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THE IMPLEMENTATION AND LEGACY OF MEXICO'S SOUTHERN BORDER PROGRAM

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The Implementation and Legacy of Mexico's Southern Border Program

Project Directed by
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The Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF) participated in the project through the pioneering Research Center, which studies migration throughout Mexico and works closely with FM4 Paso Libre. COLEF's involvement in this project created the possibility to continue fostering greater understanding around migration, provide information for decision makers working on these topics, and sensitize communities regarding migration.

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Table of Acronyms

AGA	General Customs Administration, Mexico (<i>Administración General de Aduanas</i>)
CAIMFS	Coordinating Mechanism for Comprehensive Attention to Migration for the Southern Border, Mexico (<i>Coordinación para la Atención Integral de la Migración en la Frontera Sur</i>)
CAITF	Center for Comprehensive Attention for Border Transit, Mexico (<i>Centro de Atención Integral al Tránsito Fronterizo</i>)
CDI	National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples, Mexico (<i>Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas</i>)
CISEN	Center for Investigation and National Security, Mexico (<i>Centro de Investigación y Seguridad Nacional</i>)
CNDH	National Human Rights Commission, Mexico (<i>Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos</i>)
COLEF	College of the Northern Border (<i>El Colegio de la Frontera Norte</i>)
CONAFE	National Council for Education Development, Mexico (<i>Consejo Nacional de Fomento Educativo</i>)
DICONSA	Rural Supply Program (<i>Programa de Abasto Rural</i>)
DIF	National System for Integral Family Development, Mexico (<i>Sistema Nacional para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia</i>)
FEADS	Office of the Special Prosecutor for Crimes against Health (<i>Fiscalía Especializada en Atención de Delitos Contra la Salud</i>),
FOMMUR	Microfinance Fund for Rural Women (<i>Fondo de Microfinanciamiento a Mujeres Rurales</i>)
GANSEF	High-Level Group on Border Security (<i>Grupo de Alto Nivel de Seguridad Fronteriza</i>)
GANSEG	High-Level Group on Security (<i>Grupo de Alto Nivel en Seguridad</i>)
INAES	National Institute for Social Economy, Mexico (<i>Instituto Nacional de Economía Social</i>)
INEA	National Institute for Adult Education, Mexico (<i>Instituto Nacional para la</i>

Educación de los Adultos)

INMUJERES	National Institute for Women, Mexico (<i>Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres</i>)
LICONSA	Social Supply Program for Milk (<i>Programa de Abasto Social de Leche</i>)
MAE	Mechanism for Foreign Support (<i>Mecanismo de Apoyo Exterior</i>)
PAN	National Action Party (<i>Partido Acción Nacional</i>)
PF	Federal Police, Mexico (<i>Policía Federal</i>)
PFS	Southern Border Program (<i>Programa Frontera Sur</i>)
PGR	Federal Attorney General, Mexico (<i>Procuraduría General de la República</i>)
PRI	Institutional Revolutionary Party (<i>Partido Revolucionario Institucional</i>)
PRODESFRO	Sustainable Development Program for the Border (<i>Programa de Desarrollo Sustentable de la Frontera</i>)
REDODEM	Documentation Network for Migrant Defense Organizations (<i>Red de Documentación de las Organizaciones Defensoras de Migrantes</i>)
SAGARPA	Ministry of Agriculture, Cattle, Rural Development, Fishing, and Nutrition, Mexico (<i>Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación</i>)
SAT	Tax Administration Service, Mexico (<i>Servicio de Administración Tributaria</i>)
SCT	Ministry of Communications and Transportation, Mexico (<i>Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Transportes</i>)
SE	Ministry of the Economy, Mexico (<i>Secretaría de Economía</i>)
SEDATU	Ministry of Agrarian, Land, and Urban Development, Mexico (<i>Secretaría de Desarrollo Agrario, Territorial, y Urbano</i>)
SEDENA	Mexican Army (<i>Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional</i>)
SEGOB	Ministry of the Interior, Mexico (<i>Secretaría de Gobernación</i>)
SEMAR	Mexican Navy (<i>Secretaría de Marina</i>)
SEMARNAT	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Mexico (<i>Secretaría del</i>

Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales)

SEP Ministry of Public Education, Mexico (*Secretaría de Educación Pública*)

SSA Ministry of Health, Mexico (*Secretaría de Salud*)

UIDPM Unit for the Investigation of Crimes for Migrants (*Unidad de Investigación de Delitos para Personas Migrantes*)

Foreword

The Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs has established interdisciplinary research on policy problems as the core of its educational program. A major element of this program is the nine-month policy research project, in the course of which one or more faculty members direct the research of ten to twenty graduate students of diverse disciplines and academic backgrounds on a policy issue of concern to a government or nonprofit agency. This “client orientation” brings the students face to face with administrators, legislators, and other officials active in the policy process and demonstrates that research in a policy environment demands special knowledge and skill sets. It exposes students to challenges they will face in relating academic research, and complex data, to those responsible for the development and implementation of policy and how to overcome those challenges

The curriculum of the LBJ School is intended not only to develop effective public servants, but also to produce research that will enlighten and inform those already engaged in the policy process. The project that resulted in this report has helped to accomplish the first task; it is our hope that the report itself will contribute to the second.

Finally, it should be noted that neither the LBJ School nor The University of Texas at Austin necessarily endorses the views or findings of this report.

Angela Evans
Dean

Executive Summary

Over the last two decades, Mexico has enacted multiple domestic programs and international initiatives to manage the movement of migrants and illicit goods across its southern border states. In July 2014, Mexico launched its most recent major initiative, the Southern Border Program (*Programa Frontera Sur*), amid the arrival of an unprecedented number of Central American minors traveling through Mexico to the U.S.-Mexico border. This report provides an analysis of Mexico's Southern Border Program, setting it within a historical context, describing the program and its consequences, and examining its legacy.

The Southern Border Program had two stated objectives: 1) protect migrants who entered Mexico, and 2) manage migration with the aim of promoting security and prosperity in the country's southern border states. In practice, the government focused its resources on achieving the second goal, boosting the numbers of apprehensions and deportations throughout the region. The Southern Border Program also affected Central Americans' security in their journey to the United States. As Mexico increased its enforcement operations, the number and rate of crimes against migrants rose. Migrants also changed how they traveled through Mexico, shifting to more remote routes, relying more heavily on paid guides to help them on their journey, and abandoning traditional forms of transportation, such as the train known as *La Bestia*.

Previous studies have formed conclusions about the Southern Border Program from anecdotes and raw numbers. This report sought to determine if the sharp rise in operations, apprehensions, personnel, and crimes against migrants during the program's peak was entirely the result of the program's policies, or if these numbers had also increased proportionally to the growing number of Central Americans migrating through Mexico. To examine this question, the authors developed a model to estimate the number of Central American migrants leaving their home countries for Mexico and the United States. Ultimately, the model found that enforcement levels and other developments appear to be due to factors beyond evolving migration patterns.

Though Mexican government documents indicate that the Southern Border Program still exists, many of its most prominent features generally lasted only a year or two at most. Since 2015, operations and apprehensions have declined to approximately pre-Southern Border Program levels. Crimes against migrants have also dropped, suggesting an inverse relationship between enforcement operations and migrant safety. Meanwhile, other effects of the program have endured. Migrants continue to use guides at higher rates and avoid traveling by train.

This report concludes with policy recommendations that seek to regularize migration in Mexico, clarify the legality of joint operations, improve the program's public transparency, and strengthen the humanitarian goals originally laid out by the Southern Border Program.

Chapter 1: History of Mexico's Southern Border and Migration Flows

This chapter provides an overview of Mexico's immigration policies and a short history of Central American transit migration through the country. It begins in the nineteenth century and continues through the years immediately preceding the Southern Border Program.¹

Formation of Mexico's Southern Border and Early Immigration Policies

For more than a century, Mexico and Guatemala have maintained a peaceful and open border. Following their 1821 independence from Spain, the two countries engaged in 80 years of territorial disputes. This ended in 1902, when they finalized their national boundaries. However, even with national lines drawn, Mexico's southern region remained culturally and economically fluid, as goods and people passed easily between countries. Indigenous communities retained strong kinship ties on both sides of the border, and workers also crossed seamlessly, with the Mexican coffee industry relying on Guatemalan seasonal workers.¹

Throughout the nineteenth and well into the twentieth century, migration to Mexico remained relatively low.ⁱⁱ Since its independence, Mexico had encouraged European immigration as a means to modernize, grow, and "whiten" its population.ⁱⁱⁱ Between 1895 and 1910, 140,000 Europeans and North Americans arrived in Mexico, where they held privileged social and economic positions as landowners and merchants.^{iv} By comparison, during this time period, approximately 41,000 Guatemalans migrated to Mexico as refugees fleeing regional violence.^{2v}

This era of open border policies ended with the Mexican Revolution of 1910-1920. Intent on protecting native Mexicans from foreign exploitation, Mexico's Constitution of 1917 segregated native-born citizens from both noncitizens and naturalized citizens and stripped foreigners of their rights.^{vi} The Constitution prohibited immigrants from participating in Mexico's public security forces, public service offices, and public political discourse. It also promoted workplace discrimination against foreigners, allowed private citizens to arrest unauthorized immigrants, and held that foreigners could be expelled from Mexico without due process.^{vii}

¹ When this report uses the term "Central Americans," it is referring to citizens of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala—the three largest sending countries for migrants to Mexico and the United States.

² Many European and North American arrivals ultimately stayed only briefly in Mexico, making no attempt to assimilate with the Mexican population. Nearly 20,000 Chinese and Japanese citizens also arrived during this period.

Criminalization of Immigration and Central American Displacement

A domestic population boom, an influx of highly skilled immigrants, unemployment, and increased Mexican emigration to the United States, prompted Mexico's 1974 General Law of Population, which addressed migration to, from, and through Mexico.^{viii} The law concluded a long period of increasingly restrictive immigration reforms that initially targeted Asian and poor immigrants, and extended the restrictions to include almost all immigrants.^{ix} The General Law of Population drastically limited immigration within Mexico and imposed criminal penalties on unauthorized immigrants. Foreigners caught entering the country without permission faced up to two years imprisonment, and those caught reentering the country after a previous deportation faced up to ten years.^x Mexican authorities at the state, local, and federal levels were also required to ask foreigners for proof of their lawful immigration status. Although rarely enforced, these provisions allowed corrupt Mexican officials to extort migrants through threats of extended jail time.^{xi}

Despite these restrictions, the first major Central American migration wave through Mexico's southern border occurred in the 1980s, with Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees fleeing state-sponsored killings and other human rights atrocities committed in their home countries.^{xii} Fleeing a genocide that ultimately killed over 200,000, indigenous Mayan Guatemalans were the first to arrive in Mexico. Between 1981 and 1984, more than 200,000 Guatemalans entered southern Mexico, many settling in local communities or refugee camps managed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).^{xiii} Though Mexico largely tolerated the refugees' presence, it did not offer them legal status and occasionally enacted mass deportations.^{xiv}

Individuals from El Salvador also began arriving in southern Mexico, fleeing a 12-year civil war between Marxist guerrillas and a right-wing government that ultimately claimed 75,000 lives. The United States played an active role in the conflict, providing financial support and military training for the Salvadoran government, whose armed forces were responsible for 85 percent of the killings, kidnappings, and torture that occurred during the war.^{xv} The majority of Salvadorans who fled did not stay in Mexico, but continued on to the United States and Canada, contributing to the trend of increased transit migration through Mexico. Between 1981 and 1990, hundreds of thousands of Salvadorans entered the United States without authorization.^{xvi}

Militarization of Mexico's Southern Border States and Central America Migration

During the 1990s, Mexico continued to take steps to control migration in its southern states. In 1993, Mexico established the National Institute of Migration (*Instituto Nacional de Migración*, INM).^{xvii} INM was located within Mexico's Ministry of the Interior (*Secretaría de Gobernación*, SEGOB), and was the responsible agency for enforcing new migration restrictions and regulating "the entry, stay, voluntary exit, and forced expulsion of foreigners in Mexico."^{xviii}

In 1994, Mexico's southern states gained the attention of national security forces when indigenous communities formed the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (*Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional*) to protest the socioeconomic oppression of Mexico's indigenous peoples.^{xxix} Rafael Sebastián Guillén Vicente, also known as Subcomandante Marcos, led the Zapatistas' rebellion against the Mexican government and took control of several Chiapas villages by force.^{xx} Though the conflict itself lasted roughly two weeks, Mexico responded to the confrontation by increasing the military's presence in the southern border region. By 1999, Mexico had stationed approximately 60,000 soldiers in Chiapas—an estimated one soldier for every three or four residents in some areas.^{xxi} The military also constructed new barracks and roads to facilitate troop movement into remote communities.^{xxii} Militarization dovetailed with the creation of the region's first border security program, Operation Seal the Border (*Operación Sellamiento*), which aimed to combat drug trafficking in Mexico's northern and southern border regions.

Even as Mexico's military presence increased in the southern states, migrants continued to transit through the region. The civil wars in El Salvador and Guatemala ended in 1992 and 1996, respectively, but the end of political violence did not stop Central American migration to the United States. Beginning in the 1990s and throughout the early 2000s, high poverty levels and a series of hurricanes and earthquakes led to a continuous uptick in migration among Guatemalans, Salvadorans, and, later, Hondurans.

It wasn't until 1999 when Honduran migration began in earnest. These numbers picked up after Hurricane Mitch, which made landfall in October 1998 and left 1.4 million people homeless.^{xxiii} The United States was quick to provide relief funding following the hurricane, and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Hondurans already in the country.^{3xxiv} However, it also took steps to prevent the arrival of displaced Hondurans at its border. Both Mexico and Guatemala assisted with these efforts, intercepting and deporting tens of thousands of Honduran migrants before they could reach the United States.^{xxv}

Mexico: Decriminalization of Migration (2000s)

By 2000, Mexico's relationship to migration largely centered on its own status as a major immigrant sending country to the United States. During that year, the number of Mexican-born immigrants in the United States had reached 9.2 million.^{xxvi} Former Mexican President Vicente Fox (2000-2006) sought to regularize Mexican migration to the United States and began working with former President George W. Bush on a comprehensive immigration plan.

³ Temporary Protected Status (TPS) is a form of temporary legal status for immigrants in the United States who cannot return to their home countries due to war or natural disasters. Issued by U.S. presidents, TPS must be renewed every two years, and can be revoked once a president deems it safe for immigrants to return to their countries.

In an alleged effort to show the United States that Mexico was a partner in migration issues, Mexico took steps in the summer of 2001 to stem Central American transit migration through the Southern Plan (*Plan Sur*). Several months later, on September 7, 2001, the United States and Mexico announced an agreement that signaled their first steps toward immigration policy reforms. Yet four days later, the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks ended these negotiations, beginning an era of heightened U.S. focus on border security and an increased crackdown on unauthorized migration.

