

## Mexico



Mexican migration continues to be dominated by migration flows to the US – either of Mexicans or of immigrants from other Central and South American countries that use Mexico as a transit state.

Unauthorised immigration from Mexico to the US is estimated to be at about 315 000 persons per year, adding to the about 6 570 000 unauthorised Mexicans already in the US. With the increased physical border controls that are the result of legislation to increase border security passed by the US government in 2006, there are signs that the flows may have somewhat diminished since then. This conclusion was drawn by the Pew Hispanic Center based on consistent patterns in four key indicators: 1) the size of the Mexican-born population in the US; 2) the number of Mexican-born workers employed in the US, especially in construction; 3) remittance receipts reported by the Bank of Mexico and 4) apprehensions of persons illegally crossing the border. Nevertheless, it still seems early to conclude that this trend decline will continue or whether instead it merely reflects a temporary slowdown. It also appears that this diminished flow may be linked with the slowdown of the US economy, especially in the housing sector where Mexican workers have met a sustained demand in recent years.

The southern border of Mexico has experienced a significant increase in legal and illegal flows over the past decade, in particular for migrants seeking to transit Mexico to reach the United States. The Mexican southern border has many easy-access points for undocumented migrants. Between June 2006 and June 2007, there were more than 145 000 detentions of undocumented immigrants, mainly from Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua. This number can provide an idea of the actual flows of undocumented immigrants which is estimated to be at around 2 million individuals per year.

Permanent-type legal immigration remains low. It declined by about 10% in 2006-07 to reach about 43 000. In addition, there is an inflow of about 40 000 agricultural workers per year. The main country of origin is Guatemala.

Mexico's government changed at the end of 2006. The development plan of the new government envisages a five-tiered strategy related to migration policies:

- Improvement of migration management, quality and services in Mexico.
- An enhanced Southern Border Migration Program, aiming at the gradual development of an orderly, safe, secure and modern border region. In order to achieve this, four strategies are planned: i) improving documentation of migration flows, both by systematically documenting legal crossings and by better supervising undocumented flows; ii) increasing the protection of migrants' rights; iii) strengthening of border security by taking actions against smuggling and trafficking; iv) improving and expanding technological and physical facilities.
- Consistency between the policies towards the Northern and Southern borders. In practice, this means that Mexico will seek to ensure that its demands to the US government are consistent with its own policies towards migrants crossing through its southern border. A new and enhanced awareness of the development and security needs of the Southern border is at the core of the government's migration policy.
- Enhanced International co-operation. Among the main priorities are fighting international gangs that abuse migrants in Central America and in the South East of Mexico, as well as establishing safe and orderly repatriation programmes.
- Active protection and promotion of the rights of Mexicans living abroad.

### **For further information...**


[www.migracion.gob.mx](http://www.migracion.gob.mx)

## Flow data on foreigners

Migration flows (foreigners) <i>National definition</i>	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)																										
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006																										
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>																																	
Inflows	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.3	47.6																										
Outflows	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	31.7																										
Migration inflows (foreigners) by type <i>Permit based statistics (standardised)</i>	Thousands		% distribution		<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Inflows of foreign population in Mexico</b> Thousands</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Data for Inflows of foreign population in Mexico (Thousands)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Inflows (Thousands)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1995</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>1996</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>1997</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>1998</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr><td>1999</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr><td>2000</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>2001</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>2002</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>2003</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>2004</td><td>35</td></tr> <tr><td>2005</td><td>40</td></tr> <tr><td>2006</td><td>48</td></tr> </tbody> </table>			Year	Inflows (Thousands)	1995	28	1996	28	1997	25	1998	22	1999	22	2000	25	2001	25	2002	25	2003	30	2004	35	2005	40	2006	48
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1995	28																																
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2006	48																																
Work	..	..	..	..																													
Family (incl. accompanying family)	..	..	..	..																													
Humanitarian	..	..	..	..																													
Free movements	..	..	..	..																													
Others	..	..	..	..																													
Total	..	..	..	..																													
Temporary migration	2000	2005	2006	Annual average																													
				2000-2006																													
<i>Thousands</i>																																	
International students	6.3	5.1	5.8	6.2																													
Trainees	..	..	..	..																													
Working holiday makers	..	..	..	..																													
Seasonal workers	69.0	45.5	40.2	46.2																													
Intra-company transfers	..	..	..	..																													
Other temporary workers	..	..	..	..																													
Inflows of asylum seekers	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)																										
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006																										
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>																																	
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..																										

## Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators

Macroeconomic indicators	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
Real GDP (growth, %)	-6.2	6.6	2.8	4.8	5.5	2.8	
GDP/capita (growth, %) – level in US Dollars	-8.0	4.7	1.8	3.9	3.9	1.7	9 838
Employment (growth, %) – level in thousands	-0.9	2.2	0.6	3.4	3.2	2.1	41 849
Unemployment (% of labour force)	6.9	2.6	3.5	3.2	4.2	3.1	
Components of population growth	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)
					1995-2000	2001-2006	
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Natural increase	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Net migration	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Total population	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
<i>(Annual growth %)</i>							
Native-born	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Foreign-born	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
National	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Foreign	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Naturalisations	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
<i>As a percentage of foreign population</i>							
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/434372371301>

Notes and sources are at the beginning of the Chapter. As data by nationality are not available, chart presented for Mexico differs from the other countries.