographic spaces. In a sense, transnational organized crime has created its own business environment. Migratory routes often coincide with *huachicol* (fuel theft) routes. This overlap is causal, as traffickers require

other services such as transportation, which makes intensive use of gasoline, diesel and in some rare cases, jet fuel (which is tax-free and hard to trace). They also require control over vast stretches of national territory. Moreover, sectors like lodging, food and financial services capture a large share of the irregular migrants' current spending (30% or approximately \$2.4 billion USD).

The loot and incentives are enormous and the Mexican government was permissive—by omission or commission. In this context, immigration authorities have created a restricted area between Chiapas and Tabasco, which effectively funnels migrants along specific routes, thereby regulating delivery times, end beneficiaries and segmenting the market. In 2023, considering only formal payment mechanisms, the human trafficking market in Mexico reached \$5.6 billion USD—the highest figure on record. From 2019 to 2023, criminal groups may have earned a total of \$17 billion USD from this crime. The data also show that many of these migrants—presumably those who paid—ended up between Tamaulipas and Nuevo Leon. By 2024, the drop in remittance transfers at the northern border and greater concentration in the south—particularly in Oaxaca and Chiapas—became evident. Much of these dollars entered the

Mexican economy, injecting liquidity either through cash or via the Mexican financial system.

However, recent actions by remittance companies and the Bank of Mexico raise further doubts about the reliability of financial information. In just two years, over 200 municipalities across the country went from appearing on the map to becoming ghost communities (now receiving zero dollars). This type of operation cannot simply be carried out by any criminal without proper training or authorization. It either points to decisions made at the highest levels, a breach of the Mexican financial system or deliberate actions favoring a specific criminal group. A large portion of the disruption originated in Chiapas (along the border with Guatemala), the main entry point into the country and the beginning of the route to the United States for the vast majority of irregular migrants. As a result, the slowdown in remittance growth began as early as 2023.

The Mexican state allowed the wave of violence in the country's south to grow.

Transnational organized crime has created its own business environment. Migratory routes often coincide with huachicol (fuel theft) routes. This overlap is causal, as traffickers require other services such as transportation, which makes intensive use of gasoline, diesel and in some rare cases, jet fuel.

In 2023, considering only formal payment mechanisms, the human trafficking market in Mexico reached 5.6 billion USD —the highest figure on record.



6. THE ECONOMICS OF MIGRATION ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER



EMPLOYMENTS FOR MIGRANTS; THREE STATES LEAD THE FLUX OF MIGRANTS; CONSUMERS TRUST DECREASES at <https://oem.com.mx/elsoldetijuana/local/10-mil-empleos-para-migrantes-18045988.app.json> / <https://www.eleconomista.com.mx/empresas/Tres-entidades-que-lideran-el-flujo-de-cruces-en-la-frontera-norte-Baja-California-Tamaulipas-y-Chihuahua-20220413-0035.html> / <https://oem.com.mx/elsoldetijuana/local/10-mil-empleos-para-migrantes-18045988.app.json> / <https://archivo.prensa-latina.cu/2022/07/18/disminuye-confianza-de-consumidores-latinos-en-economia-de-eeuu>

6. «THE ECONOMICS OF MIGRATION ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into three sections: The U.S. labor market, migration and its consequences on population growth in the United States; employment and migration status of the population of Mexican origin in the U.S.; and the most recent migration patterns of Mexicans and their effect on the current account. Throughout the chapter, the influence of migration on the balance of the U.S. labor market in the post-Covid stage and on the country's demographic dynamics is highlighted.

In recent years, large-scale migration to the United States has positioned the country as the main destination for migrants displaced by ongoing conditions of violence (armed conflicts) and poverty in various parts of the world. While also part of this phenomenon, Mexicans stand out for increasingly using institutional mechanisms or legal channels to access the United States. Although emigration from Mexico has resumed, it is happening under very different conditions than those of nearly fifteen years ago. Between 2004 and 2009, 37% of Mexicans who emigrated to the U.S. had some type of document authorizing their

Emigration from Mexico has resumed, it is happening under very different conditions than those of nearly fifteen years ago.

legal stay in the country. Between 2018 and 2023, this percentage rose to 59%. In the same five-year period, the rate of return to Mexico decreased (22.4% vs. 30%), while the number of Mexicans who obtained legal residence increased by 1.84 million. Additionally, over the past six years, the number of visas granted to Mexicans continued to increase—even during the current fiscal year—while the visa rejection rate has steadily declined.

The confluence of these trends and the tightening of U.S. immigration policy has led to a sustained increase in air travel by Mexicans with legal documents through January 2025. This has reduced the return rate and decreased the number of land border crossings (by car or on foot, with documents that permit such travel), which in turn may be keeping the number of immigrants overstaying their visas on the rise. The result has impacted the current account through international travel and cross-border workers. For this reason, the third part of the chapter addresses tourism topics closely related to the migration phenomenon—distinct from other forms of travel such as leisure, business or educational trips. In other words, we are witnessing the largest modern-day outflow of Mexicans (expenditures) in the form of tourists (migrants with visas), even though the vast majority end

up working in the southern and Pacific coastal regions of the United States.

6.1 IMBALANCES, CONFLICT AND MIGRATION

IMBALANCE IN THE U.S. LABOR MARKET

The Covid–19 health crisis created significant disruption in the global economy. Various markets were paralyzed and severely affected. Initially, the supply shock led to a drop in production. This decline was accompanied by the closure of millions of businesses and a reduced demand for workers. In April 2020, the number of job vacancies in the U.S. dropped by –35.3% compared to January of the same year (a loss of 2.52 million jobs)⁵³ (BLS, 2025) —a level similar to that of April 2014. With the rapid reactivation of the U.S. economy, the number of job vacancies began to increase again. By January 2021, there were 7.2 million job openings, exceeding the level from the previous year by 1.1% (BLS, 2025). Although the U.S. had already been experiencing an upward trend in unfilled jobs since the financial crisis of 2009, this trajectory accelerated more rapidly than in the past. In

⁵³ The data presented in this section correspond to the seasonally adjusted series

March 2022, it reached a historic high of 12.13 million job vacancies, a 70.3% increase over January 2020 (pre-pandemic). Since then, the decline has been gradual. As of February 2025, there were 7.57 million job openings—a variation of 444,000 or 6.2% compared to January 2020 (BLS, 2025).

This increase is primarily explained by higher labor demand in the South, Northeast and Midwest regions, with increases of 344,000, 97,000, and 85,000 job openings, respectively, relative to January 2020. In contrast, the West has returned to pre-pandemic levels (a decrease of 82,000 or -4.8%). At its peak, 45.3% of the change (2.27 million vacancies) was explained by increased labor demand in the southern U.S. (BLS, 2025). By economic activity, 82% of the change came from the private sector, which was equally driven by growth in private healthcare and education services (an increase of 297,000 jobs or 22.5% over January 2020). Other sectors such as construction and leisure and hospitality showed variations of -35,000 jobs (-11.7%) and 83,000 jobs (9.1%), respectively (BLS, 2025).

As of February 2025, there is one job opening for every 0.9 unemployed persons. In other words, there are more job vacancies than people looking for work

in the U.S. From January to July 2022—during the peak of job creation—this ratio stood at 0.5 (BLS, n. d.), meaning there were two new jobs for every unemployed person. The imbalance in the U.S. labor market—likely both sectoral and regional—was visible to the world. However, today, the growth of lower-skilled job creation is slowing compared to higher-skilled job creation.

ARMED CONFLICTS, FORCED MIGRATION AND POPULATION GROWTH

Following the health crisis, and while the U.S. economy experienced vigorous growth, previously latent tensions and conflicts worsened at the international level. The escalation of tensions in Eastern Europe—exacerbated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine—and rising levels of violence and poverty in several Latin American and Caribbean countries, including Mexico, accelerated both internal and external migratory flows. Between 2020 and 2024, the global stock of international migrants increased from 275.3 million to 304 million (a 10.5% or 28.7 million increase) (UN DESA, n. d.). Four world regions led this growth: Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, with increases of 6.4, 6.1, 5.6, and 3.5 million migrants, respective-

After Covid-19 with the rapid reactivation of the U.S. economy, the number of job vacancies began to increase again.

In March 2022, it reached a historic high of 12.13 million job vacancies, a 70.3% increase over January 2020 (pre-pandemic).

ly. These regions accounted for 75.6% of the global variation. The leading countries within these regions were Ukraine, Venezuela, India, Afghanistan and Sudan, with increases of 5.4, 2.9, 2.0, 1.8 and 1.4 million migrants, respectively —amounting to 46.9% of the global variation (UN DESA, n. d.).

Likewise, between 2020 and 2024 (July of each year), the U.S. resident population grew from 331.58 million to 340.11 million. This represented an increase of 8.53 million people (or 2.6%). This growth accelerated year after year, with annual growth rates of 0.2%, 0.6%, 0.8% and 0.98% from 2021 to 2024 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024a). Although all regions of the country experienced growth, it was most pronounced in the southern United States (6.19 million people or 4.9% cumulative growth). The West followed with a cumulative growth rate of 1.7% (or 1.33 million residents) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024a). These two regions accounted for 88.1% of the total increase. Just six states were responsible for the equivalent of two out of every three new residents in the United States: Texas, Florida, North Carolina, Georgia, Arizona and South Carolina, with increases of 2.05 million, 1.78 million, 596,400, 448,000, 395,200 and 346,600 new residents, respectively (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024a). Florida alone saw a population increase more than

three times the national average (8.2%). On the other hand, although growth in three of the four U.S. regions was less pronounced than in the South, those regions were experiencing negative population growth in 2021. In other words, regions that had negative growth rates managed to reverse the trend.

In 2024, the U.S. population growth rate was the second highest since 2001 (0.98% and 0.99% annually). Between 2015 and 2021, the growth rate had steadily declined from 0.8% to 0.16% annually (Wilder, K., 2024). Historically, since the turn of the millennium, weak population growth in the U.S. has been primarily due to limited natural population growth. However, the most recent estimates indicate that since 2022, net migration has been the key driver of U.S. population growth. Between 2022 and 2024, net migration accounted for population increases of 1.7, 2.3 and 2.8 million people, respectively (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024b). In other words, in the most recent year, 84% of the U.S. population growth was explained by migration. Without this component, resident population growth would have been just 0.16%. This means that, on its own, the U.S. population has not broken the downward trend.

Between 2020 and 2024, the global stock of international migrants increased from 275.3 million to 304 million (10.5% or 28.7 million increase) (UN DESA, n. d.). Four world regions led this growth: Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Based on the most recent population and migration flow estimates, it can be said that in the past five years, the United States has absorbed between 6.6% (1.9 million) and 25.2% (7.24 million) of the world's international migrants. Even under the lower estimate, the U.S. remains the most significant destination country globally, followed by Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom, with 6%, 6% and 4.6% of global migrants, respectively (UN DESA, n. d.). According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), between 2000 and 2020, the contribution of international migration to population growth (net migration of 80.5 million) exceeded the natural increase (births minus deaths, 66.2 million) in high-income countries (UN DESA, 2022). In the coming decades, migration is expected to become the sole engine of population growth in high-income countries. By contrast, population growth in low- and lower-middle-income countries will continue to be driven by natural increase (UN DESA, 2022).

Between 2022 and 2024, net migration accounted for population increases of 1.7, 2.3 and 2.8 million people, respectively (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024b). In other words, in the most recent year, 84% of the U.S. population growth was explained by migration. Without this component, resident population growth would have been just 0.16%. This means that, on its own, the U.S. population has not broken the downward trend.

6.2 THE ROOTS OF RESISTANCE: ECONOMIC OR LABOR DEPENDENCY (RECIPROCAL)

DEPENDENCY ON MEXICAN WORKERS

Between 2010 and 2023, the population of Mexican origin residing in the United States increased from 32.93 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010) to 37.99 million people (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023). Of the latter, 27.08 million were born in the United States (they are of Mexican origin and hold —at minimum— U.S. citizenship). Therefore, approximately 10.92 million people were born in Mexico. Of those, 3.75 million already had U.S. residency. In other words, as of 2023, there were 7.17 million Mexicans (born in Mexico) residing in the United States who were not considered U.S. citizens (i.e., undocumented) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023). In 2010, the number of Mexicans in the same condition was 9 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Since then, that figure has decreased significantly (by 20.4% or 1.84 million people), despite the Mexican-origin resident population continuing to grow (by 15.4% or 5.06 million people) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023)— and it is very likely even larger by the end of 2024.

In 2023, of the nearly 38 million people of Mexican origin residing in the United States, 73% (27.73 million people) were 16 years old or older. Of those, 68.9%

were part of the labor force. In turn, 65% were employed (18.02 million people) and only 3.5% were unemployed. Three out of four employed individuals (74.3%) worked in six economic sectors: construction (12.4%), manufacturing (10.1%), retail trade (11.1%), professional services (10.8%), educational services, healthcare and social assistance (17.9%) and entertainment, accommodation and food services (12%)⁵⁴. Of all workers, 81.1% were wage employees, 6.8% were self-employed, 11.9% worked in government, and only 0.2% worked for their families without receiving any pay (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023).

There are significant disparities (or segmentation) in access to certain labor markets between the U.S.-born population of Mexican origin and undocumented Mexican immigrants. Evidence suggests a greater probability of undocumented Mexicans being employed in sectors such as construction, professional services and entertainment, accommodation and food services. In contrast, employment in sectors such as transportation, finance, education, health-

⁵⁴ Professional Services and Entertainment and Accommodation and Food Services refer to the activities of Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative and Waste Management Services and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, and Accommodation and Food Services, respectively.

Between 2010 and 2023, the population of Mexican origin residing in the United States increased from 32.93 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010) to 37.99 million people (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023) approximately 10.92 million people were born in Mexico.



Images: "Mexicans with heavy work in the United States" at <https://www.meganoticias.mx/guaymas/noticia/mexicanos-con-el-trabajo-mas-pe-sado-en-estados-unidos/187212>

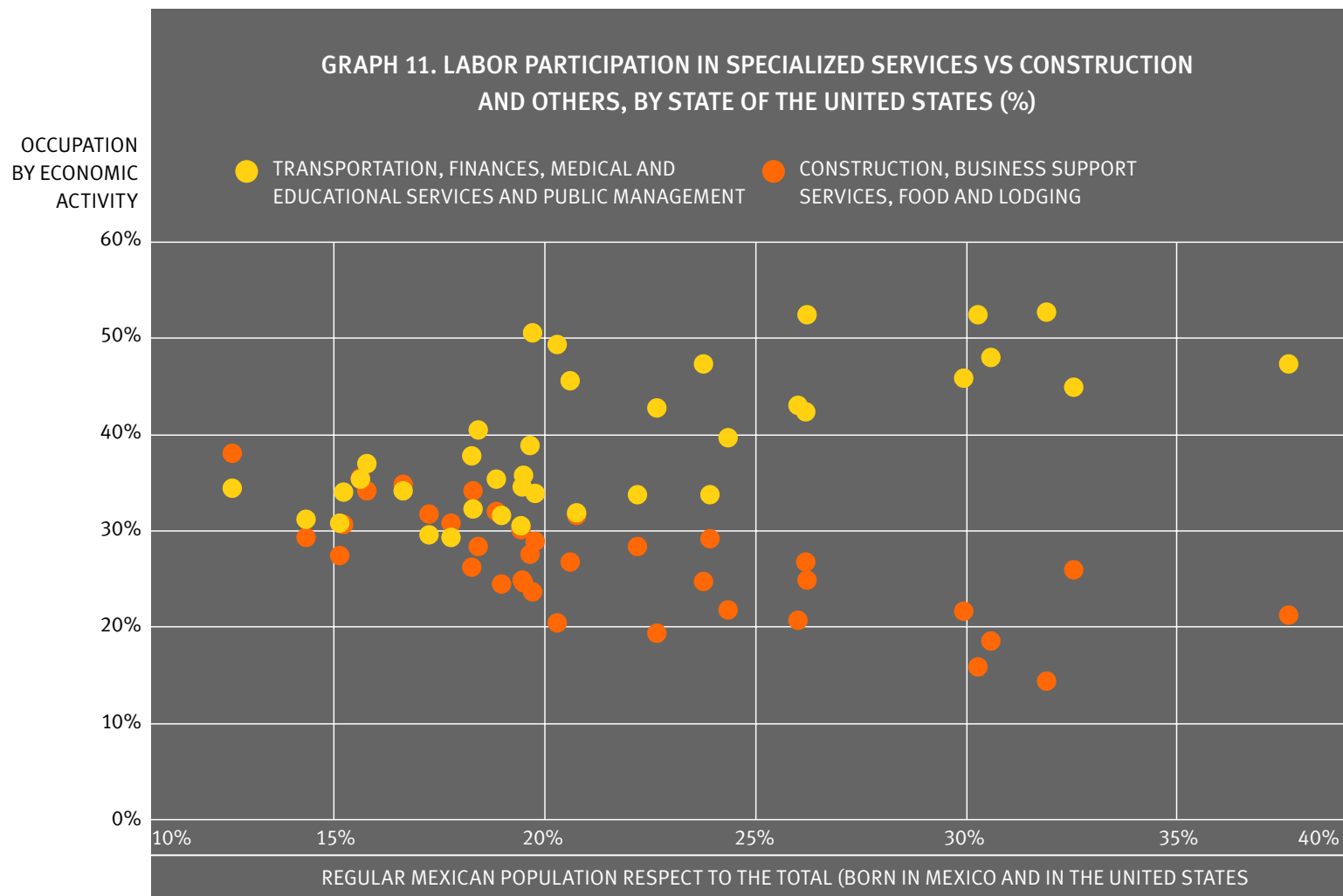
"Latin gourmets in the USA" at <https://impactolatino.com/gourmets-latinos-en-estados-unidos/>

care and social assistance and public administration⁵⁵ is more closely associated with populations that include relatively fewer undocumented Mexicans. Put differently, the greater the population of U.S.-born individuals of Mexican origin and regular-status Mexican immigrants, the higher the share of those employed in specialized services—and conversely, the

⁵⁵ Transportation and finance services refer to the activities of Transportation and Warehousing, Public Services, Finance and Insurance, and Real Estate and Rental and Leasing, respectively.

lower the share employed in construction, professional services, and entertainment (Graph 11).