In the early 2000s, Central Americans continued to travel through Mexico. In 2005, the number of Central American apprehensions along both the U.S.-Mexico border and the Mexico-Guatemala border spiked. These migrants were largely coming to improve their economic status and reunify with family members already in the United States. Soon after, in 2007, the number of apprehensions dropped steeply, a decline that is often attributed to the United States' economic recession.^{xxvii}

As the Mexican government continued to promote the rights of its undocumented citizens in the United States, it elicited criticism for its own highly restrictive immigration laws. In response to these critiques, Mexico passed a series of immigration reforms.^{xxviii} In 2008, amendments to its 1974 General Law of Population decriminalized migration. The legislation reduced unauthorized entry from a felony charge, punishable by two years in prison, to an administrative infraction, carrying a fine of MX\$5000 (approximately US\$260).^{xxix} The Mexican government also created a new visa program that allowed laborers from Belize and Guatemala to live in the southern border states for one year. Another visa allowed them to spend three days in Mexico for business or travel.^{xxx}

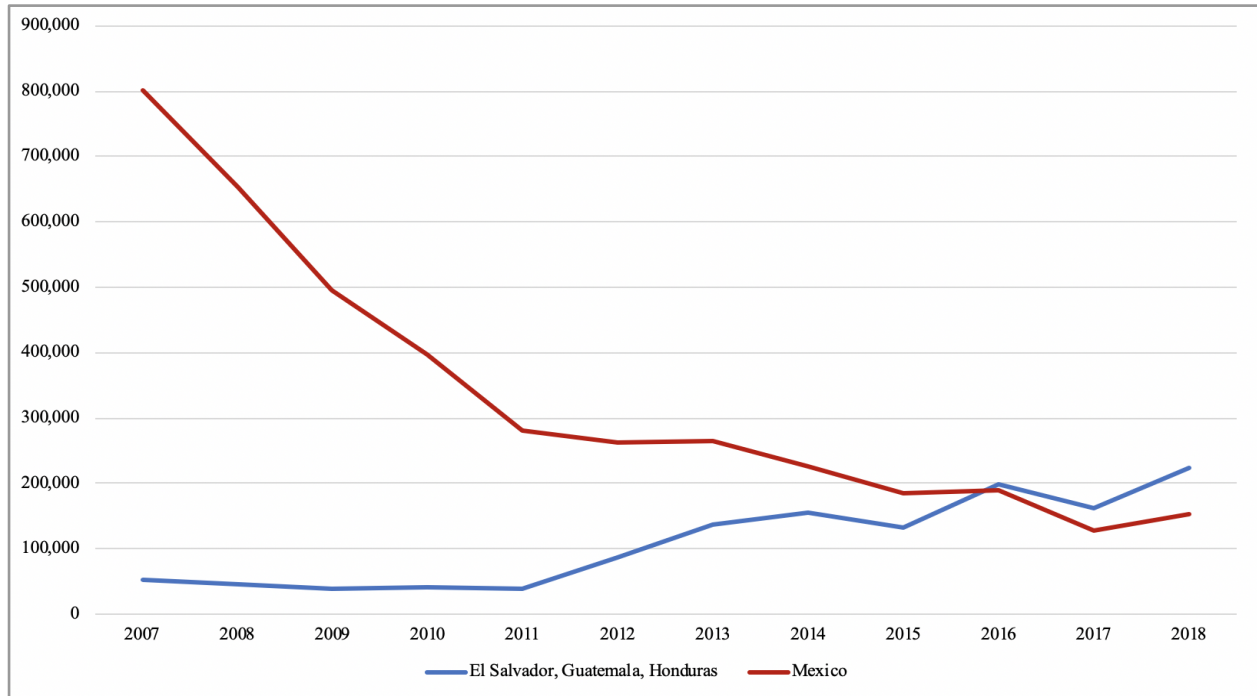
In 2011, Mexico passed legislation that addressed its role as a transit country for migrants. Following the 2010 massacre of 72 mostly Central American migrants in northeastern Mexico, the 2011 Migratory Law acknowledged the government's responsibility to protect migrants' rights. It outlined that undocumented foreigners would receive equal treatment under Mexican law, including the right to due process, education, and healthcare in Mexico.^{xxxi} The law took effect just as Central American migration began to outpace Mexican migration to the United States.

Central America: Gang Violence and Changing Migrant Demographics

By 2011, the number of Central American apprehensions began to increase at the U.S. border. These latest migrants were almost exclusively from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras, but their demographics had shifted. Between 2011 and 2012, a growing number of Central American women, families, and children began traveling through Mexico to reach the United States. In 2014, U.S. Customs and Border Protection apprehended roughly 61,300 families at the U.S.-Mexico

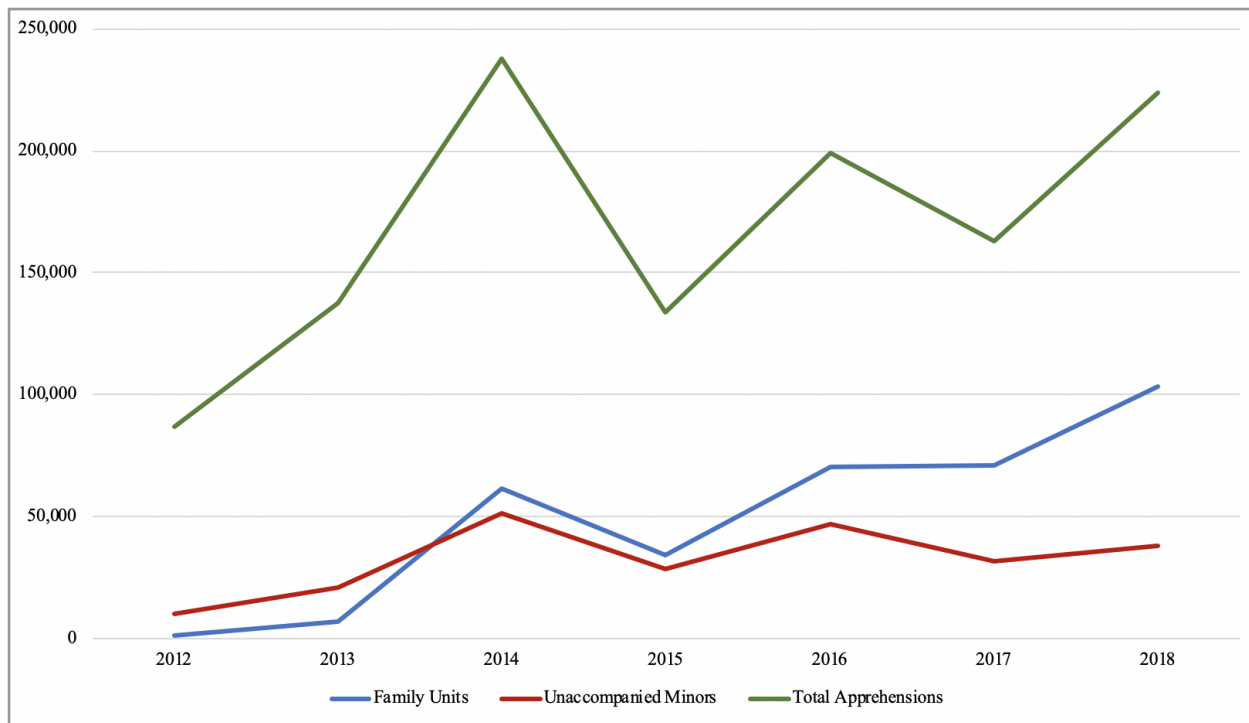
border, an eightfold increase from the previous year. The number of unaccompanied minors more than doubled, from 20,800 in 2013 to 51,700 in 2014.^{xxxii}

Figure 1
CBP Apprehensions at the U.S. Southwest Border by Nationality (FY2007-2018)



Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Figure 2
CBP Apprehensions of Central Americans at U.S. Southwest Border by Demographic
(FY2012-2018)



Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection

The motivations for these new migratory trends are complex and often overlapping. Widespread gang violence and domestic abuse have sent some migrants fleeing for their lives. Others seek economic opportunities, as the Northern Triangle region continues to experience some of the highest poverty levels in the world. Commodity prices have also pushed Central Americans into poverty, as a crisis in the Guatemalan and Honduran coffee industries—exacerbated by climate change—has caused many Guatemalans and Hondurans to emigrate in search of stable jobs.^{xxxiii} Still others transit through Mexico to reunite with family members in the United States, many of whom first entered the country following the political violence and natural disasters of the 1980s and 1990s. Overall, most often, Central Americans leave their countries for a combination of these reasons.

Chapter 2: Historical Overview of Mexico's Southern Border Security Policies

Mexico has a long history of implementing security programs along its southern border. As early as 1998, Mexico enacted programs to control migration, drugs, arms, and human trafficking in the region.⁴

Operation Seal the Border (*Operación Sellamiento*)

- **Years:** Operation Seal the Border began in February 1998^{xxxiv}
- **Leadership:** Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo, Institutional Revolutionary Party (*Partido Revolucionario Institucional*, PRI)
- **Objectives:** Operation Seal the Border aimed to combat drug trafficking in the Yucatán Peninsula, along the country's southern and northern borders, throughout the Baja California peninsula, and along the Pacific coast and Gulf of Mexico.^{xxxv}
- **Context:** Operation Seal the Border reportedly emerged from the 1996 Sustainable Border Development Program (*Programa de Desarrollo Sustentable de la Frontera*, PRODEFRO), which was a migration-focused program that aimed to better control and document migration flows, improve Mexico-Guatemala cooperation, assist migrant workers, and promote development in border communities. In reality, however, little was achieved through PRODEFRO, according to the Guatemala-Mexico Migration and Development Group (*Grupo Guatemala-México, Migración y Desarrollo*).^{xxxvi} Unlike PRODEFRO, however, Operation Seal the Border was more security focused in nature, relying on Mexico's security forces to combat drug trafficking.^{xxxvii}
- **Responsible Organizations:** Mexican Armed Forces (22,000 troops), Federal Police (*Policía Federal Preventiva*, PFP), and the Attorney General's Office (*Procuraduría General de la República*, PGR).^{xxxviii} These organizations comprised the 11 Regional Coordination Groups (*Grupos de Coordinación Regional*) and 31 Local Coordination Groups (*Grupos de Coordinación Local*), which were inter-agency groups responsible for interception activities under Operation Seal the Border.^{xxxix}
- **Funding:** Mexican government.^{xl}
- **U.S. Assistance:** The United States provided assistance in terms of information sharing.^{xli} For instance, Mexico implemented the Hemispheric Information System (*Sistema Hemisférico de Información*), which was a satellite surveillance system along Mexico's southern border. The Hemispheric Information System was used for information sharing between Mexico and the United States on drug trafficking.^{xlii}

⁴ See Appendix 1 for information on proposals for security programs along the southern border that were never implemented.

- **Implementation:** In addition to the Hemispheric Information System, the Mexican government deployed five X-Ray mobile search systems in southern Mexico to detect drug smuggling in Chiapas, Tabasco, and the Yucatán peninsula. Thirty-six special forces groups with 108 reconnaissance vehicles and 144 intercepting vehicles were also deployed in unspecified locations with the same overarching objective as the program.^{xliii}
- **Analysis:** President Zedillo’s 2000 State of the Union report said that the operations resulted in major narcotics seizures and negatively affected specific trafficking routes.^{xliv} While the program’s focus was on countering drug trafficking, an Attorney General’s Office official claimed in 2001 that it also allowed the authorities to combat “other crimes” carried out across the southern border.^{xlv} These were likely operations against human trafficking.^{xlvi}
- **End Date:** After 2001, there is no official documentation of Operation Seal the Border. In November 2001, however, an Attorney General’s Office official said that it was strengthening the program by increasing operation bases for combating drug trafficking and illegal immigration. In addition, the head of the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Crimes against Health (*Fiscalía Especializada en Atención de Delitos Contra la Salud*, FEADS) stated that the Attorney General’s Office, Army, and Navy would strengthen their efforts along the southern border and that Operation Seal the Border would be proposed again to also include the Public Security and Communication and Transportation Ministries. There is no indication that this happened.^{xlvii}

The Southern Plan (*Plan Sur*)

- **Years:** The Southern Plan entered into force in June 2001 and was implemented in July 2001.^{xlviii}
- **Leadership:** President Vicente Fox, National Action Party (*Partido Acción Nacional*, PAN)
- **Objectives/Context:** The Southern Plan aimed to stem Central American migration by improving inspection and immigration checkpoints at the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, along the Gulf of Mexico, and on the Pacific coast.^{xlix} In addition, the plan focused on developing interagency cooperation across INM, the Federal Police, the Attorney General’s Office, and other government agencies to combat organized crime, corruption, and illicit trafficking of migrants, narcotics, and other goods.¹

The Safe and Orderly Repatriation Plan (*Plan de Repatriación Segura y Ordenada*) was the pilot program for the Southern Border Plan. The Safe and Orderly Repatriation Plan lasted only fifteen days: June 5 to June 20, 2001.^{li} Under the Safe and Orderly Repatriation Plan, INM officials took apprehended Guatemalan, Honduran, and Salvadoran migrants to its control center in Tapachula. The Central American migrants were often taken to Guatemala through the El Carmen border crossing and Tecún Umán.^{lii} They were then

transported by bus through Guatemala to the border with their home country.^{liii} The campaign was coordinated with Guatemala's We Will Overcome (*Venceremos*) 2001 program.^{liv} As part of the joint agreement, Guatemalan authorities would return its own nationals to their hometowns. INM held migrants from non-Northern Triangle countries at a detention center located in Iztapalapa in Mexico State before sending them back to their countries via airplane or boat.^{lv}

- **Responsible Organizations:** INM was the primary organization responsible for the Southern Plan, although the Federal Police, Army, and Navy also contributed.^{lvi}
- **Funding:** US\$11 million from the Mexican Government, which included US\$9.9 million for deportations.^{lvii}
- **U.S. Assistance:** The United States provided US\$11 million to improve checkpoints and to provide Grupo Beta with additional personnel and equipment. Housed under INM, Grupo Beta's stated purpose is to provide migrants with humanitarian aid without engaging in enforcement activities. Some allege that the campaign was used as a bargaining chip with the United States to promote better treatment for Mexican migrants in the United States in exchange for stemming the flow of Central American migrants into the United States.^{lviii}
- **Implementation:** Between June and September 2001, the Mexican government deployed thousands of soldiers and police officers to the southern border region, increased maritime patrolling, and added migration control centers along the border with Guatemala and Belize.^{lix} Mexico established two security belts—the first belt from Chiapas to Tabasco, containing five checkpoints, and the second from Oaxaca to Veracruz, containing six checkpoints. All of the checkpoints were strategically situated at main transit points on roads and train tracks and operated by the INM, the Federal Police, and the Army.^{lx} Maritime operations were also conducted as part of Southern Plan.^{lxi}

The Mexican government conducted large-scale, yet discrete, operations along the southern border and in the bottlenecked Isthmus of Tehuantepec, resulting in 6,000 deportations to Guatemala. Some 3,000 of these individuals were then returned to Nicaragua, El Salvador, and elsewhere in the region as part of Guatemala's 2001 We Will Overcome program.

