

REPUBLIC OF HONDURAS | SECOND PROFILE 2022

MIGRATION
GOVERNANCE
INDICATORS



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GOVERNANCE
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OBJECTIVE

The MGIs aim to support well-managed migration policy by helping countries assess the comprehensiveness of their migration governance structures and identify priorities on the way forward.

MGI follow-up assessments identify the migration policy developments that have occurred since the countries' first MGI assessments, thus helping governments track their progress on national priorities as well as commitments taken at the regional and international levels.

The MGIs can be used to spark a discussion with governments and other relevant stakeholders in the country on existing migration policy structures. They can help assess whether these structures, which have often been in place for several years, still address the main challenges and opportunities of today's reality.

INTRODUCTION

This is an era of unprecedented mobility, and the need to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility is becoming increasingly relevant.¹ The need to face the challenges and to maximize the opportunities that this mobility brings has been recognized with the inclusion of migration in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which highlights the positive contribution of migrants to inclusive growth and sustainable development. Migration is integrated in a number of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets, such as ending modern slavery and addressing the vulnerability of migrant workers. However, the central reference to migration in the SDGs is target 10.7 on facilitating “orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies”.²

The incorporation of target 10.7 into the 2030 Agenda created the need to define “planned and well-managed migration policies”. This is why, in 2015, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) developed the Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF). This Framework offers a concise view of an ideal approach that allows a State to determine what it might need to govern migration well and in a way that suits its circumstances.³ The Framework was welcomed by IOM Member States in the same year.

In an effort to operationalize the MiGOF, IOM worked with Economist Impact to develop the Migration Governance Indicators (MGIs), a standard set of approximately 90 indicators to assist countries in assessing their migration policies and advance the conversation on what well-governed migration might look like in practice.

The MGIs help countries identify good practices as well as areas with potential for further development and can offer insights on the policy levers that countries can use to develop their migration governance structures. However, the MGIs recognize that all countries have different realities, challenges and opportunities that relate to migration. Therefore, the MGIs do not rank countries on the design or implementation of their migration policies. Finally, the MGIs do not measure migration policy outcomes or institutional effectiveness. Instead, they take stock of the migration-related policies in place and operate as a benchmarking framework that provides insights on policy measures that countries might want to consider as they progress towards good migration governance.

MGI follow-up assessments aim to show the progress that countries have made in their migration governance policies since their first MGI assessment. Concretely, this report presents a summary of the main changes and achievements that have taken place in the migration governance structures of the Republic of Honduras (hereinafter referred to as Honduras), since the first assessment in 2018,⁴ as well as the areas with potential for further development, as assessed by the MGIs.⁵

¹ IOM Council, 106th Session, Migration Governance Framework: The essential elements for facilitating orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people through planned and well-managed migration policies (C/106/40 of 4 November 2015), paragraph 2.

² United Nations, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1 of 21 October 2015), p. 21.

³ IOM Council, Migration Governance Framework, paragraph 5(c).

⁴ See the 2018 Migration Governance Snapshot for the Republic of Honduras.

⁵ The MGI initiative is a policy-benchmarking programme led by IOM and implemented with the support of Economist Impact. Funding is provided by IOM Member States.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

MiGOF

IOM's MiGOF sets out the essential elements to support planned and well-managed migration. It seeks to present, in a consolidated, coherent and comprehensive way, a set of three principles and three objectives which, if respected and fulfilled, would ensure that migration is humane and orderly, and benefits migrants and society.

At the basis of

PRINCIPLES

1. **Adhere** to international standards and fulfil migrants' rights.
2. **Formulate** policy using evidence and a whole-of-government approach.
3. **Engage** with partners to address migration and related issues.

OBJECTIVES

1. **Advance** the socioeconomic well-being of migrants and society.
2. **Effectively address** the mobility dimensions of crises.
3. **Ensure** that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and dignified manner.



MGIs

WHAT THEY ARE

-  A set of indicators that offers insights on policy levers that countries can use to strengthen their migration governance structures
-  A tool that identifies good practices and areas that could be further developed
-  A consultative process that advances dialogues on migration governance by clarifying what "well-governed migration" might look like in the context of SDG target 10.7 and the Global Compact for Migration implementation*

Which support the measurement of

WHAT THEY ARE NOT

-  Not a ranking of countries
-  Not an assessment of policy impacts
-  Not prescriptive



Note: "The Global Compact for Migration is framed in a way consistent with target 10.7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in which Member States committed to cooperate internationally to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration."



KEY

FINDINGS

The MGIs consist of around 90 indicators grouped under the six different dimensions of migration governance that draw upon the MiGOF categories:



MIGRANTS'
RIGHTS
PAGE 13

Indicators in this domain look at the extent to which migrants have access to certain social services such as health, education and social security. They also look at family reunification, access to work, and access to residency and citizenship. The international conventions signed and ratified are also included.



WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT
APPROACH
PAGE 15

Indicators in this area assess countries' institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks related to migration policies. This area also looks at the existence of national migration strategies that are in line with development objectives and overseas development efforts, as well as institutional transparency and coherence in relation to migration management.



PARTNERSHIPS
PAGE 17

This category focuses on countries' efforts to cooperate on migration-related issues with other States and with relevant non-governmental actors, including civil society organizations and the private sector.



WELL-BEING
OF MIGRANTS
PAGE 19

Indicators in this area assess countries' policies on the recognition of migrants' educational and professional qualifications, provisions regulating student migration and the existence of bilateral labour agreements between countries. Aspects of diaspora engagement in the country of origin and migrant remittances are also under this domain.



MOBILITY DIMENSION
OF CRISES
PAGE 21

This category looks at the type and level of preparedness of countries when they are faced with mobility dimensions of crises. The questions look at the processes in place for nationals and non-nationals in relation to disasters and climate change, including if humanitarian assistance is equally available to migrants as it is to citizens.



SAFE, ORDERLY AND
REGULAR MIGRATION
PAGE 23

This area looks at countries' approach to migration management in terms of border control and enforcement policies, admission criteria for migrants, preparedness and resilience in the case of significant and unexpected migration flows, as well as the fight against trafficking in persons.

SUMMARY OF UPDATES SINCE 2018

Migrants' rights

Activities under the National Policy against Racism and Racial Discrimination 2014–2022 (2014) include the introduction of programmes to spread knowledge and awareness of the rights of migrants, with an emphasis on the migration, forced displacement and dispossession of indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples.

Whole-of-government approach

The Strategic Government Plan 2018–2022 (2018) considered migration a priority issue for the country. The current Government is in the process of drawing up a strategic government plan.

Since the publication of the previous MGI assessment in 2018, 11 additional consulates have been opened. At the time of writing, Honduras has representations in 42 countries (37 embassies and 36 consulates in all).

Partnerships

In May 2021, Honduras signed a memorandum of understanding with Spain, bolstering its commitment to the effective management of safe, orderly and regular migration. The memorandum focuses on the Honduran community in Spain and circular migration, with a view to enabling Honduran migrants to take advantage of temporary employment opportunities in Spain.⁶

Well-being of migrants

In July 2019, during the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in Buenos Aires, the member States (including Honduras) agreed to update and amend the Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean.⁷ In March 2020, the relevant UNESCO web portal indicated that Honduras had not yet ratified the Convention.⁸

The Strategic Government Plan 2018–2022 includes returnee support workstreams involving compliance with international commitments, the promotion of gender equality, and services for the migrant population. The process of drawing up the new plan was ongoing in July 2022.

Mobility dimension of crises

Honduras has developed specific measures to assist crisis-affected migrants in the country. For example, in 2021 and 2022 the State Secretariat for National Risk and Contingency Management Offices, in collaboration with IOM, organized a series of workshops in order to ensure that crisis preparation and response encompassed migrant assistance and protection.

Safe, orderly and regular migration

Established in 2021, the Honduras Missing Migrants Tracing Board (*Mesa de Búsqueda de Migrantes Desaparecidos*) serves as a forum for dialogue on future initiatives aimed at creating effective search and assistance mechanisms for missing migrants and their families. The Board's members are government institutions, civil society organizations, consular officials and relevant authorities. The country's national voluntary review for 2022 discusses the work carried out to provide services to people with missing migrant relatives (Government of the Republic of Honduras, 2022a).

⁶ More information is available in this [article](#) from *Europa Press*.

⁷ More information on the [amended Regional Convention](#) is available on UNESCO's website.

⁸ More information on the [ratification process](#) is available on UNESCO's website.



1

ADHERE TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND FULFIL MIGRANTS' RIGHTS

1.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

In Honduras, all migrants are entitled to access all public health services, regardless of their migration status. Their right to health is recognized in the Constitution of the Republic of Honduras (1982), Article 145 of which stipulates “the right to the protection of one’s health”. The Law on Migration and Foreigners (2003) and the corresponding Regulations (2004) stipulate that “foreigners enjoy the same rights as Hondurans”.

The State must guarantee public education from preschool (for at least one year) up to the secondary level (inclusive). This right is granted under equal conditions by the Constitution: “The State has the obligation to promote the basic education of the people” (Article 153). Under the Fundamental Law on Education (2011), all people in Honduras, including migrants, are entitled to receive an education up to the secondary level. There are no differences in terms of tuition. The educational reintegration programme for vulnerable groups, including migrants, called *Todos Podemos Avanzar* was launched in 2015 and seeks to integrate young returnees into the education system. In 2020, the Ministry of Education published the *Guía de orientación docente para la reinserción educativa de niñas, niños y adolescentes en condición de vulnerabilidad*, which provides teachers with technical and administrative guidance on the reintegration or integration into the education system of returning migrant children and adolescents.

