Immigration from Mexico and Central America: Current Trends and Policies

Dr. Carlos Heredia (CIDE)
Webinar on July 12, 2022

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Immigration from Mexico and Central America: Trends and Policies

1. Geopolitics and regional security: from the Arctic Ocean to the Panama Canal

2. The changing profile of demography immigration, labor / human mobility

3. What the United States does in Central America drives Central Americans to the US


5. Shared border, shared future?
OH GREAT... ANOTHER MIGRANT CARAVAN!
Mapa de América del Norte en 2082

www.futuretimeline.net
Projected Population by Race and Hispanic Origin

Alternative Projections for the United States: 2020-2060. Table C (2016 base population as of July 1st)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race and Hispanic Origin</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2040</th>
<th>2060</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main Series, Total Population</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Race</td>
<td>314,648</td>
<td>323,069</td>
<td>357,252</td>
<td>379,228</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>248,503</td>
<td>253,280</td>
<td>269,578</td>
<td>275,014</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic White</td>
<td>197,970</td>
<td>198,571</td>
<td>193,210</td>
<td>179,162</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>43,001</td>
<td>44,734</td>
<td>52,919</td>
<td>60,690</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian and Alaska Native</td>
<td>4,055</td>
<td>4,232</td>
<td>5,038</td>
<td>5,583</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>18,319</td>
<td>20,009</td>
<td>28,718</td>
<td>36,815</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>771</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>999</td>
<td>1,125</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>8,480</td>
<td>9,570</td>
<td>16,276</td>
<td>25,255</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>57,470</td>
<td>62,313</td>
<td>87,616</td>
<td>111,216</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Alternative Foreign-born Immigration Scenarios**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2040</th>
<th>2060</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low Immigration Scenario, Total Population</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>57,470</td>
<td>61,522</td>
<td>81,988</td>
<td>100,039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High Immigration Scenario, Total Population</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>57,470</td>
<td>63,498</td>
<td>96,057</td>
<td>127,978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zero Immigration Scenario, Total Population</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>57,470</td>
<td>59,942</td>
<td>70,734</td>
<td>77,691</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 2016 is the base population estimate for the projections. Hispanic origin is considered an ethnicity, not a race. Hispanics may be of any race. Responses of "Some Other Race" from the 2010 Census are modified. For more information, see https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest/technical-documentation/file-layouts/2000-2010/mr2010.pdf. Release Date: October 24, 2019
Half of the US population lives in just 9 states

9 most populous states = 161.1 million
Half US population = 161.5 million

SOURCE: US Census
### List of States with the largest Hispanic population and the highest percentage of Hispanic population*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Hispanic Population mn</th>
<th>Hispanics as % of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>15.57</td>
<td>39.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>11.44</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. New Mexico</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>47.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This table only includes those states that combine two salient features: a) they have at least 1 million people of Hispanic origin and b) their Hispanic population exceeds 10% of their total population. Source: U.S. Census, 2020.
#DefendDACA

1/3rd of DACA recipients are enrolled in high school

1/5th of DACA recipients are enrolled in college

1/4th of DACA recipients are juggling both college and work

http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/education-and-work-profiles-daca-population
Polarization of immigration debate
For some time, the U.S. has been sending mixed messages on immigration.
U.S. Border Externalization

- Sept. 4, 2017: General John Kelly, then DHS Secretary, on the Trump wall between the U.S. and Mexico

- Security Starts ‘1500 Miles South of the Border’ = Panama Canal

- Externalization of U.S. border
# U.S. Border Externalization

![Map of North America with flags and names of countries](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Name (Spanish)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAN</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Canadá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Estados Unidos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEX</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>México</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLZ</td>
<td>Belize</td>
<td>Belice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC</td>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLV</td>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>El Salvador</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUA</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HON</td>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>Honduras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCA</td>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAN</td>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>Panamá</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Location of U.S. naval, military and airforce bases
Trump: Mexicans are not sending their best people, they’re sending criminals, rapists, drug traffickers

Historically, most immigrants in the United States came from Mexico.

However, in recent years that trend has changed, with net irregular migration from Mexico being close to zero, and Central American migration increasing.