- **Analysis:** The Southern Plan was viewed as one of the largest operations against irregular migration in Mexico.^{lxii} It came at a time of heightened anti-migrant rhetoric in Mexico that often associated migrants with illicit activities such as trafficking, organized crime, and terrorism.^{lxiii} Yet, the anti-migrant narrative and the crackdown from authorities put migrants more at risk of being victims to the crimes that they were accused of committing.^{lxiv} Migration from Central America declined during Southern Plan, although the exact causal factors are unclear—given security measures, economic changes, increased U.S. border security, more expensive smugglers, and heightened anti-immigrant rhetoric in the United States following the September 11th attacks.^{lxv}

- **End Date:** The Southern Plan concluded in 2003.^{lxvi}

High-Level Group of Border Security (*Grupo de Alto Nivel de Seguridad Fronteriza*) High-Level Group on Security (*Grupo de Alto Nivel en Seguridad*)

- **Year:** October 2002^{lxvii}
- **Leadership:** President Vicente Fox, PAN
- **Objectives/Context:** In an effort to improve bilateral cooperation on border security and intelligence sharing, Mexico and Guatemala created the High-Level Group of Border Security (*Grupo de Alto Nivel de Seguridad Fronteriza*, GANSEF).^{lxviii}
- **Responsible Organizations:** GANSEF was coordinated by the Guatemalan Ministry of Governance and Office of Strategic Analysis and Mexico's SEGOB and Center of Investigation and National Security (*Centro de Investigación y Seguridad Nacional*, CISEN).^{lxix}
- **Funding:** Mexico and Guatemala^{lxx}
- **Execution/Implementation:** During its first binational meeting, GANSEF created specialized groups for migration, human rights and border issues; public security; international terrorism; organized crime and judicial cooperation; and border customs.^{lxxi}
- **Analysis:** In 2008, the group changed its name to High-Level Group on Security (*Grupo de Alto Nivel en Seguridad*, GANSEG).^{lxxii} It appears that the group has met over 15 times. However, beyond re-stating their original objectives in these meetings, it is unclear based on publicly available information what specific progress the group has achieved on improving bilateral cooperation since its establishment.^{lxxiii}
- **End Date:** GANSEG is still active.^{lxxiv}

Three Layer System (2014 - Prior to the Southern Border Program)

- **Year:** March 2014^{lxxv}
- **Leadership:** President Enrique Peña Nieto, PRI
- **Objectives/Context:** The Mexican government intended to improve security throughout the southern border region by implementing three "land and sea containment belts."^{lxxvi} The United States had been involved in talks regarding the system's creation as early as August 2013.^{lxxvii}
- **Responsible Organizations:** The checkpoints were enforced by Mexico's Federal Police, Army, and INM.^{lxxviii}
- **U.S. Assistance:** The three layer system was ultimately incorporated as part of the Southern Border Program, which received support through the United States Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) office.^{lxxix}
- **Implementation:** The three belts were fixed along geographical lines, located at strategic points in Mexico's southern border region. The first belt is located roughly 30 miles from

the southern border, the second is at 100 miles, and the third line runs through the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.^{lxxx} The three-layer system makes use of sensors and other technology to gather intelligence against criminal groups in the region.^{lxxxii}

- **Analysis:** In the summer of 2014, the three layer system was incorporated as part of the Southern Border Program.^{lxxxii} However, the Mexican government had already been considering establishing the security measures in the region prior to the Southern Border Program's announcement.
- **End Date:** The three layer system became part of the Southern Border Program, which does not have a clear end date.^{lxxxiii}

Chapter 3: Southern Border Program Structure

During the months before Mexico announced its Southern Border Program, tens of thousands of unaccompanied minors arrived at the U.S.-Mexico border. The United States developed a comprehensive response to the situation, which included collaboration with Mexico on decreasing Central American migration. On June 2, 2014, then-U.S. President Barack Obama declared the numbers of minors seeking entry into United States an “urgent humanitarian situation.”^{lxxxiv} Two weeks later, he spoke on the phone with former Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto to discuss the two countries’ “shared responsibility to promote security in both our countries and the region.”^{lxxxv} Soon after, former U.S. Vice President Joe Biden met with leaders of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Mexico to “agree on concrete ways...to stem the flow of migrants taking the dangerous trip to the United States.”^{lxxxvi}

On July 7, 2014, President Peña Nieto announced the Southern Border Program. With the Southern Border Program, Mexico promised to take on “greater global responsibility” for migration.^{lxxxvii} Peña Nieto stated that the Southern Border Program would have two overarching goals: 1) to provide greater protections for migrants entering and transiting through Mexico, and 2) to secure Mexico’s border with Belize and Guatemala to enhance regional safety and economic development.^{lxxxviii} Absent from Peña Nieto’s announcement was what many observers considered an implicit goal of the program: preventing Central American migrants—particularly unaccompanied minors—from reaching the United States. Yet while the increase in the number of unaccompanied minors arriving at the U.S.-Mexico border may have accelerated the Southern Border Program’s implementation, many of the announced policies were already in place or being developed.^{lxxxix}

To achieve its stated goals, the program contained five points of action:^{xc}

1. Regularize Migration. Peña Nieto’s first point of action aimed to create more formal, orderly border crossings by expanding and improving the issuance of temporary entry permits. During his announcement, Peña Nieto noted that many Guatemalans and Belizeans visited southern Mexico temporarily to work or see family. To regularize migration, the Southern Border Program promised to simplify application procedures for regional work and visitor permits and establish new application centers for faster processing.⁵ Under Mexican law, Regional Visitor Cards (*Tarjeta de Visitante Regional de México*) are valid for up to five years and allow an unlimited number of stays that last no more than 72 hours. The Border Worker Visitor Card (*Tarjeta de Visitante Trabajador Fronterizo*) permits workers to stay in border

⁵ The Regional Visitor Cards and Border Worker Visitor Cards were first established during the Felipe Calderón administration.

states for longer periods of time but requires a written job offer from an employer.^{6xc1} Although the permits were available only to citizens of Guatemala and Belize, at the time Peña Nieto said that he was discussing the possibility of extending them to citizens of El Salvador and Honduras.

2. Improve Border Security Infrastructure. The Southern Border Program promised to enhance migration control infrastructure along its border and within the southern border states. While there are 10 official border crossings along Mexico's southern border, there are approximately 720 informal crossings that account for 95 percent of the movement of migrants into Mexico.^{xcii} The program aimed to improve the southern border's ports of entry, mobile checkpoints, and biometric screenings of migrants, creating a technological platform that would allow Mexico to share migrants' digital fingerprints, photographs, and other identifying information with Guatemala.^{xciii} According to Peña Nieto, it would provide new technology and equipment to immigration agents in the border region, reinforce the Southern Border Program's mobile lines of control, and create additional mobile checkpoints to regulate irregular migration.

Large customs facilities known as Comprehensive Border Crossing Attention Centers (*Centros de Atención Integral al Tránsito Fronterizo*, CAITFS), were also an important part of the Southern Border Program's second point of action. These facilities house officials from INM, the Army, the Navy, the Attorney General's Office, and the Federal Police, among others and serve as interagency cooperation centers for screening northbound traffic and promoting southern border security.⁷

3. Protection of Migrants. For his third point of action, Peña Nieto focused on improving migrants' access to medical care and conditions at migrant shelters. He stated that the Southern Border Program would expand migrant medical centers throughout the border states, building off the model of five government-sponsored medical centers in Chiapas. He also noted that the CAITFS would include medical units.^{xciv} To improve these conditions, Peña Nieto pledged to work more closely with civil society organizations.

4. Improve Regional Coordination. The Southern Border Program's fourth point of action aimed to enhance cooperation among El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and the United States to regulate migrant movements. In his speech, Peña Nieto emphasized that the

⁶ Between 2014 and 2016, INM issued 112,050 Regional Visitor Cards and 15,391 Border Worker Visas to citizens of Guatemala and Belize.

⁷ In his speech, Peña Nieto stated that two of these facilities were already in operation and two were under construction. In 2013, the Huixtla CAITF was partially operating, and CAITFS reports that the facility became fully operational in 2015 (an INM transparency request indicates that it became operational in 2014). Two other CAITFS opened in 2015 and construction has not begun or remains limited for the remaining two facilities. The Enforcement Infrastructure section in Chapter 4 provides additional information.

Southern Border Program would include economic development initiatives in Mexico's border states and in the Northern Triangle (Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador). Social and economic development efforts would focus on 23 Mexican municipalities near Guatemala and one municipality near Belize.^{xcv} According to a 2017 Baker Institute Report, the Southern Border Program planned roughly 190 economic projects for states along the southern border, and five similar programs in Guatemala.^{xcvi}

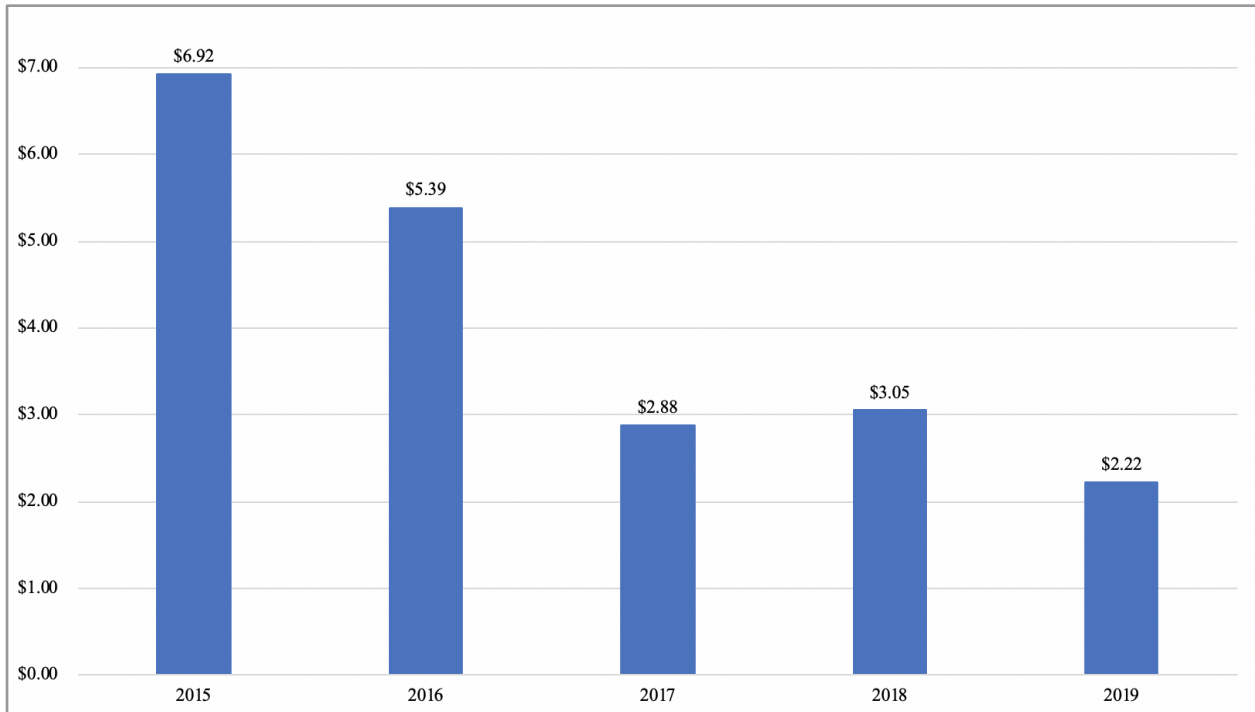
5. Improve Interagency Coordination. Finally, Peña Nieto created the Coordinating Mechanism for Comprehensive Attention to Migration for the Southern Border (*Coordinación para la Atención Integral de la Migración en la Frontera Sur*, CAIMFS). Under the direction of SEGOB, CAIMFS was charged with overseeing the implementation of the southern border migration policy, with two specific priorities: 1) to promote social and economic development and 2) to address migration in Mexico's 23 southernmost municipalities.^{xcvii}

Coordinating Mechanism for Comprehensive Attention to Migration for the Southern Border (CAIMFS)

CAIMFS was formed as an independent coordinating body within SEGOB, with the objective of coordinating the Southern Border Program. The new institution was originally staffed with 73 personnel, given a MX\$102 million (US\$6.9 million) budget, and charged with focusing on development work in the four states that make up Mexico's southern border: Campeche, Chiapas, Quintana Roo, and Tabasco.^{8xcviii}

⁸ A 2019 SEGOB Transparency Request, 0400400000817, outlines 73 official positions within CAIMFS. However, this differs from the 94 CAIMFS employees that is often cited, including in Pskowski's 2018 report. For detailed information on the 73 CAIMFS positions, please see Appendix 3.

Figure 3
CAIMFS Budget in Millions USD (2015-2019)



Source: COMAR transparency request

Overall, CAIMFS primarily focused on development activities, although it also coordinated activities at the CAITFs.^{xcix} Between July 2014 and June 2015, CAIMFS conducted 25 meetings with INM, the Army, the Navy, the Federal Police, the Attorney General’s Office, the Chiapas government, and train operators regarding the regulation and control of migration.^c The agency also contributed to the creation of Specialized Prosecutor's Offices for the Attention of Crimes Against Migrants (*Fiscalías Especializadas para Atención de Delitos Contra Migrantes*).^{ci} The three goals of these specialized offices were to: 1) reduce the number of crimes committed against migrants, 2) guarantee access to justice for migrants, and 3) establish coordination with federal and international authorities.^{cii}

In 2015, SEGOB produced a report that provided detailed information regarding CAIMFS’s activities and its results. This activities report outlined CAIMFS’s achievements and responsibilities, claiming that CAIMFS had completed 43 projects aimed at development in the southern border municipalities during its first year.⁹ These activities included infrastructure projects, meetings and seminars, and showing other Mexican officials around the border region.^{ciii} In August 2015 the Director of CAIMFS, Humberto Mayans, resigned from his position, and suggested that the agency would be integrated into other federal bodies. Following 2015, SEGOB

⁹ For example, on November 28, 2016, a CAIMFS-led campaign in the municipality of Benemérito de las Américas, Chiapas featured approximately 200 federal officials providing free medical, dental, and gynecological consultations. The campaign also rehabilitated public spaces and school campuses.

stopped printing CAIMFS-specific reports but has continued to include information on its social programs throughout Mexico, including CAIMFS's activities, in its annual activity reports.

U.S. Support for the Southern Border Program

As with previous Mexican southern border security policies, the United States has provided funding to support the Southern Border Program.^{ciiv} On July 8, 2014—one day after Peña Nieto announced the Southern Border Program—the Obama administration requested emergency supplemental appropriations from the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations. This request would allocate U.S. government funding for fiscal year 2014 to help address the arrival of unaccompanied minors along the U.S.-Mexico border.^{cv} Two days later, then-Counselor of the United States Department of State, Thomas A. Shannon, spoke in front of the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee about the president's emergency supplemental request.^{cvi} According to Shannon, the United States was poised to support the Southern Border Program through US\$86 million dollars in funds channeled through the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) office.^{cvi}

According to the Congressional Research Service, as of 2018, the United States had provided Mexico with more than US\$100 million in equipment and training to Mexican military forces to support its efforts to secure the southern border region.^{cviii} This funding was part of the Mérida Initiative, a bilateral partnership that began in 2007 to combat organized crime in the region, and was allocated through INL and the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Counternarcotics and Global Threats in the U.S. State Department.^{cix} The Mérida Initiative does not have any official connection with the Southern Border Program, but the United States has used the Mérida Initiative as a conduit for helping fund security measures in Mexico's southern border region.^{cx}

Beyond these general numbers, it is difficult to detail the United States' exact funding amounts in support of the Southern Border Program. According to an October 2018 Congressional Research Service report, the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Department of State have assisted Mexico by providing funds, equipment, technology, and training for operations throughout its southern border.^{cx} Figure 4 outlines some of the U.S. Department of Defense and Department of State's assistance to Mexico.