As stated in the 2018 MGI assessment, foreign residents can become Honduran nationals in less than five years. Under Article 24 of the Constitution, Central Americans can apply for naturalization after having lived in the country for one year; for Spaniards and Ibero-Americans by birth, it is after two consecutive years. All other migrants must have resided in the country for more than three consecutive years. Pursuant to Article 126 of the Regulations for the Law on Migration and Foreigners, naturalization fees vary by country of origin.

The Honduras National Policy against Racism and Racial Discrimination 2014–2022 (2014) provides for, inter alia, the establishment of programmes to disseminate and heighten awareness of the rights of migrants – in particular, as they relate to the forced displacement and dispossession of indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples. The Office of the Special Prosecutor for the Protection of Ethnic Groups and Cultural Heritage (which was established in 1994) works, inter alia, to assist indigenous and Afro-Honduran women affected by the migration of family members, through special programmes and projects for the children of migrants, the elderly, mothers and disabled persons who are dependent on remittances.

1.2. Areas with potential for further development

In Honduras, only permanent residents can access social security services. The objective of the Framework Law on the Social Protection System (2015) is to “allow inhabitants to obtain, progressively and in a financially sustainable way, decent coverage, through ... medical assistance, livelihood protection and other social rights inherent in the achievement of individual and collective well-being”. Under Article 2 of the Framework Law, “any foreigner residing in the country who meets the requirements of the Law can be affiliated with the Social Protection System”.

No indication has come to light of agreements with other countries on the portability of social security benefits. At the time of writing, Honduras has signed, but not ratified, the Ibero-American Multilateral Convention on Social Security (2009), according to which workers in the region can, on retirement,

aggregate the amounts they contributed throughout their working lives, even if they worked in different countries.⁹ In June 2022, negotiations started on the process of ratifying the Convention.

Residents' access to employment is limited in that, according to the Labour Code (2009), foreign employees cannot account for more than 10 per cent of a company's personnel and "the use of foreign languages in the orders, instructions, notices or directives given to workers is prohibited". In addition, in order to work, regular migrants must have a work permit¹⁰ for foreigners issued by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

Family reunification is possible only for certain migrants. The Regulations for the Law on Migration and Foreigners allows family reunification for any "foreigner who has been granted a special residence permit" and refugees. According to the Regulations, before the persons granted family reunification enter the country, their origin is reviewed by the Department of International Migrations.

⁹ The Convention applies to the following countries: Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal and Spain.

¹⁰ The permits are issued only to persons who have received a prior job offer.



2

FORMULATE POLICY USING EVIDENCE AND
WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH

2.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Implementation of migration policy is the responsibility of the National Migration Institute, which was established by Executive Decree No. PCM 063-2014 (2014). The Institute's functions include "ensuring that the requirements established in the Law on Migration and Foreigners (2003) and its Regulations (2004) are met, in respect of both the entry and exit of nationals and foreigners, and of their stay on the national territory". The Strategic Government Plan 2018–2022 (2018) lists migration as a national priority issue. In addition, the Government Plan to Reconstruct Honduras 2022–2026 (2022) considers migration a social phenomenon and a right; it proposes, inter alia, the development of a "humanistic migration policy" that counteracts forced migration and guarantees the right of people to live in the country and/or return to it in safe conditions. In 2022, an inter-institutional committee was formed to spearhead the process of updating the Law on Migration and Foreigners and of reviewing and updating the migration policy.

There are two entities for supporting citizens abroad and coordinating interaction with the diaspora: the Directorate General for the Protection of Honduran Migrants¹¹ and the National Council for the Protection of Honduran Migrants.¹² The Directorate General is in charge of implementing policies and programmes related to the protection of Honduran migrants abroad and their return through the Solidarity Fund for Honduran Migrants, in accordance with the Law on the Protection of Honduran Migrants and Their Families (2014). The Law also established the National Council for the Protection of Honduran Migrants, which is tasked with conducting studies of the Honduran diaspora situation; formulating migration-related proposals, recommendations, and draft legislation and submitting them to the Secretary of State; and collecting and providing information on the drafts to Honduran migrants. In 2017, the National Council approved regulations for the use of the Solidarity Fund for Honduran Migrants, which address assistance for Honduran migrants and their families regardless of their migration status, in transit or destination countries, and returnees. They also address support for the repatriation of the remains of Hondurans who died abroad and whose families do not have the resources needed to do so (*La Tribuna*, 2017).

The national Administration regularly compiles and publishes migration-related data. The Statistics Unit of the National Migration Institute collects administrative data and publishes statistics on entries, exits and permits issued in the country. The National Directorate for Children, Adolescents and the Family collects administrative data on returning migrant minors. The National Institute of Occupational Training collects data on issues related to reintegration policies, such as the training provided. Similarly, the Consular and Migration Observatory of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation publishes monthly information on returnees, repatriations of the deceased, and Hondurans detained abroad.¹³

The Social Development Observatory, which reports to the Ministry of Social Development, was established in 2022 and runs the Returnee Support System, using the Returning Migrant Support Form to record information for various statistical modules, including entry control (when the migrant entered the country), personal and family information, work, housing, education, health, and reasons for migration, departure and/or return. At the time of writing, in a process benefiting from IOM technical support, the Observatory is drawing up an institutional strategy and revising the Returning Migrant Support Form to make data collection more efficient.

