

Guatemalan, Honduran and Salvadoran populations in Mexico: own and compared profiles with other Latin American populations

Poblaciones guatemaltecas, hondureñas y salvadoreñas en México: perfiles propios y comparados con otras poblaciones latinoamericanas

Luis Felipe Jiménez-Chaves and Rodolfo Casillas-Ramírez

Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, México

Abstract

In recent years, the issue of Central American migration has gained a presence in Mexico. The focus has been mainly on the migration that transits the country with the aim of reaching the United States. In this environment, the foreign have been affected by a great analytical attention, although there are appreciations about their volume and public incidence. In this text, based in four statistic research, characterized the socio-demographic and socio-labor level, the stock of immigrants from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, from 1990 to 2015, in a comparative exercise with the rest of the Latin American populations in Mexico. The analysis allow us to concluded that there are similar behaviors in indicators associated with family structure, gender and economic participation, but with differences in terms of age structure, levels of schooling, place of residence and variables associated with labor insertion.

Keywords: Latin American collectives, immigrant workforce, socio-demographic and socio-labor indicators.

Resumen

En los últimos años el tema de la migración del norte centroamericano ha ganado presencia en México. La atención se ha centrado principalmente en la migración que transita por el país con el objetivo de llegar a Estados Unidos. En ese entorno, las poblaciones extranjeras inmigrantes aún no ha sido materia de gran atención analítica, aunque hay apreciaciones sobre su volumen e incidencia pública. En este texto, con base en cuatro fuentes estadísticas, se caracteriza a nivel sociodemográfico y sociolaboral, el *stock* de inmigrantes de Guatemala, Honduras y El Salvador, de 1990 a 2015, en un ejercicio comparativo con el resto de poblaciones latinoamericanas en México. El análisis permite concluir que hay comportamientos similares en indicadores asociados a la estructura familiar, sexo y participación económica, pero profundas diferencias en cuanto a estructura etaria, niveles de escolaridad, lugar de residencia y variables asociadas a la inserción laboral.

Palabras clave: Colectivos latinoamericanos, fuerza de trabajo inmigrante, indicadores sociodemográficos y sociolaborales.

INTRODUCTION

International migration has grown steadily in the world, increasing by 38 per cent between 1990 and 2015. In 1990, international migrants represented 2.9 per cent of the world's population and 3.1 per cent in 2010. By 2015, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimated that there were 240 million international migrants. On his behalf, the World Bank forecasts that in 2050 there will be 405 million, which represents an increase of 17 per cent. These data may alarm some sectors, especially when they observe undocumented migratory flows in particular. These concerns are relative when going from the global aggregate data to the national data to observe the specific content that corresponds to each country.

Meanwhile Mexico as a scenario of various migratory flows, without doubt, the emigration of Mexicans to the United States during the last decades has been one of the most researched issues, as well as the different relationships that exist between individuals since the context of origin (Mexico) and the reception (United States)¹. In parallel, another focus of analysis has been Central American migrants in transit through the country and the different nuances of violation of their human rights². Meanwhile the presence of a foreign population in Mexico, interest in this research is a less explored area. However, international immigrants, despite their low relative presence, have presented dynamic growth rates during the last years and in turn a great heterogeneity with regard to the composition and structure of the populations that arrive daily.

In consequence, Mexico has not been characterized as a country that typically receives foreigners. However, it has played an important role as a reception context for hundreds of immigrants who have left their countries at times for political and economic reasons: the groups of Spaniards during the civil war in the late 1930s; the immigrant Southern cone people in the seventies for military dictatorships; the population of northern Central America left their countries due to armed and political conflicts in the late eighties and early nineties and in recent years an increase in requests for re-

¹ Portes and Boröcz (1989) analyzed the idea of ways of incorporation in different contexts of arrival of immigrants. This intermediate scope theory was applied empirically in the immigration studies in México City conducted by Gandini (2015) and De la Peña (2015).

² Ernesto Rodríguez, Luis Felipe Ramos and Juan Carlos Narvaéz have made different efforts to collect and organize data to estimate Central American immigrants with irregular transit through Mexico, the most recent study estimated that in 2015 there were 377 thousand transmigrants. Although in recent years this volume it can be increased considerably due to the migrant caravans of 2018 and 2019. (Rodríguez, 2016: 9)

fuge from Venezuelan immigrants. Other groups with a relevant presence during the different periods have been Colombians and Cubans³.

These facts are an explanation of the increase of the Latin American population in Mexico in recent years and the disposition of the migratory policy to receive immigrants in moments of regional geopolitics. This immigration has been mediated by important socio-demographic and socio-labor differences regarding the region of origin and residence context⁴. The work of Jiménez (2018) shows evidence of the profound socio-labor inequality existing among immigrants from northern Central America, the rest of Central Americans, Caribbean and South Americans. In the particular case of immigrants from Central America in Mexico, their presence in the country has been associated with traffic flows, a topic of constant public debate in Mexico and throughout the region, however, in smaller volumes there is another part of Central American immigrants who consider Mexico as the place to develop their lives and those of their families. Aspects such as geographic place, existence of support networks, the lower cost of migration and the economic and social hierarchy of Mexico compared to El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala; They have determined the presence of Central Americans in the country.

For example, with data from 2015, the ECLAC report on the panorama of international migration in Mexico and Central America shows that the National Production of Mexico “reached in that same year a volume of 1.207 billion dollars, six times the GDP of all Central America” (Canales y Rojas, 2017: 11). However, with regard to poverty levels, Mexico’s situation resembles El Salvador (41.2 per cent and 41.6 per cent respectively) and both countries well below Guatemala (67.7 per cent) and Honduras (74.3 per cent). Although similar countries have similar social and migratory dynamics similar, the socioeconomic situation of Mexico is well above their similar. Meanwhile, the population of interest focuses on these three nationalities of origin (Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador), for three main reasons: i) for what they themselves have represented for the population and migration dynamics in the country; ii) due to their relative weight within the total number of foreigners residing in Mexico; and iii) for its possible real and potential links with Central American flows in transit through Mexican lands.

³ Some pioneering studies in immigration to Mexico are those of Palma (2006), Martínez Pérez and Aznar Molina (2007), Rodríguez (2010), Yankelevich, (2001), Pardo y Dávila (2017) y Jiménez (2018).

⁴ In one of the chapters of the book in preparation *Known and unknown aspects of the migratory processes in Mexico*, by the authors, the Latin American population interested in this work is characterized by controlling by rural and urban context in the period 1990-2015.

Some studies that have focused on the other side of Central American immigration in Mexico include those of Castillo and Vázquez (2010), De la Peña (2015), Masferrer and Pederzini (2017). In the case of the first document it is highlighted that the immigration of Guatemalans to Mexico has been consolidated by socio-historical factors such as the situation of adjacency between the two countries, the permanence of support networks for individuals and family groups, and the consolidation of cross-border markets of work force on the southern border. De la Peña (2015) in his research on Salvadorans in Mexico City, highlights that people who arrive in Mexico from this country do so in the hands of migratory networks (Salvadorans who remained in Mexico after the exiles of the years eighty) that help them to work or seek refuge; or another cluster of Salvadorans who, in their attempt to reach the United States, decline due to the extensive difficulties that exist. On the other hand, Masferrer and Pederzini (2017) offer an overview of Central American immigration in Mexico during the 21st century, differentiating between population with recent and old arrival. They highlight that there are important differences in the three nationalities of interest of this research, this associated with the demographic dynamics of each of the countries. However, this immigration is characterized by concentrating on working ages, low levels of schooling and accentuating in the municipalities of the south of the country, especially in Chiapas.

Under the place, in this article, as a result, we analyze Latin American immigration in Mexico in the last 25 years, based on the latest Population and Housing Censuses and the Intercensal Survey 2015, with particular emphasis on three nationalities of interest: Guatemalans, Hondurans and Salvadorans. The idea is to characterize the three selected nationalities with sociodemographic and socio-labor indicators and delineate a comparative analysis with Latin American immigration in general that allows establishing challenges for the economic and social integration of this population. We are interested in visualizing what are the main differences in the structure and composition of intra-regional immigrants in the country?; and how have these characteristics evolved in recent years?