Figure 4
U.S. Agency Support for the Southern Border Program

U.S. Agency	Support
Department of State	<p>US\$32 million in equipment and training assistance, including: non-intrusive inspection equipment, kiosks, canine teams, and training for INM officials operating in the south.^{cxii}</p> <p>In 2014, the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) noted that at least two ports of entry on Mexico’s southern border contained U.S.-donated biometric data kiosks.^{cxiii} These kiosks are networked with Mexico City, which enable information sharing with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Automated Biometric Identification System (IDENT).¹⁰</p> <p>In FY2019, the U.S. Department of State’s Migration and Refugees Assistance foreign aid account recommended that the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (<i>Comisión Mexicana de Ayuda a Refugiados</i>, COMAR) receive US\$18 million. These funds are meant to help COMAR increase their processing capacity of asylum applications.^{cxiv}</p>
Department of Defense	<p>The U.S. Department of Defense has provided training and equipment to Mexican military forces.^{cxv} According to an October 2014 WOLA report, this equipment included patrol boats, night vision tools, maritime sensors, and helicopters.^{cxvi}</p> <p>Mexico used INL and DOD funding to install cellular communications towers to improve communication among migration authorities. As of June 2017, the program had constructed 12 towers on naval bases.^{cxvii}</p>

U.S.-funded equipment has mostly gone to INM. However, the United States has also provided non-intrusive inspection equipment, helicopters, patrol boats, information technology, and biometric kiosks to other government agencies, including Mexico’s General Customs Administration (*Administración General de Aduanas*, AGA), the Navy, the Army, and the Federal Police.^{cxviii} During the first year and a half after the Southern Border Program’s implementation, the United States provided Mexico’s Federal Police forces operating in Chiapas with equipment, technical assistance, and training in order to combat organized crime and migrant exploitation. Chiapas and Tabasco state police officers also received U.S. training.^{cxix}

¹⁰ IDENT aims to improve Mexico’s information on those crossing the border and serve as an early warning system for detecting individuals en route to the U.S. with ties to organized crime and terrorist groups.

Chapter 4: Southern Border Program Implementation

This chapter discusses the Southern Border Program's enforcement infrastructure, personnel deployments, and operations. The following sections focus on Mexico's immigration enforcement efforts in Chiapas, Tabasco, Oaxaca, and Veracruz, which are described in this report as the "southern border states." This geographic region also includes the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, which funnels all northbound movement into a smaller area than Mexico's physical southern border. Under the Southern Border Program, Mexico sought to intercept migrants at this narrow point in their journey, before they dispersed into central Mexico.

Enforcement Infrastructure

During the Southern Border Program's implementation, the Mexican government did not create new types of migratory enforcement infrastructure, but rather incorporated existing plans into the program and expanded them. One of these existing plans was the three-layer security system (discussed in the Historical Overview of Mexico's Southern Border Security Policies section), which aimed to detect and stop irregular migrants passing through Mexico's southern border region by taking advantage of the highway system and geographic choke points, particularly the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.^{cxx}

CAITFs

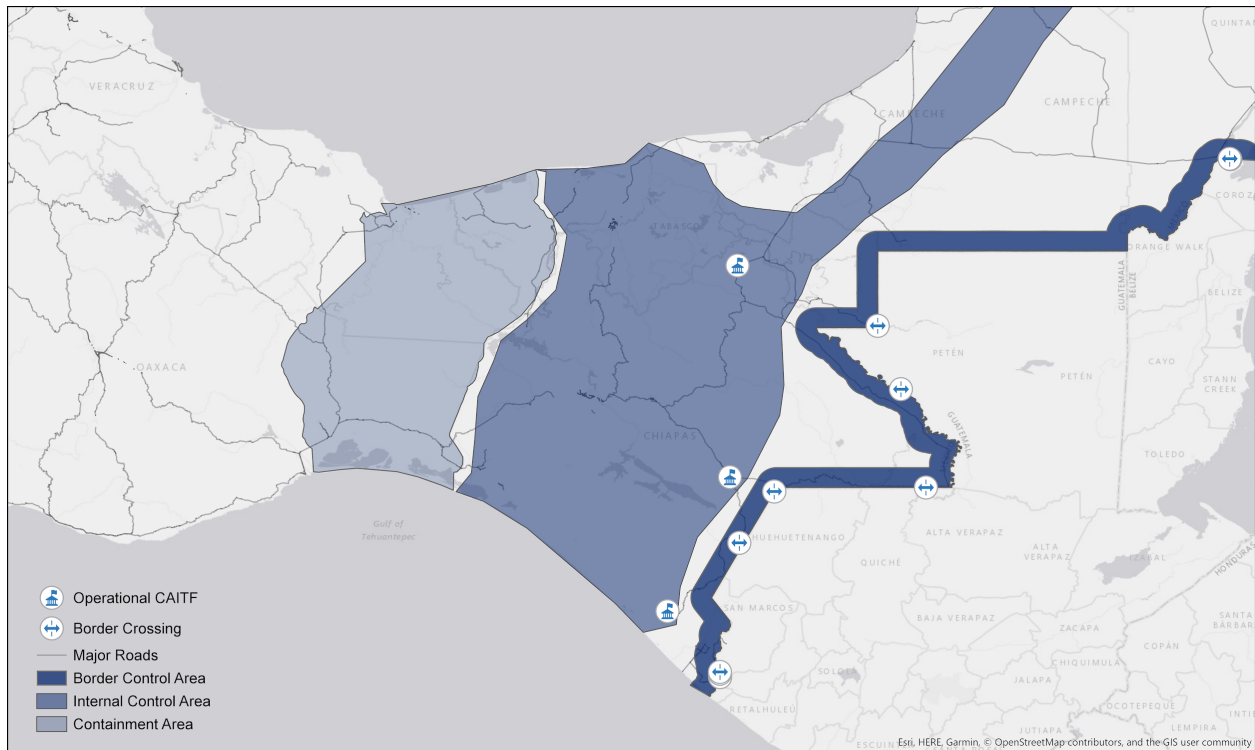
A major element of this three-layer system were the large customs facilities known as CAITFs, which established the second belt of control. CAITFs were constructed within about 50 miles of the border on strategic highway choke points and function as internal ports of entry. Although originally intended to be SAT customs checkpoints for inspecting goods coming into Mexico, the Southern Border Program transformed CAITFs into interagency cooperation centers.^{cxxi} A range of government actors operated at the CAITFs, including the Army, Navy, INM, Federal Police, federal Attorney General's Office, CISEN, AGA, agricultural and health inspectors, and municipal and state authorities.^{cxxii} CAIMFS was responsible for coordinating the agencies' activities at the CAITFs.^{cxxiii}

For detecting irregular migration, CAITFs would systematically funnel northbound traffic into the facilities, allowing INM to inspect buses or private cars to check documents of suspected undocumented individuals. Between 2014 and 2015, a total of 25 INM personnel were responsible for conducting migratory inspections at the three sites.^{11cxxiv} The map below shows the locations of the three CAITFs—Huixtla, La Trinitaria, and Playas de Catazajá—that became operational in

¹¹ CAITF Huixtla had 16 INM agents, CAITF La Trinitaria had 4, and CAITF Playas de Catazajá had 5.

2014 and 2015.^{cxxv} Details on two additional planned CAITFs are discussed in the legacy section of this report.

Figure 5
CAITF Facilities and Mexico’s Three-Layer System



Source: CAIMFS, INM, SCT, SEMAR, and SRE transparency requests

Checkpoints

The Southern Border Program relied on layers of permanent and mobile checkpoints within 100 miles of Mexico’s southern border to provide INM with multiple opportunities to check travelers’ immigration status.^{cxxvi} Fixed checkpoints were present in southern Mexico before the Southern Border Program’s implementation. However, in late 2014, a permanent checkpoint opened in Balacán, Tabasco, according to a Guatemalan consular representative in Tenosique.¹²

INM officials also increasingly used mobile checkpoints under the Southern Border Program. The U.S. Congressional Research Service reported that by 2016, Mexico had deployed more than 100 mobile highway checkpoints throughout Mexico’s southern border region as part of the program.^{cxxvii} These checkpoints, known as *volantas*, can be as rudimentary as impromptu road blocks using INM vehicles. INM moved the mobile checkpoints strategically throughout the

¹² It is possible that additional permanent checkpoints were constructed under the Southern Border Program, but INM transparency requests did not confirm this information.

southern border region to add an element of surprise for migrants and smugglers.^{cxxviii} INM operated these mobile checkpoints, at times with Federal Police support. Around this time, local groups in Chiapas reported more sophisticated equipment at mobile checkpoints and an increase in checkpoints on secondary roads.^{cxxix}

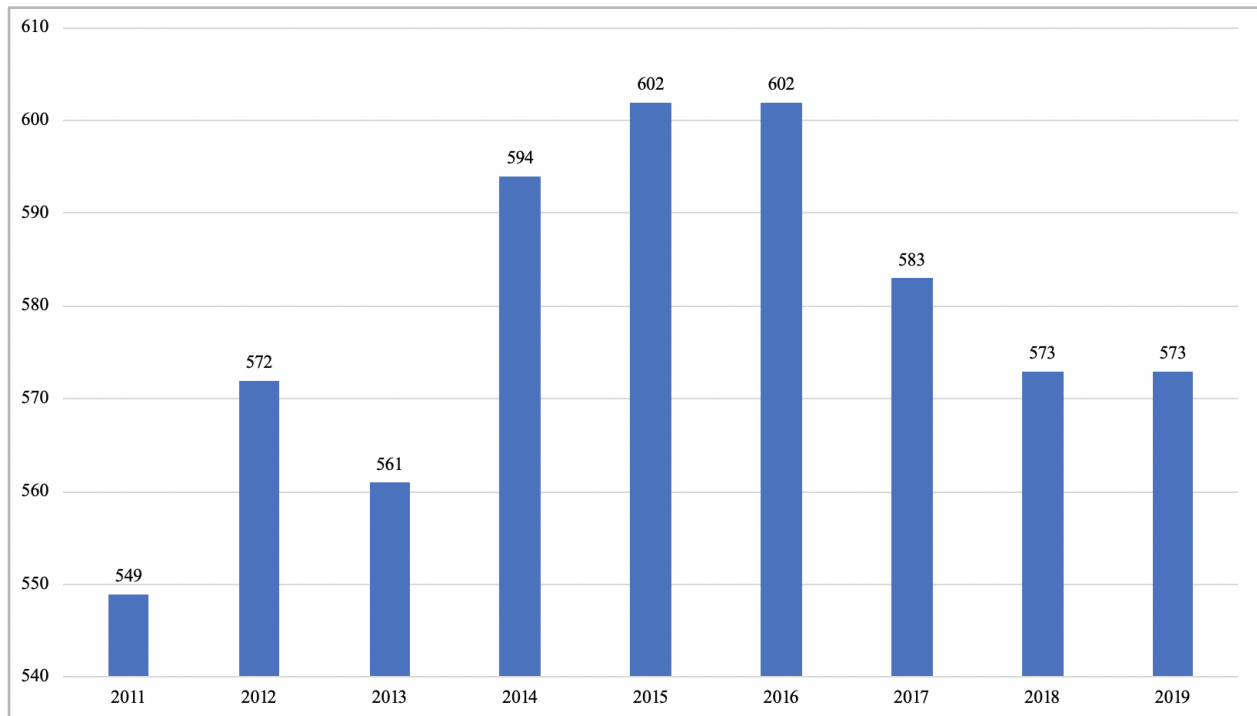
Naval Facilities

Similar to the CAITFs, the Navy was planning and constructing facilities before the Southern Border Program's announcement. However, these facilities became incorporated into the program. In 2014, there were approximately 12 Advanced Naval Stations (*Estaciones Navales Avanzadas*) under construction, and between September 2014 and July 2015, the Navy completed four of these stations.^{cxxx} The Mexican government's annual report for 2014 and 2015 said that these facilities aimed to "increase the effectiveness of measures against criminal groups that attack and injure the migrant population and inhabitants in the southeast region."^{cxxxi} Three of the bases were constructed in Chiapas (La Angostura Dam, Frontera Corozal, and La Libertad) and the fourth is in Chetumal, Quintana Roo.^{cxxxii} In addition, the Navy completed a large naval post at Port Chiapas in Tapachula, Chiapas, as part of its efforts to secure Mexico's southern border region.^{cxxxiii}

Personnel Deployments

After the Southern Border Program was implemented, the INM and Federal Police increased the number of agents and officers in Chiapas, Oaxaca, Tabasco, and Veracruz. This increase was meant to address the program's second stated objective of increasing security in the region. Figure 6 highlights the total number of INM agents in these four states from 2011 to 2019.^{cxxxiv}

Figure 6
Total INM Agents in the Southern Border Region (2011-2019)

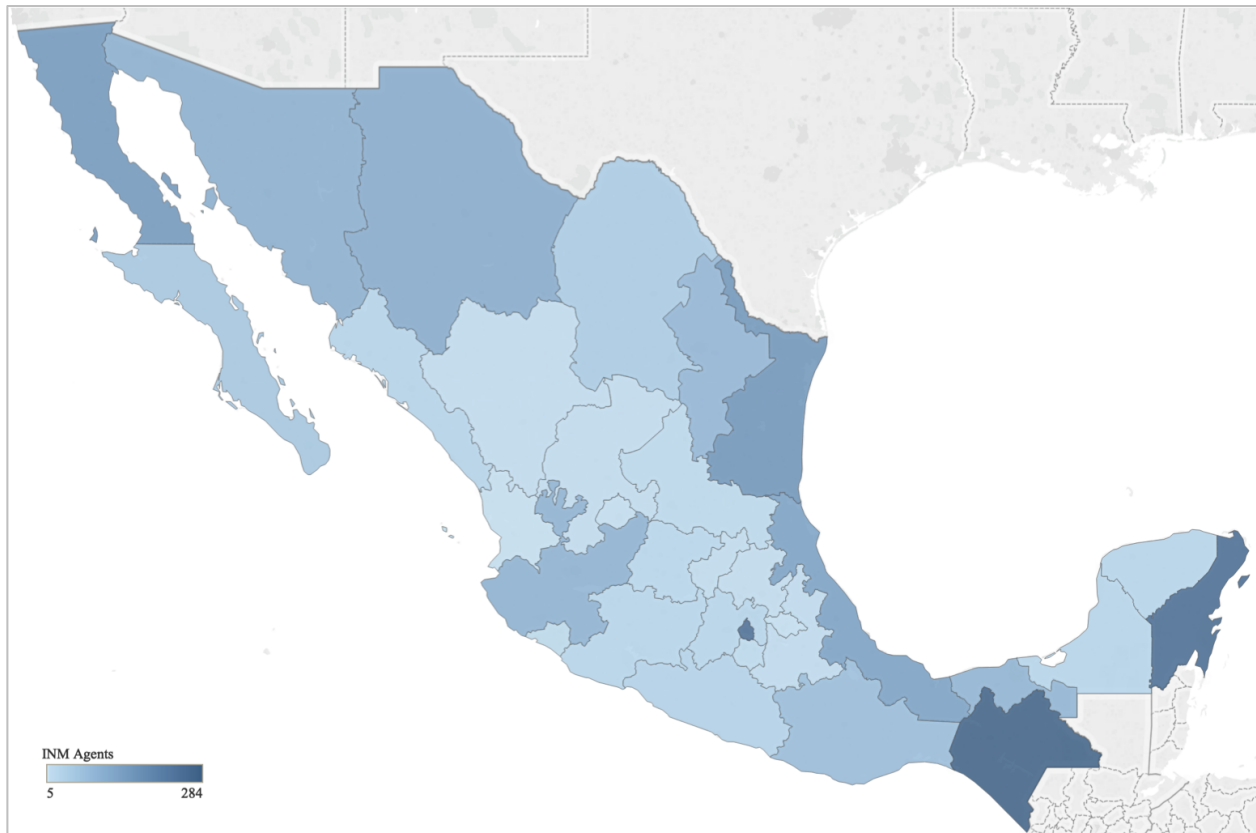


Source: SEGOB

SEGOB data shows that following the Southern Border Program’s implementation in 2014, there was an increase in INM agents in the southern border states. In 2011, there were 549 INM agents in the southern states of Chiapas, Oaxaca, Tabasco, and Veracruz out of 2,490 agents across Mexico.^{cxxxv} By 2015, this number had increased to 602 active INM agents in the region. These agents made up 26 percent of the 2,300 total INM agents active throughout Mexico that year.