¹¹ Part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

¹² Attached to the Secretariat of State in the Foreign Affairs Office.

¹³ The *Observatory* reports to the Undersecretariat for Consular and Migration Affairs, with a view to generating statistical data and monitoring consular and migration-related issues.

Honduras has gender-equality policies that apply to migrant women. Under the Law on Migration and Foreigners and its Regulations, people who suffered persecution in the form of sexual violence, or other forms of gender persecution in violation of the human rights enshrined in international instruments, are granted refugee status. The goals of the National Policy for Women and Second Plan for Gender Equality and Equity of Honduras 2010–2022 (2010) include the promotion of mechanisms to protect migrant women from different forms of violence and of comprehensive policies for safeguarding the rights of women from migrant families.

Since the publication of the previous MGI assessment in 2018, an additional 11 consulates have been opened.¹⁴ At the time of writing, Honduras has representations in 42 countries (37 embassies and 36 consulates).

In 2017, Honduras formed an inter-institutional board on labour migration comprising the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the National Migration Institute. The board deals with activities of interest in operational terms and seeks to strengthen the capacities of operational and administrative personnel (with workshops and certificate courses) on the subject of labour migration (Government of the Republic of Honduras, 2022a).

2.2. Areas with potential for further development

Since 2019 up to the time of writing, the National Migration Institute has been formulating the National Migration Policy, which covers immigrants, emigrants, persons in transit and returnees. The initial draft is being developed at the technical level by working groups made up of all interested institutions.

An area with potential for further development is the strengthening of the National Statistical System through the National Institute of Statistics, with a view to improving the production of statistical data on migratory dynamics in the country and informing decision-making.

¹⁴ In the United States cities of Atlanta, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, Phoenix, San Francisco and Washington, D.C.



3

ENGAGE WITH PARTNERS TO ADDRESS MIGRATION AND RELATED ISSUES

3.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Since the publication of the previous MGI profile in 2018, Honduras has continued to participate in regional forums such as the Regional Conference on Migration (or the Puebla Process),¹⁵ of which it has been a member since 1996.¹⁶ Honduras is also a member of the Commission of Migration Authorities of the Member Countries of SICA (*Comisión de Autoridades Migratorias de los Países Miembros del Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana*),¹⁷ a regional mechanism for coordination, dialogue and consultation on migration. Finally, Honduras has been a member of the Ibero-American Network of Migration Authorities since the latter was founded in 2012 to share information and training, as well as to harmonize views and measures regarding transnational crimes such as human trafficking, document counterfeiting and migrant smuggling.

As a result of its participation in the Puebla Process, Honduras has entered into formal arrangements to promote intraregional mobility. For example, the Puebla Process 2009 Action Plan summarizes commitments for regional action and establishes a basic framework for the management and coordination of activities. The report titled “Towards a regional mechanism for the comprehensive protection of boys, girls, and adolescent migrants and refugees” (2014) seeks to guide member countries’ efforts to protect the rights of migrant children. The Liaison Officer Network to Combat Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons, which was set up in 2016, meets twice a year with a view to improving regional coordination in this regard.

Since 2018, Honduras has signed new migration-related memorandums of understanding. In 2021, it signed a memorandum of understanding with Spain to reinforce its commitment to the effective management of safe, orderly and regular migration – in particular, with regard to the Honduran community in Spain as well as circular migration. The memorandum allows Hondurans to access temporary work opportunities in Spain. In addition, a 2016 memorandum of understanding on labour cooperation with El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico lays the groundwork for the preparation of a joint plan to support migrant workers; a 2005 memorandum of understanding with Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua covers the repatriation of migrant nationals by land; and a 2015 memorandum of understanding with Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama and the Dominican Republic sets out a comprehensive approach to the crime of trafficking in persons in Central America and the Dominican Republic.

In October 2021, Honduras joined the Executive Committee of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as an Observer State on the Standing Committee. Furthermore, it has been a member of IOM since 1967.

3.2. Areas with potential for further development

In collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development, the Government identifies, screens and registers workers eligible for temporary employment with private companies in the United States of America. In terms of labour reintegration, it works with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Organization of American States, and the United Nations Development Programme, involving the private sector and social partners on an ad hoc basis in efforts to increase private-sector investment and create jobs for migrants.

¹⁵ The Puebla Process is a multilateral regional forum on international migration that enables decision-making by consensus and provides a space for respectful, frank and honest discussion among member countries on regional and international migration, ensuring greater coordination, transparency and cooperation.

¹⁶ The Puebla Process has 11 member countries: Belize, Canada, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and the United States of America.

¹⁷ SICA in English is the Central American Integration System.

Pursuant to the Law on the Protection of Honduran Migrants and Their Families (2014), the National Council for the Protection of Honduran Migrants brings together various government institutions, private companies, churches, non-governmental organizations and other civil society entities. Strengthening partnerships between these sectors and heightening awareness of their activities are considered areas with potential for further development.