It is presumed that the journalistic and common expressions about “excessive Central American immigration that is permanently located in Mexico⁵” are a bit alarmist and excessive, given that, although most use Mexico as a transit country or as temporary border workers⁶, they are few

⁵ González *et al.* (2014) and Nájjar (2013) can be reviewed.

⁶ This type of Visa refers to that of Visitor Border Worker, which by terms of article 52, Section III of the Migration Law and articles 132 and 136 of its Regulations, allows temporary internment of groups of Central American migrants. Mostly Guatemalans.

who decide to stay or reside in the main Mexican cities. In addition, it is expected that there will be important differential features within the different intraregional immigrant groups in the country, this related to the different causes and nationalities of origin of immigration to Mexico.

This article is subdivided into five sections, the first one includes the present introduction in order to contextualize Central American immigration in Mexico and cite some of the works related to the subject; in a second moment, the main methodological aspects of the investigation and the benefits and limitations of the sources of information used are described; in the subsequent segments are the results of research divided into sociodemographic and socio-labor aspects. In the last part of the document some final reflections are made.

METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The focus of this research is descriptive and comparative based on various interest groups and different observation periods. The population considered as an immigrant was anyone who at the time of the Census or in the Survey revealed to be born in a country other than Mexico⁷, the four sources contemplate the usual residents, that is, individuals residing in a “place of accommodation specific to sleep, eat, prepare your food, protect yourself from the environment and to which you can return at any time you want” (INEGI, 2015: 32)

Regarding the variables analyzed, all those that allowed comparability between the different sources of information were used, at the sociodemographic level: sex, age, levels of schooling, ethnicity, school attendance, type of household, marital status, territorial location; and in the socio-labor scale the condition of activity, economic sector and occupational category of insertion in the labor market.

Percentages were used in the total indicators elaborated, so that hypothesis tests were made to compare proportions for independent samples⁸ taking into account confidence levels of 90 per cent and 95 per cent. This in order to verify if the differences between the groups and in the different periods were statistically significant. Therefore, the reference hypotheses raised were:

⁷ For a more detailed study the question of the place of birth should be crossed with others such as the nationality of the parents or the residence time of the foreigner in the country. Since this would allow to identify foreigners with and without origin in the country.

⁸ This method contrasts a statistic calculated on the basis of proportions compared to a statistic obtained by tables of a normal distribution assuming different levels of confidence and significance.

- Null Hypothesis: $px_t^i = px_{t+1}^i$
- Alternative Hypothesis: $px_t^i \neq px_{t+1}^i$

Where:

px_t^i is the proportion of households with the characteristic x in the population i for the period t .

px_{t+1}^i is the proportion of households with the characteristic x in the population i for the next census or intercensal period.

The sources of information used in this research were the Population and Housing Censuses of 1990, 2000 and 2010 (10 per cent samples) in Mexico, in turn the Intercensal Survey 2015. These sources allow characterizing different populations of interest in a transversal way to starting from obtaining sociodemographic, socio-labor and spatial indicators at levels of homes, homes and individuals on a more unpleasant scale. An advantage of these instruments is that they allow foreigners' criticism to be contrasted with other particular sources such as administrative migration records or statistics produced by countries of origin. The main limitation of the Population and Housing Censuses is the lack of some questions related to migration, for Rodríguez (2012) it is important to include related variables such as the year of arrival, current citizenship status, condition and cause of the migration⁹.

A strength of this research was the use of the 2015 Intercensal Survey, given that it was a pioneer reference in the country, due to its large sample size, this allowed obtaining reliable and current indicators on immigrants in the country, these estimates were subject to the expansion factors. In addition, this source allowed to meet different information demands at the municipal level. Unlike the previous Population and Housing Counts conducted in the country, the Intercensal Survey includes the question of the place of birth, as well as the possession of Mexican nationality or not¹⁰.

SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC AND TERRITORIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Absolute and relative distributions by country of nationality

In 2015 the foreign population residing in Mexico represents 0.84 per cent of the total population in the country. That is, a smaller percentage in general, and very small percentages for the three selected Central American

⁹ On the causes of immigration was a question included in the 2007 Population and Housing Census questionnaire, the results indicate a large percentage of the population that migrated to Mexico for work reasons (around 50%) and the rest distributed for reasons family, study or refugee.

¹⁰ Jiménez (2018) indicate that in 2015 around 55% of foreigners in Mexico do not possess Mexican nationality.

nationalities. These data are consistent with what the Mexican censuses report for the different decades of the 20th century, in which in no case did the total population of registered foreigners reach 0.9 per cent (Rodríguez, 2010: 60 y 107). In contrast to other national experiences of the region, the United States and Argentina, for example recorded in the last decade about 15 per cent and 4.4 per cent of the foreign population residing in their respective countries¹¹, what happens in Mexico is a lower-volume immigration process throughout its history.

As seen in Table 1, in the last 25 years, the highest percentage of foreigners in the country corresponds to the United States, with a relative participation between 55 per cent and 80 per cent approximately; secondly Guatemala with a participation around 4 per cent since 2000, in absolute and relative terms very distant from the US population. Honduras and El Salvador would occupy the seventh and ninth places with 1 per cent, respectively, in absolute terms very close to each other but very distant from those located in the first two sites of foreign populations in Mexico.

Colombia, Argentina, Cuba and Venezuela are other groups of Latin Americans positioned in the top ten positions. It is important to clarify that the volume of the foreign population in Mexico and its relative distribution by nationality of origin changes when the American population with ancestry in Mexico is discriminated against, that is, with parents born in the country. In 2016, the National Institute of Migration (INM), the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics (INEGI for its acronym in Spanish) and the Migration Policy Unit (UPM for its acronym in Spanish), estimated with data from 2015 that 70 per cent of the US population originated in the country.

With respect to diachronic changes during the analysis period, with the exception of the Spaniards and Guatemalans, all the main immigrant groups in the country had high growth rates between 1990 and 2015. The cases of Venezuela and Honduras stand out, countries that increased by nine and six times their immigrants from 1990 compared to those of 2015, respectively. In the case of Guatemala and El Salvador, very distant growth dynamics were obtained, while the first country decreased in absolute and relative terms the presence of immigrants in the country, the second had a moderate growth (for each one Salvadoran in 1990 resided one more in 2015).

¹¹ Information from the report on labor immigration in Latin America prepared by the Economic Commission for the Development of Latin America (CEPAL for its acronym in Spanish) and the International Labor Organization in 2017.

Table 1a: México: Population of migrants from northern Central America and their distribution by country of birth, 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2015

Birth Country	Population			
	1990	2000	2010	2015
United States	194,619	343,591	739,918	739,168
Guatemala	46,005	23,957	31,888	42,874
Spain	24,873	21,024	20,727	22,646
Colombia	4,964	6,215	12,832	18,735
Venezuela	1,533	2,823	10,786	15,664
Argentina	4,635	6,480	14,171	14,747
Honduras	1,997	3,722	9,980	14,544
Cuba	2,979	6,647	11,822	12,768
El Salvador	5,215	5,537	8,864	10,594
Canadá	3,011	5,768	10,208	9,816
China ¹	1,161	1,891	8,301	9,702
France	4,195	5,723	8,533	8,625
Germany	4,499	5,595	7,033	6,400
Other country	41,138	53,644	73,899	81,622
Total	340,824	492,617	968,147	1,007,063
México's Population	81,249,645	97,483,412	112,336,538	119,530,753
% Foreigns	0.42	0.53	0.86	0.84

Notes: 1 / China includes the codes of China, Hong Kong, Republic of China or Nationalist China; which are alternate names for Taiwan. 2) The countries of interest for this project are marked in bold.

* Non-statistically significant proportion compared to the immediately preceding period, at a 95% confidence level.

Source: Own calculations based on microdata from the sample of CPyV 1990, 2000 and 2010; Intercensal Survey 2015, INEGI.