The increase in agents was most evident in Chiapas, where the majority of migrants enter Mexico. In 2015 and 2016, there were 284 INM agents stationed in Chiapas, representing the highest number of agents in any Mexican state.^{cxxxvi} Since 2014, Chiapas has seen an increase every year in the number of INM agents operating in its territory. Between 2013 and 2014, there was a 12 percent increase in the number of INM agents in Chiapas.^{cxxxvii} Figure 7 shows the number of INM agents per state in 2015, with the darkest shaded states representing the locations where most INM agents operate.^{cxxxviii}

Figure 7
Number of INM Agents per State (2015)



Source: SEGOB

Mexico also deployed the Federal Police to support INM's migration enforcement efforts in the southern border states.^{cxxxix} Between July 2014 and November 2015, the Federal Police deployed several hundred Mexican Federal Police agents to Chiapas, particularly to the cities of Tapachula and Tuxtla Gutiérrez and on the main highways.^{cxl} Additionally, in September 2014, Mexico's Gendarmerie—a unit of the Federal Police—sent 100 members to Chiapas. However, the Gendarmerie's focus was on addressing violence and crime rather than stopping migration.^{cxli}

INM Operations

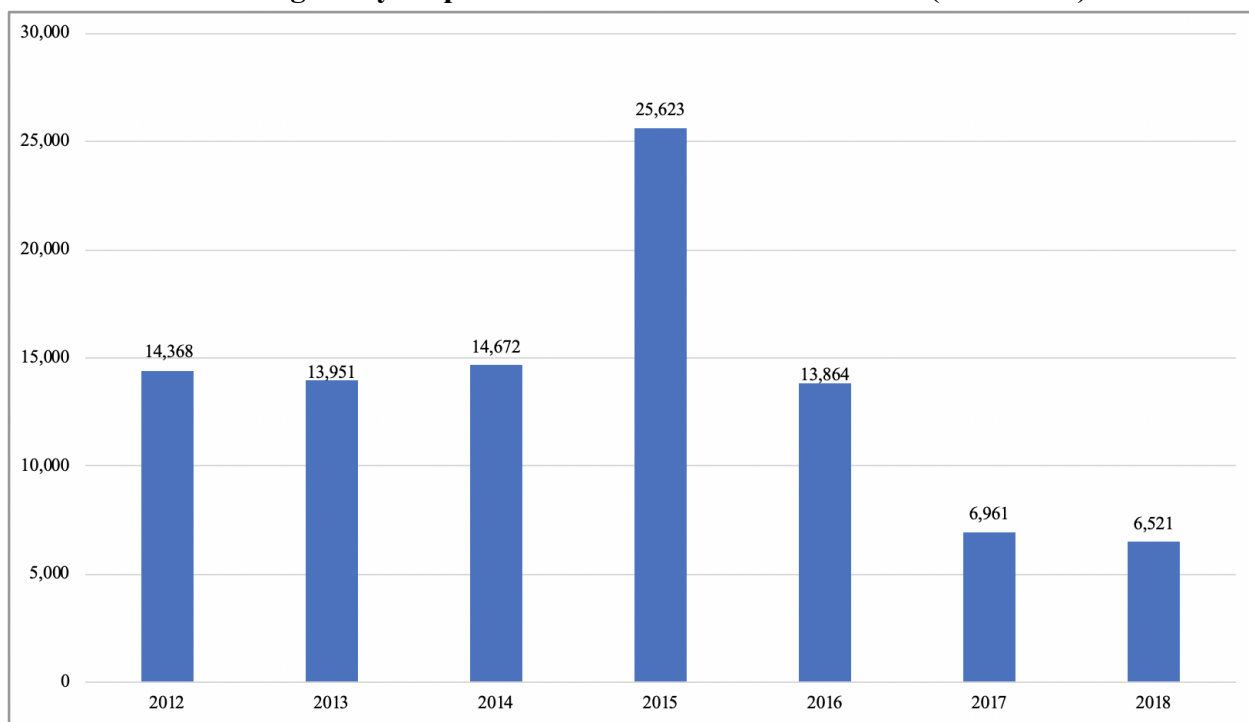
Following the Southern Border Program's announcement, the INM swiftly increased its enforcement operations in southern Mexico. From 2014 to 2015, the INM's expanded use of mobile checkpoints and increase in personnel allowed the agency to conduct nearly 11,000 additional operations. These operations generally targeted migration routes throughout the states of Chiapas, Tabasco, Oaxaca, and Veracruz.

INM operations can be divided into two main types of enforcement activities: migratory inspections (*revisiones migratorias*) and verification visits (*visitas de verificación*).^{cxlii} A migratory

inspection involves INM officers reviewing individuals’ immigration statuses at fixed and mobile checkpoints, train tracks, public spaces, and other areas within Mexican territory.^{cxliii} While a verification visit involves INM agents arriving at residences and businesses to verify foreigners’ legal status in Mexico.^{cxliv}

In 2015, at the Southern Border Program’s peak, migratory inspections increased sharply across Mexico’s southern border region. In 2012, two years before the Southern Border Program was announced, INM agents conducted 14,368 inspections in the southern border states.^{cxlv} In 2015, the INM conducted 25,623 inspections—nearly doubling 2012’s total. This upward trend persisted even after factoring in fluctuations in total migration levels. For example, in 2012, INM carried out nearly 8,400 inspections for every estimated 100,000 Central American migrants who were passing through the southern border states.^{cxlvi} In 2015, INM conducted more than 13,000 inspections per 100,000 migrants, the highest rate of migratory inspections to date.¹³

Figure 8
Total Migratory Inspections in Southern Border States (2012-2018)

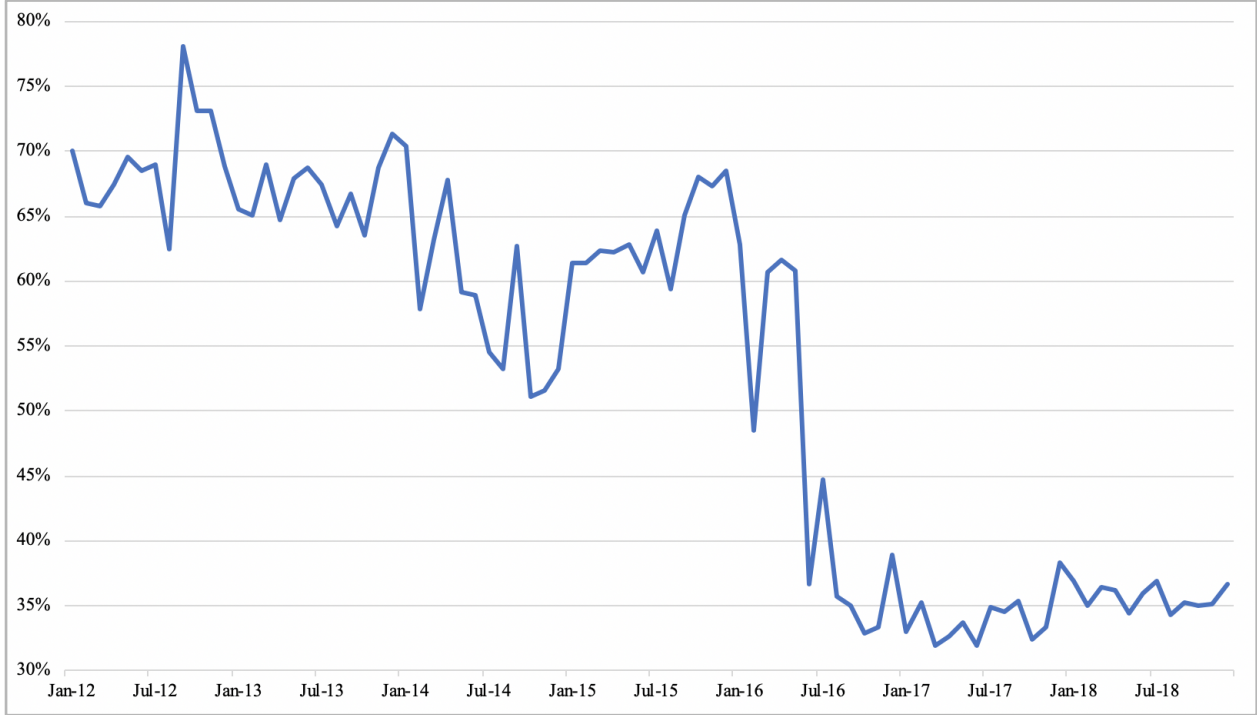


Source: INM transparency request, INM website

¹³ To determine these rates, the authors calculated the number of Central American migrants transiting through Mexico each year by developing a model that draws on a wide range of U.S. and Mexican migration enforcement data. For more information and access to the model, see: Stephanie Leutert and Sarah Spalding, “How Many Central Americans Are Traveling North?” *Lawfare Blog*, March 14, 2019, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/how-many-central-americans-are-traveling-north>.

These operations took place at a greater rate in the southern states of Veracruz, Chiapas, Oaxaca, and Tabasco than across the rest of the country. Between 2012 and 2013, INM conducted, on average, 68 percent of its migratory inspections within the southern border region. By 2014, the percent of operations had decreased, reaching only 58 percent. Yet, the following year, in 2015, INM once again picked up its operations in the southern states with roughly 64 percent of Mexico’s migratory inspections occurring in this region. In 2016, those numbers began a steep decline as INM started to shift its migration control operations to other parts of the country.

Figure 9
Migratory Inspections in Southern Border States as a Percent of Total Inspections in Mexico by Month (2012-2018)^{cxlvii}



Source: INM transparency request, INM website

When compared to migratory inspections, the Southern Border Program had a limited effect on verification visits. These increased only slightly in 2015 and 2016, when it conducted roughly 3,450 visits.^{cxlviii}

INM Joint Operations

During the Southern Border Program, INM agents, who do not carry arms, worked closely with Mexican security forces to control irregular migration. Although INM is the sole agency tasked with apprehending, detaining, and deporting unauthorized migrants, it may partner with other agencies on a temporary basis. Mexico’s 2011 Migration Law authorizes the Federal Police to support INM agents throughout the country, while the Navy may support INM operations in

coastal states.¹⁴ Both government bodies hold official agreements with the INM that describe their legal authority to participate in joint operations and, in the case of the Federal Police, detail the process that INM must follow to request assistance.^{15cxlix} While both agreements state that the participating agents must safeguard migrants' human rights during joint operations, neither document contains guidelines surrounding security officials' use of force. The 2011 Migration Law does not address the authority of the Army or state and municipal police agencies to participate in INM operations.^{16cl}

After the Southern Border Program was implemented, INM doubled the number of joint operations from 491 in 2014 to 1,074 in 2015.^{cli} The Federal Police provided the most migratory enforcement support, participating in more than 30 percent of all interagency operations between 2014 and 2017. Military forces participated in the second highest number of operations, with the Army and Navy engaging in 21 and 15 percent of joint operations, respectively. At times, these authorities outnumbered INM agents during joint operations.^{clii}

Yet, despite the higher numbers, joint operations continued to form the minority of INM enforcement actions under the Southern Border Program. In 2015, joint operations made up roughly 6 percent of INM's enforcement activities in Chiapas, Oaxaca, and Tabasco.¹⁷ Figure 10 shows each agency's participation rate in joint operations conducted in these three states between 2014 and 2017.

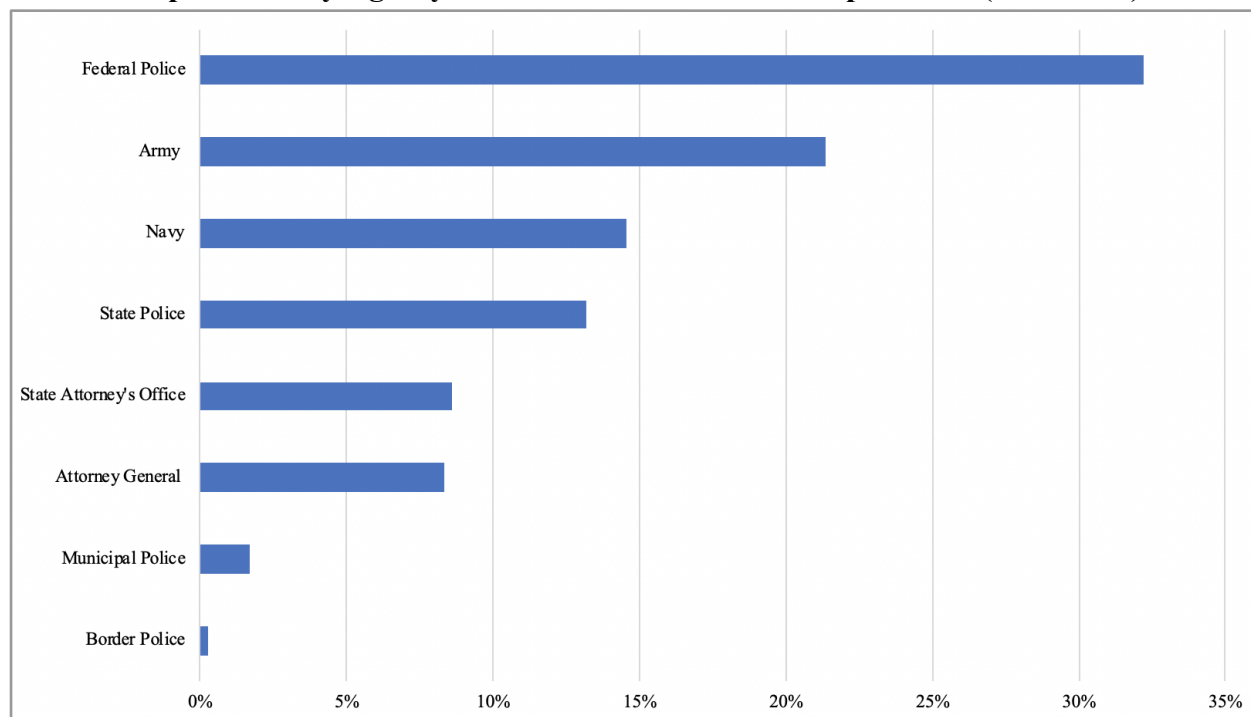
¹⁴ Articles 81, 96, and 105 of the 2011 Migratory Law authorize the Federal Police to support the INM in migratory enforcement operations, and Article 83 of the Implementing Legislation of the Migratory Law states that the Navy (SEMAR) can collaborate with migration authorities at maritime ports of entry but does not provide additional details. The Navy's authority to support the INM in coastal states stems from a 2006 joint agreement.