For Trump any brown person south of the US-Mexico border is “Mexican”
DHS: Violence, poverty are driving children to flee Central America to U.S.
Sin papeles

JUAN JOSÉ MILLÁS
Geografía de México-Guatemala Transbordera Region

MAPA 1
GEOGRAFÍA DE LA FRONTERA GUATEMALA-MÉXICO

Puntos de internación con presencia de autoridades migratorias

Chiapas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Región</th>
<th>Guatemala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Soconusco</td>
<td>1. San Marcos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td>2. Quetzaltenango</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Fronteriza</td>
<td>3. Retalhuleu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Selva</td>
<td>4. Huehuetenango</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. El Quiché</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. El Petén</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fuente: elaboración propia.
Migration: Inter-Regional border
Tehuantepec Isthmus: a Geopolitical Hub – and a security barrier vs northward migration?
EL PLAN DE BIDEN PARA FORTALECER LA SEGURIDAD Y LA PROSPERIDAD EN COLABORACIÓN CON LOS PUEBLOS DE CENTROAMÉRICA
Who wants to preserve the status quo and who wants a new development agenda?
WHAT THE US DOES THERE DRIVES CENTRAL AMERICANS TO THE US

• Jeff Faux • The American Prospect, May 5, 2018

☐ Americans are divided over immigration policy. Missing from both sides of the argument is any recognition of the role the U.S. has played there—in Central America—in creating conditions that drive so many to risk the fatal trek to get here.

☐ Eighty percent of the caravan refugees currently knocking at our door are from Honduras. The rest are from El Salvador and Guatemala.

☐ For 150 years, U.S. has intervened in these countries with arms, political pressure, and money to support alliances between our business and military elites and theirs—who prosper by impoverishing their people. The most important figure in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador is the U.S. ambassador. These 3 nations are, in effect, our colonies.

☐ We have trapped these migrants between a foreign policy that drives them from their home and a domestic policy that won’t let them into ours.

☐ Since 2013, 75 percent of asylum applications from these countries have been rejected. In desperation, many will try to cross illegally—again and again.

☐ Until we Americans acknowledge our own responsibility for sowing the seeds of this humanitarian crisis, and reverse our policies that perpetuate it, it will only continue to grow.
Despite the chronic poverty, immigration from Central America remained modest until the Reagan administration’s contra wars in the 1980s.

The flood of dollars and weapons, and the CIA’s clandestine alliance with narcotraffickers, destabilized the already fragile lives of ordinary people. In the war’s wake, these countries became the major route for the shipment of drugs from South America to the United States.

With drugs producing more profits than coffee or bananas, many of the oligarchs partnered with the drug cartels. Protected by government officials, the gangs spread throughout the region, bringing a culture of hellish violence to daily life.

The U.S. government’s response has been a War on Drugs that provides these regimes with political protection and a steady stream of weapons.
How Central American exodus perpetuates itself

- Oligarch multiplication generates inequality in tragic proportions.
- Elites live in walled fortresses with private armies and subordinate the State.
- Remittances have made the rich richer than they were when they were landowners.
- More emigration means + remittances, - productivity, + unemployment, + violence and + emigration.
- “Coyotes” are what moves the economy and gangs rule poor neighborhoods. Gangs result from the exponential multiplication of dysfunctional families, and the destruction of the social and familiar fabric by emigration.
Increase in security? Alliance for Prosperity?

The U.S. government argues that its programs:

i) fight transnational criminal organizations;
ii) contain drug trafficking;
iii) increase citizen security;
iv) decrease gang violence;
v) strengthen borders;
vi) discourage human trafficking;
vii) focus on police and military professionalization, and strengthen their ability to face challenges by themselves.
CICIG: Int’l Commision vs Corruption and Impunity in Guatemala: Improvement in governance vs corruption

Washington supports CICIG, which in turn:

i) Improves business conditions;

ii) Strengthens the rule of law;

iii) Promotes strong institutions;

iv) Generates accountability;

v) Reduces impunity;

vi) Promotes more efficient tax collection;

vii) Promotes civil society involvement, and
Poor ol’ Mexico. They’ll never end all the violence until they shut off the flow of drugs.
Migrantes invisibles, violencia tangible
Informe 2014
FROM EVIDENCE TO ACTION:
TACKLING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AGAINST MIGRANT WOMEN AND GIRLS
Children on the Run

UNHCR Report "Children Living Outside Their Legal Borders and the Need for International Protection"

A report on the situation of children living outside their legal borders and the need for international protection. The report is published by UNHCR.
Migraciones en México: fronteras, omisiones y transgresiones
Informe 2019
BAJO LA BOTA
MILITARIZACIÓN DE LA POLÍTICA
MIGRATORIA EN MÉXICO
https://www.meca.edu/event/jason-de-leon/  Jason De Leon, A wall of nearly 800 backpacks left behind the Mexico-US border; Photographer: Marc Tatti
Safest & Most Dangerous Cities in America

- Safest:
  - Virginia Beach
  - Honolulu
  - Austin
  - El Paso
  - Mesa
  - San Diego
  - Anaheim
- Most Dangerous:
  - St. Louis
  - Memphis
  - Cleveland
  - Baltimore
  - Detroit
  - Milwaukee
  - Kansas City
  - Indianapolis
  - Oakland
  - Tampa
  - San Jose

safewise.com
Ending a Decade-Long Decline, More Mexicans Are Migrating to U.S.