Similarly, the Mexican-origin population makes a significant difference in the structure of the U.S. labor market in three sectors: agriculture, construction and entertainment, accommodation and food services. In the United States, the share of total employed individuals in these sectors is 1.6%, 6.9% and 8.8%, respectively. In contrast, the employment rates for



Source: In-house elaboration with information from the U.S. Census Bureau (2023). de Banxico (s.f.).

Mexicans in these same sectors are 3.5%, 12.4% and 12%, respectively. In these areas, the contribution of the Mexican workforce is especially significant, as Mexicans represent 24%, 19.7% and 15% of the total U.S. labor force in agriculture, construction and accommodation/food services, respectively (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023).

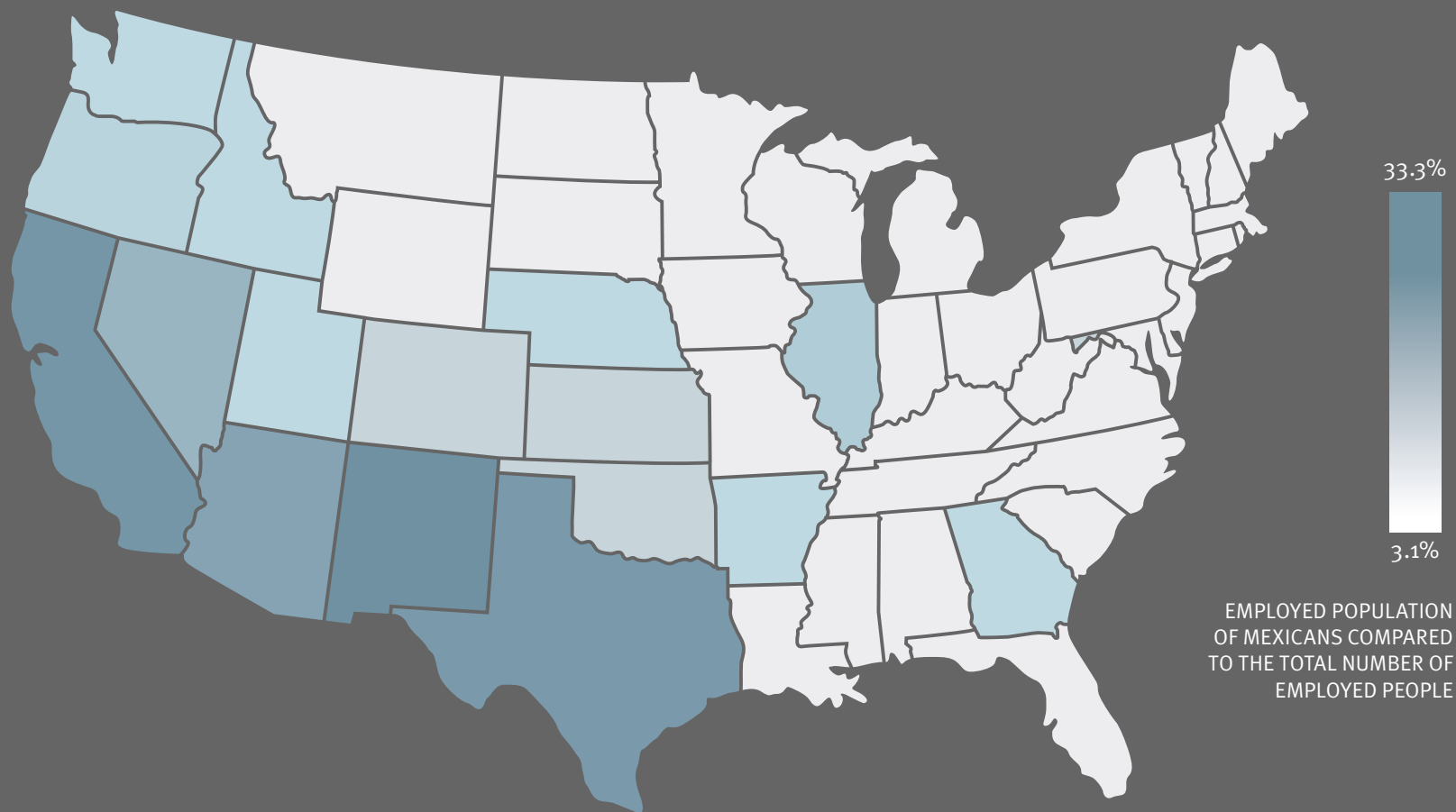
Considering the total Mexican-origin population, their employed share represents 11% of the entire U.S. labor force. However, the differences are substantial at the state level. The greater the presence (proportion of the population) of Mexicans in a state, the greater the state's labor dependency on Mexican workers. Arizona, California, Colorado, Illinois, Nevada, New Mexico and Texas have the highest levels of labor dependency. In those states, 27, 32, 15, 14, 22, 33 and 30 out of every 100 workers, respectively, are of Mexican origin (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023). From this, it can also be inferred that states with a smaller undocumented Mexican population tend to show a higher participation of the broader Mexican-origin population in the labor market (Map 1).

In 2023, the annual income of the Mexican-origin population reached 986.4 billion dollars (USD). The per capita income for the population considered to be of Mexican origin was \$25,963 (USD). However, of the total number of workers, 72.6% (13.92 million workers) worked full-time during the year. The total income of these full-time workers amounted to \$743.1 billion (USD) (75.3% of total income). On average, each full-time worker of Mexican origin earned \$56,757.5 (USD), with men averaging \$60,968 (USD) and women \$50,253 (USD) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023). The average wage for men was 21.3% higher than that of women. Likewise, the average income of full-time workers was 15.05% higher than that of part-time or non-full-time workers: 4.93 million workers with an average annual income of \$49,332.1 (USD).

A total of 78.4% (\$773.6 billion USD) of the economic output from the Mexican-origin population was concentrated in eight states. Arizona (\$52.7 B), California (\$341 B), Colorado (\$27.1 B), Florida (\$18.6 billion USD), Illinois (\$48.8 billion USD), New Mexico (\$17.8 billion USD), Texas (\$244.7 billion USD) and Washington (\$22.9 billion USD). These same states are home to 72.9% (5.22 million) of Mexicans in irregular status and 77.4% of the total Mexican-origin population (29.38 million people) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023).

The greater the presence of Mexicans in a state, the greater the state's labor dependency on Mexican workers: out of every 100 workers, are of Mexican origin: Arizona (27), California (32), Colorado (15), Illinois (14), Nevada (22), Nuevo Mexico (33) and Texas (30) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023).

MAP 1. LABOR DEPENDENCY OF PEOPLE OF MEXICAN ORIGIN BY MOST RELEVANT STATES
AND REST OF THE UNITED STATES (%)



Source: In-house elaboration with information from the U.S. Census Bureau (2023).

The southern border and the West Coast of the U.S. are strategic economic zones for Mexicans due to the income generation associated with employment and the opportunities that may lead to social mobility. Few exceptions exist in other regions, such as the East Coast states of New York, Georgia and North Carolina; however, the economic output in those states is much smaller.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COUNTING EVERYONE

Given the decline in the stock of Mexicans in irregular status in the U.S. and the increase in the Mexican-origin resident population, it is essential to expand the study of migration beyond strictly irregular flows; otherwise, there is a risk of significant information loss. Between May 2004 and June 2009, 66.7% of Mexicans who emigrated to the U.S. did so without documentation (INEGI, n. d. a). Between August 2018 and October 2023, that percentage dropped to 40.6% (434,900 Mexicans) (INEGI, 2024). The lowest percentage of irregular migrants was recorded between August 2013 and October 5, 2018, at 27% (174,100 Mexicans) (INEGI, n. d. b). Thus, in the past decade, most Mexicans who emigrated to the U.S. did so with legal documentation.

The trend has been favorable for Mexicans. An increasing number and proportion of Mexicans travel to the U.S. with documentation that supports their legal stay —whether a residence or work permit (green card), tourist or student visa or another valid document, including U.S. citizenship. Notably, throughout the period analyzed, Mexican women traveled to the U.S. with legal documentation in a higher proportion than men. Between 2018 and 2023, 26.5% (54,806 women) of Mexican women who emigrated to the U.S. did so irregularly, compared to 43.9% of men (INEGI, 2024). However, during the last five years, with the increase in Mexican migration to the U.S., a setback is observed —both in absolute and relative terms. Between 2018 and 2023, the number of international migrants exceeded one million (1.072 million Mexicans), of which 621,200 had documentation and 434,900 were undocumented⁵⁶ (INEGI, 2024).

Despite this setback, Mexicans continue to rely more heavily on institutional channels. Between 2018 and 2024, the number of visas granted to Mexicans rose from 1,379,400 to 1,875,200 (including the Border Crossing Card - BCC)⁵⁷, a 35.9% increase (U.S. Depart-

56 16,200 thousand people declared that they did not know if they had any document proving their legal stay abroad.

57 The BBC is only granted to Mexicans residing in Mexico.

A total of 78.4% (773.6 billion usd) of the economic output from the Mexican-origin population was concentrated in eight

<i>states:</i>	<i>b usd:</i>
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>52.7</i>
<i>California</i>	<i>341</i>
<i>Colorado</i>	<i>27.1</i>
<i>Florida</i>	<i>18.6</i>
<i>Illinois</i>	<i>48.8</i>
<i>New Mexico</i>	<i>17.8</i>
<i>Texas</i>	<i>244.7</i>
<i>Washington</i>	<i>22.9</i>



Images:

"Ask migrants in Arizona to keep informed and organized upon deportation threats" at <https://oem.com.mx/elsoldehermosillo/local/piden-a-migrantes-en-arizona-a-mantenerse-informados-y-organizados-ante-amenazas-de-deportaciones-21210550>

"Work of migrants, fundamental for California" at <https://diariocambio22.mx/trabajo-de-inmigrantes-mexicanos-fundamental-para-california/>

Migrants in Texas at <https://futuroenusa.net/trabajos/texas/>

Migrant in Florida at <https://aprende.com/recursos/comunidad-latina-en-usa/ oportunidades-laborales-para-recien-llegados/>



ment of State, n. d.). Like many mobility-related phenomena, this growth paused in 2020 due to the pandemic. Likewise, during the same six-year period, the visa rejection rate dropped from 24.93% to 13.87% (U.S. Department of State, n. d.). A smaller number and proportion of Mexican visa applicants were denied. Between October 2024 and January 2025 (i.e., the current fiscal year), Mexicans received 747,800 visas—an increase of 18.1% compared to the same period in fiscal year 2024⁵⁸.

In the labor field, researchers at the Baker Institute for Public Policy observed that since the 2008–2009 global financial crisis, TN visas—temporary professional visas established under NAFTA (now USMCA)—have experienced the largest growth among work visa categories. Between 2010 and 2022, the number of TN visas granted to Mexicans rose by 884%, from 3,392 to 33,361. These visas went from representing 0.7% of work visas in 2010 to 4.4% in 2021. Meanwhile, the rejection rate fell from approximately 17%

When presented with a passport it works as a B visa, accepted to enter any part of the United States by any means of transportation. The BCC bearer is allowed to visit the border area when entering by land or sea for up to 30 days, which includes: California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas up to 25, 75, 55 (or up to Interstate 10, whichever is furthest north) and 25 miles from the border, respectively.

⁵⁸ These are US tax years (October to September of each year).

to 11% in the same period. This means that an applicant and their employer have a 90% chance of being granted the visa (Payan & Rodriguez-Sanchez, 2023). At the close of fiscal year 2023, the U.S. government granted 32,904 additional TN visas (a -1.3% annual variation). Although the trend has slightly dipped, the flow of work visas under USMCA remains significantly high, even if still underrepresented relative to the total.

In fiscal year 2023, 4.98 million temporary workers entered the U.S. —the highest number on record. Of these, 1,204,900 entered under TN visas (24.2% of the total) (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2024). This number represents the highest since USMCA took effect (formerly NAFTA). In 2021, amid the pandemic, 385,900 entered the U.S. with TN visas, still four times the average recorded in the early 2000s. The previous peak had occurred in 2011, when the global economy was recovering from the financial crisis. At that time, 899,500 temporary workers entered the U.S. The post-crisis recovery spurred significant demand for these workers, as in 2008, the figure had barely approached 100,000. However, to this day —and despite progress in granting work visas to Mexicans— tourist visas remain the most prevalent, accounting for 88% of the total.

In the last decade, most Mexicans that emigrated to the U. S. had some type of document authorizing their legal stay in the country.

Between 2010 and 2022, the number of TN visas granted to Mexicans rose by 884%, from 3,392 to 33,361. the rejection rate fell from approximately 17% to 11% .