Table 1b: México: Population of migrants from northern Central America and their distribution by country of birth, 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2015

Birth Country	Relative Distribution			
	1990	2000	2010	2015
United States	57.10	69.75	76.43	73.40
Guatemala	13.50	4.86	3.29	4.26
Spain	7.30	4.27	2.14	2.25
Colombia	1.46	1.26	1.33	1.86
Venezuela	0.45	0.57	1.11	1.56
Argentina	1.36	1.32	1.46	1.46*
Honduras	0.59	0.76	1.03	1.44
Cuba	0.87	1.35	1.22	1.27
El Salvador	1.53	1.12	0.92	1.05
Canadá	0.88	1.17	1.05	0.97
China ¹	0.34	0.38	0.86	0.96
France	1.23	1.16	0.88	0.86
Germany	1.32	1.14	0.73	0.64
Other country	12.07	10.89	7.63	8.10
Total	100	100	100	100
México's Population % Foreigns				

Notes: 1 / China includes the codes of China, Hong Kong, Republic of China or Nationalist China; which are alternate names for Taiwan. 2) The countries of interest for this project are marked in bold.

* Non-statistically significant proportion compared to the immediately preceding period, at a 95% confidence level.

Source: Own calculations based on microdata from the sample of CPyV 1990, 2000 and 2010; Intercensal Survey 2015, INEGI.

Table 1c: México: Population of migrants from northern Central America and their distribution by country of birth, 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2015

Birth Country	Growth rate			
	1990 2000	2000 2010	2010 2015	1990 2015
United States	76.55	115.35	-0.10	279.80
Guatemala	-47.93	33.11	34.45	-6.81
Spain	-15.47	-1.41	9.26	-8.95
Colombia	25.20	106.47	46.00	277.42
Venezuela	84.15	282.08	45.23	921.79
Argentina	39.81	118.69	4.06	218.17
Honduras	86.38	168.14	45.73	628.29
Cuba	123.13	77.85	8.00	328.60
El Salvador	6.17	60.09	19.52	103.14
Canadá	91.56	76.98	-3.84	226.00
China ¹	62.88	338.97	16.88	735.66
France	36.42	49.10	1.08	105.60
Germany	24.36	25.70	-9.00	42.25
Other country	30.40	37.76	10.45	98.41
Total	44.54	96.53	4.02	195.48
México's Population % Foreigns				

Notes: 1 / China includes the codes of China, Hong Kong, Republic of China or Nationalist China; which are alternate names for Taiwan. 2) The countries of interest for this project are marked in bold.

* Non-statistically significant proportion compared to the immediately preceding period, at a 95% confidence level.

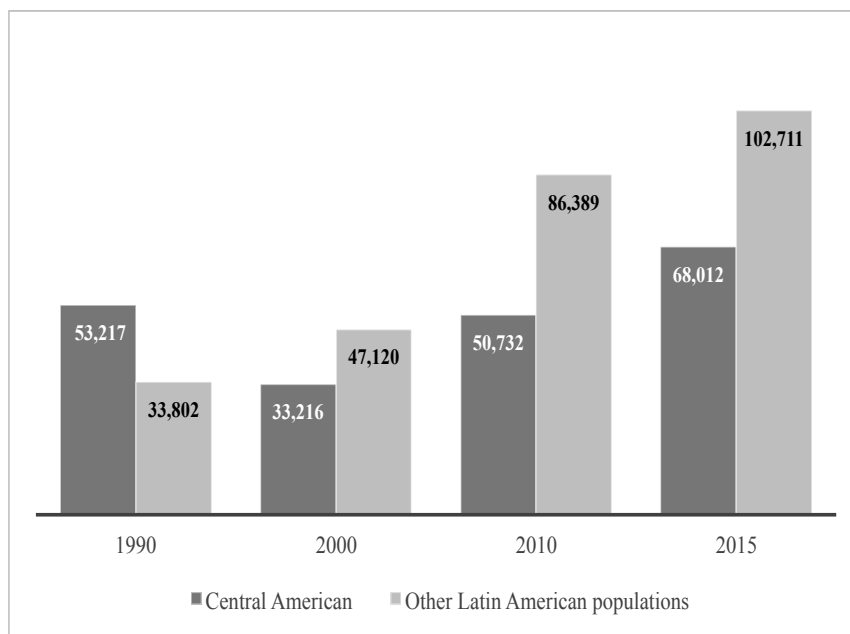
Source: Own calculations based on microdata from the sample of CPyV 1990, 2000 and 2010; Intercensal Survey 2015, INEGI.

Some hypotheses related to these particular cases focus on: i) the emerging crisis in Venezuela, which has intensified in the last decade, generating excessive emigration to different countries in the region or other frequency receivers such as the United States and Spain; ii) The social and economic situation of Honduras has deteriorated over the years, which has led to dramatically increased emigration rates, with Mexico being one of the countries sought to migrate; iii) In the case of Guatemala, the apparent decrease between the analyzed period is mediated by the arrival and subsequent return of Guatemalans to Mexico during the 1990s. Castillo and Vásquez state that between 1991 and 1993 a large number of immigrants returned to Guatemala who had left during the 1980s due to the civil crisis that faced that country.

With the information from population and housing censuses (1990, 2000 and 2010) and the Intercensal Survey (2015), a slight increase in the migrant population of northern Central America settled in the country is observed, which goes from 53,217 in the year 2000 to 68,012 in 2015. It should be noted that, in each of these statistical events, the migrant population from Guatemala constitutes more than half of the migrants in this region. In the 1990s and 2000s, Salvadoran migrants ranked as the second group of migrants from that region, but as of 2010, that place is occupied by those from Honduras. In 1990, immigrants from the north of Central America constituted 61.15 per cent of Latin American immigrants in Mexico, but the orientation changes from the year 2000, since most of them come from other countries in the region. Due to these amounts, the socio-demographic and socio-labor characteristics analyzed correspond to the Central American migrants as a whole compared to the rest of Latin American populations.

It should be noted that the change in the percentage of Salvadoran and Honduran migrants as of 2010 may be due to the prevailing social conditions in three countries of analysis, as mentioned earlier. For example, according to data from the *Statistical Yearbook for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2016*, the annual rate of open unemployment (in urban areas) (Cepal, 2016) in 2015 is 2.8 in Guatemala and 8.8 in Honduras; the last data available for El Salvador corresponds to the year 2014, and is 6.7. With data from 2014, from the World Bank (World Bank, 2017), it is observed that the highest intentional homicide rate for these three countries is Honduras, with 75 per 100 thousand inhabitants, followed by El Salvador (64.2) and Guatemala (31.2).

Graph 1: Mexico: Population of migrants from northern Central America living in Mexico and their distribution by country of birth, 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2015



Fuente: elaboración propia con base en el INEGI, muestras del 10% del XI Censo General de Población y Vivienda, 1990, XII Censo General de Población y Vivienda, 2000, y Censo de Población y Vivienda 2010, Encuesta Intercensal, 2015.

The United Nations notes that more and more people are forced to flee from the violence in the countries of northern Central America (Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador), while there has been an increase in asylum applications from these countries, so that in the first four months of 2016, 11,000 people required refugee-status mainly in the United States and Mexico (United Nations, 2016).

Structure by age, sex and region of residence groups in Mexico

By sex, as of 2000 more women than male migrants from northern Central America are observed, being the year 2010 when the biggest difference occurs (55.4 versus 44.6 per cent, respectively). The trend towards feminization is in line with the rest of Latin American immigrants According to the report *Women in the Flight* (on Spanish called *Mujeres en la Huida*), women and their children are fleeing from high levels of violence, including gender-based violence in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, where

recognizes control of criminal groups, some of transnational scope (Martínez and Martínez, 2018). Female homicide rates in these countries place them in the top ten worldwide, with El Salvador ranking first, followed by Guatemala in third and Honduras in seventh (UNHCR or ACNUR in Spanish, 2015). Other important factors to explain the greater presence of immigrant women are: the increase in the process of tertiarization and the greater female participation in the Mexican labor market. This hypothesis will be corroborated or not with some indicators specific to the labor insertion of the immigrant population of interest.