The death of at least 53 migrants in Texas, more than half of whom were from Mexico, is testing U.S. efforts to enlist Mexico in deterring migration.

Yolanda Olivares, left, holding photos of her sons, Jair and Yovani Valencia Olivares, during a march on Thursday in southern Mexico. The two brothers are missing and may have been among the migrants found in an abandoned trailer in Texas. Credit...Cristopher Rogel Blanquet for The New York Times

By Oscar Lopez and Maria Abi-Habib    July 1, 2022
Fact Sheet: The 2022 Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection / US Government and Foreign Partner Deliverables

Pillar I:  Stability and Assistance for Communities

International financing and assistance related to development, basic humanitarian needs, protection, security, public health, education, financial inclusion, and employment.

Pillar II:  Legal Pathways and Protection

Regular pathways, including circular and seasonal labor migration opportunities, family reunification, temporary migration mechanisms, and regularization, promote safer and more orderly migration.

Pillar III:  Humane Border Management

We intend to expand collaborative efforts to save lives, address violence and discrimination, counter xenophobia, and combat smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons.
¿POR QUÉ INVERTIR EN AGUA POTABLE EN GUATEMALA, HONDURAS Y EL SALVADOR?

Porque tiene un efecto multiplicador en el bienestar de la población.

CADA DÓLAR INVERTIDO EN AGUA

GENER A REDUCE

un retorno económico de entre tres y 34 dólares, dependiendo de la región.

mortalidad infantil en niños de 0 a 4 años

deserción escolar en niños de 5 a 14 años

infecciones gastrointestinales prevenibles.

EL SALVADOR

- Al menos un 22% de salvadoreños y salvadoreñas no cuenta con agua corriente en hogares
- Más del 50% del agua no cumple con las normas nacionales e internacionales de agua potable
- Un 30% de la población accede al agua a través de proveedores locales

GUATEMALA

- En 2009, faltaba un 34% de cobertura de agua potable por conexiones domiciliarias
- El BID estimó que solamente el 35% del agua distribuida puede ser considerada potable y que apenas el 5% de los sistemas de alcantarillado existentes poseen algún tipo de tratamiento del agua residual

HONDURAS

- Aprox. 800,000 hondureños y hondureñas en zonas rurales dispersas aún no gozan de servicios de agua mejorados
- 1.6 millones no disponen de servicios mejorados de saneamiento

PROYECTOS INSTITUCIONALES

BID

Mejorando vías cuenta con proyectos que beneficiarán a 300,000 personas en El Salvador, 24,000 en Guatemala e iniciarán procesos de infraestructura en Honduras

CEPAL

Propone sistemas de cosecha de agua de lluvia en comunidades del Corredor Seco para el Plan de Desarrollo Integral.

UVG

Propone invertir en sistemas de irrigación y almacenamiento, así como de avisos tempranos para temporadas de sequía.

OXFAM

Apoya a comunidades en el Corredor Seco en El Salvador para plantar árboles que mejoren la calidad del agua de las fuentes de agua de comunidades rurales, así como en apoyar a líderes para la promulgación de leyes que protejan el agua de actividad nociva para el medio ambiente, como la minería.
¿POR QUÉ INVERTIR EN LA EDUCACIÓN DE NIÑAS EN GUATEMALA, HONDURAS Y EL SALVADOR?

Porque tiene un efecto multiplicador en el bienestar de la población.

RECOMENDACIONES: inversión en la educación de niñas de bajos ingresos

SI INVERTIMOS EN LA EDUCACIÓN DE NIÑAS

UN INCREMENTO DE SÓLO EL 1% DE MUJERES
que terminan educación secundaria abona al crecimiento adicional del PIB de un país en 0.3%

LA MORTALIDAD INFANTIL SE REDUCE EN con educación primaria de la madre con educación secundaria de la madre

LAS NIÑAS CON EDUCACIÓN MENOS PROPENSAS A SUFRIR VIOLENCIA DOMÉSTICA

LAS RAZONES POR LAS QUE LAS NIÑAS NO ESTUDIAN SON
• falta de cobertura, particularmente en educación secundaria
• padres prefieren invertir en hijos varones
• dedicación a labores del hogar
• violencia de género

SITUACIÓN EDUCATIVA DE LAS NIÑAS CENTROAMERICANAS
• Guatemala: la escolaridad promedio de las niñas es de entre 4 y 6 años.
• El Salvador: la escolaridad promedio de las niñas es de 8,4 años.
• Honduras: los niños tienden a completar la escuela primaria en un 83,6 %, mientras que solo el 78,8 % de las niñas lo hace.