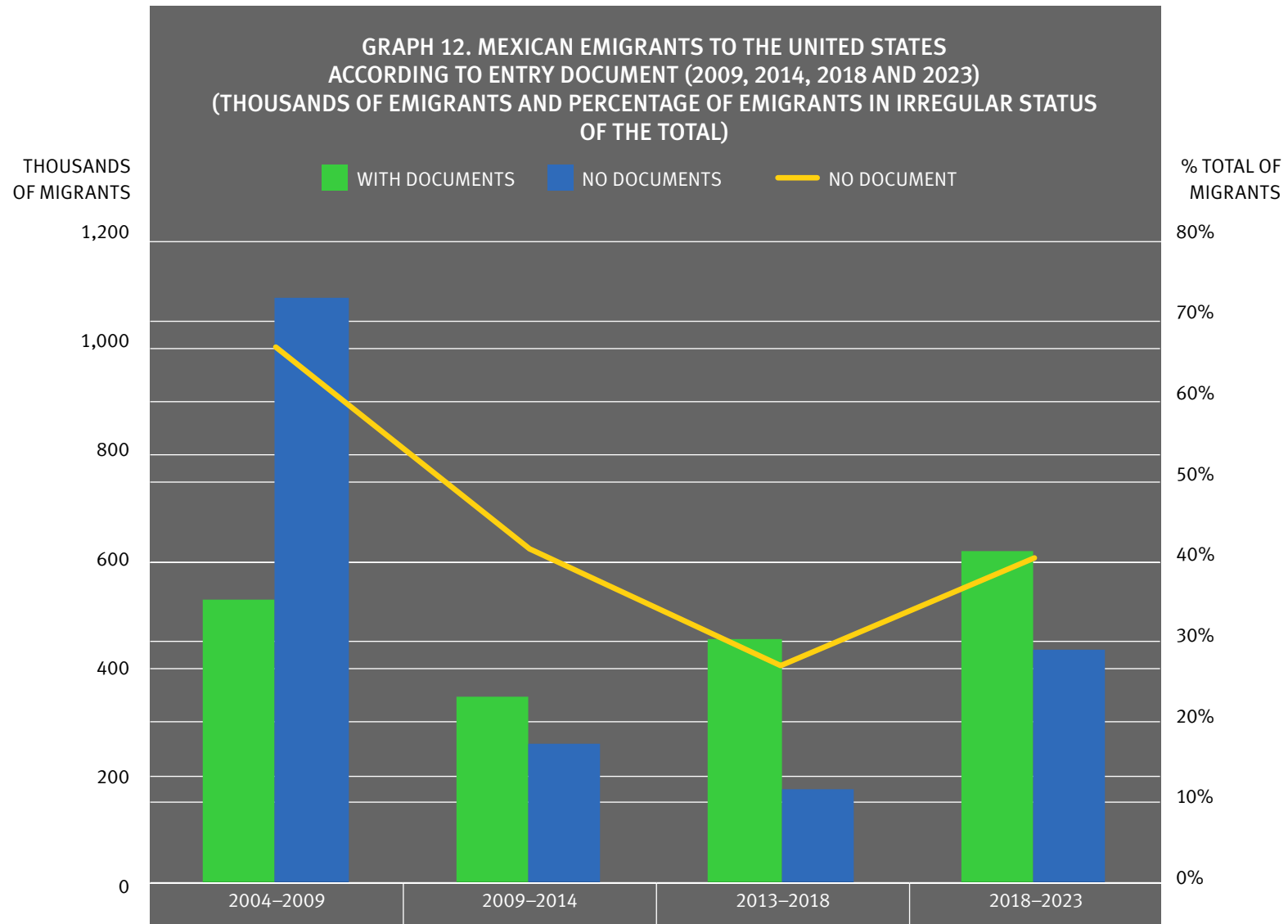
Now then, among Mexicans who migrated to the U.S. between 2004 and 2009, 29.9% (490,305 people) returned to Mexico during the same period, while 70% (1.147 million people) did not (INEGI, n. d. a). In contrast, for those who emigrated between 2018 and 2023, only 22.4% returned, while 832,627 (77.6%) remained in the U.S. (INEGI, 2024). Between August 2009 and September 2014, the highest return rate was recorded (43.2%), even surpassing the return rate of irregular migrants for the same period (41.6%) (INEGI, n. d.). Over the past five years, the return rate has been lower than in previous periods. This suggests that a similar number of Mexicans who migrated between 2004–2009 and 2018–2023 still reside in the U.S. Moreover, the data indicates that a significant number of regular-status migrants (with non-immigrant visas) have decided not to return to Mexico. In other words, many Mexicans with non-immigrant visas are overstaying their allowed time (Graph 12).

Previous studies indicate that by 2014, approximately 4.5 million residents in the United States —or 42% of the total undocumented population— were individuals who had overstayed their visas. That year, California had the highest number of residents —already in irregular status— who had exceeded their permitted stay (890,000 people), followed by New York, Tex-

as and Florida with 520,000, 475,000 and 435,000 people, respectively (Warren & Kerwin, 2017). In 2014, as a proportion of the total population, East Coast states stood out: Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Florida and Delaware, with 77%, 67%, 67%, 64%, 63%, 61% and 61% of the total irregular population. In Hawaii, the figure was 96% (Warren & Kerwin, 2017). In other words, more than 60% of the immigrant population in those states—now undocumented—original-



Image: "Return to Mexico: 7 stories" at <https://www.univision.com/local/los-angeles-kmex/retorno-a-mexico-siete-historias-de-inmigrantes-en-eeuu-que-regresaron-voluntariamente-a-su-pais>



Source: In-house elaboration with information from INEGI (s.f.a, s.f.b, s.f.c., 2024).

ly entered with a valid visa (Warren & Kerwin, 2017). Between 2007 and 2017, the primary mode of entry into the U.S. for the undocumented population was through this mechanism (with a visa), and the most common means of transport was air travel. In 2017, Mexico led in this population (50,000 of the 145,000 undocumented Mexicans), with twice the number of undocumented immigrants from China or India. However, all 25,000 undocumented immigrants from India had entered with a visa (Warren, 2019).

The regular and irregular status of Mexicans abroad—primarily in the United States— opens up a wide range of mechanisms through which the U.S. economy, in its various regions and across many industries, can source labor. This includes Mexicans residing in the U.S. as tourists, border workers, or Mexican-Americans who migrated for reasons such as job search (52.1%), job offer (30.3%), family reunification (5.8%), studying (5.3%), living with a partner (2.1%) or due to insecurity (0.5%), among the main reasons⁵⁹ (INEGI, 2024). As a consequence of the mobility of these individuals (entry or exit in both countries) and the growing demand for migrant labor and various— pri-

⁵⁹ The figures correspond to the period 2018 to 2023 and are not comparable with other years because the categories for the question “Cause of emigration” were modified.



Image: "Hotels in Los Angeles hire migrants to replace strike workers" at <https://www.latimes.com/espanol/california/articulo/2023-10-30/hoteles-los-angeles-contratan-inmigrantes-para-reemplazar-trabajadores-en-huelga>

marily institutional— mechanisms to enter the United States, the balance of payments and specifically the current account, is impacted in four areas, both on the credit (inflows) and debit (outflows) side: remittances, compensation of employees, tourism (travel) and services related to these activities (such as transportation).

This also means that the economic impact of human flows between Mexico and the United States goes beyond remittances, which include a significant

component of illicit funds (money laundering, drug trafficking and human smuggling and trafficking). To focus solely on remittances is to underestimate the economic exchange generated by all those Mexican residents (with regular status) in other economies, who now represent the vast majority.

The economic impact of human flows between Mexico and the United States goes beyond remittances, which include a significant component of illicit funds. To focus solely on remittances is to underestimate the economic exchange generated by all those Mexican residents.



Image: Families living in the US with legal papers at <https://www.anahuac.mx/mexico/noticias/Familias-en-Mexico-en-peligro-de-extincion>

6.3 BALANCE OF PAYMENTS: TOURISM AND BORDER WORKERS

NEW MOBILITY PATTERNS BETWEEN MEXICO AND THE UNITED STATES (AND VICE VERSA)

As discussed above, tourism becomes relevant because it accounts for the flow of people as well as the economic exchange they generate, for various purposes (primarily work), under the understanding that such flows occur within an institutional framework (they require some type of visa)⁶⁰. In 2018, 86.3 million Mexican residents departed the country (outflows), whereas by 2024, that figure barely reached 68.9 million residents⁶¹. The number of Mexican residents visiting other countries around the world dropped significantly (down 20.2% or 17.4 million departures). In 2020, the number of visitors leaving Mexico was severely impacted by the health crisis,

⁶⁰Since these are this type of transfers (with documents), it must be understood that they are not undocumented population, which has no relationship with border encounters. The latter can be understood as attempts to cross into the United States, but do not necessarily result in cases of success. And that, although many concepts used here correspond to the tourism area, it is not about studying the behavior of said market as a whole.

⁶¹ Like various economic data where two or more countries are involved, statistics indicate the place of residence, regardless of nationality.

falling to 36.1 million departures —a yearly drop of −56.4%. However, the downward trend had already begun the previous year (−4.1% year-over-year or −3.53 million departures). In 2021, the number continued to decline (32.98 million departures) (INEGI, n.d.d), and since then, the recovery has been insufficient.

The decline in the number of residents traveling from Mexico to other countries is counted in the millions, even though it became cheaper to travel abroad (due to exchange rate appreciation) during the analyzed —especially to countries other than the United States. By April 2024, the Mexican peso had appreciated by 16.9% against the U.S. dollar in real terms



Image: "Mexicans in Francia" at <https://abtravel.com.mx/noticias/f/barcelonnet-el-rinc%C3%B3n-mexicano-en-francia-que-es-todo-un-para%C3%A1>

(compared to December 2018). During the same period, appreciation relative to the rest of the world was even greater (29.5%)⁶² (Banxico, n.d.f). Additionally, by 2023, travel restrictions related to the health crisis had significantly eased.

From 2018 to 2024, of the total loss in departures, 16.5 million (or –20.4%) corresponded to international border day visitors (excursionistas fronterizos)⁶³. They were followed by border tourists, whose numbers declined by 2.3 million. Finally, among overnight international tourists, those who exited by land decreased by 617,800. It is worth noting that the contraction, which began in 2019, was observed only in border day visitors (–5.4% annually or –3.59 mil-

62 This is the appreciation of the Mexican peso with respect to a basket of 111 currencies.

63 International travelers (broader conception of tourists) are divided into international tourists and excursionists. In turn, the former may be internal and border tourists. Internal tourists can enter the country by air or land, while border tourists can only enter the country by land (pedestrians or cars). For their part, international excursionists are only border travelers (pedestrians and in cars). The difference between tourists and border excursionists is that the former spend the night and the latter do not. It is extremely important to consider that the surveys carried out by the INEGI (since 2018) correspond to residents of the Mexican economy, that is, they do not correspond to a specific nationality, such as Mexican. Similar to what happens with the registration of remittances.

From 2018 to 2024, of the total loss in departures, 16.5 million (or –20.4%) corresponded to international border day visitors (excursionistas fronterizos.

lion) (INEGI, n.d.d). The loss of border excursionists accounts for 85.1% of the total decline over the last six years. Therefore, only overnight tourists —specifically those traveling by air from Mexico to other countries, mainly the United States— have shown a positive variation (up 34.7% or 1.9 million tourists)⁶⁴ (INEGI, n.d.d). This increase has not been enough to offset the overall decline in international visitors (outflows), as the number of border crossings from Mexico to the United States (by car or on foot) has dropped significantly, and its recovery has been notably slow.

As a result, Mexican airports have seen increased activity. Between 2019 and 2024, international passengers departing from Mexican airports rose from 23.86

64 Internment tourists by land have decreased by -617,750 people. Thus, the variation in the number of internal tourists (land and air routes) is 1,336,300 tourists.

million to 28.84 million (an increase of 4.98 million or 20.9%) (AFAC, 2022). Of the latter, 69.4% (20.03 million) traveled to the United States. Of that figure, 14.31 million were U.S. citizens (71.4%) and around 6 million were of other nationalities (ITA, n.d.). The number of passengers bound for the United States increased by 31.2% (or 4.76 million passengers), which aligns closely with the growth in Mexican-resident travelers to the U.S.; however, the growth of passengers traveling to the rest of the world was only 2.5% (representing 211,500 passengers) (AFAC, 2022).

Based on available data, we estimate that 65.8% of outflows from Mexico were headed to the United States. This amount is equivalent to 81.3% of travelers arriving in the United States from Mexico (4.99 million tourists). In the past five years, this number has increased by approximately 28%. Moreover, only 26.3% of those who traveled from Mexico to different parts of the world —primarily to the U.S.— were residents of Mexico; the vast majority (approximately 73.7%) were of nationalities other than Mexican and were not residents.

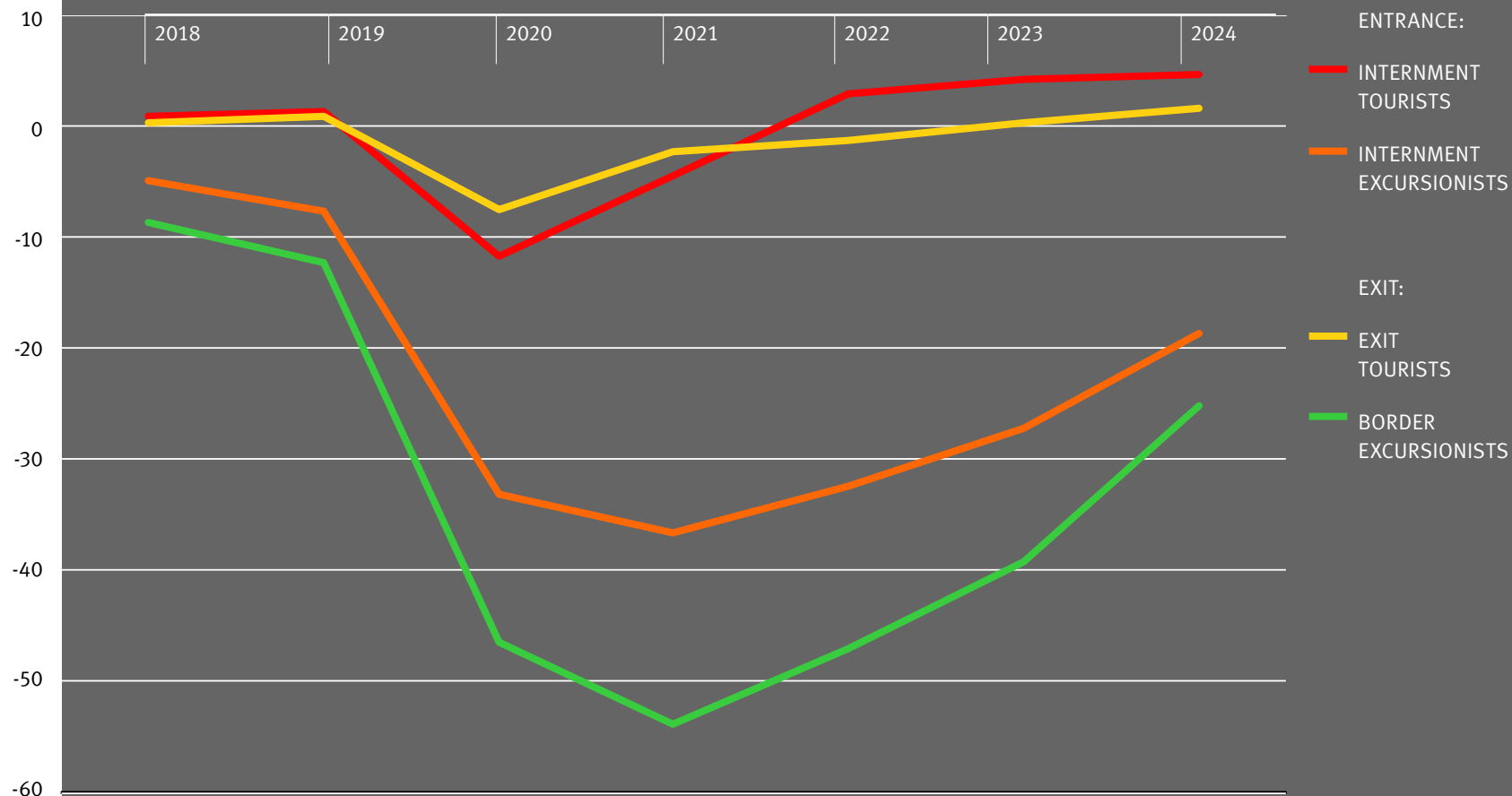
The number of passengers bound for the United States increased by 31.2% (or 4.76 million passengers), which aligns closely with the growth in Mexican-resident travelers to the U.S. (AFAC, 2022).



Image: "Mexican tourists that travel to the USA feel unsafe" at <https://www.nmas.com.mx/nacional/turistas-mexicanos-que-viajan-a-eua-se-sienten-inseguros-por-redadas-contra-migrantes/>

GRAPH 13. INTERNATIONAL TRAVELERS: INTERNAL TOURISTS AND EXCURSIONISTS
(ENTRIES TO MEXICO AND EXITS FROM MEXICO)
MILLIONS OF TRAVELERS (CHANGE COMPARED TO 2017)

MILLIONS OF
TRAVELERS



Source: In-house elaboration with information from INEGI (s.f.d).

6.4 TOURIST ARRIVALS TO MEXICO

Just as with outbound travel, Mexico faces a similar phenomenon with the arrival of international visitors. This consists of a decline in border day visitors, border tourists, and overnight tourists arriving by land. Between 2018 and 2024, the variation in the number of visitors was –15.69 million, –27.7 thousand and –43.6 thousand tourists, respectively (INEGI, n.d.d). As with outbound travel, the decline in arrivals is dominated by trips across the northern border and all land-based entries. The change has mirrored itself on both sides of the border, with a more severe impact on crossings from the United States into Mexico (–33.4% compared to 2018). In fact, the trend is similar for both types of day visitors, outbound and inbound. The only difference from outbound travel is that the recovery of international tourism has occurred not only through air travel but also via cruise day visitors, with increases of 3.8 million tourists (19.6%) and 1.88 million excursionists (22.7%) (INEGI, n.d.d).