¹⁵ The Federal Attorney General's Office (PGR) also possesses an information-sharing agreement with INM, but the agreement does not address the PGR's participation in migration control operations.

¹⁶ Instead, these security agents may claim that their participation in INM operations was prompted not by migration concerns but by criminal actions committed by migrants.

¹⁷ Veracruz was excluded from these calculations because its joint operations data is incomplete for the years 2014 through 2016.

Figure 10
Joint Operations by Agency as a Percent of Total Joint Operations (2014-2017)^{18, 19}



Source: INM transparency request

The Southern Border Program’s migration control strategy focused much of its interagency operations on migrants’ rail travel. On August 1, 2014—less than a month after the Southern Border Program was announced—the INM began to raid trains boarded by migrants in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.^{cliii} These enforcement actions involved multiple agencies including the Federal Attorney General’s Office, Army, Federal Police, Navy, the government of Chiapas, and private railway representatives.^{cliv} With the support of the Marines and the Navy, INM agents reportedly removed migrants from cargo trains and prevented them from boarding the trains altogether. INM agents patrolled train routes, while marines erected physical barriers to block migrants from approaching railways.^{clv} Some of these operations were large-scale. According to Friar Tomas González, former coordinator of La 72 migrant shelter, at the program’s peak, as many as 100 agents carried out raids on a single train in Tenosique, Chiapas.^{clvi}

Although INM’s joint operations particularly targeted trains, agents also carried out operations at other points along migration routes. Migrants reported that INM and other agencies stationed patrols outside migrant shelters and raided migrants’ hotel rooms.^{clvii} INM agents also conducted operations at bus stations and increased the number of checkpoints along major highways. Under the Southern Border Program, the number of vehicles that authorities stopped for carrying irregular

¹⁸ Figure 10 includes joint operations within only Chiapas, Tabasco, and Oaxaca.

¹⁹ In Figure 10, “Border Police” refers to a 135-member subunit within the Chiapas state border police.

migrants rose by 10 percent in Mexico's southern states.^{clviii} Civil society groups have alleged that these enforcement actions involved racial profiling. They point to cases in which Mexican citizens were mistakenly detained by INM officials, who claimed that they could detect migrants by their "nervous behavior, their skin color and mode of dress, and above all their smell."^{clix}

Chapter 5: Southern Border Program Effects (2014-2015)

The Southern Border Program's changes to INM infrastructure, personnel, and operations created a series of effects for Central American migrants. These effects included increased apprehensions and deportations, changes in how and where migrants traveled in Mexico, the frequency with which migrants hired guides to pass through the country, and an increase in the average price of those guides. The most dramatic effects occurred in late 2014 through the end of 2015.

Apprehensions²⁰²¹

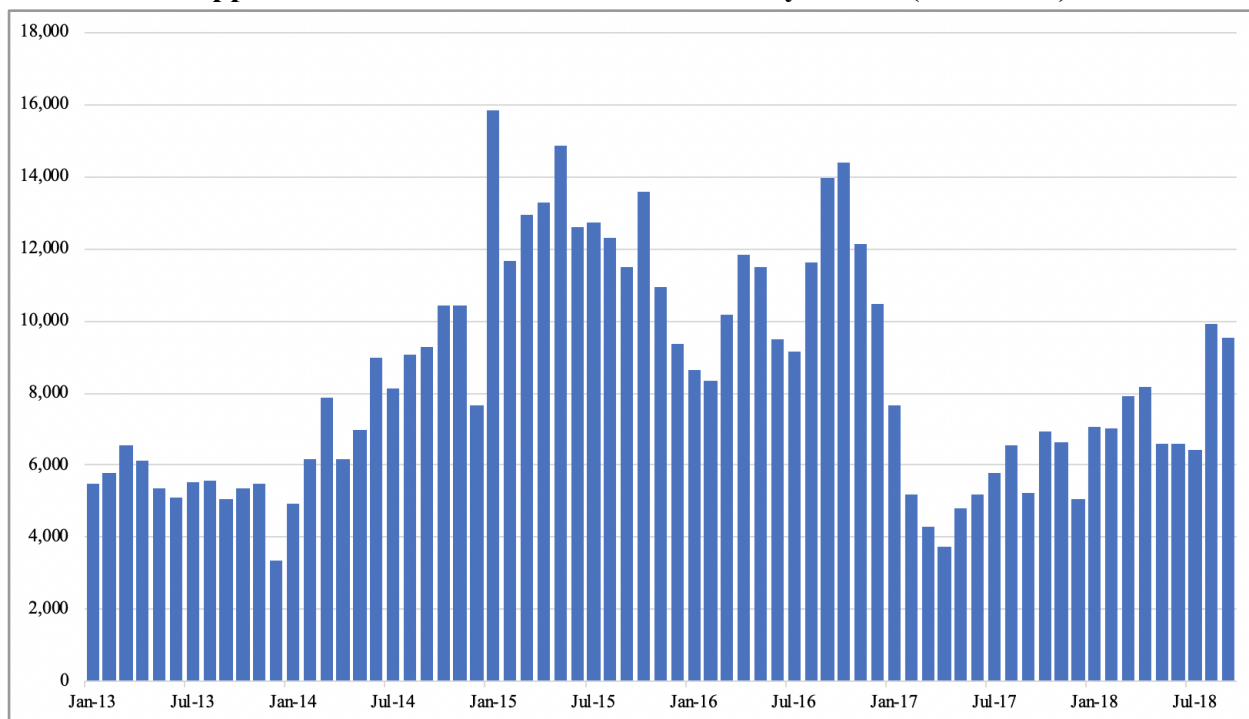
Due to the INM's increased number of checkpoints, personnel, and migratory operations, apprehensions of migrants in Mexico increased significantly under the Southern Border Program. This trend was particularly clear in Chiapas, Tabasco, Veracruz, and Oaxaca, and between 2013 and 2015, apprehensions rose by 134 percent in these four states alone—making up more than three quarters of total apprehensions across the country.²² Figure 11 shows the increase in apprehensions in the southern border states after the Southern Border Program's June 2014 announcement. After a brief dip in December 2014, apprehensions nearly doubled the following month and remained high through 2015.

²⁰ All data in this section (with the exception of cited CBP data) is from SEGOB's Boletines Estadísticos for 2012-2018. The following datasets were used for each year: "Eventos de extranjeros presentados ante la autoridad migratoria, según entidad federativa"; "Eventos de extranjeros presentados ante la autoridad migratoria, según continente, país de nacionalidad y entidad federativa"; "Eventos de extranjeros devueltos por la autoridad migratoria mexicana, según entidad federativa y tipo de resolución."

²¹ Deportations are not discussed in the apprehensions section because the majority of apprehended Central Americans are ultimately deported.

²² This totaled 86,807 additional apprehensions.

Figure 11
Apprehensions in Southern Border States by Month (2013-2015)



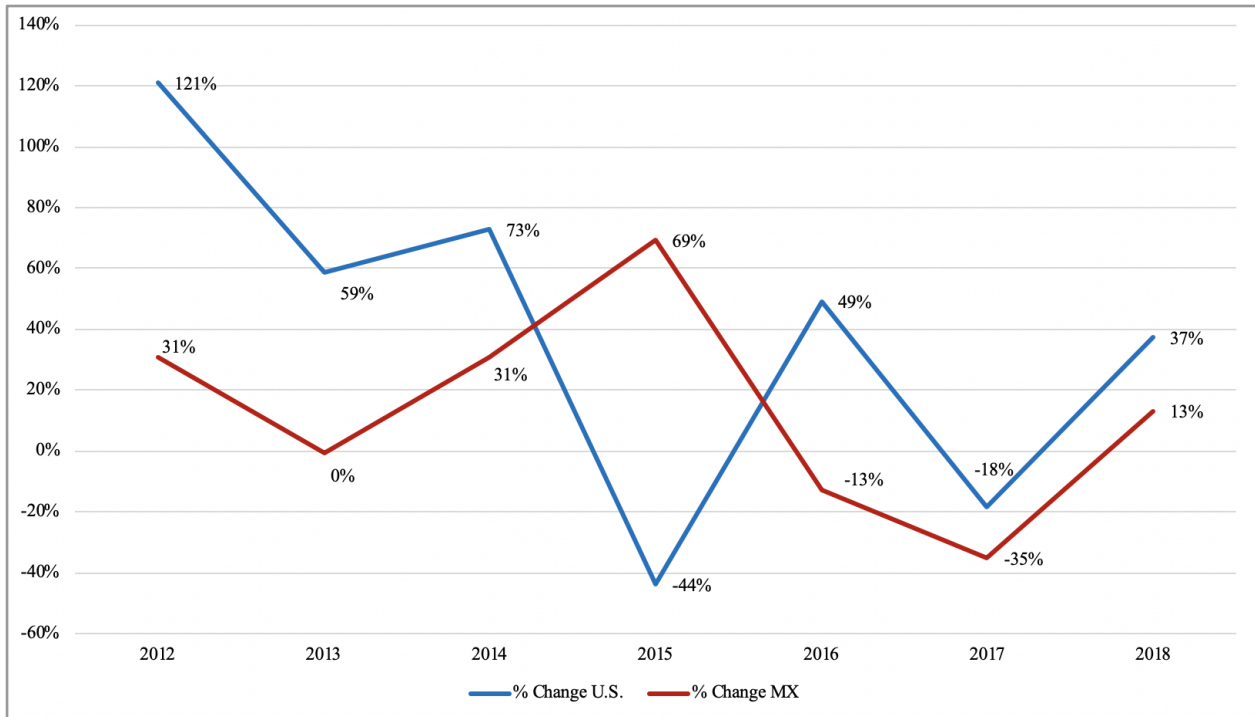
Source: SEGOB

These increased apprehensions appear to be from the greater number of INM operations, rather than an alternative explanation, such as a larger number of migrants passing through Mexico. Using estimates of Central American migration and calculating the rate of apprehensions in both the United States and Mexico per 100,000 irregular migrants, the data rules out this possibility.²³

Between fiscal years 2014 and 2015, apprehensions of Central Americans at the U.S. southwest border decreased by nearly 45 percent (see Figure 12). In Mexico, the number of apprehended Central Americans during this time period increased by nearly 70 percent. The data show an inverse relationship between enforcement actions in Mexico’s southern border region and the number of apprehensions at the U.S. border. While reducing the number of migrants arriving at the United States was never a stated goal of the program, this data suggests that the Southern Border Program did play a role in temporarily stemming migrant transit to the United States.

²³ To determine these rates, the authors calculated the number of Central American irregular migrants transiting through Mexico each year by developing a model that draws on a wide range of U.S. and Mexican migration enforcement statistics. For more information and access to the model, see: Stephanie Leutert and Sarah Spalding, “How Many Central Americans Are Traveling North?” *Lawfare Blog*, March 14, 2019, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/how-many-central-americans-are-traveling-north>.

Figure 12
Percent Change in Apprehensions of Central Americans at the U.S. Southwest Border versus Mexico (FY2012-2018)



Source: SEGOB, U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Migrant Travel

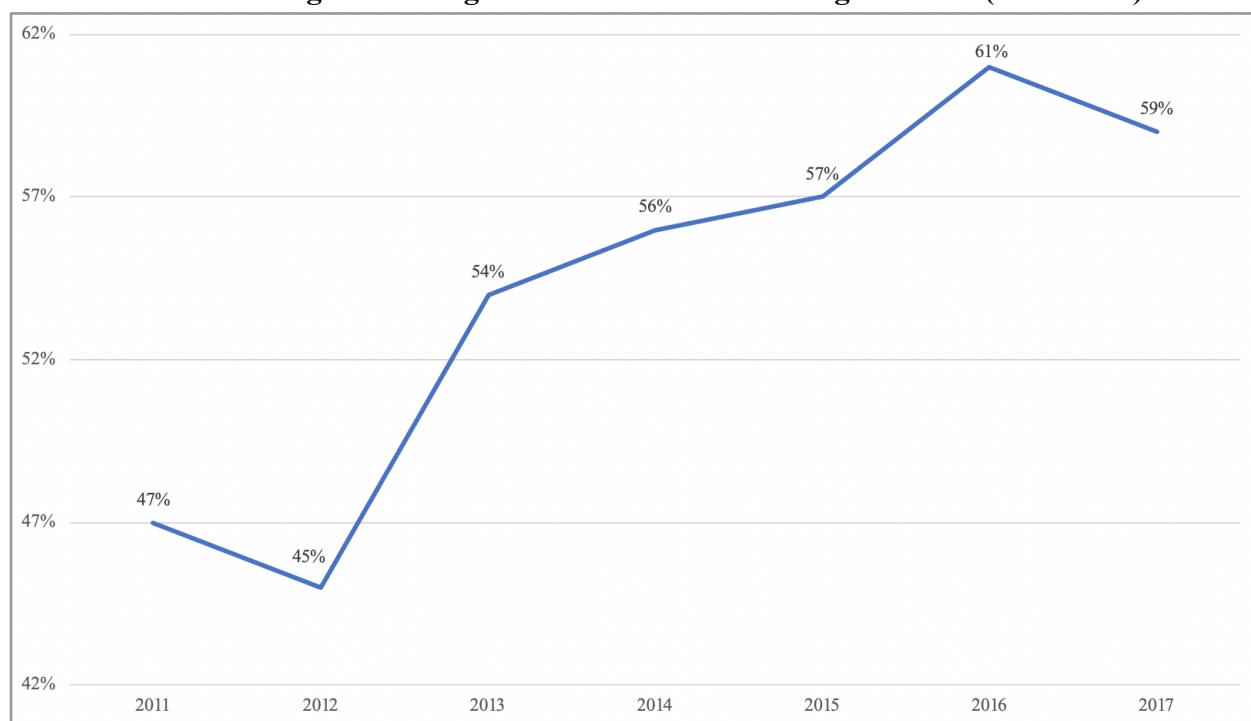
The Southern Border Program’s increased operations and apprehensions changed the way that some migrants traveled through Mexico. As operations began to increase along train routes and highways, migrants began to look for alternative and more isolated routes.^{clx} Broadly speaking, INM operations did not change overall migration routes. They did, however, create what the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) calls a “multiplication of routes.”^{clxi} The starting, middle, and end points of migrants’ routes stayed the same, but the pathways and transportation methods used along those routes diversified. These isolated routes can be more dangerous than traditional routes, given the absence of migrant shelters or civil society organizations that provide migrants with humanitarian assistance.^{clxii}

Along with this change in routes, migrants adopted different forms of transportation.^{clxiii} Survey data from the College of the Northern Border (*Colegio de la Frontera Norte*, COLEF) of Central Americans deported from the United States show that migrants’ use of cars, trailers, buses, and trains all decreased in 2014, likely due to increased INM operations.^{clxiv} The use of trains was already declining by 2013, but there was a particularly sharp decrease in 2014 for train use among Hondurans, with the percent using a train dropping from 41 percent to 25 percent.^{clxv} In 2015, the

use of cars, buses, and trailers as forms of transportation rebounded to above their pre-2014 levels, while train use never recovered to its earlier levels.^{clxvi}

As INM operations increased, migrants increasingly relied on guides.²⁴ These guides physically transport migrants across Mexico, helping them to pass through or circumvent checkpoints. To facilitate this transportation, these guides also pay bribes to corrupt government officials or criminal groups to help secure migrants' passage. From 2012 to 2015, the percent of migrants using guides increased from 45 percent to 57 percent, as seen in Figure 13. This figure is also likely an underestimate, given that this data comes from surveys of Central Americans deported from the United States, and does not include many families or unaccompanied children who use guides at higher rates and seek legal protections once they reach U.S. territory.

