

Mexico



Migration issues in Mexico continue to be dominated by the outflow of Mexican migrants and Central and South American transit migrants to the United States. Undocumented migration,

combined with human trafficking and other criminal activities, is a significant feature of these cross-border migration issues, and although it cannot be exactly quantified, Mexican estimates are of about 315 000 persons crossing to the United States and 2 million into Mexico annually.

Due to the economic crisis, migration flows from and through Mexico to the United States have dramatically fallen in 2009. Stricter enforcement by the United States also contributed to this decrease. The number of unauthorised foreigners detained along the US-Mexico border fell from over 1.6 million in 2000 to less than half that in 2008. The detention of unauthorised foreigners at Mexico's Southern border also decreased from 113 000 in 2007 to 89 000 in 2008. The sharp rise in temporary employment permits to the United States since 2005 also ended in 2008. The economic crisis affected Mexican migrants in the United States more than the native population there, with higher unemployment rates for Hispanic citizens and even worse impact on irregular migrants. Remittances to Mexico fell by 15%. Nonetheless, no large-scale return migration of Mexicans from the United States occurred.

Regarding the documented immigration to Mexico, the number of permanent migrants (FM2 visa) more than doubled from 2007 to 2008, reaching 15 000. The majority (60%) of permanent migrants comes from Central America, such as neighbouring Guatemala and Honduras, but also from South America (Columbia, Argentina and Venezuela), and from Cuba and the Caribbean. An increasing share, and so far the only large group from Asia, are Chinese, with 2 000 out of 23 400 FM2 visas issued in 2009. The number of migrants benefiting from the Regularisation Program, which came into effect in November 2008 and offers an FM2 visa to those who migrated irregularly before 2007, slightly increased by 500 to 2 600 in 2008 and further to 2 880 in 2009. Most are from Central America, especially Guatemala and Honduras.

The number of seasonal temporary workers decreased from 27 800 in 2007 to 23 300 in 2008, about half of the inflow in 2005. Two new permits were introduced to regulate movements at the Southern border and reduce irregular movements and associated risks of human rights violations. The Border Workers Permit (FMTF), valid for one year, replaced the 1997 Agricultural Visitor Migration Permit. The FMTF is for Guatemalan and Belizean temporary cross-border labour migrants with employment in the border states. In 2009, 30 000 permits were issued to Guatemalans working in the states of Chiapas and Tabasco; no Belizean applied for this permit until December. The Local Visitor Permit (FMVL), valid for five years, also allows Guatemalans and Belizeans legal entry into border towns for access to school, merchandise purchases, bank deposits and non-profit activities. In total, 135 000 permits were issued in 2009, 96% were for Guatemalans and the rest for Belizeans. In October 2009 President Calderon announced to expand the FMVL to persons living not only in the border area but for any Guatemalan, and to introduce biometric controls at the border.

To better monitor migration flows and crime along the Southern border, Mexico developed a comprehensive strategy including the development of border infrastructure, better coordination of federal and local investigations and tax incentives for border communities to use legal trade channels. Readmission agreements have been signed with Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, and, in 2008, Mexico signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Cuba to address the increasing numbers of Cubans seeking to enter the United States through Mexico.

Another recent development in migration is the increase of emigration of skilled Mexicans to the United States. Due to the educational development promoting higher education, but insufficient domestic opportunities of employment, an increasing number of professionals are leaving Mexico. Although they constitute only a small percentage of the labour force in the United States, these emigrants comprise 8% of professionals in Mexico. By 2025, Mexico is projected to feel the effects of this "brain drain".

For further information:

www.inm.gob.mx/EN/index.php


Recent trends in migrants' flows and stocks

MEXICO

Migration flows (foreigners) <i>National definition</i>	1995	2000	2007	2008	Average		Level ('000)
					1997-2002	2003-2008	2008
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
Inflows	..	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	15.1
Outflows	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Migration inflows (foreigners) by type <i>Permit based statistics (standardised)</i>	Thousands		% distribution				
	2007	2008	2007	2008			
Work	..	..	..	..
Family (incl. accompanying family)	..	..	..	..
Humanitarian	..	..	..	..
Free movements	..	..	..	..
Others	..	..	..	..
Total	6.8	15.1	..	..	
Temporary migration	2000	2007	2008	Average			
				2003-2008			
<i>Thousands</i>							
International students	6.3	7.1	..	5.8			
Trainees	..	..	..	..
Working holiday makers	..	..	..	..
Seasonal workers	69.0	27.8	23.3	37.3			
Intra-company transfers	..	..	..	..
Other temporary workers	..	..	..	..
Inflows of asylum seekers	1995	2000	2007	2008	Average		Level
					1997-2002	2003-2008	2008
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							

Components of population growth	1995	2000	2007	2008	Average		Level ('000)
					1997-2002	2003-2008	2008
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Natural increase	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Net migration	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Stocks of immigrants	1995	2000	2007	2008	Average		Level ('000)
					1997-2002	2003-2008	2008
<i>Percentage of the total population</i>							
Foreign-born population	0.4	0.5	..	..	..	..	..
Foreign population	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Naturalisations	1995	2000	2007	2008	Average		Level
					1997-2002	2003-2008	2008
<i>Percentage of the foreign population</i>							
	..	..	..	..	..	..	4 471
Labour market outcomes	1995	2000	2007	2008	Average		
					1997-2002	2003-2008	
<i>Employment/population ratio</i>							
Native-born men	..	..	..	..	..	..
Foreign-born men	..	..	..	..	..	..
Native-born women	..	..	..	..	..	..
Foreign-born women	..	..	..	..	..	..
<i>Unemployment rate</i>							
Native-born men	..	..	..	..	..	..
Foreign-born men	..	..	..	..	..	..
Native-born women	..	..	..	..	..	..
Foreign-born women	..	..	..	..	..	..
Macroeconomic indicators	1995	2000	2007	2008	Average		Level
					1997-2002	2003-2008	2008
<i>Annual growth in %</i>							
Real GDP	-6.2	6.6	3.4	1.3	3.8	3.1	
GDP/capita (level in US dollars)	-8.0	4.7	2.5	0.5	2.3	2.1	11 191
Employment (level in thousands)	-0.9	2.2	1.7	2.3	2.4	2.0	43 527
<i>Percentage of the labour force</i>							
Unemployment	6.9	2.6	3.4	3.5	3.0	3.4	

Notes and sources are at the end of the chapter.

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