The recovery of international tourism in Mexico has been led almost entirely by the United States, with an increase of 3.65 million tourists (34.8%). The U.S. is followed at a distance by visitors from Canada, India, Colombia, China, Portugal, France and Costa Rica,



Image: "Second fall of American tourists to Mexico" at <https://periodicviaje.com/tendencias/noticias-destacadas/segunda-caida-de-turistas-estadounidenses-a-mexico/>

with variations of 487.1 thousand (22.6%), 67.3 thousand (82.6%), 55.6 thousand (10%), 45.5 thousand (27.1%), 20 thousand (6.7%), 19.2 thousand (6.7%) and 16.5 thousand (10.1%) tourists, respectively (Sector, n.d.). With the exception of India, the other countries leading the recovery have shown conservative growth. Thus, the most significant flow originates from North America, and the upward variation is explained by the increase in arrivals of residents from these two economies. In contrast, and with some ex-

ceptions, the rest of the world shows a cumulative decline of -9.1% (or -548,174 tourists) (Sectur, n.d.).

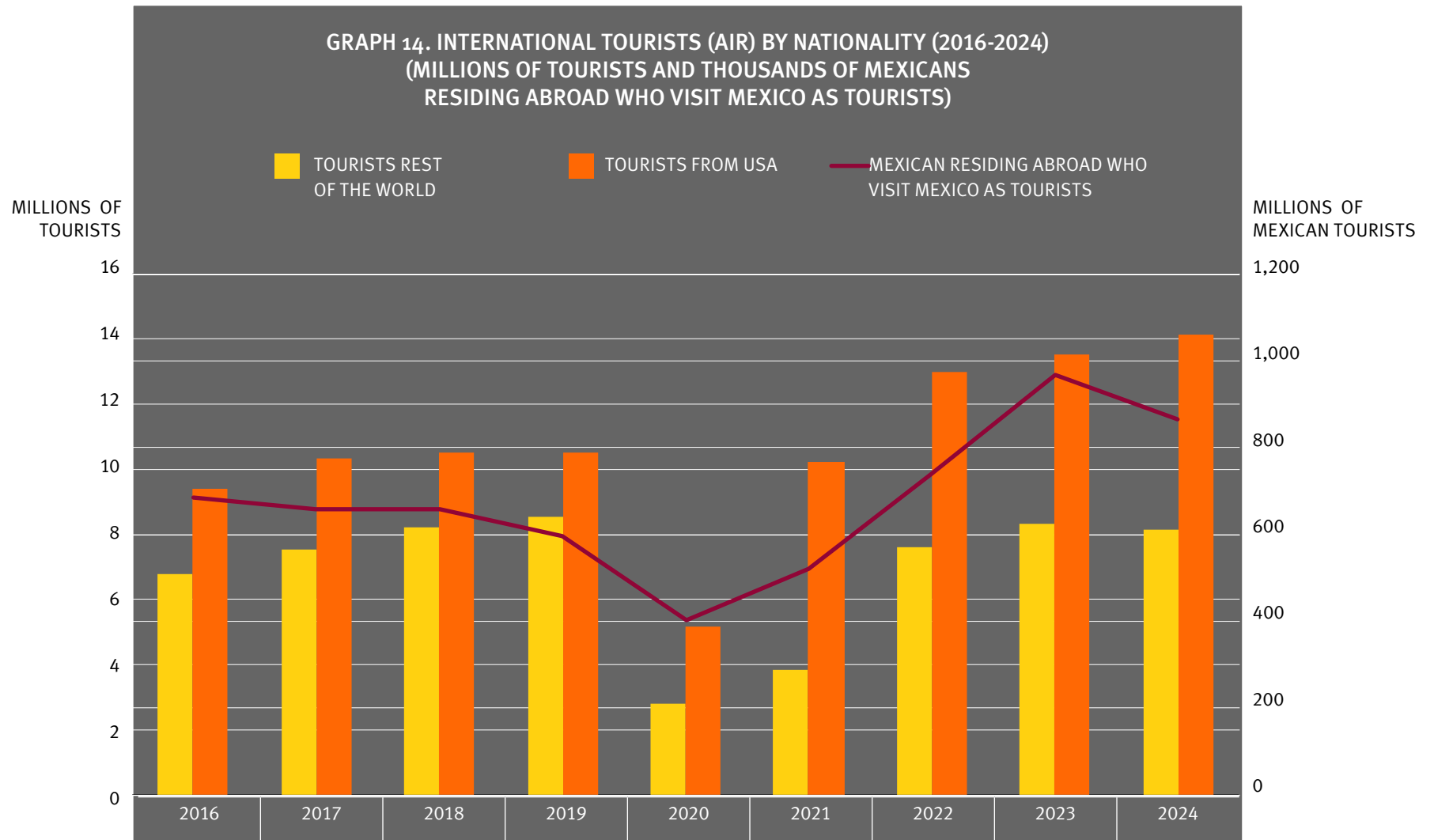
These exceptions are framed by international conflicts, with Mexico receiving part of the exodus of people —through tourism— from countries such as Haiti, Russia, Ukraine, Turkey, Georgia and Venezuela. Between 2018 and 2024, the number of Haitian visitors increased by 106.1% (a variation of 3.4 thousand tourists), peaking in 2022, when 17.9 thousand Haitians arrived in Mexico —a 455.5% increase or 14.7 thousand more tourists compared to 2018 (Sectur, n.d.). This mass outflow may have affected other countries in the region due to rising insecurity. The number of tourists from Jamaica reached 16.2 thousand, an increase of 8.5 thousand tourists or 110.2% compared to 2018 (the highest number on record) (Sectur, n.d.).

The Russian invasion of Ukraine had a significant effect on tourist flows. In 2022, the number of Russian and Ukrainian tourists visiting Mexico reached 90.3 thousand (a level not seen since 2014) and 51 thousand (the highest on record), respectively (Sectur, n.d.). These figures represented increases of 40.4% and 161.9% compared to 2018, respectively. In the same year, the highest number of tourists from Tur-

key and Georgia was also recorded: 37.8 thousand and 7.7 thousand tourists, representing increases of 200.7% and 1,200.2% compared to 2018, respectively (Sectur, n.d.). The year 2022 was particularly notable for the arrival of tourists to Mexico by air from conflict-affected countries. An atypical case occurred in 2021, when the highest number of Venezuelan arrivals on record was reported (191.9 thousand tourists). Between 2018 and 2021, growth was 92.8% or 92.4 thousand Venezuelan tourists (Sectur, n.d.). This variation was several times greater than the growth in air tourism. Subsequently, this figure declined rapidly, reaching negative rates. Between 2018 and 2024, the variation in Venezuelan tourists was -26% or -25.8 thousand tourists (Graph 14).

It should not be overlooked that one of the factors driving international tourism in Mexico was the increase in entries by Mexicans residing abroad. Between 2018 and 2024, the number of Mexicans visiting Mexico grew by 31.4%. During the same period, if treated as a single country, tourism growth from Mexicans residing abroad entering Mexico by air would rank third in importance—behind only Canada. The growth rate exceeded overall tourism activity and closely matched the increase in arrivals of U.S. residents to Mexico. However, in 2024, the first con-

The Russian invasion of Ukraine had a significant effect on tourist flows. In 2022, the number of Russian and Ukrainian tourists visiting Mexico reached 90.3 thousand (a level not seen since 2014) and 51 thousand (the highest on record), respectively (Sectur, s.f.).



Source: In-house elaboration with information from Sector (n.d.) and INEGI (n.d.d).

traction since 2019 (excluding the health crisis) was recorded.

Initial 2025 data shows the downward trend is continuing. According to data from the Unit of Migration Policy, Registry and Identity of Persons, in 2018, 1,400,900 Mexicans residing abroad entered Mexico (Segob, 2019); by 2024, this figure had risen to 2.1 million (a cumulative variation of 49.5%) (Segob, 2025). Nonetheless, in 2024 there was an annual decline of -2.2%, after reaching a record high of 2.14 million entries in 2023. In the first two months of 2025, 264,000 Mexicans entered Mexico compared to 298,900 during the same period in 2024 (a variation of -11.7%) (Segob, 2025).

EFFECTS ON THE CURRENT ACCOUNT

Between 2018 and 2024, air travel resulted in outbound spending (tourists spending abroad) rising from \$5.9 billion USD to \$6.3 billion USD. The dollar variation was 6.3% (or \$378 million USD), but when adjusted for inflation (real pesos), the variation was negative at -20.6%. However small, this increase has been the main driver of outbound spending by residents of Mexico. Mexican tourists are now spending less abroad than six years ago. In 2024, the average

expenditure per tourist declined by -21.1% compared to 2018, even though the number of tourists increased by 34.7%. In those same years, the average spending dropped from \$1,063.1 to \$838.9 USD per tourist traveling by air from Mexico (INEGI, n.d.d). The real peso drop was even steeper (-41%). In total, between 2018 and 2024, all visitors departing from Mexico (tourists and day visitors) went from spending \$11.2 billion to \$11.3 billion USD (INEGI, n.d.d). The dollar amount remained virtually unchanged (a variation of 0.85% or \$94.9 million), but the outflow per capita in Mexican pesos was significantly lower.

As of 2024, the decline in spending by land-entry overnight tourists and border tourists (both outbound) stood at -\$316 million USD and -\$113.2 million USD, respectively (INEGI, n.d.d). In contrast, international day visitors leaving Mexico increased their spending by \$146 million USD (INEGI, n.d.d). A lower number of border-crossing day visitors but higher aggregate spending has led to a 39.1% increase in average expenditure. This is notable given that the purpose of these visits is merely to enter the U.S. border zone without overnight stays. During the same period, international tourist arrivals to Mexico by air also increased significantly in spending (50.8% or \$9.1 billion USD) (INEGI, n.d.d). This spending differ-

Between 2018 and 2024, air travel resulted in outbound spending (tourists spending abroad) rising from 5.9 billion usd to 6.3 billion usd. The dollar variation was 6.3% (or 378 million usd), but when adjusted for inflation (real pesos), the variation was negative at -20.6%.

ence (between inbound and outbound tourism) has enabled the tourism balance to achieve an increasingly larger surplus. From 2018 to 2024, the surplus rose from \$11.3 billion to \$21.6 billion USD (a 91.5% variation) (INEGI, n.d.d).

In 2024, the wages of cross-border workers (those dependent on border crossings) amounted to \$2.9 billion (USD) (Banxico, n.d.b). After several years of sustained growth—excluding the health crisis—2024 saw the first contraction in at least a decade (−0.9% or −\$27.6 million USD). The decline originated in the last quarter of 2024, since from January to September of the same year the annual growth was 6.1%. One year earlier, the flow had reached a historic high of \$2.9 billion (Banxico, n.d.b). Between 2012 and 2019, these remittances had uninterrupted positive growth, which was only halted by the 2020 health crisis (−12% annual drop). Even so, the contraction was milder than in other mobility-related flows, and it Covid levels. Despite the recent drop, growth over the past six years was 38.3% (an increase of \$800.3 million USD), similar to the rise in average spending by outbound border day visitors.

In 2020, it was estimated that the cross-border workforce residing in northern Mexico's border municipi-

From 2018 to 2024, international tourist arrivals to Mexico by air increased significantly in spending (50.8% or 9.1 billion usd). This spending difference (between inbound and outbound tourism) has enabled the tourism balance to achieve an increasingly larger surplus (INEGI, n.d.d).

palities totaled 87,675 people. Of these, 55,553 were born in Mexico and 31,998 in the U.S. (Orraca, 2023). That same year, each of these workers earned an average of \$2,161.1 USD per month in the Mexican economy. Likewise, the population of U.S. residents in states adjacent to the southern U.S. border working in Mexico numbered 16,723 people (Orraca, 2023). It is very likely that the average (and total) income of these workers is underestimated—i.e., underreported in the current account. If these workers are only part-time, their income would be 71.2% higher than reported. Thus, in 2020, the actual income of these workers could have reached \$3.9 billion USD rather than the reported \$2.2 billion. From this perspective, it makes sense that despite fewer border crossings, labor-related income continues to increase.

FINAL REFLECTIONS: THE BALANCE IN THE U.S. LABOR MARKET ARRIVED BY PLANE

It is likely that, amid the post-pandemic recovery, the U.S. economy did not overheat excessively due to the massive entry of immigrants —both those who entered through institutional channels (with official documents) and those who were undocumented. The policy of stricter entry restrictions into the United States, implemented since Donald Trump's first term, has had a significant impact on migration patterns and flows. This restrictive policy is encouraging the growth of the Mexican population entering the U.S. with documents verifying their stay, such as tourist or temporary work visas.

We estimate that between 2018 and 2023, around 490,000 Mexicans entered the U.S. with a visa and did not return to Mexico. By 2024, the number of Mexicans using this mechanism continued to exceed those entering through other (undocumented) means, and the primary mode of entry was by air. This figure could increase by another 207,000 individuals. Mexico has resumed emigration, and nearly two out of every three migrants departed from Mexican airports and entered through U.S. airports. Un-

fortunately for Mexico, these Mexicans have taken a one-way flight.

The evidence shows that Mexican immigrants have opted for documented (legal) entry. This highlights that transnational criminal networks are primarily responsible for facilitating access to the United States for people of other nationalities, and to a much lesser extent for Mexicans. These criminal networks have capitalized on conflict-driven exoduses from various parts of the world and enabled the entry of such migrants to the East Coast of the U.S. (Northeast and Midwest), with the immediate effect of reversing population growth rates from negative to positive. The consequences of these movements will become clear as official statistics show that the proportion of the population of Mexican origin, relative to the total number of foreigners, has declined in these regions (though not in absolute numbers). The growth of undocumented immigrants was several times greater than the entry of Mexicans.

Over the past six years, these movements have enriched traffickers by nearly \$20 billion (USD). However, other industries, such as transportation, have also benefited from regular (documented) mobility. Still, many doubts and questions remain regarding

We estimate that between 2018 and 2023, around 490,000 Mexicans entered the U.S. with a visa and did not return to Mexico.

the behavior of border crossings, casting doubt on the actions of immigration authorities on both sides of the border. The number of crossings plummeted without affecting the trend in cross-border workers' income, as if there were no correlation.

Since 2018, the decline in border crossings has been offset by longer stays, reducing the number of daily pedestrian and vehicle crossings. Mexicans are moving beyond the border zone (reducing the risk of deportation), otherwise, these flows would be counted as border tourism—which is not the case. In other words, the effect runs counter to what is officially reported and sets the stage for another potential labor market imbalance in the United States. Evidence shows that the entry of Mexicans (with documents) is linked to the expansion of the U.S. economy—meaning these entries are pro-cyclical. Nonetheless, this phenomenon does not exempt the U.S. economy from facing challenges in more complex sectors, where immigrant participation is comparatively low.

The evidence shows that Mexican immigrants have opted for documented (legal) entry. This highlights that transnational criminal networks are primarily responsible for facilitating access to the United States for people of other nationalities, and to a much lesser extent for Mexicans.



GENERAL CONCLUSIONS



<https://www.lanacion.com.ar/estados-unidos/migraciones/los-migrantes-llegan-a-la-frontera-de-arizona-pese-a-las-deportaciones-masivas-hay-mucha-nid11022025/>

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS



The migratory phenomenon between Mexico and the United States has reached an unprecedented level of complexity and importance, particularly following the immigration policies implemented by the Trump administration, whose rhetoric and actions have directly linked migration to the national security of the United States. This approach has placed migrants at the center of a debate that now involves not only their well-being and human rights, but also uses migration as a tool of political, economic and geopolitical negotiation between both countries. However, migration is far from being solely a bilateral issue between Mexico and the United States —it extends into an international matter that fundamentally involves all Latin American countries. If this phenomenon is

not managed with a proper sense of cooperation, negotiation and consensus-building, the social, political and economic effects of migration could become deeply destabilizing for both Mexico and the rest of Latin America.

For Mexico, migration has ceased to be an internal policy issue and has become a central topic in its international relations, especially with the United States. Dependence on U.S. immigration policies has turned Mexico into a key player in curbing irregular migration, which has had profound implications on its sovereignty, the protection of migrants' human rights and the strain on the Mexican financial system. The growing militarization of borders, the deployment of

Donald Trump has used migration as a tool of political, economic and geopolitical negotiation.

However, migration is far from being solely a bilateral issue between Mexico and the US —it involves all Latin American countries.

the National Guard and the implementation of measures such as the “Remain in Mexico” program have placed Mexico in a position where external pressures condition its immigration policymaking and have prevented the development of a strategy that addresses the structural causes of migration.