Together with El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua, Honduras is party to the Agreement Establishing the Single Central American Visa for the Free Movement of Foreigners (2005), in accordance with which nationals of the signatory countries can transit within the region without needing to use a passport and benefit from expedited processing of migration documents. The Agreement does not, however, contain provisions regarding labour migration.

From the beginning of 2022 up to the time of writing, no working meetings are reported to have taken place between the National Migration Institute and civil society on migration issues through the National Forum for Migration in Honduras.¹⁸ The strengthening of partnerships with civil society with a view to setting the agenda and implementing migration-related programmes is considered an area with potential for further development.

¹⁸ The National Forum for Migration in Honduras was established in 1997 as a space in which civic and private organizations, in cooperation and coordination with persons, government entities and civil society, can discuss migration-related policies.



4

ADVANCE THE SOCIOECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF MIGRANTS AND SOCIETY

4.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Since 2015, the Honduras Supportive and Productive Remittances Programme, which is implemented by the Ministry of Social Development in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, has promoted the creation of formal remittance schemes. The Programme is carried out with members of the Honduran migrant community abroad, mainly in the United States, with a view to promoting community development through social infrastructure projects and community, educational, and productive services proposed by migrants in places selected by them. Additionally, since 2022 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, in coordination with the Ministry of Social Development and with the support of IOM, has been implementing the *Hondureños y Hondureñas Conectadas* programme, which involves the diaspora in the country's growth and development through initiatives driven by remittances (*Honduras Al Día*, 2022).

Honduras promotes gender equality for migrants in the workforce. Article 60 of the Constitution (1982) stipulates, "All forms of discrimination on account of sex, race, class or any other reason prejudicial to human dignity shall be punishable." The *Ciudad Mujer* programme run by the Secretariat for Women's Affairs has been offering comprehensive services since 2017. Honduran migrant women returning to the country have the right to benefit from the programme's modules.¹⁹

Honduras participates in international schemes with common qualification frameworks. In 2019, it signed the Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, agreed upon under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Under the Convention, the States Parties undertake to adopt all necessary measures to gradually achieve the objectives set forth in Article II thereof, collaborating with other States Parties in the region through bilateral, subregional or regional agreements to ensure the following, among others:

- “1. Recognize studies, diplomas and degrees in the countries of the region of Latin America and the Caribbean under the terms of this Convention and the specific regulations of each country.
2. Promote academic mobility among the States Parties.
3. Promote the harmonization of higher-education systems for the recognition of studies, diplomas and degrees and facilitate the recognition of professional qualifications for use in accordance with national legislation.”

4.2. Areas with potential for further development

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation issues different types of visas and residence permits, such as tourist/business visas for foreigners wishing to travel to Honduras for recreational, business or family reasons; consular visas; diplomatic visas for holders of diplomatic passports; visas for foreign government officials; and courtesy visas for employees of international organizations. Single Central American visas are issued under the Agreement Establishing the Single Central American Visa for the Free Movement of Foreigners (2005), the purpose of which is to enable freedom of movement for foreigners in the territory of any of the States Parties. The establishment of different visa classes to attract workers with certain skills is seen as an area with potential for further development.

¹⁹ The programme includes modules on economic independence, sexual and reproductive health, and awareness and protection of women's rights.

Honduras does not have regulatory frameworks to facilitate the financial inclusion of migrants²⁰ or reduce the costs of remittance transfers. The National Banking and Insurance Commission's *Reporte de Inclusión Financiera en Honduras* (2021) does not refer to the financial inclusion of the migrant population. In 2019, the Central Bank of Honduras established a financial innovation working group aimed at furthering financial inclusion through the adoption and use of financial technology, but it does not explicitly address the financial inclusion of migrants.

The establishment of a mechanism to monitor the labour market demand for migrants, the supply of domestic labour and the effects of emigration on the national labour market is also an area with potential for further development. Neither the Ministry of Labour and Social Security nor the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation reports on or monitors labour shortages in sectors of the economy. At the time of writing, an agreement is being signed between the National Institute of Statistics and IOM for the development of a national survey on migration and remittances, which will provide an overview of the general conditions of the migrant population and the receipt of remittances. This information could be used to generate specific studies of the country's labour market.

International students do not have access to university education on the same terms as Honduran students. Although there is no public evidence of restrictions in the legal framework for foreign students in Honduras, tuition varies depending on the validation of diplomas for nationals, Central Americans and non-Central Americans.

Honduras has no programmes encouraging international students to remain in the country to work after graduation, nor does the Fundamental Law on Education (2011) contain any provisions to that effect. Pursuant to Article 39 of the Law on Migration and Foreigners (2003), the National Migration Institute can grant special residence permits for up to a maximum of five years to students at any level of the national education system. These permits are extendable.

²⁰ For example, the inclusion of financial products such as private pension funds, loans and tax incentives.