Figure 13
Percent of Migrants Using a Guide to Transit Through Mexico (2011-2017)



Source: COLEF

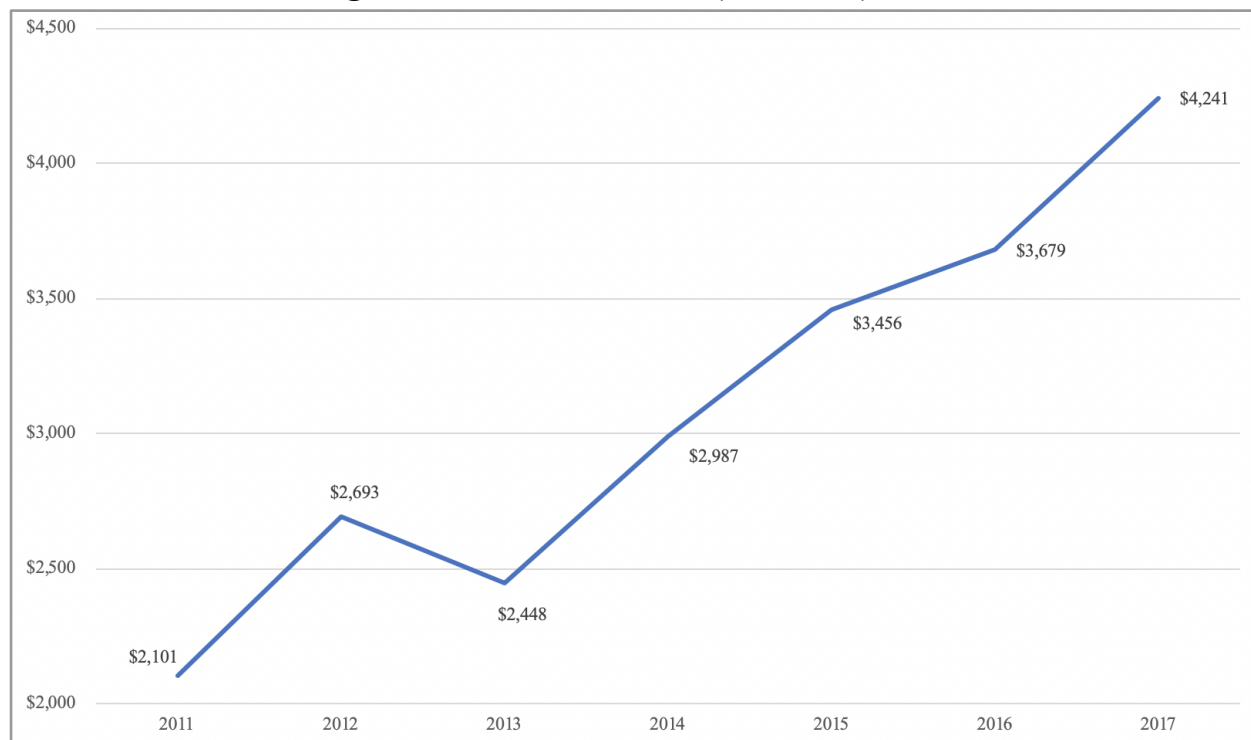
Along with the increase in people traveling through Mexico with guides, the price of these services increased under the Southern Border Program.²⁵ From 2013 to 2014 the price that Central Americans reported paying for a guide went up by 22 percent. One theory for why the cost of a

²⁴ Guides are also referred to as smugglers, coyotes, or polleros.

²⁵ Rodrigo Soberanes Santín, "El Plan Frontera Sur, Según Los Coyotes," *En el Camino* (blog), June 16, 2015, <https://enelcamino.piedepagina.mx/ruta/el-plan-frontera-sur-segun-los-coyotes/>.

guide may have increased after the Southern Border Program’s implementation is that guides had to pay higher bribes to officials and these costs were passed down to migrants.^{clxvii}

Figure 14
Average Cost of a Guide in USD (2011-2017)^{26, 27, clxviii}



Source: COLEF

Crimes Against Migrants

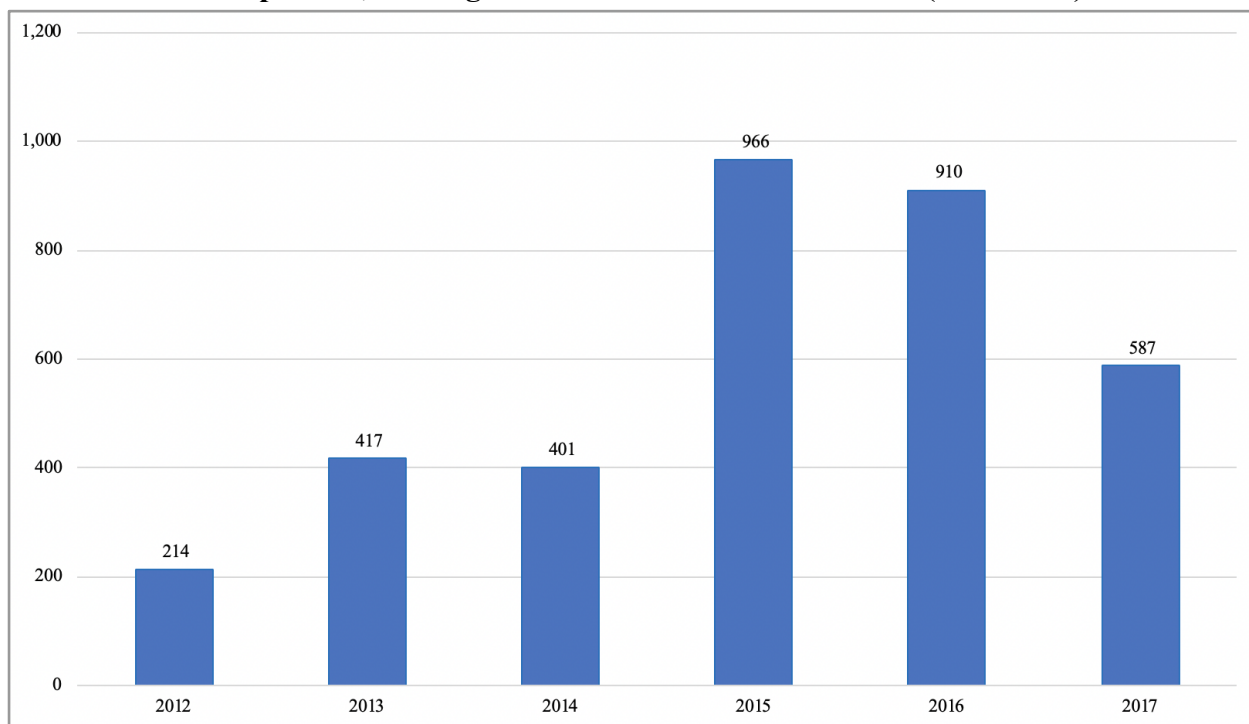
The Southern Border Program also coincided with an increase in reported crimes against migrants in Mexico. This increase has been a source of criticism among human rights activists, and was reported by a number of organizations such as the International Crisis Group (ICG), the Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA), and WOLA.^{clxix} These groups argue that Mexico prioritized migrant apprehensions over actions designed to improve migrant safety.^{clxx} As a result, migrants increasingly became victim to serious abuses in their journey to the United States. For example, according to an investigation by *Animal Político*, kidnappings of irregular migrants in Mexico’s southern border states increased by 166 percent during the first year of the Southern Border Program.^{clxxi}

²⁶ All responses regarding costs were converted into USD.

²⁷ This chart was created using COLEF interview data from 2011 to 2017. As of April 26, 2019, the 2018 data was not available.

There are various potential reasons behind the increase in crimes, including: 1) More frequent encounters with authorities due to expanded INM operations during this time period; 2) Migrants taking clandestine and remote routes to evade migration authorities that left them more at risk to the elements and criminal actors; and 3) Criminal actors moving into migrant exploitation activities as migration numbers increased within Mexico. Yet the higher number of crimes corresponds to greater rates of victimization and not just larger numbers of migrants transiting through the country. This conclusion was reached by using state prosecutor’s office’s crime numbers and estimates of the Central American migrant population passing through Mexico every year.²⁸ Using this methodology, there was a 140 percent increase in the rate of crimes against migrants from 2014 to 2015 in Mexico’s southern border region.

Figure 15
Crimes per 100,000 Migrants in Southern Border States (2012-2017)²⁹



Source: Chiapas, Veracruz, Oaxaca, Tabasco State Prosecutors transparency requests and author’s calculations

²⁸ To determine these rates, the authors calculated the number of Central American irregular migrants transiting through Mexico each year by developing a model that draws on a wide range of U.S. and Mexican migration enforcement statistics. For more information and access to the model, see: Stephanie Leutert and Sarah Spalding, “How Many Central Americans Are Traveling North?” *Lawfare Blog*, March 14, 2019, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/how-many-central-americans-are-traveling-north>.

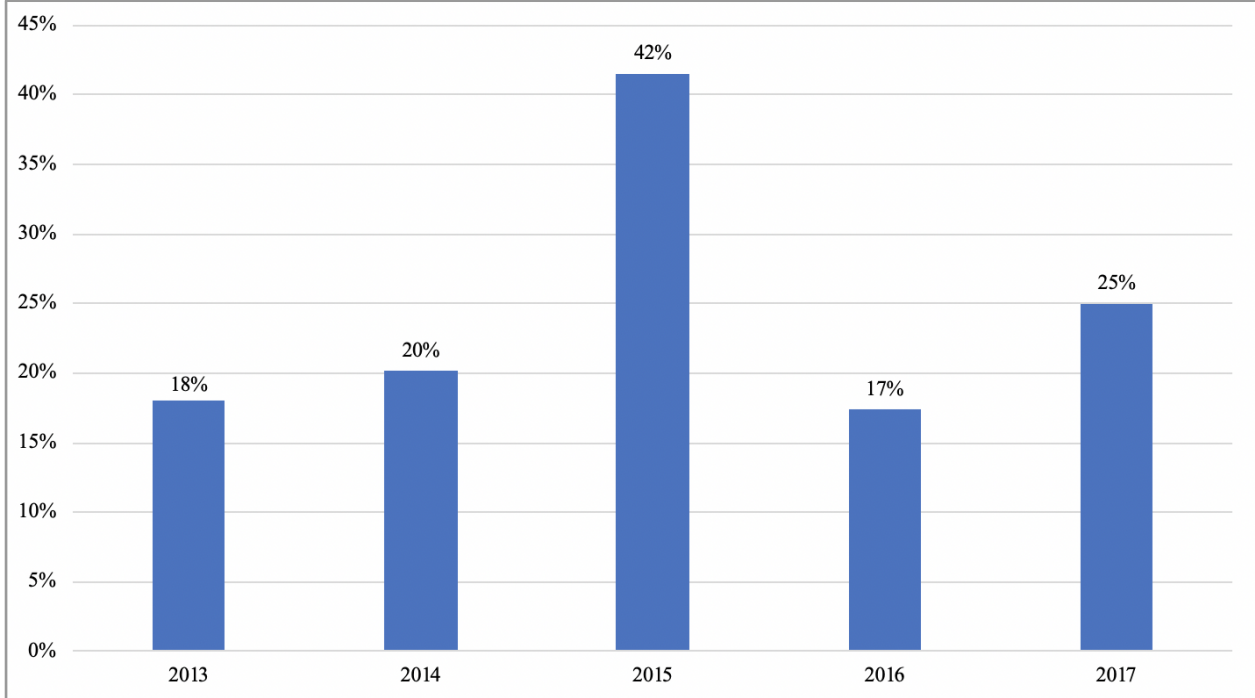
²⁹ This chart includes data from Chiapas, Veracruz, Oaxaca, and Tabasco.

Crimes Against Migrants Committed by Authorities

As mentioned, one possible explanation for the increase in crimes are the more frequent interactions between migrants and Mexican authorities.^{clxxii} In line with this explanation, the Documentation Network of Migrant Defender Organizations (*Red de Documentación de las Organizaciones Defensoras de Migrantes*, REDODEM), which obtains its data from interviews with irregular migrants at shelters, reported that the percent of crimes against migrants by Mexican authorities increased by about 50 percent from 2014 to 2015.^{clxxiii}

According to REDODEM, police forces—primarily the Federal Police—accounted for 81 percent of crimes against migrants committed by authorities in 2015, an increase of 32 percent from 2014.^{clxxiv} However, contrary to REDODEM, data from Mexico’s National Human Rights Commission (*Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos*, CNDH), aggregated through formal complaints from victims, indicates that police forces accounted for only 13 percent of human rights violations against migrants in 2015, although these rates did see a 60 percent increase the year the Southern Border Program was implemented.^{clxxv} Instead, the CNDH reported that INM was the main perpetrator of human rights violations against migrants by authorities, accounting for 84 percent of violations in 2015, an increase of 46 percent from the previous year.^{clxxvi}

Figure 16
Percent of Crimes Against Migrants Committed by Authorities (2013-2017)



Source: REDODEM

Efforts to Address Crimes Against Migrants

After the Southern Border Program's July 2014 implementation, Mexican states also created specialized prosecutor's offices for crimes against migrants. Specialized prosecutor's offices opened in Tabasco (December 2014), Campeche (May 2015), and Quintana Roo (June 2015).³⁰ In 2015, the federal Attorney General's Office also created the Unit for the Investigation of Crimes for Migrants (*Unidad de Investigación de Delitos para Personas Migrantes*, UIDPM) to investigate federal crimes against migrants, as well as the Mechanism for Foreign Support (*Mecanismo de Apoyo Exterior*, MAE) for migrants and their families outside of Mexico to report crimes that had occurred within the country.^{clxxvii}

Despite these efforts, migrant crime reports have gone virtually unpunished, as 99 percent of crimes against migrants end without convictions.^{clxxviii} Much of this impunity is due to challenges within Mexico's judicial system, affecting both migrants and Mexican nationals. Additionally, many migrants never report crimes out of fear of deportation or do so only later when they are outside the state where the crime occurred.^{clxxix} Other migrants simply abandon their cases in order to continue their journeys northward.