The numbers reflect the magnitude of this phenomenon: in 2024, Mexico detained more than 2 million migrants, showing the constant pressure the country faces to control the flow of people crossing its territory in search of a better life in the United States. In 2017, Mexican authorities set a record with more than 223,000 migrant arrests, and the numbers continued to rise during the administration of Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador. Rather than moving toward an autonomous migration policy, Mexico has been perceived as a country subordinated to U.S. demands, implementing policies that contradict its international human rights commitments in an attempt to meet the expectations imposed by its northern neighbor.

Moreover, the tensions arising from U.S. immigration policies are also reflected in the growing militarization of the border and the discrimination and criminalization of migrants. In this context, human rights violations have become commonplace, with migrants

suffering arbitrary detentions, abuse by authorities and precarious conditions in detention centers. The fact that more than 70,000 migrants have been returned to Mexico under the “Remain in Mexico” program, despite legal and humanitarian concerns, underscores the severe impact of these policies on the most vulnerable individuals. Throughout 2024, violence and abuse intensified in migration stations and border cities, where migrants are trapped in a relentless cycle of vulnerability and neglect.

Migration does not only affect Mexico; it has a profound impact on other Latin American countries that must manage both the flows of migrants crossing their territories and the consequences of irregular migration on their economies, societies and security systems. Countries like Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Venezuela—plagued by violence, poverty and political instability—face situations similar to Mexico’s, as their citizens seek better opportunities in the United States. However, these countries lack the resources and infrastructure needed to adequately manage migratory flows, further exacerbating the crisis.

In 2024, according to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, nearly 40% of migrants detained at

The numbers reflect the magnitude of this phenomenon: in 2024, Mexico detained more than 2 million migrants, showing the constant pressure the country faces to control the flow of people crossing its territory in search of a better life in the United States.

the southern border came from Central American countries. The lack of adequate regional responses and the absence of effective cooperation among the countries involved, have left migrants trapped in a state of desperation. Living conditions in detention centers and makeshift camps along the southern border are increasingly unsustainable. Migrants from these countries are exposed to violence from gangs and transnational organized crime, increasing the risk of kidnapping, forced recruitment, extortion and death. The migratory flow has also intensified pressure on transit countries such as Panama and Costa Rica, which have had to manage forced repatriation flights or bilateral agreements with the United States to receive transiting migrants. This phenomenon has not only generated tensions within recipient countries, but also disrupted the allocation of resources and services, further complicating migrant integration and the management of social tensions.

A key aspect marking migration within the context of Mexico-U.S. bilateral relations is its use as a bargaining chip. President Trump has used the threat of imposing tariffs on Mexican goods and deploying military forces at the border as a means of pressuring Mexico to comply with migration control demands. This has created a context of instability and mistrust,

where Mexico has been compelled to accept measures that directly affect its sovereignty and compromise migrant rights. In 2025, Trump announced the implementation of a 25% tariff on all goods from Mexico if the Mexican government failed to stop irregular migration to the United States. Faced with this threat, President Claudia Sheinbaum's administration felt pressured to strengthen containment measures, deploying more than 10,000 National Guard troops along the U.S. border. Despite the official narrative of a sovereign Mexico that defends migrant rights, the containment actions and agreements with the United States, appear to have been dictated by the need to avoid an economic conflict, lacking a clear and autonomous migration strategy.

This type of negotiation exposes the fragility of Mexico's migration approach, which is based more on forced cooperation with the United States than on a comprehensive and long-term strategy that addresses the structural causes of migration. If Mexico and other Latin American countries fail to establish a more collaborative approach—based on respect for human rights and the pursuit of structural solutions to migration—the region will remain vulnerable to external pressures, with devastating effects on mi-

Trump announced the implementation of a 25% tariff on all goods from Mexico if the Mexican government failed to stop irregular migration to the United States.

grants, affected communities and financial systems on both sides of the border.

It is essential that the issue of migration be addressed with a multilateral cooperation approach involving all countries in the region. Migration is a phenomenon that cannot be resolved in isolation; it requires a joint response that considers the root causes of displacement, such as violence, poverty and lack of opportunities in the countries of origin. Cooperation between Mexico, the United States and Central American countries, must focus on respect for human rights, the strengthening of local institutions and the creation of policies that promote economic development and social inclusion. Migration becomes a threat from the moment that, over the past six years, it has enabled transnational criminal organizations to establish markets, acquire resources (more than \$17 billion USD) and integrate them into the financial system. Financial information from Mexico and demographic data from the United States suggest that, in just one year, such organizations were able to move more than half a million people from the south to the northern border of Mexico without obstacles, successfully sending many of them into the southern and eastern coasts of the United States (from Florida to New York). This transit has altered the U.S. popula-

tion trajectory (from negative to positive in three out of four regions) and changed the composition of the population by country of origin. In 2024, 84% of U.S. population growth was attributed to migration. Between 2020 and 2024, the resident population in the U.S. increased by 8.5 million people—and even the most ambitious deportation plan would only slightly reverse that trend.

In this context, Mexicans have become a less attractive market for criminal organizations, even as they continue to swell the populations of the southern and Pacific coastal areas of the U.S. For more than a decade, Mexicans have increasingly chosen the institutional route—unlike the Mexican government, which has facilitated their entry into various labor markets. In practice, the U.S. government's response has been favorable: it now grants more visas than in the past and has shown a declining rejection rate. Between 2018 and 2023, 59 out of every 100 Mexicans chose to travel to the U.S. (by air), using documents that allowed them to stay legally in the country and travel beyond the 75-mile border zone. Of those, only 22 out of 100 Mexicans returned—a record low return rate. However, these changes are still insufficient for the size of the North American labor market, and at the same time they place limits on restrictive immi-

Cooperation between Mexico, the United States and Central American countries, must focus on respect for human rights, the strengthening of local institutions and the creation of policies that promote economic development and social inclusion.

gration policy. In this regard, Mexico has much more to lose than just remittances —more than 2 million Mexicans residing abroad could stop entering Mexico as tourists each year. Given this, the U.S. government is pursuing a win-win strategy: it deports a number of foreigners that does not affect labor market performance and, in turn, alters travel expectations among these foreigners, who then choose not to return to their countries of origin.

Nevertheless, migration should not only be seen as a threat or challenge, but also as an opportunity to rethink relationships among Latin American countries and to build a more just and equitable region. If governments fail to act responsibly and humanely, migration will continue to be a sensitive and destabilizing issue for the countries involved as well as for the migrants themselves. In this regard, the future of migration will depend on the ability of governments to create policies based on respect, cooperation and consensus-building that benefit all stakeholders involved. In conclusion, migration is one of the most critical issues for the political, economic and social stability of Mexico and Latin America. But it is equally critical for the stability of the U.S. labor market. The lack of an adequate and coherent response — coupled with the growing militarization of the border

and containment policies— has created a scenario in which the human rights of migrants are increasingly at risk. It is imperative to seek comprehensive and sustainable solutions that prioritize cooperation and negotiation to address migration in a respectful, humane and fair manner, without overlooking financial intelligence. Migration is not only a challenge— it is also an opportunity to build a more united and compassionate region.

The lack of an adequate and coherent response —coupled with the growing militarization of the border and containment policies—has created a scenario in which the human rights of migrants are increasingly at risk. It is imperative to seek comprehensive and sustainable solutions that prioritize cooperation and negotiation to address migration in a respectful, humane and fair manner, without overlooking financial intelligence. Migration is not only a challenge—it is also an opportunity to build a more united and compassionate region.



STATISTICAL ANNEX

1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	
1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	
1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	
0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	
1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0

STATISTICAL ANNEX

«

This section outlines the main results of the estimations referred to in Chapter 5 of this report, carried out by Signos Vitales, concerning the profits of organized crime (2015–2023) derived from human trafficking. These estimations use remittance databases from Finabien and the Bank of Mexico (Banxico), as well as data from a previous study by the World Bank. This information is also combined with data from the Survey on Migration at Mexico’s Northern and Southern Borders (EMIF), conducted by El Colegio de la Frontera Norte (Colef), particularly concerning the fees or payments migrants make to human traffickers (coyote, smuggler, guide, boatman, among others).

The request for information, filed under tracking number 330029324000450 on May 2, 2024—which provides the data from Finabien—can currently be found on the National Transparency Platform (PNT). However, since the institution’s initial response on May 31, 2024, was incomplete, Signos Vitales filed an appeal before the now-defunct INAI. As a result, the complete response (all data) was obtained through the review process RRA 8075/24 (September 12, 2024), which is now part of Signos Vitales’ documentary archive.

This analysis aims to quantify the total amount (in value) paid by migrants—mostly foreigners—for border

crossings from Mexico into the United States through the international financial system, as well as to estimate the approximate number of such crossings. In this regard, it is important to clarify that these crossings, which involve payments to transnational criminal organizations for their services, should not be confused with encounters at the southern U.S. border. It is important to note that “encounters” refer to events (i.e., attempted crossings), not to individual migrants or successful entries into the U.S.¹ Our study focuses on the former.

Accordingly, we examined remittance behavior in Mexico from January 2015 through April 2024. These include both electronic transfers and cash transactions, with a clear predominance of the former. The data are flow-based, recorded monthly and expressed in millions of current pesos. In cases where figures were reported in U.S. dollars, they were converted to Mexican pesos using the monthly average exchange rate published in the Official Gazette of the Federation (DOF). This latter database comes from Banxico.

¹ According to Signos Vitales consultants, specialized in immigration matters, the ratio of encounters by the same person or subject can be up to 4 to 1. The same person can try to cross the border between Mexico and the United States 3 or 4 times in the same period of time. That is, the number of encounters must be divided by 3 or 4 to know the approximate number of people trying to cross said border.

The proposed econometric model is dynamic, with autoregressive and moving average components (12,1), and includes seasonal adjustments for the months of January, February, April and November each year. The model uses as independent (explanatory) variables the remittance data received by foreigners in Mexico (referred to as Finabien²) and the Mexican peso–U.S. dollar exchange rate (referred to as TIPODECAMBIO). To capture the inertia of the total remittances recorded in Mexico (dependent variable referred to as BANXICO), as well as other potentially unobserved explanatory variables, a linear trend component (@TREND) is added. As shown, all the variables in the model are statistically significant, with a goodness of fit of 0.970409.

² FINABIEN has a sufficiently robust database by nationality of beneficiaries (those who collect remittances); however, at the aggregate level (public information from Banxico), the same data is not available. Although this does not mean that such information is not generated by all agents (remittance companies), and subject to the information produced by the United States government in demographic matters, based on the available data it is not advisable to draw conclusions at this level of disaggregation (nationality).

CHART 1. RESULTS OF THE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Dependent Variable: BANXICO Method: ARMA Maximum Likelihood (BFGS) Date: 03/26/25 Time: 18:33 Sample: 2015M01 2024M04 Included observations: 112 Convergence achieved after 8 iterations Coefficient covariance computed using outer product of grad				
Variable	Coefficie	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-28281.24	6595.178	-4.288170	0.0000
TIPODECAMBIO	3485.496	321.2365	10.85025	0.0000
FINABIEN	562.2071	191.9088	2.929554	0.0042
@TREND	471.2677	57.81014	8.151990	0.0000
@SEAS(1)	-10587.66	1570.455	-6.741779	0.0000
@SEAS(2)	-11420.15	1711.270	-6.673492	0.0000
@SEAS(4)	-4489.941	1460.198	-3.074884	0.0027
@SEAS(11)	-4578.785	1446.463	-3.165503	0.0021
AR(2)	0.558682	0.112388	4.971019	0.0000
AR(12)	0.184339	0.086087	2.141314	0.0347
MA(1)	0.556868	0.102552	5.430081	0.0000
SIGMASQ	16009464	2239242.	7.149502	0.0000
R-squared	0.970409	Mean dependent v 66833.08		
Adjusted R-squar	0.967154	S.D. dependent var23364.44		
S.E. of regression	4234.454	Akaike info criterion19.65386		
Sum squared resid	1.79E+09	Schwarz criterion 19.94513		
Log likelihood	-1088.616	Hannan-Quinn crit 19.77204		
F-statistic	298.1268	Durbin-Watson stat2.114047		
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000000			
Inverted AR Roots	.94	.79-.39i	.79+.39i	.45-.71i
	.45+.71i	.00+.83i	-.00-.83i	-.45-.71i
	-.45+.71i	-.79-.39i	-.79+.39i	-.94
Inverted MA Roots	-.56			

The results of the time series analysis indicate that the dependent variable (BANXICO) and the variables TIPODECAMBIO and FINABIEN maintain a positive relationship. For every one million pesos that foreigners collect in remittances through Finabien, there are 562.207 million pesos in total remittances recorded in Mexico. Additionally, the depreciation of the peso has a positive effect on the increase in remittances. Thus, there is no evidence to support claims that “Mexicans send more remittances because of the peso’s appreciation against the dollar”; rather, the opposite appears to be true. The model shows that, on average, for each one-peso depreciation relative to the U.S. dollar, remittances increase by 3,500 million pesos.

The results of the FINABIEN estimator suggest that the size of the market is considerably larger than the remittances processed by public-sector financial institutions (in this case, Finabien). In other words, private remittance companies handle the majority of payments received by foreigners in Mexico. In 2023, 250.5 million pesos were processed through Finabien, implying that foreigners may have received an estimated total of 140,880.7 million pesos (the result of multiplying 250.585 by 562.2071), equivalent to 7,989.2 million (USD) at the average exchange rate

during the year, via the financial system. Another likely explanation is that foreigners receive these transfers through third parties (traffickers may receive or collect the funds directly), or that the operations are settled in U.S. dollars in cash at some point along the journey to the United States.

Based on the regression analysis results (7.9 billion dollars received by foreigners in Mexico) and following the estimates made by Ratha (Ratha, D., *et al.*, 2021), it was possible to estimate the maximum amount³ earned by transnational criminal organizations through human trafficking. Assuming that 76.1% of the resources received by foreigners in Mexico were used to pay for crossing the Mexico–U.S. border, in 2023, the criminal organizations' profits could have amounted to \$ 6 billion (USD) (76.1% of 7.9 billion USD).

Finally, the total amount collected by the criminal organizations was divided by the average payment per crossing during the second half of 2023 for migrants returned by U.S. immigration authorities to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras (\$9,378.48 USD). This figure was recorded in the EMIF Sur survey conduct-

ed by Colef. Using this, we estimate that the approximate number of border crossings from Mexico into the United States was 648,271 foreigners (excluding Mexicans).

Therefore, the model captures all those crossings for which there was some monetary compensation through formal payment channels, as well as operations settled in U.S. cash, assuming the journey began at Mexico's southern border (with Guatemala) and ended at the northern border with the United States. In this regard, it is very unlikely that the model captures border crossings by Mexicans, since many of them do not travel across the country from south to north. Furthermore, as shown in Chapter 6, between 2018 and 2023, nearly 6 out of 10 successful crossings were made with a tourist or temporary work visa. Thus, our model presents a moderate scenario in terms of both the number of successful crossings and the earnings captured by transnational organized crime (Graph 15).