Regarding age, with the exception of 1990, where the majority of Central American migrants are in the group under 18 years of age (35.0 per cent), in the rest of the years analyzed it is observed that the highest percentage of migrants belong to the group of 30 to 49 years of age and despite what might be expected, the percentage of migrants aged 50 and over is higher than that of those under 18 years of age. That is, although the percentage of Central American migrants under 18 has increased (12.6 per cent in 2000 against 14.2 per cent in 2010 and 14.1 per cent in 2015), in general terms, it is the age group with the least presence.

The previous behavior varies relatively with respect to the rest of the Latin American population. In the last twenty-five years, the trend shows a greater participation of the group of 30 to 49 years of age, however, the population with 50 years and older has also become important. In 2015, one in four immigrants from other Latin American countries made up the oldest group. Due to the above, the empirical evidence indicates a relatively younger immigration from Central America compared to the rest of the region's foreign population.

Among the data that can be obtained with the sources mentioned is the identification of the place of habitual residence (in this case the federative entity) of the migrant at the time of the interview. To summarize the results, they were grouped according to geographical area of residence (North, Center and South) with the exception of Chiapas, an entity bordering Guatemala, one of the countries of interest in this work.

Chiapas is the entity with the highest percentage of migrants from northern Central America, although its proportion drops from 56.1 to 49.2 per cent between 1990 and 2015. This is an expected result given the geographic proximity to Mexico. The other half of Central American immigrants in the country has been disseminated by the rest of the states. In recent years there has been a significant relative presence in southern states (Campeche, Guerrero, Morelos, Oaxaca, Puebla, Quintana Roo, Tabasco,

Veracruz and Yucatan). In the case of the central and northern areas of the country, different trends have been observed in the last five decades. While in the entities of the center (Aguascalientes, Colima, Mexico City, Guanajuato, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Mexico, Michoacán, Nayarit, Querétaro, San Luis Potosí and Tlaxcala), the presence of immigrants from the North of Central America has diminished. In the case of the northern states (Baja California, Baja California Sur, Coahuila, Chihuahua, Durango, Nuevo Leon, Sonora, Sinaloa, Tamaulipas and Zacatecas) a slight increase is observed, going from 3.9 in 1990 to 14.1 in 2015. It is possible that with these data it is realized, in some part, for adjustments in migratory routes throughout the country.

As for the distribution of the rest of the Latin American population by region of residence, traditionally the majority of immigrants are concentrated in the entities of the center of the Republic. This fact was to be expected given that in this area is Mexico City, a city characterized by being a magnet for immigrants from different parts of the world; there is also Guadalajara, the second most populated center in Mexico. It is important to mention that between 1990 and 2015 the relative contribution of the rest of Latin American immigrants in the central zone has gone from 69.3 per cent to 57.8 per cent. The southern zone is characterized as the second region with the greatest presence of immigrants from the rest of Latin America in recent years. Estimates indicate that one in four immigrants from these countries have lived in one of the southern Mexican entities. Some of the cities with an important presence of immigrants are Puebla and Cancún. Third, the entities of the northern zone are positioned, where there is a slight increase in this group of foreigners (14.5 in 1990 against 16.2 in 2015).

Condition of indigenous language and educational characteristics

Taking into account the identifiable socio-demographic characteristics for Central American migrants from the selected statistical sources, it can be seen that the status of an indigenous language offers an approximation to identify the indigenous population.

According to data from the World Bank for Latin America, Guatemala is one of the countries with the greatest relative contribution of the indigenous population over the total population (41 per cent in 2002). In the case of Honduras and El Salvador, indigenous people contributed to the total population with 7.2 per cent and 0.02 per cent in 2002 and 2007, respectively.

Table 2a: Percentage distribution of the Central American population compared to other Latin American populations living in Mexico by sex, age group and region of residence, 1990-2015

Indicators	Population of northern Central America			
	1990	2000	2010	2015
<i>Sex (%)</i>				
Men	52.4	47.1	44.6	46.8
Women	47.6	52.9	55.4	53.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>Age group (%)</i>				
Under 18 years	35.0	12.6	14.2	14.14*
19-29 years	29.2	34.4	26.8	26.73*
30-49 years	25.7	37.9	42.2	41.7
50 and over	9.9	14.7	16.8	17.4
Not specified	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>Entity or region of residence (%)</i>				
Chiapas	56.7	48.2	52.1	49.2
South	28.0	23.8	17.1	21.8
Center	11.4	19.6	18.3	14.8
North	3.9	8.4	12.5	14.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population total	53,217	33,216	50,732	68,012

* Non-statistically significant proportion compared to the immediately preceding period, at a 95% confidence level.

Sources: Population and Housing Census 1990 and 2000; Sample of 10% of the 2010 Population and Housing Census; Intercensal Survey 2015. INEGI.

Table 2b: Percentage distribution of the Central American population compared to other Latin American populations living in Mexico by sex, age group and region of residence, 1990-2015

Indicators	Other Latin American Population			
	1990	2000	2010	2015
<i>Sex (%)</i>				
Men	50.3	48.8	47.9	47.81*
Women	49.7	51.2	52.1	52.19*
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>Age group (%)</i>				
Under 18 years	14.5	12.3	11.6	10.7
19-29 years	27.0	22.7	18.3	18.7
30-49 years	39.2	41.3	45.5	45.2
50 and over	19.1	23.4	24.5	25.4
Not specified	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.03*
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>Entity or region of residence (%)</i>				
Chiapas	0.7	0.79*	1.7	1.0
South	15.6	18.3	24.3	25.0
Center	69.3	65.0	57.3	57.8
North	14.5	15.9	16.7	16.2
Total	100.0	99.0	100.0	100.0
Population total	33,734	47,120	86,389	102,711

* Non-statistically significant proportion compared to the immediately preceding period, at a 95% confidence level.

Sources: Population and Housing Census 1990 and 2000; Sample of 10% of the 2010 Population and Housing Census; Intercensal Survey 2015. INEGI.

Table 2c: Percentage distribution of the Central American population compared to other Latin American populations living in Mexico by sex, age group and region of residence, 1990-2015

Indicators	Total Latin American			
	1990	2000	2010	2015
<i>Sex (%)</i>				
Men	51.6	48.1	46.7	47.4
Women	48.4	51.9	53.3	52.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>Age group (%)</i>				
Under 18 years	27.0	12.4	12.6	12.1
19-29 years	28.3	27.5	21.5	21.9
30-49 years	31.0	39.9	44.3	43.8
50 and over	13.5	19.8	21.7	22.2
Not specified	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>Entity or region of residence (%)</i>				
Chiapas	35.0	20.4	20.4*	20.2*
South	23.2	20.6	21.6	23.7
Center	33.8	46.2	42.9	40.7
North	8.0	12.8	15.1	15.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population total	86,951	80,336	137,121	170,723

* Non-statistically significant proportion compared to the immediately preceding period, at a 95% confidence level.

Sources: Population and Housing Census 1990 and 2000; Sample of 10% of the 2010 Population and Housing Census; Intercensal Survey 2015. INEGI.

From 1990 to 2010, there was a downward trend in the proportion of Central American native-speaking migrants: while in 1990, 49.3 per cent of migrants fulfilled this characteristic, by 2010 the proportion was 15.3. Despite the decrease in the indigenous immigrant population of northern Central America, it is important to note that their relative presence has been much greater compared to the rest of the Latin American population. For this last group, the indigenous population has in no case surpassed more than 2 per cent of the total of immigrants.

With the analysis of the variable *condition of literacy*, understood as knowing how to read and write a message, it is observed that migrants from one of the three countries of interest of 15 years and more each have lower percentages of illiteracy. In this way, while in 1990 23.8 per cent did not know how to read and write, in the year 2000, 26.2 per cent; for the years 2010 and 2015, only 17 per cent of migrants from the North of Central America present this condition.

These data are in correspondence with those of the World Bank (2017) and also give an account of the selectivity of migrants, which indicate that in 2015, 88 per cent of the population aged 15 and over knows how to read and write in Honduras and El Salvador. Of the three Central American countries considered in this text, Guatemala has the lowest percentage of literacy with 79 per cent.

When comparing the condition of literacy with the rest of Latin American immigrants, it is observed that the immigrants of the North of Central America presented in all the years of analysis higher illiteracy rates compared with the other collective groups.