PROYECTOS INSTITUCIONALES

LA RED FE Y ALEGRÍA cuenta con el programa LA LUZ DE LAS NIÑAS que opera en 15 países, incluidos El Salvador (127 beneficiarias), Guatemala (2,182 beneficiarias) y Honduras (314 beneficiarias) al promover el acceso a la educación de las niñas y la erradicación de la violencia de género.

El PNUD trabaja con los gobiernos de Centroamérica para sistematizar buenas prácticas e historias de éxito en la formulación de políticas públicas para erradicar la violencia de género.

USAID tiene el Proyecto Justicia para Juventud y Género que busca proporcionar apoyo a jóvenes víctimas de violencia, incluida la violencia sexual.
North America’s Destiny

North America’s reality: Connectivity, Integration, Growth.


North America’s Assets: Natural, Demographic, Economic, Cultural and Social Resources. Democratic Values.
**Economy and trade**

### U.S. and Mexican economies inseparable

U.S. imports from Mexico totaled $347 billion in 2018. Here are the top trade items:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New cars and trucks</td>
<td>$64.5 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto parts</td>
<td>$49.8 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer equipment</td>
<td>$26.6 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil and gas</td>
<td>$14.6 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications equipment</td>
<td>$11.6 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appliances</td>
<td>$7.1 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits and nuts</td>
<td>$6.6 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical equipment</td>
<td>$6.4 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables and melons</td>
<td>$6.2 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastic and rubber products</td>
<td>$5.9 billion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census, Commerce Department
Mexico is a huge market for U.S. exports

The U.S. shipped $265 billion worth of goods to Mexico in 2018

- **Petroleum**: $28.8 billion
- **Chemicals**: $25.9 billion
- **Auto parts**: $20.2 billion
- **Computer equipment**: $17.3 billion
- **Semiconductors**: $13.1 billion
- **Plastic and Rubber products**: $11.3 billion
- **Engines and turbines**: $8.2 billion
- **Paper**: $5.2 billion
- **Iron and steel products**: $4.5 billion
- **Corn**: $3.1 billion

Source: U.S. Census, Commerce Department
Shared Border, Shared Future?

Mexico and the US have lacked a bilateral agreement to regulate cross-border labor mobility since 1965. Unlawful migration from Mexico to the U.S. has exploded. This vast black market in labor has harmed both countries. These two neighboring countries, with an indisputably shared destiny, can come together to work out a better way.
The Catholic Church and the two governments

- President Biden is a devout Catholic. Pope Francis has been a staunch defender of the dignity of migrants. And yet, toward the mid-terms he will be seen as weak if he does not tighten enforcement.

- President López Obrador has put aside claims from justice for migrants and victims. He has delivered on migration containment vs Central Americans, but can he do it when the flows are once again majoritarily Mexican?
Take-away points from this presentation

1. After a 10-year pause, Mexican undocumented migration to the US has resumed in a strong way.
2. AMLO’s social programs in Mexico and Central America have not stopped or even slowed down migration.
3. The driving factors of this migration surge are:
   a) Help wanted in the US – workers needed everywhere;
   b) The absence of a rescue program for Mexican employers and of a relief program for families;
   c) The extremely high levels of violence and public insecurity in many Mexican states, which make people flee their communities or origin;
   d) The only antidote for migration is making your communities livable, where people can thrive in peace.
Take-away points

The disastrous legacy of the Trump years must be reversed. We make a compelling case: immigration policies in the Central America – North America corridor must be based on democratic norms and institutions”

Jorge Durand, Professor, University of Guadalajara; co-founder, Mexican Migration Project, Princeton University
Dear undocumented students,
In this classroom, there are no walls. You belong here. You are loved.

Dear black students,
In this classroom, YOUR life matters. You are loved.

Dear Muslim students and students of Middle Eastern descent,
We know you are not terrorists. You are loved.

Dear Mexican students,
You are not rapists or drug dealers. You are loved.

Dear female students,
Men cannot grab you. Men WILL respect you – demand it. You are loved.

Dear LGBTQ students,
You are perfect just as you are. You are loved.

Dear ALL students,
We will get through this day, this year, together. We will respect each other and learn from one another. You are a beloved part of this country and community.

Love,
Señora Tarman
¡Muchas gracias!

carlos.heredia@cide.edu