³ It is important to clarify that Ratha's estimates include payments to other agents, such as corrupt authorities

GRAPH 15. ESTIMATED MODEL, CURRENT VALUE
AND MODEL RESIDUALS

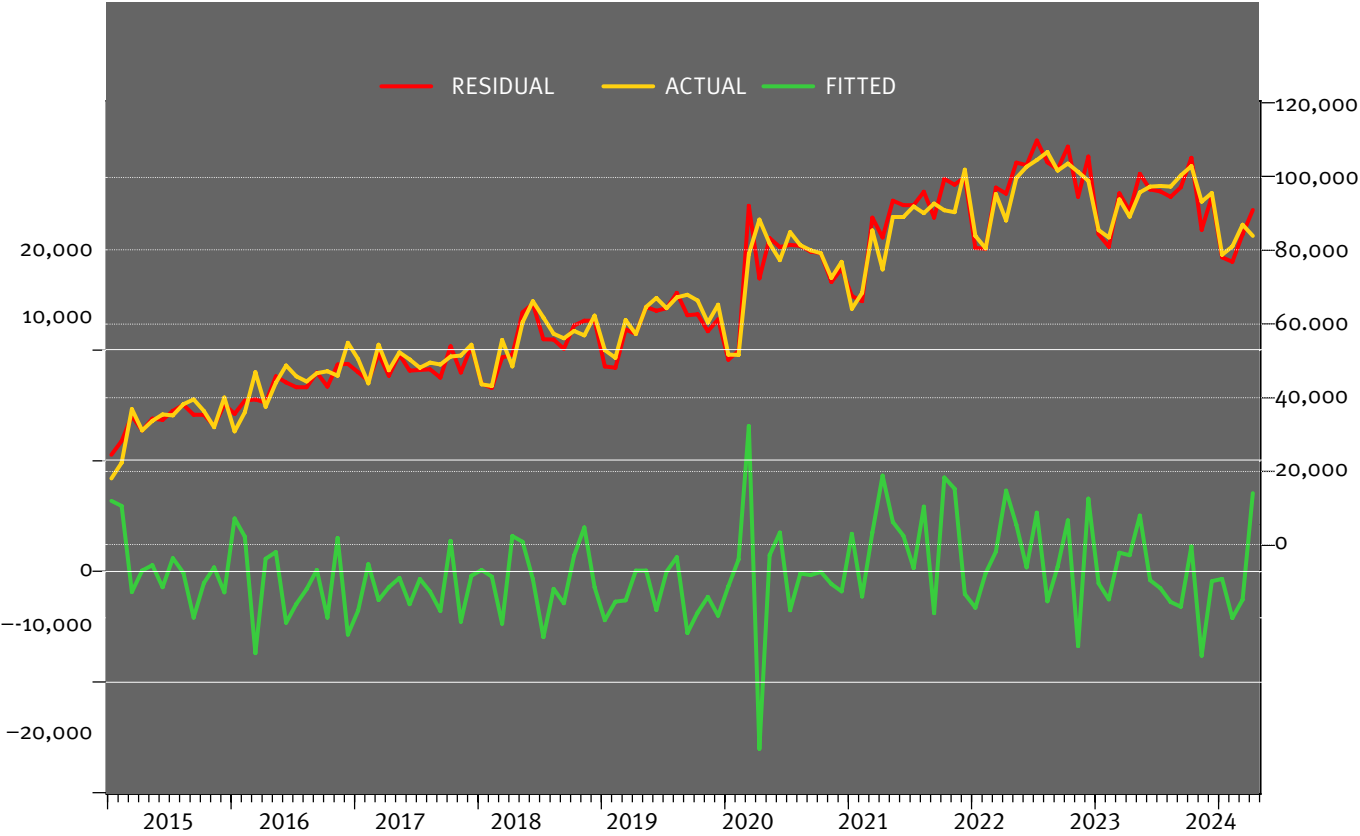
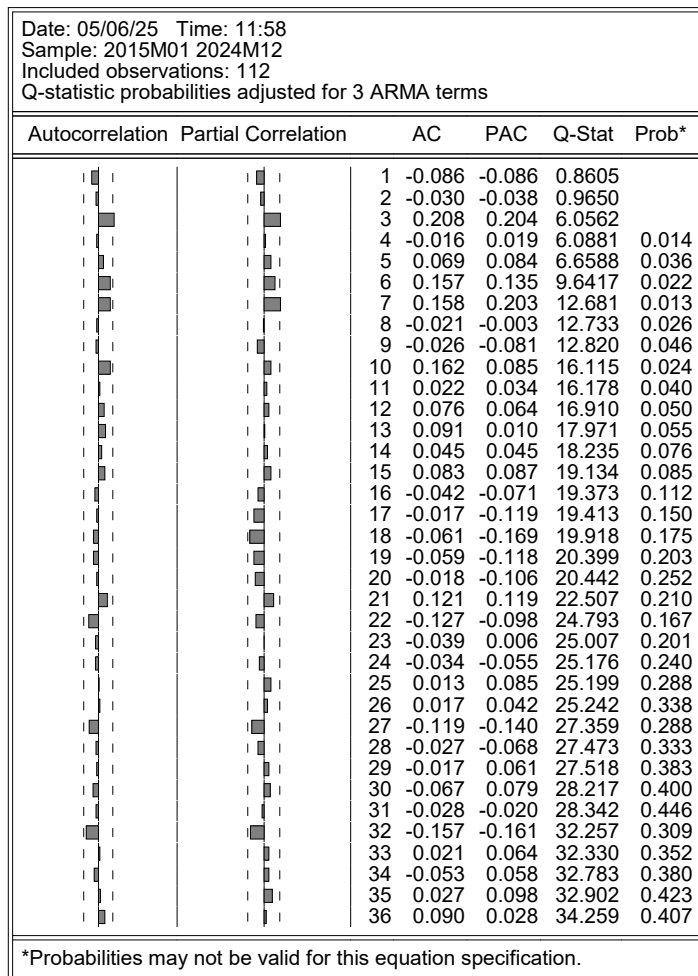


FIGURE 2. CORRELOGRAM



In Figure 2, one can observe the estimated and actual values of remittances, as well as the residuals of the aforementioned model. The values are recorded in current Mexican pesos. Given the presence of seasonality and autocorrelation, the previously mentioned seasonal components were included. Likewise, as shown in the visual test (last panel), the autocorrelation was corrected.



REFERENCES



<https://www3.gobiernodecanarias.org/noticias/las-bibliotecas-reciben-700-000-mil-euros-para-la-adquisicion-de-nuevos-fondos-bibliograficos/>

REFERENCES



- AFP (2025). “Administracion Trump elimina el 83% de los programas de ayuda internacional de la USAID”. El Economista. Available at: <https://www.eleconomista.com.mx/internacionales/administracion-trump-elimina-83-programas-ayuda-internacional-usaid-20250310-749815.html>
- Agencia de la ONU para los Refugiados (ACNUR) (2023b). “Caminando hacia la integracion”. Principales resultados ACNUR Mexico 2022. Available at: https://mexico.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-05/Resultados_2022.pdf
- Agencia de la ONU para los Refugiados (ACNUR) (2024). “Mexico: una esperanza de un nuevo hogar”. Principales resultados 2023. Available at: <https://www.acnur.org/mx/sites/es-mx/files/2024-04/Reporte%202023%20ACNUR%20Me%CC%81xico.pdf>
- Agencia de la ONU para los Refugiados (ACNUR) (s.f.2). “Programa de Asistencia Humanitaria en Mexico Preguntas y respuestas”. Available at: <https://www.acnur.org/mx/sites/es-mx/files/legacy-pdf/5f1867d64.pdf>
- Agencia Federal de Aviacion Civil (AFAC). 2022. Estadística Mensual Operativa. 1992 – 2024. Available at: <https://www.gob.mx/afac/acciones-y-programas/estadistica-mensual-operativa-monthly-traffic-statistics>
- Ainsley, J. y Strickler, L. (2025): “Illegal crossings plunge to levels not seen in decades”. NBC News. Available at: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/illegal-crossings-plunge-to-levels-not-seen-in-decades-amid-trump-crackdown/?ftag=C-NM-00-10aab7e&linkId=762285460>
- Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados (ACNUR) (s.f.1). “Guia para la Proteccion de los Refugiados en Centroamerica”. Available at: https://www.acnur.org/fileadmin/Documentos/RefugiadosAmericas/Mexico/Guia_para_la_proteccion_de_los_refugiados_en_Mexico.pdf
- Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados (ACNUR) (2018) “Principios y directrices, apoyados por orientaciones practicas, sobre la proteccion de los derechos humanos de personas migrantes en situacion de vulnerabilidad”. Global Migration Group. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/principles-and-guidelines-sp.pdf>
- Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados (ACNUR) (2023a) “La securitizacion y la aplicacion de medidas restrictivas de gobernanza migratoria en las fronteras”. Los derechos humanos de las personas migrantes en Mexico y America Central. Available at: <https://hchr.org.mx/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Boletin-Derechos-Humanos-Migrantes.pdf>
- Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados (ACNUR) y Programa Mundial de Alimentos (PMA) (2023). “Mixed Movements Monitoring Report | UNHCR-WFP | Q1 2023”. Available at: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/102005>
- American Immigration Council (2024). “Mass Deportation: Devastating Costs to America, Its Budget and Economy”. Available at: https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/mass_deportation_report_2024.pdf
- American Immigration Council (2025): “The “Migrant Protection Protocols”: An Explanation of the “Remain in Mexico” Program.” Available at: <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/migrant-protection-protocols>

- Amnistia Internacional (2025). “Las medidas de Trump y su impacto en los derechos humanos”. Available at: <https://www.es.amnesty.org/en-que-estamos/blog/historia/articulo/las-primeras-medidas-de-trump-y-su-impacto-en-derechos-humanos/>
- Banco de Mexico (Banxico). s.f. Sistema de Informacion Economica (SIE). Ingresos por remesas, distribucion por entidad federativa – (CE100). Available at: <https://www.banxico.org.mx/SieInternet/consultarDirectorioInternetAction.do?sector=1&accion=consultarCuadro&idCuadro=CE100&locale=es>
- Banco de Mexico (Banxico). s.f.b. Sistema de Informacion Economica (SIE). Balanza de pagos con base en MBP6 (a partir de 2002) – (CE174). Available at: <https://www.banxico.org.mx/SieInternet/consultarDirectorioInternetAction.do?sector=1&accion=consultarCuadro&idCuadro=CE174&locale=es>
- Banco de Mexico (Banxico). s.f.c. Sistema de Informacion Economica (SIE). Circulacion de billete – (CM1). Available at: <https://www.banxico.org.mx/SieInternet/consultarDirectorioInternetAction.do?sector=11&accion=consultarCuadro&idCuadro=CM1&locale=es>
- Banco de Mexico (Banxico). s.f.d. Sistema de Informacion Economica (SIE). Numero de contratos de los instrumentos de captacion de la banca comercial por entidad federativa y municipio – (CF661). Available at: <https://www.banxico.org.mx/SieInternet/consultarDirectorioInternetAction.do?sector=19&accion=consultarCuadro&idCuadro=CF661&locale=es>
- Banco de Mexico (Banxico). s.f.e. Sistema de Informacion Economica (SIE). Saldos de los instrumentos de captacion de la banca comercial por entidad federativa y municipio – (CF662). Available at: <https://www.banxico.org.mx/SieInternet/consultarDirectorioInternetAction.do?sector=19&accion=consultarCuadro&idCuadro=CF662&locale=es>
- Banco de Mexico (Banxico). s.f.f Sistema de Informacion Economica (SIE). Indice de tipo de cambio real con precios consumidor y con respecto a 111 paises – (CR60). Available at: <https://www.banxico.org.mx/SieInternet/consultarDirectorioInternetAction.do?sector=6&accion=consultarCuadro&idCuadro=CR60&locale=es>
- Banco de Mexico (Banxico). s.f.g. Sistema de Informacion Economica (SIE). Base monetaria, Fuentes y usos – (CF2). Available at: <https://www.banxico.org.mx/SieInternet/consultarDirectorioInternetAction.do?sector=3&idCuadro=CF2&accion=consultarCuadro&locale=es>
- Batalova, J. (2024). “Inmigrantes mexicanos en Estados Unidos”. Migration Policy Institute. Available at: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/inmigrantes-mexicanos-en-estados-unidos>
- BBVA Research (2024). “Anuario de migracion y remesas Mexico”. Secretaria de Gobernacion de Mexico, a traves del Consejo Nacional de Poblacion, Fundacion BBVA Mexico y BBVA Research. Available at: <https://www.bbvarsearch.com/publicaciones/mexico-anuario-de-migracion-y-remesas-2024/>
- Becerra, M. (2021) “La ilegalidad del muro de Donald Trump”. Anuario mexicano de derecho internacional. DOI: 10.22201/ij.24487872e.2020.20.14495. Available at: <https://revistas.juridicas.unam.mx/index.php/derecho-internacional/article/view/14495/19203>
- Bedoya, Y. (2022). “Migracion internacional de retorno e insercion laboral en Mexico a inicios del Siglo XXI”. Revista Latinoamericana de Poblacion. Vol. 16. Available at: <https://revistarelap.org/index.php/relap/article/view/1>
- Brewer, S. y Walsh, J. (2025): “Aranceles, fentanilo y migracion: Actualizacion sobre las relaciones entre EE.UU. y Mexico tras el primer mes de Trump”. WOLA. Available at: <https://www.wola.org/es/analysis/aranceles-fentanilo-y-migracion-actualizacion-sobre-las-relaciones-entre-ee-uu-y-mexico-tras-el-primer-mes-de-trump/>
- Camhaji, E. (2024): “La primera batalla: Sheinbaum se lanza contra la politica migratoria de Trump”. Available at:

- <https://elpais.com/mexico/2024-11-22/la-primera-batalla-sheinbaum-se-lanza-contr-la-politica-migratoria-de-trump.html>
- Camhaji, E. (2025): "U.S. Spy Planes spark controversy in Mexico". El Pais. Available at: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2025-02-12/us-spy-planes-spark-controversy-in-mexico-we-dont-know-what-they-did.html>
- Cassarino, Jean-Pierre 2004 "Theorizing Return Migration: The Conceptual Approach to Return Migrants Revisited", en International Journal on Multicultural Societies, vol. 6, num. 2, pp. 253-279.
- CBP (2025): "U.S. Border and Customs Protection Southwest Land Border Encounters". Available at: <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-land-border-encounters>
- Center for Immigration Studies (2025). "Foreign-Born Number and Share of U.S. Population at All-Time Highs in January 2025. Record increase in last four years driven primarily by illegal immigration". Available at: <https://cis.org/Report/ForeignBorn-Number-and-Share-US-Population-AllTime-Highs-January-2025>
- Centro de Estudios de Guatemala (2018). "Migracion del Triangulo Norte de Centroamerica: Una region que huye". Available at: <http://www.ceg.org.gt/images/documentos/publicaciones/Informe%20Migracion%20region%20huye.pdf>
- Chabat, J. (2010): "La iniciativa Merida y la relacion Mexico – Estados Unidos: En busca de la confianza perdida". CIDE. Available at: https://cide.repositorioinstitucional.mx/jspui/bitstream/1011/116/1/000099110_documento.pdf
- Chrishti, M / Bush-Joseph, K. (2025): "In First 100 Days, Trump 2.0. Has dramatically reshaped the U.S. Immigration System, but it is not meeting mass deportation aims". Migration Policy Institute. Available at: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/trump-2-immigration-first-100-days>
- CNN (2024): "Gobierno de Sheinbaum ha detenido a casi 350.000 migrantes desde el 1 de octubre". Available at: <https://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2024/12/04/mexico/gobierno-sheinbaum-detenido-350-000-migrantes-mexico-orix>
- Coalicion de Derechos Humanos y No mas muertes. (2023). "Disappeared: How the US border enforcement agencies are fueling a missing persons crisis". Available at: <https://missingpersons.icrc.org/library/disappeared-how-us-border-enforcement-agencies-are-fueling-missing-persons-crisis>
- Comision Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (CIDH) (2013) "Derechos humanos de los migrantes y otras personas en contexto de movilidad humana en Mexico" OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc.48/13, 2013, parr. 400. Available at: <https://www.oas.org/es/cidh/migrantes/docs/pdf/informe-migrantes-mexico-2013.pdf>
- Comision Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (CIDH) (2023). "Fin del Titulo 42: CIDH llama a Estados Unidos a proteger derechos de personas migrantes y refugiadas". Available at: <https://www.oas.org/es/cidh/jsForm/?File=/es/cidh/prensa/comunicados/2023/099.asp>
- Comision Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (CIDH) (2025). "CIDH expresa preocupacion por las recientes politicas y medidas migratorias y de asilo en los Estados Unidos". Available at: https://www.oas.org/es/cidh/jsForm/?File=/es/cidh/prensa/comunicados/2025/037.asp&utm_content=country-usa&utm_term=class-mon
- Comision Mexicana de Ayuda a Refugiados (Comar) (2025). "La Comar en numeros". Available at: <https://www.gob.mx/Comar/articulos/la-Comar-en-numeros-387226?idiom=es>
- Comision Nacional de Derechos Humanos (CNDH) (s.f). "Derechos de los migrantes". Available at: <https://www.cndh.org.mx/derechos-humanos/derechos-de-las-personas-migrantes>
- Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO) (2025). "Migrantes y derechos humanos bajo amenaza".