The condition of school attendance in the population of migrants from the Central American north of 6 to 14 years of age, which includes the ages to attend basic education (elementary and middle school), referred to as their regular attendance to educational establishments that are part of the National Education System (SEN by its initials in Spanish), shows that in 1990 there is the highest percentage of school attendance. According to this source, 64.7 per cent of the migrants of the indicated age group regularly attend a teaching center; the second highest percentage is observed in 2015 (59.9 per cent). If this last percentage is taken as a parameter and compared with that of 2010 (56.2 per cent) and 2000 (46.5 per cent), it can be said that there was a decline in access to education for a period of over ten years. This shows that, for some reason, there is some kind of impediment for these migrant children to be able to access school in Mexico; it may be due to their constant mobility and lack of documents. In a contrary

position, there is a greater socio-educational integration of children born in other Latin American countries, given the high rates of school attendance at the basic levels of education during the twenty-five years analyzed. This percentage ranges between 93 per cent and 96.7 per cent.

Regarding the levels of schooling, it is important to make an assessment: the sources will be analyzed independently because their comparability is not possible, given that each census event presents some specific differences in the collection of their data. It also indicates that the maximum level of studies refers to the level of schooling (years or degrees completed) reached by the person.

In general terms, for all the statistical events analyzed, the distribution by schooling levels indicates distant behaviors among immigrants from the North of Central America and the rest of Latin Americans. While the first group concentrates mostly on the lowest levels of education, the second group does so at levels with a Bachelor's degree or higher. These trends indicate a clear selectivity of qualified Latin American migrants with the exception of our Central American group of interest.

When taking into consideration the aforementioned, in 1990 it is observed that 44.7 of the migrants from the north of Central America of 15 years and more did not reach any level of schooling, followed by those who have elementary (37.4 per cent) and later with middle school (6.6 per cent). In the case of the rest of Latin Americans, in this same year, 45.9 per cent reached a bachelor's degree, followed by high and middle school with 19.5 per cent and 13.3 per cent, respectively.

Regarding the year 2000, 41.1 of the immigrants from the North of Central America have elementary education as the maximum level of studies, followed by those who do not have studies (26.8 per cent) and those who have a middle school education (10.6 per cent). The percentages of baccalaureate, bachelor and postgraduate degrees are less than 10 per cent. Relative to the immigrants from other Latin American countries, the maximum level of education was 48.5 per cent, followed by High School (23.8 per cent) and Postgraduate (12.0).

In 2010, while 43.7 per cent of migrants aged 15 and over had completed elementary education, 19.2 per cent had no studies, middle school education was the next highest level of education (16 per cent), and the bachelor's degree represented 11 per cent. When considering the other group of Latin American immigrants more than half reached a professional career (55.1), 20.7 per cent had a high school and 13.2 per cent had a graduate degree.

Finally, for 2015, 59.8 per cent of migrants have basic education (43.1 per cent elementary and 16.4 per cent middle school), versus 20.3 per cent who do not have studies. The percentage of those who have a baccalaureate is 11.2 per cent. In the case of the rest of Latin Americans, 7 out of every 10 immigrants have a degree (52.3 per cent) or a graduate degree (16.3 per cent). The baccalaureate and middle school levels show a modest relative participation, 19.7 per cent and 7.4 per cent, respectively.

Marital situation, female fertility and composition of households

With the exception of 1990, about two thirds of the population of Central American migrants aged 12 and over are married or in free union. In the year 2010 when we observe the highest percentage of people with said conjugal situation in this period with 70.4 per cent. The following group is made up of singles, with percentages that range between 20.2 and 32.6 per cent, although neither in this nor in the previous group are there trends in the data over time.

Finally, it is highlighted that the trend in the percentage of population that has ever been united (separated or divorced and widowed) has increased slightly in recent years (5.1 per cent in 1990 against 3.0 per cent in 2010). The conjugal situation of the migrants from the northern Central America is one of the indicators more similar to the case of the rest of Latin Americans. In the last years of every 10 immigrants from these countries, approximately 6 are united, 3 are not united and 1 was once married or in a free union. It is probable that this change in the conjugal situation is related to possible new unions and the dissolutions of those relationships, whether they are marriages or free unions, that have taken place during the residence period of the migrants from the Northern Central America and the rest of Latin Americans in Mexico.

Linked to the previous variable, data are presented on live born children of Central American migrant women and other Latin American women of 12 years and older. If the condition of children born alive is analyzed, it is observed that in 1990, 6 out of 10 women have at least one child (36.3 per cent have one to three and 28.6 per cent, four or more children). In 2000 this proportion rises to eight out of ten (in percentage, women with one to three children represent 44.5 per cent), and this proportion is maintained for 2010 and 2015, years in which it is also observed that the highest percentage it is still that of women with one to three children born alive (52.2 and 49.6 per cent respectively).

Table 3a: Percentage distribution of the Central American population compared to other Latin American populations living in Mexico due to their indigenous language and schooling indicators, 1990-2015

Indicators	Population of northern Central America			
	1990	2000	2010	2015
Indigenous language condition (%)				
Yes	49.3	26.0	15.1	15.3*
No	48.7	73.6	84.6	84.7*
Not specified	2.0	0.4	0.3	n.d.
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population aged 5 years and over	52,000	32,444	49,626	66,101
Literacy condition (%)				
Can read and write	75.9	73.7	81.9	80.7
Cannot read and write	23.8	26.2	17.2	17.0*
Not specified	0.4	0.2	1.0	2.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population aged 5 years and over	52,000	32,444	49,626	66,101
Assistance condition (%)				
Yes	64.7	46.5	56.2	59.9
No	33.9	52.2	43.2	40.1
Not specified	1.4	1.3*	0.7	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population between 5 and 14 years	12,750	2,054	3,868	5,050
Maximun level of studies (%)				
Without schooling	44.7	26.8	19.2	20.3
Elementary	37.4	41.1	43.7	43.1
Middle School	6.6	10.6	16.0	16.4
High School	3.8	8.9	9.9	11.2
Bachelor's School	6.2	9.2	9.5	7.0
Postgraduate	1.4	2.0	1.7	1.8
Not specified	0.0	1.3	0.0	n.d.
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population aged 15 years and over	39,250	30,390	45,758	61,010

As of the 2010 Census, the questions of indigenous language, school attendance and literacy are asked after 3 years. In this research the fixed point of 5 years is conserved to maintain comparability.

* Non-statistically significant proportion compared to the immediately preceding period, at a 95% confidence level.

Sources: Population and Housing Census 1990 and 2000; Sample of 10% of the 2010 Population and Housing Census; Intercensal Survey 2015. INEGI

Table 3b: Percentage distribution of the Central American population compared to other Latin American populations living in Mexico due to their indigenous language and schooling indicators, 1990-2015

Indicators	Rest of Latin Americana population			
	1990	2000	2010	2015
<i>Indigenous language condition (%)</i>				
Yes	1.7	1.5*	1.4	<u>1.2</u>
No	94.2	97.8	98.0	98.3
Not specified	4.1	0.7	0.7*	n.d.
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population aged 5 years and over	32,992	45,869	84,795	100,570
<i>Literacy condition (%)</i>				
Can read and write	98.3	98.7	98.3	98.3*
Cannot read and write	1.5	1.2	0.6	0.8
Not specified	0.2	0.2*	1.1	0.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population aged 5 years and over	32,992	45,869	84,795	100,570
<i>Assistance condition (%)</i>				
Yes	93.4	93.0	94.0	96.7
No	5.9	6.1	5.2	3.1
Not specified	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population between 5 and 14 years	3,029	3,368	6,550	6,699
<i>Maximun level of studies (%)</i>				
Without schooling	1.9	0.9	<u>0.6</u>	<u>0.6</u>
Elementary	7.5	5.2	3.5	3.2
Middle School	13.3	8.5	6.0	7.4
High School	19.5	23.8	20.7	19.7
Bachelor's School	45.9	48.5	55.1	52.3
Postgraduate	11.8	12.0	13.2	16.3
Not specified	0.0	1.1	0.9	n.d.
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population aged 15 years and over	29,963	42,501	78,245	93,840

As of the 2010 Census, the questions of indigenous language, school attendance and literacy are asked after 3 years. In this research the fixed point of 5 years is conserved to maintain comparability.