5

EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS THE
MOBILITY DIMENSIONS OF CRISES

5.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Honduras State Policy for Comprehensive Risk Management (2017) is the country's reference framework for comprehensive risk management in the short, medium and long term. The Policy identifies concrete and ongoing actions that must be taken by various government administrations to reduce vulnerability and risk levels in the face of disasters, and to foster a far-sighted, responsible, and resilient civic and institutional culture. The entity responsible for its implementation is the State Secretariat for National Risk and Contingency Management Offices,²¹ which also coordinates the National Risk Management System. The Secretariat does not have specific information on migrants in Honduras, but its plans apply equally to the entire population.

Honduras has adopted specific measures to assist migrants when the country is struck by a crisis. In 2021 and 2022, the State Secretariat for National Risk and Contingency Management Offices, in collaboration with IOM, held a series of workshops to ensure that emergency preparation and response encompassed migrant assistance and protection. The participants passed on the knowledge thus gained to people working in the National Risk Management System and the State Secretariat at the central and local levels.

The Law on the National Risk Management System (2009) constitutes the legal framework for risk management. The Government's State Policy for Comprehensive Risk Management contains provisions specifically intended to prevent and address the impact of disaster-induced displacement. Pursuant to the Regulations for the Law on the National Risk Management System (2010), the institutions involved (depending on the event) must ensure their operational preparedness and resources so that they are ready to act when a displacement occurs. The Regulations also supports spontaneous recovery initiatives by the communities concerned and for disaster-affected populations, especially internally displaced persons, to contribute to recovery and reconstruction.

Measures have been adopted on exceptions to the immigration procedures for migrants whose respective countries of origin are in crisis. The Regulations for the Law on Migration and Foreigners (2004) contains a clause that allows refugees to be granted temporary resident status for a period not exceeding 90 days, extendable for 30 days when necessary. The National Migration Institute can issue special residence permits for reasons of national or humanitarian interest or to reciprocate similar action by other States.

In October 2018, Guatemala and Honduras activated the Safe Return of Hondurans to the Country plan, which is implemented by the National Coordinator's System for Disaster Reduction and the State Secretariat for National Risk and Contingency Management Offices. The assistance provided at the control points that were enabled included the delivery of drinking water and food rations, prehospital care, and oversight of safety and public order.

5.2. Areas with potential for further development

The country's emergency communication systems do not take into account the specific vulnerabilities of migrants (for example, ensuring that information is available in multiple languages or providing information on visa procedures and return processes). The communication system of the State Secretariat for National Risk and Contingency Management Offices uses multiple platforms such as newspapers, radio broadcasts,

²¹ Previously the Permanent Contingency Commission, elevated to the status of State Secretariat in 2019. For further information, see Executive Decree No. PCM-051-2019.

cell phones and newsletters published on its website; however, the dissemination of information in other languages is an area with potential for further development.

Another such area is the development of a contingency plan to manage large-scale population movements in times of crisis. There is no indication that either the Law on the National Risk Management System or its Regulations makes provisions for a plan of this kind. However, in the coming months, the State Secretariat hopes to validate internally the draft institutional contingency plan for massive flows of irregular migrants.



6

ENSURE THAT MIGRATION TAKES PLACE IN A SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MANNER

6.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Directorate General for the Protection of Honduran Migrants is in charge of the Returning Migrant Assistance Office, the Returning Migrant Assistance Centres and the Municipal Returnee Assistance Units for migration management. Since their inception in 2014, the Returning Migrant Assistance Centres have provided returnees with services such as biometric migration processing, giving information on the Government's social services, housing, food, transportation, and clothes and shoes.²² There are also four Assistance Centres for Irregular Migrants – in Choluteca, San Pedro Sula and Tegucigalpa. In addition, the Directorate General for the Protection of Honduran Migrants and the National Council for the Protection of Honduran Migrants have formal arrangements to protect and assist returning migrants. For example, it is the responsibility of the National Council for the Protection of Honduran Migrants to propose studies of situations and problems that affect or benefit Hondurans abroad.

Since the publication of the previous MGI assessment in 2018, the National Migration Institute has remained in charge of monitoring exits and entries. The Institute's strategic objectives include the implementation of a comprehensive biometric control system at all migration control points, which involves developing interoperability and migration interconnection, and facilitating regular migration flows. Under the Regulations for the Law on Migration and Foreigners (2004), the Institute has priority when it comes to monitoring and inspecting the entry and exit of people at international maritime, air and land transit points. The Institute's five regional offices and central office in Tegucigalpa perform migration management functions, provide services for foreigners and issue travel documents. The migration supervision and control processes at border points are carried out in coordination with the National Police and the National Directorate of Border Police Services, through the Migration Police Unit. The protection of cross-border migrants is the responsibility of the Ministry of Security.

The website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation clearly describes the visa options and provides links to the relevant forms. In early 2022, the Ministry established a working group of various government institutions²³ to coordinate activities in response to government commitments under the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. One of its main products was the voluntary review (Government of the Republic of Honduras, 2022a) submitted to the International Migration Review Forum in May 2022.