- Available at: <https://www.clacso.org/migrantes-y-derechos-humanos-bajo-amenaza/>
- D'Aubeterre Buznego, M. E. (2012). "Empezar de nuevo: migración femenina a Estados Unidos. Retornos y reinserción en la Sierra Norte de Puebla." *Norteamérica. Revista Académica del cisan-unam*, 7, 149-180
- Da Cruz, M. (2018). "Offshore Migrant Workers: Return Migrants in Mexico's English-Speaking Call Centers." *rsf: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences*, 4(1), 39- 57. Consultado en: <https://doi.org/10.7758/rsf.2018.4.1.03>
- Departamento de Defensa (2025): "Acting Secretary of Defense Robert Salesses Statement on DOD Actions" Available at: <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/4037500/acting-secretary-of-defense-robert-sales-ses-statement-on-dod-actions-responding/>
- Departamento de Estado (2025): "Specially Designated Global Terrorist Designations of Tren de Aragua, Mara Salvatrucha, Cartel de Sinaloa, Cartel de Jalisco Nueva Generación, Carteles Unidos, Cartel del Noreste, Cartel del Golfo, and La Nueva Familia Michoacana". Registro Federal. Available at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/02/20/2025-02870/specially-designated-global-terrorist-designations-of-tren-de-aragua-mara-salvatrucha-cartel-de>
- Departamento de Seguridad Nacional (2025): "ICE Arrests in 50 first days of Trump Administration" Press Release. Available at: <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/03/13/ice-arrests-first-50-days-trump-administration>
- Devereaux R., (2022). The Border patrol is systemically failing to count migrant deaths. Available at: <https://theintercept.com/2022/05/09/border-patrol-migrant-deaths-gao/>
- Díaz, I. (2018). "El primer sueño americano". ¿Cómo empezó el sueño americano?. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). Available at: <https://unamglobal.unam.mx/como-empezo-el-sueno-americano/>
- Díaz, L. (2025): "Exclusive: Amid Trump Crackdown, surge in migrants in Mexico seeking help to return home". Reuters. Available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/amid-trump-crackdown-surge-migrants-mexico-seeking-help-return-home-2025-03-12/>
- Diodato, D., Hausmann, R., Neffke, F. (2023) The impact of return migration on employment and wages in Mexican cities (2023) *Journal of Urban Economics*, 135, art. no. 103557. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0094119023000268>
- El Colegio de la Frontera Norte (Colef). s.f. Encuesta sobre Migración en la Frontera Sur de México. Available at: www.colef.mx/emif
- El Economista (2021). "Comparación de salarios en México y Estados Unidos: manufactura". Available at: <https://www.eleconomista.com.mx/empresas/Comparacion-de-salarios-en-Mexico-y-Estados-Unidos-manufactura-20211017-0004.html>
- El Economista (2025): "Sheinbaum aclara que el país no ha aceptado recibir a migrantes del 'Quedate en México'". Available at: <https://www.eleconomista.com.mx/internacionales/sheinbaum-aclara-pais-aceptado-recibir-migrantes-quedate-mexico-20250122-743132.html>
- Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja (IFRC) (2024). "Migración y salud en las Américas: Una evaluación de las necesidades y servicios 2021-2023". Available at: <https://www.ifrc.org/es/document/migracion-y-salud-en-las-americas-una-evaluacion-las-necesidades-y-servicios-2021-2023>
- Federal Register (2025): "2025 Donald J. Trump Executive Orders" In: The National Archives. Available at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/presidential-documents/executive-orders/donald-trump/2025#>
- Fernández, H., Salma J., Dorow S & Salami B., (2023). "A multi-scalar critical analysis of return migration policies

- in Mexico". International Migration. <https://doi-org.wdgbiblio.udg.mx:8443/10.1111/imig.13157>
- Forbes (2025): "Sheinbaum reitera que defendera a migrantes mexicanos ante politicas migratorias de EU". Available at: <https://forbes.com.mx/sheinbaum-reitera-que-defendera-a-migrantes-mexicanos-ante-politicas-migratorias-de-eu/>
- Foreign Assistance (s.f). "U.S. Agency for International Development" Available at: <https://foreignassistance.gov/>
- Fundar (2015): "Un camino incierto: Justicia para delitos y violaciones a los derechos humanos contra personas migrantes y refugiados en Mexico". Available at: <https://fundar.org.mx/un-camino-incierto-justicia-para-delitos-y-violaciones-a-los-derechos-humanos-contr-personas-migrantes-y-refugiadas-en-mexico/>
- Galvan, M. (2019): "El gobierno de Peña Nieto rompio record como expulsor de migrantes". Expansion Politica. Available at: <https://politica.expansion.mx/mexico/2019/02/27/el-gobierno-de-pena-nieto-rompio-record-como-expulsor-de-migrantes>
- Garcia, P. (2024). "La militarizacion del Instituto Nacional de Migracion y sus implicaciones en las violaciones a derechos humanos de las personas migrantes". Universidad Iberoamericana. Available at: <https://readymag.website/u3038421399/informeINM/>
- Garrapa, A. M. (2022). El exodo centroamericano entre insercion laboral y militarizacion en la frontera sur de Mexico. *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies / Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y Del Caribe*, 114, 25-43. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48712107>
- Glick Schiller, N., & Salazar, N. B. (2013). Regimes of mobility across the globe. *Journal of ethnic and migration studies*, 39(2), 183-200. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2013.723253>
- Gobierno de Mexico (2014): "Plan Frontera Sur". Available at: <https://www.gob.mx/siap/prensa/programa-frontera-sur-38330#:~:text=Dicho%20Programa%2C%20es%20una%20estrategia,legalidad%20a%20los%20derechos%20humanos>
- Gobierno de Mexico (2016). Reconocimiento de la condicion de refugiado. Available at: <https://www.gob.mx/Comar/acciones-y-programas/solicitud-de-reconocimiento-de-la-condicion-de-refugiado>
- Gobierno de Mexico (2018). "Programa de Asistencia Juridica a Personas Mexicanas a traves de Asesorias Legales Externas en los Estados Unidos de America (PALE)". Available at: <https://www.gob.mx/sre/acciones-y-programas/programa-de-asistencia-juridica-a-mexicanos-a-traves-de-asesorias-legales-externas-en-los-estados-unidos-de-america-pale>
- Gobierno de Mexico (2019). "Caravanas migrantes de Centroamerica". Available at: <https://www.colef.mx/estemes/caravanas-migrantes-de-centroamericanos/>
- Gobierno de Mexico (2024): "Comision nacional de ayuda a refugiados" Available at: <https://www.gob.mx/Comar>
- Gobierno de Mexico (2024a). "III. Personas en situacion migratoria irregular (antes, extranjeros presentados y devueltos)". Available at: <http://www.politicamigratoria.gob.mx/es/PoliticaMigratoria/CuadrosBOLETIN?Anual=2024&Secc=3>
- Gobierno de Mexico (2024b): "Presenta presidenta Claudia Sheinbaum programa de apoyo para las y los mexicanos en Estados Unidos". Available at: <https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/presenta-presidenta-claudia-sheinbaum-programa-de-apoyo-para-las-y-los-mexicanos-en-estados-unidos?idiom=en>
- Gobierno de Mexico (2025). "La red consular en Estados Unidos se ha fortalecido para apoyar, proteger y defender a los connacionales en ese pais". Comunicado No. 011. Available at: <https://www.gob.mx/sre/prensa/la-red-consular-en-estados-unidos-se-ha-fortalecido-para-apoyar-proteger-y-de>

fender-a-los-connacionales-en-ese-pais?idiom=es

Gobierno de Mexico (2025a): “"Mexico te abraza"”. Available at: https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/971337/28enero25_M_xico_te_abraza.pdf

Gobierno de Mexico (2025b): “Personas en situacion migratoria irregular entre Mexico y Estados Unidos. La narrativa actual en medios de comunicacion”. Available at: http://www.omi.gob.mx/es/OMI/Mig_irregular_Mx_USA#:~:text=Las%20cifras%20oficiales%20indican%20que,comparacion%20con%20enero%20de%202024

Gobierno de Mexico (2025c). “Del 3 al 27 de marzo se dispersa el pago de Pensiones y Programas para el Bienestar: Ariadna Montiel”. Comunicado. Secretaria de Bienestar. Available at: <https://www.gob.mx/bienestar/prensa/del-3-al-27-de-marzo-se-dispersa-el-pago-de-pensiones-y-programas-para-el-bienestar-ariadna-montiel#:~:text=La%20estrategia%20M%C3%A9xico%20Te%20Abraza,en%20diferentes%20puntos%20del%20pa%C3%ADs.>

Gobierno de Mexico (s.f). “Instituto Nacional de Migracion ¿Que hacemos?”. Available at: <https://www.gob.mx/inm/que-hacemos>

Gonzalez, C. (2025, abril 9). “Estas son todas las medidas que ha implementado Trump contra los inmigrantes desde que empezo su segundo mandato” AS USA. Available at: <https://as.com/us/actualidad/estas-son-todas-las-medidas-que-ha-implementado-trump-contralos-inmigrantes-desde-que-empezo-su-segundo-mandato-n/>

Gordoa, H. (2024): “Sheinbaum anuncia una “transformacion profunda en el INM con la salida de Francisco Garduño”. LatinUS. Available at: <https://latinus.us/mexico/2024/12/27/sheinbaum-anuncia-una-transformacion-profunda-en-el-inm-con-la-salida-de-francisco-garduno-131421.html>

Guillen, B., & Suarez, K. (2025, abril 6). Mexico busca el viento a favor en la tormenta de Trump. El Pais. <https://elpais.com/mexico/2025-04-06/mexico-busca-el-viento-a-favor->

[en-la-tormenta-de-trump.html](https://elpais.com/mexico/2025-04-06/mexico-busca-el-viento-a-favor-en-la-tormenta-de-trump.html)

Guillen, T. (2025) “La tendencia de la migracion en 2025 es hacia el estancamiento”. Available at: https://www.dgcs.unam.mx/boletin/bdboletin/2025_120.html

Hagan, J. M., Hernandez-Leon, R., y Demonsant, J.-L. (2015). Skills of the “Unskilled” Work and Mobility among Mexican Migrants. Oakland: University of California Press.

Human Rights First (2023). “A line that barely budges U.S Limiting Access to Asylum Nogales, Arizona Port of Entry”. Available at: https://humanrightsfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/A-Line-That-Barely-Budges_Nogales-Arizona-1.pdf

Human Rights First (2024). “Trapped, preyed upon, and punished. One Year of the Biden Administration Asylum Ban”. Available at: https://humanrightsfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Asylum-Ban-One-Year-Report_final-formatted_5.13.24.pdf

Human Rights Watch (2025). “Mexico. Eventos de 2024”. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/es/world-report/2025/country-chapters/mexico>

Human Rights Watch (s.f). “Quedate en Mexico”. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/es/tag/quedate-en-mexico>

Infobae (2019): “Mexico endurecio sus controles migratorios con 21,500 uniformados”. Available at: <https://www.infobae.com/america/mexico/2019/06/24/mexico-endurecio-sus-controles-migratorios-con-21500-uniformados/>

Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI) (2023). “Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares”. Available at: <https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/enigh/nc/2022/>

Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI). 2024. Encuesta Nacional de la Dinámica Demográfica (ENADID) 2023. Available at: <https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/enadid/2023/#tabulados>

Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI). s.f. Ofer-

- ta y Demanda Global Trimestral. Available at: https://www.inegi.org.mx/temas/ofyd/default.html#informacion_general
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI). s.f.a. Encuesta Nacional de la Dinámica Demográfica (ENADID) 2009. Available at: <https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/enadid/2009/#tabulados>
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI). s.f.b. Encuesta Nacional de la Dinámica Demográfica (ENADID) 2023. Available at: <https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/enadid/2018/#microdatos>
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI). s.f.c. Encuesta Nacional de la Dinámica Demográfica (ENADID) 2014. Available at: <https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/enadid/2014/#tabulados>
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI). s.f.d. Economía y Sectores Productivos. Turismo. Tabulados. Available at: <https://www.inegi.org.mx/temas/turismo/#-tabulados>
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI). s.f.e. “Información Demográfica y Social”. Censo de Población y Vivienda. Available at: <https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/ccpv/2020/>
- Instituto para las Mujeres en la Migración A.C. (Imumi) (2024). “Incendio en la estancia migratoria de Ciudad Juárez. “No nos dejen morir aquí”. Available at: <https://imumi.org/nuestras-publicaciones/incendio-en-la-estancia-migratoria-de-ciudad-juarez-no-nos-dejen-morir-aqui/>
- International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce (ITA). s.f.. International Air Travel Statistics Program – APIS I – 92 Data. Available at: <https://www.trade.gov/us-international-air-travel-statistics-i-92-data>
- Isacson, A. (2025a): “Weekly U.S.-Mexico Border Update, 07.03.25 ”. WOLA. Available at: <https://www.wola.org/2025/03/weekly-u-s-mexico-border-update-tariffs-february-migration-military-role-mass-deportation/>
- Isacson, A. (2025b): “Weekly U.S.-Mexico Border Update, 21.03.2025”: WOLA. Available at: <https://www.wola.org/2025/03/weekly-u-s-mexico-border-update-the-alien-enemies-act-military-buildup-border-wall/>
- Laborie, MA (2011). “The evolution of the concept of security”. Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies. Spain: Ministry of Defense.
- Linthicum, K. (2025): “Asylum requests surge in Mexico amid U.S. Border crackdown.”. L.A. Times. Available at: <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2025-03-04/as-trump-shuts-the-door-on-asylum-seekers-migrants-turn-to-mexico>
- Lopez Magallon, E. (2015): “El Plan Frontera Sur dispersa la migración sin detenerla” Deutsche Welle. Available at: <https://www.dw.com/es/el-plan-frontera-sur-dispersa-la-migracion-sin-detenerla/a-18779878>
- Masferrer, C. (2021a). Atlas de migración de retorno de Estados Unidos a México. México, , México: El Colegio de México.
- Masferrer, C. (2021b). “Legados y desafíos desde una perspectiva multidisciplinaria”. Desigualdades sociales en México. El Colegio de México (2021). Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv2kcwnkj.8>
- Massey, D. S., Durand, J., y Malone, N. J. (2002). Beyond Smoke and Mirrors: Mexican Immigration in an Era of Economic Integration. Nueva York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- McAuliffe, M. y L.A. Oucho (eds.), 2024. Informe sobre las Migraciones en el Mundo 2024. Organización Internacional para las Migraciones (OIM), Ginebra. Available at: <https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/es>
- McKibbin, W., Hogan, M., y Noland M. (2024). “The International Economic Implications of a Second Trump Presidency”. Working Paper. Peterson Institute For International Economics (PIIE). Available at: <https://www.piie.com/publica->

