



## Migration Governance Snapshot: Republic of Honduras

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In 2015, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) developed a [Migration Governance Framework \(MiGOF\)](#) to help countries define what “well-managed migration policy” might look like at the national level. The MiGOF was welcomed by IOM’s Member States in the same year. The Migration Governance Indicators (MGI)<sup>1</sup> were developed to assist countries operationalize the MiGOF by using a standard set of approximately 90 indicators that could be applied across six key policy domains.

The MGI is a tool based on policy inputs, which offers insights on policy levers that countries can use to develop their migration governance. The MGI is not intended to function as a measurement of outcomes related to migration policies and institutions. Instead, it operates as input-based benchmarking framework that offers insights on policy measures that countries can use to strengthen migration governance. The MGI is not meant to rank countries in the assessment of the comprehensiveness of their migration policies, or to identify gaps and areas that could be strengthened. The MGI aims to assist countries while advancing the conversation on migration governance by clarifying what “well-governed migration” might look like in the context of the [Sustainable Development Goal Target 10.7](#), “Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.”

This country snapshot presents a summary of well-governed areas of the Republic of Honduras’s (hereafter referred to as Honduras) migration governance structures, as well as the areas with potential for further development, as assessed by the MGI.

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## Key findings

### I. Adherence to international standards and fulfilment of migrants' rights

#### I.1. International conventions ratified

The table below follows a standard format and looks at the ratification of specific international conventions. The list of conventions covered is by no means exhaustive.

Name of the convention	Ratification
ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97)	No
Convention on the Status of Refugees, 1951	Yes (1992)
Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, 1954	Yes (2012)
Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, 1961	Yes (2012)
ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143)	No
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989	Yes (1990)
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990	Yes (2005)

#### I.2. Migration Governance: Examples of well-developed areas

[The Basic Law on Education of 2012](#) guarantees access to education up to the secondary level for all the country's young people (Articles 8 and 9). The programme *Todos Podemos Avanzar* (We Can All Move Forward) (TPA) run by the Ministry of Education facilitates the reincorporation of returning migrants into the national education system.

The Government of Honduras maintains agreements with other countries on the portability of social security benefits and is a party to the Ibero-American Multilateral Agreement on Social Security (CMISS), concluded in the framework of the [Latin American Social Security Organization \(OISS\)](#), of which it is a member. Under the Agreement, when workers in the Latin American region retire, they access the benefits associated with all the contributions they have paid throughout their working life, regardless of whether those payments were made in different member countries of that Agreement.

The Framework Law on Social Protection of Honduras recognizes that returning migrants are vulnerable and have particular needs that require special attention. Accordingly, that law was the basis for the creation of an interministerial working group to assist the migrant community, and that working party has promoted access to health services regardless of the nationality and legal status of those in that population group (Chapter 3, Article 20, subparagraphs 1 and 2).

There are paths to naturalization for migrants in Honduras. Article 24 of the Constitution of the Republic provides that Honduran citizenship can be obtained on the basis of different periods of residence in the country, namely: one year for Central American citizens; two consecutive years for Spaniards and Latin Americans by birth; three consecutive years for other nationalities.

#### I.3. Areas with potential for further development

Relatives declared as economic dependents of migrants residing in Honduras may not immediately obtain a work permit. To do so they must apply to the National Migration Institute for a permit of residence with a status other than that of economic dependent. However, under the ideal scenario envisaged in the [Migrant Integration Policy Index \(MIPEX\)](#), immigrants with residence permits should have access to the job market upon their arrival in the country, on the same terms as Hondurans.

Moreover, employers have a cap on the number of immigrants they may hire. Article 11 of the [Labour Code](#) stipulates that their number should not exceed 10 per cent of the company's workforce.

The right to vote is reserved for holders of Honduran citizenship. Indeed, Article 32 of the Constitution of the Republic prescribes that "foreigners may not engage in domestic or international political activities in the country, on pain of legal penalties." Nor are there any specific mechanisms for civil participation that enable immigrants to be considered an active part of society.