The Missing Migrants Tracing Board was established in 2021 to promote dialogue and launch initiatives aimed at creating effective search and assistance mechanisms for missing migrants and their families. The Board comprises government institutions, civil society agencies, consular officials and the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team²⁴ and is supported by the International Committee of the Red Cross. Its objective is to implement a strategy to locate Honduran migrants on the route across El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico and the United States, based on information provided by the Committees of Relatives of Missing Migrants.

²² There are two such Assistance Centres – in San Pedro Sula and Omoa. There is also a [protection centre for migrant children and families in Belén](#).

²³ The working group is made up of the following institutions: Honduras Association of Municipalities; National Human Rights Commission; National Directorate for Children, Adolescents and the Family; National Institute of Statistics; National Institute of Occupational Training; National Youth Institute; National Migration Institute; Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock; Secretariat for Women's Affairs; Human Rights Secretariat; Ministry of Social Development; Ministry of Finance; Secretariat of Strategic Planning; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Labour and Social Security; Ministry of Education; National Entrepreneurship and Small Business Service; Permanent Contingency Commission; Ministry of Human Rights, Justice, Governance and Decentralization; National Information Centre for the Social Sector; and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

²⁴ An Argentine scientific, non-governmental organization established in 1984 and covering various fields of scientific endeavour, such as anthropology, archaeology, medicine, biology, genetics, physics, architecture, computer science and geography.

To that end, a road map for the search of missing migrants and multiple tracing protocols have been drawn up. Likewise, a unique form has been approved to record data on missing migrants, through the Inter-institutional Cooperation Agreement for the Creation of Mechanisms for the Exchange of Information on Missing Migrants and Unidentified Bodies.

The Government Plan to Reconstruct Honduras 2022–2026 (2022) specifically refers to the reintegration of returning migrants, stating that the Government will prioritize specific protection measures for migrants and their networks, including their financial inclusion and social coverage. The Plan also refers specifically to the establishment of a specialized comprehensive assistance centre for returning migrant women, which promotes their social reintegration.

Additionally, in July 2022 the National Congress approved a three-month amnesty exempting irregular migrants transiting through Honduras from the payment of fines. The relevant legislation stipulates the suspension of administrative fines under Article 104 of the Law on Migration and Foreigners (2003), according to which migrants violating the law are liable to fines ranging from one half to three minimum wages. The National Migration Institute published a statement indicating that it had issued instructions for the amnesty's immediate application and that humanitarian assistance would be made available through the Human Rights Management Office, to identify the needs of populations in vulnerable situations, such as women, minors, the LGBTIQ+ community and the elderly. In August 2022, the National Congress amended Legislative Decree No. 42-2022, thus extending the amnesty until 31 December 2022.

6.2. Areas with potential for further development

The establishment of a system to monitor visa overstays is considered an area with potential for further development. The Assistance Centres for Irregular Migrants could be converted into comprehensive assistance centres to facilitate migration control, the protection of migrants in line with international standards and conventions, and the identification of vulnerable people who require assistance and protection. The assignment of a Human Rights Officer at each Assistance Centre, to help identify vulnerable people, is also considered an area with potential for further development, as is the provision of shelter to migrants from population flows transiting through the country.

In order to comply with the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration, the role of municipal governments should be strengthened to include migrants in transit in municipal development plans and the application of migratory emergency plans, to heighten the awareness of local populations when caravans of migrants transit through municipalities.

National Migration Institute officials are trained in legal and operational considerations related to the execution of immigration controls, including the identification of counterfeit travel or personal identification documents. In this respect, continued training of border personnel on border management, massive flows and the detection of vulnerable people, with a view to identifying migrants in vulnerable situations, is an area with potential for further development.



PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PROTOCOLS ON THE RISKS OF THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

This annex summarizes key national COVID-19 policy responses in Honduras from a migration governance perspective. It is based on 12 questions that were added to the standard [Migration Governance Indicators \(MGIs\)](#) assessment in the country in order to effectively assess national local migration governance in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.



The Law on Free COVID-19 Vaccines for All (2020)¹ guarantees immunization for the entire population. Migrants are one of the prioritized groups in the third phase of the National Plan for the Introduction of the COVID-19 Vaccine (2021).²

In 2020 and 2021, the Honduran Government was part of an inter-agency working group on migration and health, and it established guidelines, such as the Plan for the Containment of and Response to Cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) (2021)³ and the Assistance Plan for migrants returning to or in transit in Honduras and Hondurans in transit requiring transfer assistance.⁴



The Special Law for Economic Recovery and Social Protection in the Face of the Impact of Coronavirus COVID-19 (2020)⁵ stipulates emergency measures, such as flexibility with regard to people's financial products, measures for small and medium-sized companies, and teleworking authorizations. There is no indication of specific measures for migrant populations, and only regular migrants can access labour measures.⁶



In 2021, the Permanent Contingency Commission, in coordination with the United Nations in Honduras, activated the Humanitarian Country Team, which created the Temporary Accommodation stream for migrants, refugees and returnees; at the time of writing, the stream continues to exist.⁷ Temporary quarantine centres were also opened, to limit the possibility of infection from returnees.