- tions/working-papers/2024/international-economic-implications-second-trump-presidency
- Mendez, M. (2025) “Las politicas migratorias en Mexico y Estados Unidos ante el inicio del segundo mandato de Donald Trump”. Available at: <https://mx.boell.org/es/2025/01/21/las-politicas-migratorias-en-mexico-y-estados-unidos-ante-el-inicio-del-segundo-mandato>
- Mixed Migration Centre (2024). “Oficinas de Movilidad Segura: Conocimiento, interes y posible influencia en las dinamicas de migracion mixta en America Latina y el Caribe”. Available at: https://mixedmigration.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/320_Safe-Mobility-Offices-Infographics_ES.pdf
- Montoya-Galvez, C. (2025): “Amid Trump crackdown, illegal border crossings plunge to levels not seen in decades”. CBS News. Available at: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/illegal-crossings-plunge-to-levels-not-seen-in-decades-amid-trump-crackdown/?ftag=CNM-00-10aab7e&linkId=762285460>
- National Immigrant Justice Center (2025). “Accion Diferida para los Llegados en la Infancia (DACA)”. Available at: https://immigrantjustice.org/sites/default/files/content-type/know-your-rights/documents/2025-01/DACA-FAQ_January-2025_Spanish.pdf
- National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities (UNHCR) Declaracion Conjunta Mexico Estados Unidos, 7 June 2019, <https://www.refworld.org/legal/resolution/natlegbod/2019/es/122917>
- Neumann, S. (2025): “Up to 3,000 more U.S. troops are ordered to the border with Mexico”: NPR. Available at: <https://www.npr.org/2025/03/01/nx-s1-5314368/more-border-troops-mexico>
- Organizacion de las Naciones Unidas (ONU) (s.f). “Migracion Internacional”. Available at: <https://www.un.org/es/global-issues/migration>
- Organizacion Internacional para las Migraciones (OIM) (2023a) Seguimiento de flujos de poblacion migrante - Tenosique - 31 de julio. Available at: <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/mexico-monitoreo-de-flujos-de-poblacion-migrante-tenosique-julio-2023>
- Organizacion Internacional para las Migraciones (OIM) (2023b) DTM seguimiento de flujos de poblacion migrante Tapachula 30 junio. Available at: https://mexico.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd1686/files/documents/2023-08/dtm-2023-tapachula-junio_light.pdf
- Organizacion Internacional para las Migraciones (OIM) (s.f) “Proyecto Migrantes Desaparecidos”. Available at: <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/es>
- Orjeda, Y. (2025): “Flujo migratorio Norte-Sur sigue en ascenso”. Diario Las Americas. Available at: <https://www.diariolasamericas.com/el-flujo-migratorio-norte-sur-sigue-ascenso-n5372322>
- Orraca Romano, P. (2023). Trabajadores transfronterizos o commuters internacionales en la frontera Mexico-Estados Unidos: evolucion e importancia economica. Estudios Fronterizos, 24, e118. Available at: <https://ref.uabc.mx/ojs/index.php/ref/article/view/1114>
- Ortiz Blanes, S. (2025) “Trump sent these Venezuelans to El Salvador mega prison. Their families deny gang ties.”. Miami Herald. Available at: <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/immigration/article302251339.html>
- Padinger, G. (2021): “Que es la Iniciativa Merida, el cuestionado pacto de seguridad entre Mexico y EE.UU. que podria ser reemplazado”. CNN. Available at: <https://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2021/10/08/que-es-iniciativa-merida-pacto-seguridad-mexico-eeuu-orix>
- Payan, Tony y Rodriguez-Sanchez, J.I. 7 de junio de 2023. Revamping the TN visa to get workers where the US needs them. Houston: Rice University’s Baker Institute for Public Policy. Available at: <https://www.bakerinstitute.org/>

research/revamping-tn-visa-get-workers-where-us-needs-them

- Perez Gallardo, M. (2025): “"Mexico te abraza" – el gobierno de Sheinbaum se prepara para las deportaciones de Trump”. France24. Available at: <https://www.france24.com/es/america-latina/20250124-mexico-te-abraza-el-gobierno-de-sheinbaum-se-prepara-para-las-deportaciones-de-trump>
- Ramirez, E.R. (2022). “Migracion en el Triangulo norte (de Centroamerica): Vulnerabilidad y riesgos”. Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Honduras. Available at: <https://www.asuntosconstitucionales.com/pdf/2-ERubi.pdf>
- Ramos, D. (2011): “Calderon promulga la Ley de Migracion”. Animal Politico. Available at: <https://animalpolitico.com/2011/05/calderon-promulga-la-ley-de-migracion>
- Ratha, D., Kim, E., Plaza, S., Seshan, G., Riordan, E., Chandra, V. 2021. Migration and Development Brief 35: Recovery: COVID-19 Crisis through a Migration Lens. KNOMAD - World Bank. Available at: <https://www.knomad.org/publication/migration-and-development-brief-35>
- Rivera, S. (2025): “US repatriating 135 migrants daily to Mexico”. The Border Report. Available at: <https://www.borereport.com/immigration/us-repatriating-135-migrants-daily-to-mexico-on-flights/>
- Rodriguez Calva, P. (2019): “Numero de migrantes detenidos en Mexico aumento 23%: CNDH”. Excelsior. Available at: <https://www.excelsior.com.mx/nacional/numero-de-migrantes-detenido-en-mexico-aumento-23-cndh/1353978>
- Rodriguez E. (2025) “Migracion entre Mexico y EE UU: ¿como esta la situacion ahora?”. The New York Times. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/es/2025/01/08/espanol/america-latina/migracion-entre-mexico-y-ee-uu-como-esta-la-situacion-ahora.html>
- Rojas, A. (2024b) “Retiene Mexico a mas migrantes en Fronteras y CDMX”. Available at: <https://www.eleconomista.com.mx/politica/Retiene-Mexico-a-mas-migrantes-en-frontend-y-CDMX-20240607-0005.html>

mx/politica/Retiene-Mexico-a-mas-migrantes-en-frontend-y-CDMX-20240607-0005.html

- Rojas, R. (2025): “On a U.S. deportation flight of 135 mostly Asian migrants to Costa Rica, half will be minors”. Available at: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/us-deportation-flight-costa-rica-asian-migrants-san-jose-rcna192902>
- Rosas, T. (2011): “Calderon promulga la Ley de Migracion”. El Economista. Available at: <https://www.eleconomista.com.mx/politica/Calderon-promulga-Ley-de-Migracion-20110524-0099.html>
- Ruiz Soto A. y Selee, A. (2025): “Entre amenazas arencelarias, la gestion de la migracion es clave para la evolucion de la relacion Trump-Sheinbaum.” Migration Policy Institute. Available at: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/news/aran-celarias-migracion-trump-sheinbaum>
- Ruiz-Healy, E. (2025): “"Mexico te abraza": grandes objetivos, pequeños recursos, ajustes inevitables”. El Economista. Available at: <https://www.eleconomista.com.mx/opinion/mexico-te-abraza-grandes-objetivos-pequenos-recursos-ajustes-inevitables-20250122-743089.html>
- Saenz, H.I. (2008): “La Iniciativa Merida: seguridad, soberania y migracion en la relacion Mexico – Estados Unidos”. Serie Cuadernos de Trabajo del Instituto para la Seguridad y la Democracia A.C. (Insyde). Available at: http://insyde.org.mx/pdf/cuadernos-trabajo/CT_22_Iniciativa-Merida.pdf
- Secretaria de Gobernacion (Segob). 2019. Boletin Mensual de Estadísticas Migratorias, 2018. Unidad de Política Migratoria. Available at: https://portales.Segob.gob.mx/es/PoliticaMigratoria/Boletines_Estadisticos
- Secretaria de Gobernacion (Segob). 2025. Boletin Mensual de Estadísticas Migratorias, 2024. Unidad de Política Migratoria, Registro e Identidad de Personas. Available at: https://portales.Segob.gob.mx/es/PoliticaMigratoria/Boletines_Estadisticos

- Secretaria de Hacienda y Credito Publico (SHCP) (2024). “Presupuesto de Egresos de la Federacion 2024. Analisis funcional programatico economico”. Available at: https://www.pef.hacienda.gob.mx/work/models/btrnZkyc/PEF2024/rpdngkxq/docs/04/ro4_afpe.pdf
- Secretaria de Hacienda y Credito Publico (SHCP) (2025). “Presupuesto de Egresos de la Federacion 2025. Analisis Funcional Programatico Economico”. Available at: https://www.pef.hacienda.gob.mx/work/models/GOp25P/PEF2025/Loungbqw/docs/04/ro4_afpe.pdf
- Secretaria de Turismo (Sectur). s.f. Datatur con informacion de la Unidad de Politica Migratoria, Registro e Identidad de Personas de la Secretaria de Gobernacion. Entradas aereas de turistas extranjeros por Pais de Nacionalidad. <https://datatur.sectur.gob.mx/SitePages/Visitantes%20por%20Nacionalidad.aspx>
- Segob (2018): Unidad de Politica Migratoria, Registro e Identidad de Personas. Available at: https://portales.Segob.gob.mx/es/PoliticaMigratoria/Panorama_de_la_migracion_en_Mexico
- Segob (2025): “Politica Migratoria – estadisticas”. Available at: http://www.politicamigratoria.gob.mx/work/models/PoliticaMigratoria/CEM/Estadisticas/Boletines_Estadisticos/2025/Cuadros2025/cuadro3.1.xls
- Segob (2025b): “Boletin mensual de estadisticas migratorias 2025”. Available at: <http://www.politicamigratoria.gob.mx/es/PoliticaMigratoria/CuadrosBOLETIN?Anual=2025&Secc=3>
- Segob (2025c): “Boletín mensual de estadísticas migratorias 2025”. Available at: https://portales.Segob.gob.mx/work/models/PoliticaMigratoria/CEM/Estadisticas/Boletines_Estadisticos/2025/Boletin_2025.pdf
- Shelton, S. (2025): “EE.UU. despliega un segundo buque de guerra en la frontera con Mexico mientras Trump intensifica la politica migratoria”. CNN Español. Available at: <https://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2025/03/22/eeuu/despliegue-segundo-buque-de-guerra-frontera-mexico-trax>
- Signos Vitales (2020): “Contencion Migratoria: Lesiones graves a los Derechos Humanos”. Available at: <https://signosvitalismexico.org/contencion-migratoria-lesiones-graves-a-los-derechos-humanos/>
- Signos Vitales (2021): “Contencion Migratoria – Lesiones Graves a los Derechos Humanos”. Available at: <https://signosvitalismexico.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Contencion-migratoria.pdf>
- Signos Vitales (2022). “Diagnostico de Mexico: Obscuras perspectivas”. Signos Vitales Society. Available at: <https://signosvitalismexico.org/reporte-10/>
- Signos Vitales (2024): “El Legado de Lopez Obrador”. Available at: <https://signosvitalismexico.org/reporte-17/>
- Signos Vitales (Diciembre de 2020). “Mexico y Estados Unidos: de la subordinacion a la expectativa”. Available at: <https://signosvitalismexico.org/reporte-3/>
- Sin Fronteras (2016) “Evolucion y Retos del Asilo en Mexico 20 años de asistencia legal e incidencia por las personas refugiadas”. Available at: https://sinfronteras.org.mx/asiloporderecho.sinfronteras.org.mx/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/InformeAsilo_2016_WEB.compressed.pdf
- Soto, D. (2025): “Detencion de migrantes crecio 230% con Lopez Obrador; sumo 2.7 millones”. Politica Expansion. Available at: <https://politica.expansion.mx/mexico/2025/02/13/detencion-de-migrantes-crecio-230-con-Lopez-Obrador-sumo-2-7-millones>
- The White House (2025): “Fact Sheet – President Trump imposes Tariffs on Imports from Canada, Mexico and China”. Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/02/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-imposes-tariffs-on-imports-from-canada-mexico-and-china/>

- Torres, E., Paris, M.D., y Gutierrez, E.E. (2021). “El sistema de refugio mexicano: entre proteger y contener”. Available at: https://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=So187-73722021000100107
- Track Immigration (2025). “Little Empirical Evidence That Arrests and Removals Are Higher Under Trump”. Available at: <https://tracreports.org/reports/754/>
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). 2025. Job Openings by Industry and Region: Levels, Seasonally Adjusted. Obtenido de FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. Available at: <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/release/tables?rid=192&eid=6615>
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). s.f. Number of unemployed persons per job opening, seasonally adjusted. Available at: <https://www.bls.gov/charts/job-openings-and-labor-turnover/unemp-per-job-opening.htm>
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) (2025). “Temporary Protected Status”. Available at: <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status>
- U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (2025): “Resumen de las ordenes ejecutivas del 20 de enero del USCRI.” Available at: <https://refugees.org/uscri-summary-of-january-20-executive-orders/>
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection (2025). “Southwest Land Border Encounters”. Available at: <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-land-border-encounters>
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2025). “DHS Repatriations”. Office Of Homeland Security Statistics. Available at: <https://ohss.dhs.gov/khsm/dhs-repatriations>
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security. 2024. Nonimmigrant Admissions Annual Flow Report. Office of Homeland Security Statistics. Available at: <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/nonimmigrant/nonimmigrant-AFR>
- U.S. Department of State. s.f. Visa Statistics. Monthly Nonimmigrant Visa Issuance Statistics. Available at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/legal/visa-lawo/visa-statistics/nonimmigrant-visa-statistics/monthly-nonimmigrant-visa-issuances.html#>
- Unidad de Política Migratoria (2024) Registro e Identidad de Personas, Secretaría de Gobernación. Boletín Mensual de Estadísticas Migratorias. Available at: http://www.politica-migratoria.gob.mx/work/models/PoliticaMigratoria/CEM/Estadisticas/Boletines_Estadisticos/2024/Boletin_2024.pdf
- Unidad de Política Migratoria (2025) Registro e Identidad de Personas, Secretaría de Gobernación. Boletín Mensual de Estadísticas Migratorias. Available at: http://www.politica-migratoria.gob.mx/work/models/PoliticaMigratoria/CEM/Estadisticas/Boletines_Estadisticos/2025/Boletin_2025.pdf
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (UN DESA). s.f. International Migrant Stock. Available at: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/international-migrant-stock>
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (UN DESA). (2022). World Population Prospects 2022: Summary of Results. UN DESA/POP/2022/TR/NO. 3. Available at: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/World-Population-Prospects-2022>
- United States Census Bureau (U.S. Census Bureau). (2010). Selected Population Profile in the United States. American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Selected Population Profiles, Table S0201. Available at: <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSSPP1Y2010.S0201?q=mexican&g=010XX00US>
- United States Census Bureau (U.S. Census Bureau). 2024a. Press Kit: Vintage 2024 National and State Population Estimates. Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for the United States, Regions, States, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2024 (NST-EST2024-POP). Available at: <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/>

- press-kits/2024/national-state-population-estimates.html
- United States Census Bureau (U.S. Census Bureau). 2024b. Net International Migration Drives Highest U.S. Population Growth in Decades. Available at: <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2024/population-estimates-international-migration.html>
- United States Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce (U.S. Census Bureau). (2023). Selected Population Profile in the United States. American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Selected Population Profiles, Table S0201. Available at: <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSSPP1Y2023.S0201?q=mexican&g=010XX00US>
- Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico (UNAM) (s.f). Derechos de las personas migrantes. Available at: <https://museodelasconstituciones.unam.mx/derechos-migrantes-2/>
- Ureste, M. (2022): “En su cuarto año, Lopez Obrador despliega a 46% mas militares y guardias para contener a migrantes; detenciones llegan a 345 mil.” Available at: <https://animalpolitico.com/sociedad/mas-militares-guardias-nacionales-detener-migrantes>
- Ureste, M. (2024): “Sexenio de Lopez Obrador bate record de detenciones”. Animal Politico. Available at: <https://animalpolitico.com/politica/migrantes-detenciones-mexico-Lopez-Obrador-cifras>
- Vega, D. y Aguilar, M. (2023). “Perfil demografico reciente de la migracion de retorno en Guanajuato. Elementos para las politicas de reintegracion”. Available at: <https://comunicacion-cientifica.com/html/ID-CC-121/PM-2-3.php>
- Ventas, L. (2025): “Emergencia nacional en la frontera con Mexico: 6 medidas para reducir la migracion anunciadas por Trump en su primer dia como presidente de EE.UU.” BBC. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/mundo/articulos/c5yv5g8r7qpo>
- Villafuerte Solis, D. (2017). Tiempo de fronteras. Una vision geopolitica de la frontera sur de Mexico. CESMECA-UNICACH/Juan Pablos Editor. <https://doi.org/10.29043/CESMECA.rep.998>
- Wallace, J. (2025). “Pentagon deploys Navy destroyer to Texas-Mexico border to combat drug cartels”. The Houston Chronicle. Available at: <https://www.houston-chronicle.com/politics/texas-take/article/pentagon-navy-texas-mexico-20226691.php>
- Warren, Robert y Kerwin, D. (2017). The 2,000 mile wall in search of a purpose: since 2007 visa overstays have outnumbered undocumented border crossers by a half million. Journal on Migration and Human Security. Available at: <https://cmsny.org/publications/jmhs-visa-overstays-border-wall/>
- Warren, Robert. 2019. US Undocumented population continued to fall from 2016 to 2017, and visa overstays significantly exceeded illegal crossings for the seventh consecutive year. Center for Migration Studies of New York (CMS). Available at: <https://cmsny.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/US-Undocumented-Population-Continued-to-Fall-from-2016-to-2017-and-Visa-Overstays.pdf>
- Wilder, K. 2024. U.S. Population Grows at Fastest Pace in More Than Two Decades. Available at: <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2024/12/population-estimates.html>
- WOLA (2025). “Las ordenes ejecutivas de Trump y America Latina: Lo que hay que saber”. Available at: <https://www.wola.org/es/analysis/las-ordenes-ejecutivas-de-trump-america-latina-lo-que-hay-que-saber/>
- Yousif, N. (2025): “Six big immigration changes under Trump – and their impact so far”. BBC. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/clyn2p8x2eyo>
- Zuñiga, D. (2025): “El drama sin salida de los venezolanos varados en Mexico”. DW. Available at: <https://www.dw.com/es/el-drama-sin-salida-de-los-venezolanos-varados-en-mexico/a-72327801#:~:text=Ese%20es%20el%20resumen%20de,no%20disponen%20de%20los%20recursos>



May 2025



**MIGRATION IN MEXICO IN TIMES OF TRUMP:
THREATS AND SUBORDINATION**

© 2025 Signos Vitales Society

Sitio web: www.signosvitalismexico.org

Correo: comunicacion@signosvitalismexico.org

Versión electrónica. Primera Edición

ISBN: 978-1-967204-31-1



SIGNOSVITALESMEXICO.ORG.MX