## 2. Formulates policy using evidence and whole-of-government approach

### 2.1. Migration Governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Honduras has legislation that regulates immigration and emigration. This legal framework comprises the [Law on Migration and Foreign Nationals](#), which took effect in March 2004, together with its implementing regulations, in force since May 2004. In addition, the 2014 [Law on the Protection of Honduran Migrants and Their Families](#) governs the protection of Honduran nationals abroad and the promotion of migration agreements with other countries.

Information on the Honduran legal framework for migration is easily obtainable, as it is available on a number of websites. For example, the website of the [National Migration Institute \(INM\)](#) provides information on the requirements and costs of formalities for immigrants and on certain formalities for Hondurans, as well as all the necessary information regarding permits and residency.

There is transparency regarding statistics on returnees. Each month the Ministry of External Relations and International Cooperation publishes, through its Consular and Migration Observatory (CONMIGHO), information on returnees, the repatriation of deceased persons and persons arrested abroad.

The National Institute of Statistics gathers migration-related data by means of the national census. In particular, information is compiled on the general characteristics of the migrant population in Honduras and on emigration for the preceding 10 years (as of 2003) by country of residence.

### 2.2. Areas with potential for further development

There is no lead institution with overall responsibility for monitoring and overseeing migration policy, instead it is incumbent on several government departments. For example, the National Migration Institute (INM) is responsible for issuing and monitoring passports and residence permits, while the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion (SEDIS) promotes the policy of social inclusiveness which encompasses assistance to migrants. This notwithstanding, there is no national migration strategy whereby overall control of migration policy is assigned to a single entity and which covers the immigrant, emigrant, in-transit and returning population.

Except for those conducted in 2009 and 2011, the Multi-Purpose Household Surveys do not have a migration information module; this significantly complicates the task of estimating the number of Hondurans living abroad. However, it is important to note the efforts of the Ministry of External Relations and International Cooperation (SRECI), which since 2017 has been issuing a new personal identity document, the consular registration card (*matrícula consular*), which enables all Honduran citizens residing in the United States of America to undertake formalities, irrespective of their migration status.

### 3. Engages with partners to address migration and related issues

#### 3.1. Migration Governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Honduran State promotes international cooperation. In October 2016, Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras signed a Memorandum of Understanding on labour cooperation, thereby laying the groundwork for formulating a joint plan of support for migrant workers. Furthermore, in December 2016 these countries signed a consular coordination agreement called TRICAMEX, which created a comprehensive framework for the provision of services by their consulates located on United States territory.

The Government of Honduras has bilateral agreements on the sharing of migration-related information with Colombia and Ecuador. Additionally, Honduras takes part in regional consultative processes on migration, such as the [Regional Conference on Migration](#) (RCM).

The Government works with various stakeholders on economic issues in order to formulate comprehensive migration-related strategies. By way of example, the Government cooperates formally with the private sector to boost the sector's investment and generate more economic activity and employment.

The Government of Honduras collaborates with civil society bodies to coordinate the provision of humanitarian assistance to migrants. In the framework of the Nineteenth Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), a Network to Assist and Protect Migrant Children and Adolescents was set up, comprising Migration Directorates, Ministries of Foreign Affairs and child protection institutions in RCM Member Countries.

#### 3.2. Areas with potential for further development

Programmes for preserving ties with Hondurans abroad who have the wherewithal to contribute to the country's development and the intention to do so are yet to be formulated. In this connection, the efforts being deployed by the SRECI through the *Programa de Remesas Solidarias y Productivas* (programme of solidarity-based and productive remittances) must be acknowledged.

The Honduran Government has not ratified the ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97) or the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention (No. 143) of 1975.

### 4. Advances the socioeconomic well-being of migrants and society

#### 4.1. Migration Governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The State of Honduras has mechanisms for protecting the rights of the Honduran population abroad. Under the Labour Code, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security is in charge of regulating, monitoring and controlling the processes of attracting and recruiting Honduran workers to provide services or execute works abroad. In January 2017, for example, the Ministry of Labour advertised and conducted the search for 3,800 candidates to be recruited for work in Canada.

