

Covid-19 and (Im)Mobility in the Americas

HONDURAS

October - December 2020

1. **Poverty Rate (defined by unsatisfied basic needs):** 52.6% of total population.¹
2. **Migration Facts** ²
 - Sending country: About 801,000 Hondurans, or 8.35% of its population, reside abroad mainly in the US (82%), Spain (7.2%), and Mexico (2%).
 - Destination country: Around 39,000 immigrants or 0.41% of the total population live in Honduras. The main countries of origin are El Salvador (23%), Nicaragua (20.27%), and the US (18%).
 - Transit country: Salvadoran migrants, and to a lesser extent Nicaraguan migrants and migrants from Caribbean, South American, Asian, and African countries transit Honduras en route to the US.
 - Host country for refugees: In October 2019, Honduras signed an agreement to be a “Safe Third Country” to receive and protect asylum seekers from Cuba and Nicaraguan seeking to reach the US.
3. **State Measures**
 - On Wednesday, September 30, 2020, hundreds of migrants of Honduran origin set out for the border with Guatemala. [This caravan advances only two weeks after Guatemala reopened its borders](#), after keeping them closed for months to stop the spread of covid-19.
 - Several governments in the region announced that they were watching the situation: Mexico’s immigration agency said in a statement that it would enforce “safe, orderly, and legal” migration and that it would do nothing to promote the formation of a migrant caravan.
 - The Honduran ambassador to Guatemala, Mario Fortín, told journalists that that neighboring country is [demanding laboratory PCR tests to guarantee that foreigners are not infected with Covid-19](#).

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<https://www.laprensa.hn/honduras/1352983-410/honduras-pobreza-medicion-hondurenos-economia-estadisticas-gobierno>

²<https://datosmacro.expansion.com/demografia/migracion/emigracion/honduras>;

<https://www.vaticannews.va/es/mundo/news/2019-02/caravana-migrante-guatemala-mexico-eeuu.html>;

<https://www.acnur.org/guatemala-abre-la-puerta-a-un-nuevo-comienzo.html>.

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- The United States Embassy in Honduras assured that [migration to the United States was more difficult than ever](#) at this time and more dangerous due to Covid-19. But the push factors that drive migrants from Central America have not diminished during the pandemic.
- [On October 1, 2020, more than a thousand Honduran migrants participated in a caravan that entered Guatemala irregularly.](#) However, on October 4, 2020, Honduran Vice Foreign Minister Nelly Jerez mentioned that 1,043 migrants returned, representing 83% of the people who left in the caravan. Jerez also pointed out that the returnees “are being transferred to their places of origin by the Honduran authorities.”
- For his part, Guatemalan President Alejandro Giammattei assured that he repatriated 3,384 migrants from Honduras and that [the Guatemalan security forces were able to "contain" the migratory exodus](#) that, according to the president, was a factor in the spread of COVID-19.
- On December 10, 2020, [Honduran National Police personnel carried out an operation to verify negative PCR tests for Covid-19.](#) The operation did not allow the caravan to advance. This is the same caravan that left San Pedro Sula for the United States the day before. The operation was located three kilometers from the border with Guatemala, specifically in Aguas Calientes.

4. Migrant Situation Alerts

Migrants in transit (migrant caravan)

- Hundreds of migrants began walking on Wednesday, September 30th, 2020, from San Pedro Sula—in northern Honduras—to the border with Guatemala using a migration route that has remained very busy during times of COVID-19.
- On October 1st, [a Honduran caravan breaks the police line](#) and enters Guatemala.

5. Social Responses

- *Migrant resistance*
 - o The persistence of the migrant caravans shows a collective migrant struggle to improve their living conditions even amid the restrictions on mobility caused by the pandemic.