* Non-statistically significant proportion compared to the immediately preceding period, at a 95% confidence level.

Sources: Population and Housing Census 1990 and 2000; Sample of 10% of the 2010 Population and Housing Census; Intercensal Survey 2015. INEGI

Table 3c: Percentage distribution of the Central American population compared to other Latin American populations living in Mexico due to their indigenous language and schooling indicators, 1990-2015

Indicators	Total Latin Americans			
	1990	2000	2010	2015
<i>Indigenous language condition (%)</i>				
Yes	30.8	11.7	8.3	6.8
No	66.4	87.8	91.3	92.9
Not specified	2.8	0.6	0.5	n.d.
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population aged 5 years and over	84,992	78,313	134,421	166,671
<i>Literacy condition (%)</i>				
Can read and write	74.4	88.3	92.2	91.3
Cannot read and write	23.4	11.5	6.7	7.2
Not specified	2.3	0.2	1.0	1.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population aged 5 years and over	84,992	78,313	134,421	166,671
<i>Assistance condition (%)</i>				
Yes	70.2	75.4	79.9	80.9*
No	28.5	23.5	19.3	19.0*
Not specified	1.3	1.1	0.8	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population between 5 and 14 years	15,779	5,422	10,418	11,749
<i>Maximun level of studies (%)</i>				
Without schooling	26.2	11.7	7.5	8.4
Elementary	24.5	20.2	18.3	18.9
Middle School	9.5	9.4	9.7	10.9
High School	10.6	17.6	16.7	16.4
Bachelor's School	23.4	32.1	38.3	34.4
Postgraduate	5.9	7.8	8.9	10.6
Not specified	0.0	1.2	0.6	n.d.
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population aged 15 years and over	69,213	72,891	124,003	154,850

As of the 2010 Census, the questions of indigenous language, school attendance and literacy are asked after 3 years. In this research the fixed point of 5 years is conserved to maintain comparability.

* Non-statistically significant proportion compared to the immediately preceding period, at a 95% confidence level.

Sources: Population and Housing Census 1990 and 2000; Sample of 10% of the 2010 Population and Housing Census; Intercensal Survey 2015. INEGI

As for the rest of Latin Americans, in all the years of analysis more than half of the women had between 1 and 3 children. Also, it is striking that between 1990-2015, approximately one in three women did not have children. This percentage fluctuates between 33.2 per cent and 37.4 per cent. With smaller proportions are women with more than three children: in 1990 the highest percentage was observed with 10.9 per cent and in 2015 the lowest with 6 per cent.

As can be observed with the previous indicator (conjugal situation), the majority of migrants from Northern Central America and Latin America are married or have a free union, so it was foreseeable the uptake of at least one child born alive among women migrants of 12 years of age or above resulting percentages. Likewise, as stated in the report *Women in the Flight* (on Spanish called *Mujeres en la Huida*) (UNHCR or ACNUR in Spanish, 2015), it has been observed that women who flee from gender violence in Central America usually do so accompanied by their children.

Basic Laboral characteristics

Finally, the last analysis dimension proposed to have a general overview of the conditions of migrants from Northern Central America and Latin Americans in the country is the socio-Laboral. Below are some indicators of activity status and labor insertion of interest groups.

In general, the predominant activity of Latin American immigrants in recent years (with the exception of 1990) is to be engaged in some activity of the labor market. In the case of Central American immigrants, the data indicate that, as of 2000, more than half of them joined the labor market. This behavior is related to the rest of Latin Americans. This economic participation is an indication of the strong weight that Latin American labor immigration has in the country, even if its population volume is lower.

In the second place of activity for the two groups of Latin American immigrants analyzed in this research (with the exception of 1990) is the *non-economically active population* (students, unpaid workers, retirees, among others), although with disparate percentages throughout of the period studied: for migrants from North Central America they range from 41.9 per cent (in 2010) to 50.7 per cent (in the year 1990); while the rest of Latin Americans oscillates between 38.0 per cent and 59.6 per cent.

Table 4a: Percentage distribution of the Central American population compared with other Latin American populations living in Mexico by family composition indicators, 1990-2015

Indicators	Population of northern central american			
	1990	2000	2010	2015
<i>Type of household (%)</i>				
Familiar	87.4	85.6	93.5	92.5
Non-familiar	10.6	13.9	5.9	7.5
Not specified	2.0	0.5	0.6	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total population	53,217	33,216	50,732	68,012
<i>Number of children (%)</i>				
Without of children	35.1	21.6	19.0	18.3
1 to 3	36.3	44.5	52.2	49.6
4 o more	28.6	32.4	27.2	29.7
Not specified	0.0	1.5	1.6*	2.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Female population age 12 or older	20,904	15,978	25,797	33,523
<i>Conjugal situation (%)</i>				
United	61.3	69.8	70.4	70.0*
Once united	5.1	8.3	9.3	9.0
Not united	32.6	21.6	20.2	20.9
Not specified	1.0	0.3	0.2	n.d.
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population aged 12 or order	44,133	31,111	47,042	62,954

* Non-statistically significant proportion compared to the immediately preceding period, at a 95% confidence level.

Sources: Population and Housing Census 1990 and 2000; Sample of 10% of the 2010 Population and Housing Census; Intercensal Survey 2015. INEGI.

Table 4b: Percentage distribution of the Central American population compared with other Latin American populations living in Mexico by family composition indicators, 1990-2015

Indicators	Rest of Latin American population			
	1990	2000	2010	2015
<i>Type of household (%)</i>				
Familiar	84.0	85.6	86.8	83.5
Non-familiar	13.7	13.9*	12.3	16.5
Not specified	2.3	0.5	0.9	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total population	33,734	47,120	86,389	102,711
<i>Number of children (%)</i>				
Without of children	37.4	34.5	33.2	36.9
1 to 3	51.7	54.1	56.0	54.4
4 o more	10.9	9.7	8.3	6.0
Not specified	0.0	1.7	2.6	2.7*
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Female population age 12 or older	15,455	22,000	41,126	50,039
<i>Conjugal situation (%)</i>				
United	60.1	63.2	65.7	63.3
Once united	8.0	10.1	9.8*	9.3
Not united	30.9	26.4	24.2	27.2
Not specified	1.0	0.4	0.3	n.d.
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population aged 12 or order	31,038	43,563	80,292	96,217

* Non-statistically significant proportion compared to the immediately preceding period, at a 95% confidence level.

Sources: Population and Housing Census 1990 and 2000; Sample of 10% of the 2010 Population and Housing Census; Intercensal Survey 2015. INEGI.

Table 4c: Percentage distribution of the Central American population compared with other Latin American populations living in Mexico by family composition indicators, 1990-2015

Indicators	Total Latin AmericanS			
	1990	2000	2010	2015
<i>Type of household (%)</i>				
Familiar	86.1	88.5	91.3	89.3
Non-familiar	11.8	11.1	8.0	9.9
Not specified	2.1	0.4	0.7	0.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total population	86,951	80,336	137,121	170,723
<i>Number of children (%)</i>				
Without of children	36.1	29.1	27.7	29.4
1 to 3	42.9	50.1	54.6	52.5
4 o more	21.1	19.3	15.5	15.5*
Not specified	0.0	1.6	2.2	2.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Female population age 12 or older	36,359	37,978	66,923	83,562
<i>Conjugal situation (%)</i>				
United	60.8	65.9	67.4	65.9
Once united	6.3	9.4	9.6	9.1
Not united	31.9	24.4	22.7	24.7
Not specified	1.0	0.3	0.2	n.d.
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population aged 12 or order	75,171	74,674	127,334	159,171

* Non-statistically significant proportion compared to the immediately preceding period, at a 95% confidence level.

Sources: Population and Housing Census 1990 and 2000; Sample of 10% of the 2010 Population and Housing Census; Intercensal Survey 2015. INEGI.

The predominance of this condition of activity in 1990 can be explained due to the political conflicts of the Southern cone in the seventies and the armed conflicts that have occurred in Central America since the 1980s and that ended in the 1990s. This could have led to a number of Central American population to seek refuge in Mexico to continue their studies.