The Honduran Government maintains relations with the governments of other countries so as to boost opportunities for Honduran workers and safeguard their rights. In December 2016, for example, Honduras signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the United States of America with a view to drawing up a plan

to protect Honduran migrant workers against discriminatory employment practices based on their origin or migration status.

#### **4.2. Areas with potential for further development**

There are no formal mechanisms for closely monitoring the job market implications of migration. Similarly there are no programmes to facilitate the granting of residence permits to attract workers and professionals with specific skill sets.

Immigrants are permitted to study in Honduras upon application for a special permit of residence for students, but there is no legal framework that facilitates or promotes their integration into the local job market at the end of their studies. Besides, international students are not permitted to accept paid employment in the formal sector.

### **5. Effectively addresses the mobility dimensions of crises**

#### **5.1. Migration Governance: Examples of well-developed areas**

The [Permanent Contingency Commission \(COPECO\)](#) is responsible for disaster risk management. The disaster risk reduction and contingency plans address issues touching on communities vulnerable to displacement and relocation, as well as shelters in crisis situations.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment (SERNA) is responsible for the National Climate Change Strategy. The action plan based on the strategy aims to "enhance civilian safety and governance of the nation by anticipating, reducing and addressing, in an appropriate and timely manner, temporary or permanent displacements of communities caused by climate-related factors."

Honduras has measures that allow for exceptions to immigration procedures in the cases of migrants whose country of origin is undergoing a crisis. The 2004 Regulations on Migration and Foreign Nationals contain a clause whereby temporary residency may be granted on justified grounds. The Migration Institute is empowered to issue special permits of up to five years to certain categories of immigrants such as refugees and asylum seekers.

The country's development plan – Vision for the Country 2010-2038 and National Plan 2010-2020 (*Visión de País 2010-2038 y Plan de Nación 2010-2022*) – addresses migration issues and delineates programmes for the reintegration of returning migrants. According to the target set for 2034, "the country will offer all its migrants the opportunity for dignified reintegration, and expectations of achievement comparable to those they enjoy in their countries of residence, with added value in terms of family and cultural consolidation."

#### **5.2. Areas with potential for further development**

Risk management and contingency plans still do not include a specific strategy whereby particular services are provided in crisis situations to vulnerable migrants with needs different from those of the rest of the population. Local experts point out that the system of communication utilizes multiple platforms (newspapers, radio, mobile phones) to convey information to the country's residents. However, this information is transmitted in Spanish only.

While recognizing the existence and efforts of the Care Centres for Irregular Migrants (CAMI), there is still room for improving the infrastructure and facilities for assisting and protecting migrants in transit originating from countries in crisis.

## **6. Ensures that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and dignified manner**

### **6.1. Migration Governance: Examples of well-developed areas**

Honduras has reception centres that serve returning migrants. The Reception Centres for Returned Migrants (CAMR) are government-run centres (more specifically, operated by the Ministry of External Relations and International Cooperation) that provide humanitarian assistance to returnees. The CAMR centres offer various types of assistance such as information about available government social services, accommodation, food, transport, clothing, footwear, personal hygiene articles, medical and psycho-social assistance, *inter alia*. Moreover, the National Migration Institute operates Centres for Assistance to Irregular Migrants (CAMI) that offer care and protection to migrants in transit.

There are clearly defined lines of responsibility for implementing migration policy at the border. The National Migration Institute (INM) is responsible for controlling departures and entries. The INM and the Border Police coordinate the training of their staff with various international organizations, in fields relevant to effective and humane migration governance.

### **6.2. Areas with potential for further development**

Although the Interinstitutional Commission to combat Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking (CICESCT) publishes information on human trafficking, these statistics are not published regularly.

As there is no electronic platform to apply for residency before arriving in Honduras, this can only be done using a printed form, which applicants must present at an embassy or consulate.

## Key sources

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