¹ Government of the Republic of Honduras, *Ley de Vacuna Gratuita para Todos Contra la COVID-19 (2020)*.

² Government of Honduras, *Plan Nacional de Introducción de la Vacuna contra la COVID-19 Honduras, 2020–2021 (2021)*.

³ Government of Honduras, *Plan para la Contención y Respuesta a Casos de Coronavirus (COVID-19) en Honduras (2020)*.

⁴ Ministry of Health, *Secretaría de Salud firma acuerdo con la OPS/OMS para el fortalecimiento del abordaje de la COVID-19*. Press release, 6 September 2020.

⁵ Government of Honduras, *Ley especial de aceleración económica y protección social frente a los efectos del coronavirus COVID-19 (2020)*.

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PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PROTOCOLS ON THE RISKS OF THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



The Ministry of Health provides all available information on COVID-19 on its website, in Spanish and English. Health statistics bulletins on COVID-19 are published in Spanish only.⁸

Between 2020 and 2021, the Government communicated information on lockdowns and case numbers through national radio and television broadcasts in Spanish.⁹



No indication has come to light of special measures introduced to ensure that migrants can contribute to the COVID-19 response in key sectors in Honduras. According to the official communications of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and of the National Migration Institute, there is no special programme for this segment of the population.¹⁰ Similarly, the United Nations Report on the Honduras COVID-19 Humanitarian Response Plan (2020) does not mention measures of this type.¹¹



Migration status is not captured as a variable in the collection and dissemination of data related to the main health statistics on COVID-19.

The Ministry of Health publishes a daily COVID-19 bulletin on its website comprising two types of figures: Hospital and Surveillance. The Hospital figures are divided into the following subcategories: intensive care figures, number of positive tests, and number of cases by department and hospital.

⁸ See the Ministry's website.

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ANNEXES

MiGOF: Migration Governance Framework²⁵

In an attempt to define the concept of “well-managed migration policies”, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) devised a Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF), which was welcomed by the IOM Council in November 2015. For the purposes of the Migration Governance Framework, IOM defines governance as “the traditions and institutions by which authority on migration, mobility and nationality in a country is exercised, including the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies in these areas”.

The Framework sets out the essential elements of “good migration governance” – three principles and three objectives which, if respected and fulfilled, would ensure that migration is humane, safe and orderly, and that it provides benefits for migrants and societies.²⁶ IOM’s view is that a migration system promotes migration and human mobility that is humane and orderly and benefits migrants and society:

When it:

- (i) Adheres to international standards and fulfils migrants’ rights;
- (ii) Formulates policy using evidence and a “whole-of-government” approach;
- (iii) Engages with partners to address migration and related issues.

As it seeks to:

- (i) Advance the socioeconomic well-being of migrants and society;
- (ii) Effectively address the mobility dimensions of crises;
- (iii) Ensure that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and dignified manner.

The MiGOF does NOT create new standards or norms. In drafting the Framework, IOM relied on its expertise and analytical work, as well as on existing commitments, non-binding declarations and statements. It does NOT address global migration governance that is the international architecture for dealing with issues related to migration and human mobility. Instead, the focus is on the governance and management of migration from the point of view of the State as the primary actor. It does NOT propose one model for all States. The Framework presents a “high road” or ideal version of migration governance, to which States can aspire.

The MiGOF is based on the understanding that, as the primary actor in migration, mobility and nationality affairs, a State retains the sovereign right to determine who enters and stays in its territory and under what conditions, within the framework of international law. Other actors – citizens, migrants, international organizations, the private sector, unions, non-governmental organizations, community organizations, religious organizations and academia – contribute to migration governance through their interaction with States and each other.

²⁵ IOM Council, *Migration Governance Framework*, 106th Session, C/106/40 (4 November 2015).

²⁶ *Migration Governance Framework infosheet* (2016).

The MGI process



1

Launch of the MGI process

The first step of the process is to explain what the MGIs entail to key government officials, in order to ensure full understanding of the project and complete buy-in.



2

Data collection

The second step of the process is to start the collection and analysis of data, based on about 90 indicators grounded in the six dimensions of the MiGOF. A migration governance profile based on the analysis of the findings is then drafted and shared with the government counterparts.



3

Interministerial consultation

The third step of the process is to convene an interministerial consultation where all relevant ministries and other stakeholders discuss the good practices and main areas that could be developed further as identified in the draft migration governance profile, as well as priorities on the way forward. It is also an opportunity for them to comment and provide suggestions on the draft profile.



4

Publication of the report on the Global Migration Data Portal

After the migration governance profiles are finalized and vetted by government counterparts, they are published on the [Migration Data Portal](#) and upload it on the [IOM Publications Platform](#).



www.migrationdataportal.org/mgi

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