In relation to labor structure indicators, Latin American immigrants comply with two features of the labor market in Mexico in recent years: greater wage-earning and the outsourcing of economic activities. (Ariza and Oliveira, 2014). In the variable type of employment, a similar behavior is observed both for migrants from the northern Central America and for the rest of Latin Americans. In all the years of the census event, six out of every 10 immigrants from these two subregions occupied a salaried job. In terms of self-employment, immigrants from the three countries of interest reported slightly lower percentages compared to the other groups, with the most pronounced gap in 1990 (32.4 for non-Central Americans *versus* 27.9).

On the other hand, the distribution by branch of economic activity was the most heterogeneous socio-labor variable among migrants from the North of Central America in relation to the other groups in the region. Migrants from the Central American community of interest point to an increase in participation in activities of the tertiary sector and in particular in *commerce, personal services and distributive services*. The employed population in this branch has tripled its participation, going from 14.1 in 1990 to 48.5 in 2015. The second branch of activity of the Central Americans (with the exception of 1990) has been *agricultural activities*, although in recent years there has been a significant decrease (the change was from 63.8 per cent in 1990 to 22.3 per cent in 2015). However, in the present the participation of these immigrants in the activities of the primary sector is relatively high compared to the rest of Latin Americans. With regard to participation in *industrial and construction activities*, this has gained a slight prominence in recent years. In 1990, one in 10 Central Americans was inserted in this branch, while in 2015 the ratio is 2 out of 10. Finally, the sector with a less pronounced participation are social, financial and government services. It could be expected that in this last sector Central American immigrants with higher qualification levels will be included.

In the case of immigrants from the rest of Latin America, the classification by branch of economic activity varies markedly regarding the group of the analyzed Central Americans. Said labor immigrants are widely characterized by positioning themselves in an activity typical of the tertiary

sector. As of 2010, eight out of ten employed persons comply with this pattern. However, unlike Central Americans, the majority of immigrants from the rest of the region (with the exception of 2010) figure in *social, financial and government activities*. Second, it indicates a labor insertion in *commerce, financial services and government*. On the other hand, immigrants from the rest of Latin America in contrast to Central American immigrants have shown a decrease in activities of the secondary sector. (20.5 per cent in 1990 against 14.7 per cent in 2015). The last branch of insertion for this group is indicated by the agricultural activities: the percentages do not exceed 2 per cent of the total employed.

Finally, an indicator more approximate to the qualification level of Latin American immigrants in Mexico is the distribution by occupational categories. In the case of Central Americans, it is observed that the majority of employed persons perform manual activities, despite the fact that this contribution has decreased by around 10 percentage points between 1990 and 2010. It went from 85.8 per cent in the first census event analyzed to 75.4 in the 2015 Survey estimate. On the other hand, related to low levels of schooling and low participation in high tertiary activities (*social, financial and government services*), Central American immigrants who work in non-manual activities mostly they do it in positions different from those of professionals or managers.

The situation changes when the rest of Latin American immigrants are analyzed. The majority is positioned in manual activities and in particular in senior management positions, although this contribution decreased between 1990-2010 and shows a slight increase in the last five years (52.9 in 1990, 51.4 in 2000, 44.2 in 2010 against 48.8 in 2015). The second place is constituted by immigrants who perform manual activities of medium or low qualification, these relative weights fluctuate between 31.8 per cent and 40 per cent. Contrary to Central Americans, the rest of foreigners from Latin America have had a low relative contribution in manual activities. This result can be related to the previous indicator, given that *agricultural, industrial and construction* activities regularly demand manual labor.

Table 5a: Percentage distribution of the Central American population compared to other Latin American populations living in Mexico by socioeconomic indicators 1990-2015

Indicators	Population of northern central american			
	1990	2000	2010	2015
<i>Activity condition (%)</i>				
Occupied	46.3	53.6	57.4	56.5
Unoccupied	1.2	0.8	0.4	1.6
Not economically active	50.7	45.2	41.9	41.9*
Not specified	1.9	0.3	0.4*	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population aged 12 and over	44,133	31,111	47,042	62,954
<i>Type of employment (%)</i>				
Wage-earner	67.4	65.2	67.3	68.5
Self-employment	27.9	31.3	30.2	29.9*
Not specified	4.7	3.4	2.5	1.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population occupied aged 12 and over	20,437	16,939	27,185	35,537
<i>Rama de actividad (%)</i>				
Agricultural activities (primary)	63.8	40.4	25.6	22.3
Industry or construction (secondary)	11.7	16.5	16.4*	20.1
Commerce, personal and distributive	14.1	31.8	48.9	48.5
Socialm financial and goverment services	7.7	9.4	9.2*	8.1
Tertiary	21.8	41.2	48.9	56.6
Not specified	2.8	1.9	0.0	1.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population occupied aged 12 and over	20,437	16,939	27,185	35,537
<i>Categoría ocupacional (%)</i>				
Professional or manager	7.0	8.8	8.9*	5.2
Not manual	7.2	14.3	21.1	18.8
Subtotal non-manual	14.2	23.0	30.0	24.0
Manual	85.8	77.0	70.4	75.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.0
Population occupied aged 12 and over	20,437	16,939	27,185	35,537

* Non-statistically significant proportion compared to the immediately preceding period, at a 95% confidence level.

Sources: Population and Housing Census 1990 and 2000; Sample of 10% of the 2010 Population and Housing Census; Intercensal Survey 2015. INEGI.

Table 5b: Percentage distribution of the Central American population compared to other Latin American populations living in Mexico by socioeconomic indicators 1990-2015

Indicators	Rest of Latin American population			
	1990	2000	2010	2015
<i>Activity condition (%)</i>				
Occupied	43.7	53.2	60.6	58.8
Unoccupied	0.6	1.0	0.8	1.8
Not economically active	54.6	45.4	38.0	39.4
Not specified	1.1	0.3	0.7	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population aged 12 and over	31,038	43,563	80,292	96,217
<i>Type of employment (%)</i>				
Wage-earner	65.0	64.7*	65.0*	67.8
Self-employment	32.4	32.7*	32.4*	31.2
Not specified	2.7	2.5*	2.6*	1.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population occupied aged 12 and over	13,571	23,634	49,269	56,455
<i>Rama de actividad (%)</i>				
Agricultural activities (primary)	2.0	1.3	1.2*	1.2*
Industry or construction (secondary)	20.5	16.0	15.3	14.7
Commerce, personal and distributive	30.1	37.0	47.7	35.7
Socialm financial and government services	43.2	41.6	35.8	45.6
Tertiary	73.3	78.5	83.5	81.3
Not specified	4.2	4.1*	0.0	2.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population occupied aged 12 and over	13,571	23,634	49,269	56,455
<i>Categoría ocupacional (%)</i>				
Professional or manager	52.9	51.4	44.2	48.8
Not manual	31.8	33.4	40.0	34.8
Subtotal non-manual	84.7	84.8	84.1	83.6
Manual	15.3	15.2	14.7	15.4
Total	100.0	100.0	99.0	99.0
Population occupied aged 12 and over	13,571	23,634	49,269	56,455

* Non-statistically significant proportion compared to the immediately preceding period, at a 95% confidence level.

Sources: Population and Housing Census 1990 and 2000; Sample of 10% of the 2010 Population and Housing Census; Intercensal Survey 2015. INEGI.

Table 5c: Percentage distribution of the Central American population compared to other Latin American populations living in Mexico by socioeconomic indicators 1990-2015

Indicators	Total Latin Americans			
	1990	2000	2010	2015
<i>Activity condition (%)</i>				
Occupied	45.2	53.4	59.4	57.9
Unoccupied	0.9	0.9*	0.6	1.7
Not economically active	52.3	45.3	39.4	40.4
Not specified	1.6	0.3	0.6	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population aged 12 and over	75,171	74,674	127,334	159,171
<i>Type of employment (%)</i>				
Wage-earner	66.4	65.0	65.8	68.1
Self-employment	29.7	32.1	31.6	30.7
Not specified	3.9	2.9	2.6	1.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population occupied aged 12 and over	34,008	40,573	76,454	91,992
<i>Rama de actividad (%)</i>				
Agricultural activities (primary)	39.1	17.7	10.1	9.4
Industry or construction (secondary)	15.2	16.2	15.7	16.8
Commerce, personal and distributive	20.5	34.8	48.1	40.7
Socialm financial and government services	21.8	28.1	26.1	31.1
Tertiary	42.3	62.9	74.2	71.8
Not specified	3.3	3.2*	0.0	2.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population occupied aged 12 and over	34,008	40,573	76,454	91,992
<i>Categoría ocupacional (%)</i>				
Professional or manager	25.4	33.5	31.3	31.9
Not manual	17.0	25.4	33.3	28.6
Subtotal non-manual	42.5	58.9	64.6	60.5
Manual	57.5	41.1	34.5	38.6
Total	100.0	100.0	99.0	99.0
Population occupied aged 12 and over	34,008	40,573	76,454	91,992

* Non-statistically significant proportion compared to the immediately preceding period, at a 95% confidence level.

Sources: Population and Housing Census 1990 and 2000; Sample of 10% of the 2010 Population and Housing Census; Intercensal Survey 2015. INEGI.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data selected for this analysis, from 1990 and particularly since the 21st century, the presence of Central American migrants in Mexico has spread (dispersed) throughout the national territory, but at the same time its relative weight compared to other nationalities, and in particular Latin Americans, it has decreased. The presence atomized, although the relatively greater volumes are in the borders, can have diverse explanations. Historically, at least in the southern border of Mexico, from faraway times it has been the destination of flows motivated by political, social and economic reasons, although this has not led at any moment to a disproportionate growth of any of the three Central American nationalities of interest. Another possible one can respond to explorations of new migratory routes, until the decision of some to stay to settle in Mexico when finding work, or before the impossibility to cross the border of the United States. The adaptation to a country with which language, traditions and cultural traits are shared, is also a factor that affects the decision of some to settle in Mexico. When considering the data of the 1990 General Population and Housing Census, in contrast to the Intercensal Survey of 2015, it is also clearly observed that after the south of the country (with an incontrovertible presence in Chiapas), the second concentration of Central American migrants is found in the center of the country.

The decision to stay in Mexico may also be related to the possibility of access to education, health or food in the national territory. For example, in the case of education, it corresponds to the fact that more than half of Central American migrant children aged 6 to 14 regularly attend school, according to the results of the statistical sources analyzed. From another perspective, despite the fact that in those ages the education should be guaranteed for all girls and boys, a significant percentage of them do not attend. In the case of the rest of Latin Americans, a high socio-educational integration of these foreign immigrants was observed.

Another feature that stands out from this brief profile is that, as pointed out by the United Nations, there is a transition in the type or characteristics of the Central American migrant population. While in 1990 an important component of migrants was observed for economic reasons (considering the percentages of speakers of indigenous language and illiteracy), for 2010 and 2015 migrants are more likely to have security among their main motives. This reflection is reinforced by the data on the structure by age and sex where an increasing number of migrants under 18 years of age are

observed, although without specifying whether they travel in the company of a relative or *unaccompanied* (which are defined by the Migration Law as those persons under the age of 18 who are in national territory and who are separated from both parents and without legal guardianship, either a blood relative or person with legal representation) (CNDH, 2016). Central American migrant children and teenagers face multiple violence in their countries of origin, both within their homes and in their communities, so that Honduran nationals are the ones who are fleeing the most violence and insecurity: 59.5 per cent of Honduran girls and boys are migrants for this reason; In the case of Salvadorans, the percentage is 40 per cent and among Guatemalans, 33.3 per cent (Camargo, 2014, Martínez 2016, Martínez and Martínez, 2018).

As indicated above, women are another group vulnerable to the situation of violence that exists in these countries of Central America. The case of Guatemala helps to analyze why since the 1990 census a greater number of women has been observed in relation to male migrants. Indeed, in Guatemala, since the 1960s, military-political conflicts have been observed that generated migratory waves, mainly from inaccessible regions of the Guatemalan highlands towards southern Mexico, with an increasing participation of women (García Sánchez, *et al.*, 2002). In recent years, the problem between gangs, the Maras, government action against them and the intervention of groups linked to drug trafficking, together with the growing violence against women, have forced women to continue migrating alone or accompanied by their children; It should be remembered that in the corresponding analysis it is observed that more than 60 per cent of Central American migrant women of 12 years and older have at least one child born alive. However, this does not necessarily mean that they migrate with them, although there is strong evidence of *the Maras* actions against girls, boys and teenagers (Martínez, 2010 and 2016).

Regardless of the time of their stay in Mexico, selected Central American migrants, mainly males, although with greater female participation in recent years, they work. By its nature, the census information does not allow to specify how many of these are agricultural workers whose stay in the country is linked to rainfed agricultural activities, of those who intend to follow a migratory route that takes them to the United States (for such purposes there are other statistical instruments that are not related to the census source), again it is important to analyze, even at another time, the data that indicates the presence of migrants beyond the southern border states, and their increase in other states of the Mexican center and north.

It is important to emphasize that the data presented here corresponds to the population that was registered in the national territory. In other words, a significant number of unaccompanied migrant children, adults and families who are in transit to the United States is not counted. Therefore, these figures correspond in large part to those migrants who for various reasons have settled in Mexico temporarily at least.

In addition to the socioeconomic conditions, violence and lack of opportunities in the countries of origin, there are also natural disasters that have affected the Central American region in recent years, especially in those areas most vulnerable to meteorological events (World Food Program, 2017). This has caused the population to be more in need of finding a space and alternate sources of subsistence, although it should be noted that the available sources document direct migrations in the Central American countries of internal, regional and within the Central American Isthmus, but not necessary or directly to the north of the continent.

Despite programs that seek to protect Central American migrants from deportation and allow them to work in the United States, such as Temporary Protected Status (TPS), these expire in the first quarter of 2018 (Lesser, G and Batalova, J., 2017) and at the time of writing this text it is not yet known with certainty what result there will be for the populations involved. Due to the above, one can think that the flows of documented or undocumented migrants could be seriously affected, especially by the projects put in place and others planned by the US presidency to stop immigration and reduce the existing one in US territory. If this should happen, it would be the first time that, since its implementation with the signing of peace, disarmament and democracy in Central America, the aforementioned stay permits were not renewed and increased in numerical coverage. This potential situation will not cause a smaller number of Central Americans to stop leaving their country due to unfavorable conditions for transit through Mexico and stay in the US. One can think of the possibility that the number of migrants from the north of Central America in Mexico will increase if the governments of the places of origin, transit and destination do not offer them any other alternative, but we will deal with this in another text and time.

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CURRICULAR INFORMATION OF THE AUTHORS

Luis Felipe Jiménez Chaves

Egresado de la Maestría en Población y Desarrollo de la Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, Sede México. Especialista en Estadística Aplicada de la Universidad del Valle y Economista de la Universidad del Cauca en Colombia. Ha impartido cursos universitarios de análisis de datos, econometría y macroeconomía. Sus principales áreas de interés se centran en la inmigración laboral, estructura y dinámica de los mercados de trabajo.

email: luis.jimenez@estudiante-flacso.mx

Registry ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6197-9070>

Rodolfo Casillas Ramírez

Profesor investigador de la Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, Sede México. Miembro del Consejo Consultivo del Instituto Nacional de Migración (2007-2012) y Miembro, para efectos consultivos, de la Comisión Intersecretarial sobre Trata de Personas del gobierno de México (2009-2012 y 2016-2017). Miembro del Comité editorial de la Revista *Trace*, publicación especializada en ciencias sociales del Centro de Estudios Mexicanos y Centroamericanos (CEMCA) (2014- 2017). Sus principales investigaciones comprenden en el plano conceptual y teórico: La construcción de identidades y espacios sociales de los grupos subalternos fuera del ámbito institucional. En el plano de la investigación empírica: Trata de personas en México; Migraciones internacionales de centroamericanos y mexicanos a Estados Unidos y procesos sociorreligiosos en México, con particular atención a las minorías religiosas.

email: rodolfo.casillas@flacso.edu.mx

Registry ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-0862-7708>