³⁰ The specialized prosecutor's office in Chiapas opened in 2013.

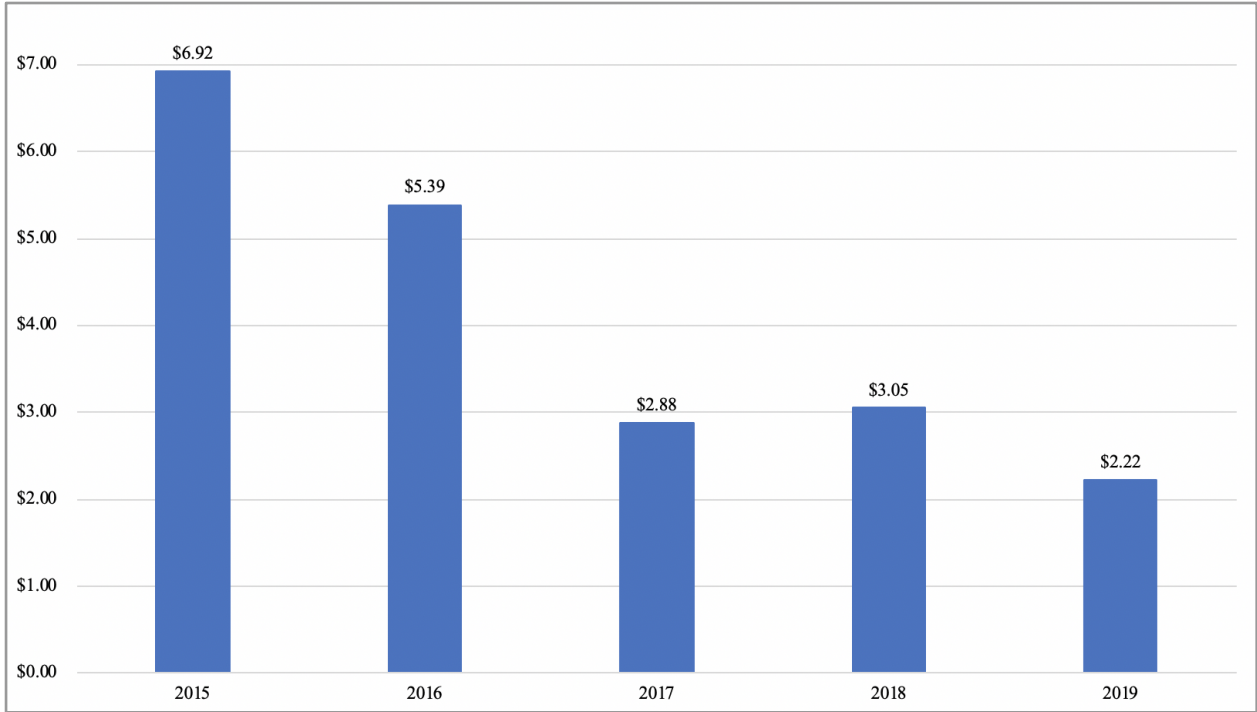
Chapter 6: Southern Border Program Legacy (2016-2018)

As of September 2018, Mexican government reports indicated that the Southern Border Program was still technically active, although the program is not operating at previous levels.^{clxxx} After the Southern Border Program’s announcement in July 2014, its peak operations took place through the end of 2015. In the following years, many aspects of the program—such as programming through its governing body, operations, and apprehensions—diminished while other aspects have endured. This chapter focuses on the program’s structural legacy, its implementation legacy, and its residual effects on migrants.

Structural Legacy

Since 2015, CAIMFS’s budget has steadily declined (as seen in Figure 17). In 2019, CAIMFS budget was US\$2.2 million, or roughly one third its initial budget of US\$6.92 million.^{clxxxii} Along with a decreased budget, the number of personnel has also declined. A 2019 transparency request noted that there were seven CAIMFS employees, and only one who has worked there since its founding in 2014.^{31clxxxii}

Figure 17
CAIMFS Budget in Millions USD (2015-2019)



Source: SEGOB transparency request

³¹ For more information on CAIMFS personnel over time, please see Appendix 3.

Since 2015, CAIMFS has continued to coordinate activities at CAITFs throughout the southern border.^{clxxxiii} Additionally, SEGOB has continued to report on CAIMFS's social programming initiatives throughout Mexico, which have included general medical services; school campus renovations; workshops on bullying, alcoholism, and domestic violence; community kitchens; free haircuts; and public service announcements regarding human rights, gender equity, and migratory legislation.^{clxxxiv} CAIMFS also has an office in Mexico City located only blocks from the main SEGOB building.³² However, despite these activities and physical presence, CAIMFS does not have an agency website, despite Article 70 of the Transparency Law that requires all governing bodies to have a public and up-to-date website with information on programs.^{clxxxv}

Implementation Legacy

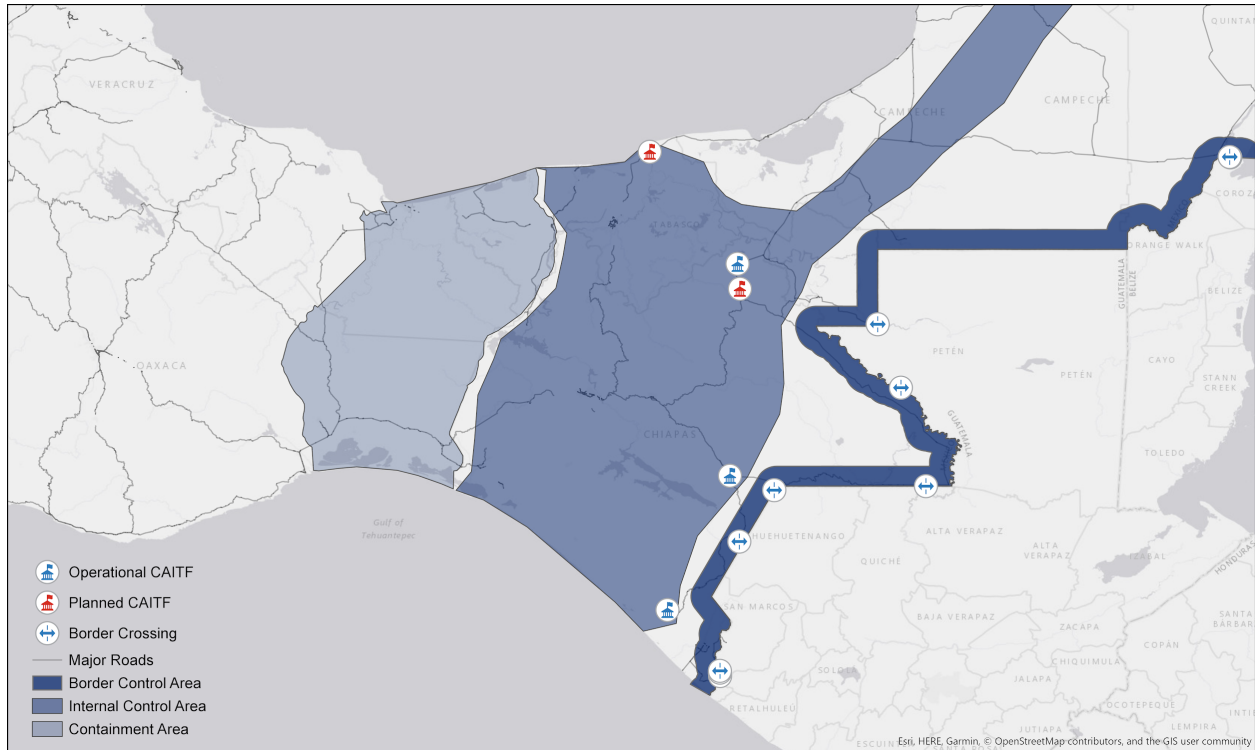
During the Southern Border Program's peak, various government bodies constructed enforcement infrastructure throughout the southern border region. This infrastructure continues to exist, and various government agencies continue to leverage these facilities in their daily activities.

CAITFs and Fixed Checkpoints

Soon after the Southern Border Program's announcement, three CAITFs opened across Chiapas and these facilities continue to operate through today. Two additional facilities—one in Palenque, Chiapas and another in Centla, Tabasco—were set to open in 2017 and 2018, respectively. These plans were stalled when construction funds were reallocated to address the damage from the September 2017 earthquakes that impacted Oaxaca, Morelos, and Mexico City.^{clxxxvi} A 2019 transparency request from CAIMFS indicates that it still intends to complete the two facilities to fulfill the Southern Border Program's objectives. Yet there are no specifics as to when the construction process will be completed.^{clxxxvii} Figure 18 shows the locations of the three CAITFs and the locations of the two additional CAITFs that are pending completion.

³² Confirmed in March 2019 by an employee at the Unit of Migratory Policy (*Unidad de Política Migratoria*).

Figure 18
Operational and Planned CAITF Facilities



Source: CAIMFS, INM, SCT, SEMAR, and SRE transparency requests

INM’s consistent budget allocations for CAITF activities confirms that these facilities continue to be an important aspect of Mexico’s migration enforcement strategy. Since the CAITFs opened, INM’s budgets for their activities has remained unchanged (La Trinitaria) or steadily increased (Playas de Catazajá).^{clxxxviii} The Huixtla facility is the exception, which had its budget nearly halved in 2017. (For more information on CAITF budgets, please see Appendix 4).^{clxxxix} In addition, the number of INM personnel stationed at each CAITF has remained relatively constant since each facility began operations: the Huixtla CAITF currently has 14 stationed INM agents, in comparison to 16 from 2014 to 2017; La Trinitaria has maintained four agents since operations started in 2014; and Playas de Catazajá had five agents until 2019 when this number was reduced to three.^{cx} Fixed checkpoints continue to be used for migration enforcement throughout the southern border states, although, since 2016, their use may have plateaued or slightly decreased.³³

³³ In March 2017, Adam Isacson of WOLA counted 10 checkpoints on the Chiapas Pacific Highway between Tapachula and Arriaga. At the time, he suspected that there was an equal or perhaps slightly greater number on other major roads, such as the Inter-American Highway through Comitán, as well as the road through Ocosingo to Palenque. However, since 2016, Mr. Isacson believes the use of mobile checkpoints has either plateaued or decreased.

Naval Facilities

As discussed in this report’s Southern Border Program Implementation section, the construction of Advanced Naval Stations was incorporated into the Southern Border Program. As of 2015, four of the stations were complete but information about the status of the remaining nine bases was unavailable. The four Advanced Naval Stations likely continue to serve their intended purpose of protecting migrants and promoting security under the Southern Border Program.^{cxci}

Personnel Deployment

As part of the Southern Border Program, there was an increase in INM personnel deployed to the southern border states. Since this initial increase, the number of agents stationed in these states has decreased to pre-Southern Border Program levels, particularly in Tabasco and Veracruz. However, as a percent of total active INM agents, the amount stationed in the southern border states (roughly 26 percent) has not changed since 2015. Chiapas has had the largest share of active INM agents in Mexico, with roughly 13 percent of all active INM agents located within the state.^{cxcii} Figure 19 shows that the number of INM agents in Chiapas has remained consistently high from the start of the Southern Border Program through 2019.^{cxci}

Figure 19
Number of Active INM Agents (2015-2019)

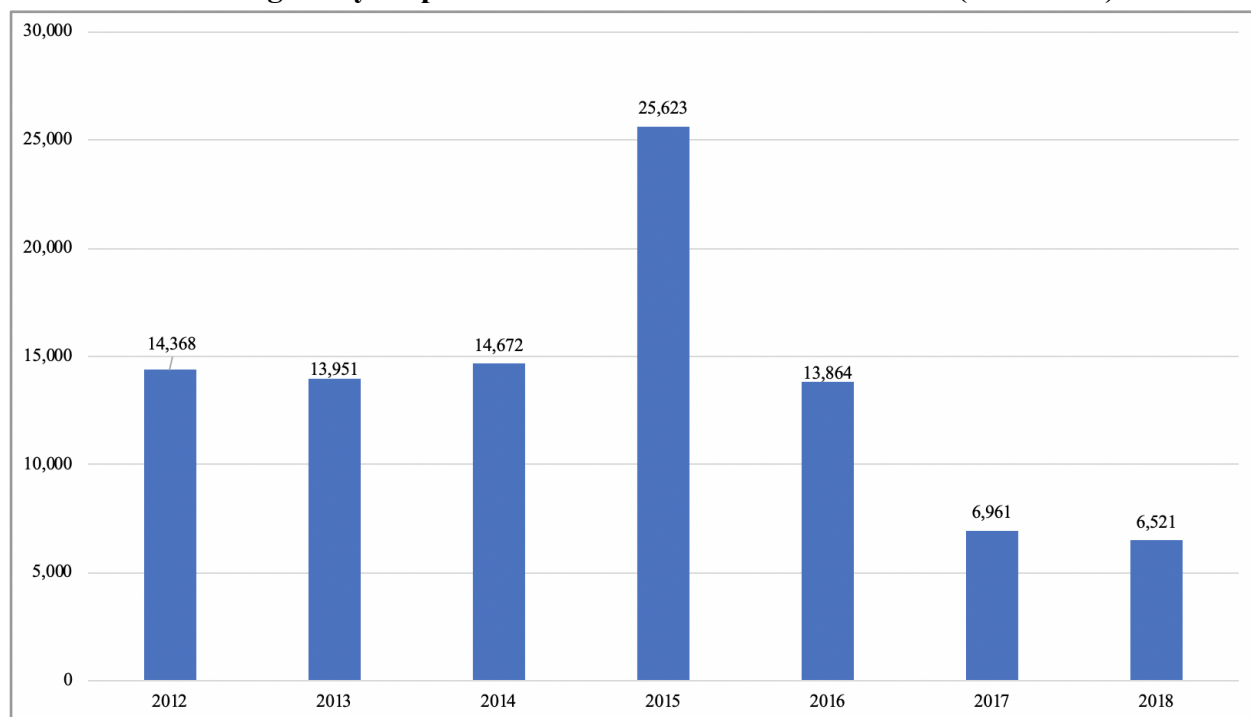
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Chiapas	284	284	281	289	289
Oaxaca	80	80	77	75	75
Tabasco	97	97	88	78	78
Veracruz	141	141	137	131	131
Total in Southern Border	602	602	583	573	573
Total Outside Southern Border	1698	1698	1660	1667	1667
Total INM Active Agents	2300	2300	2243	2240	2240

Source: SEGOB

INM Operations

After the Southern Border Program’s implementation, INM operations and joint operations increased in the southern border states of Chiapas, Oaxaca, Tabasco, and Veracruz. By 2016, however, INM’s enforcement actions had already begun to decline, and by 2017, migratory inspections had fallen below pre-Southern Border Program levels. In 2017, INM conducted just 6,961 migratory inspections in the region—roughly half the number carried out in 2013, the year before the Southern Border Program took effect.^{cxciiv} These migration control activities shifted to other parts of Mexico, with particularly steep declines in Oaxaca and Veracruz. In 2015, during the height of the Southern Border Program, 64 percent of INM operations occurred in the southern border region. By 2018, that number had flipped, and 64 percent of operations took place outside the southern states.^{cxcv}

Figure 20
Total Migratory Inspections in the Southern Border States (2012-2018)



Source: INM transparency requests

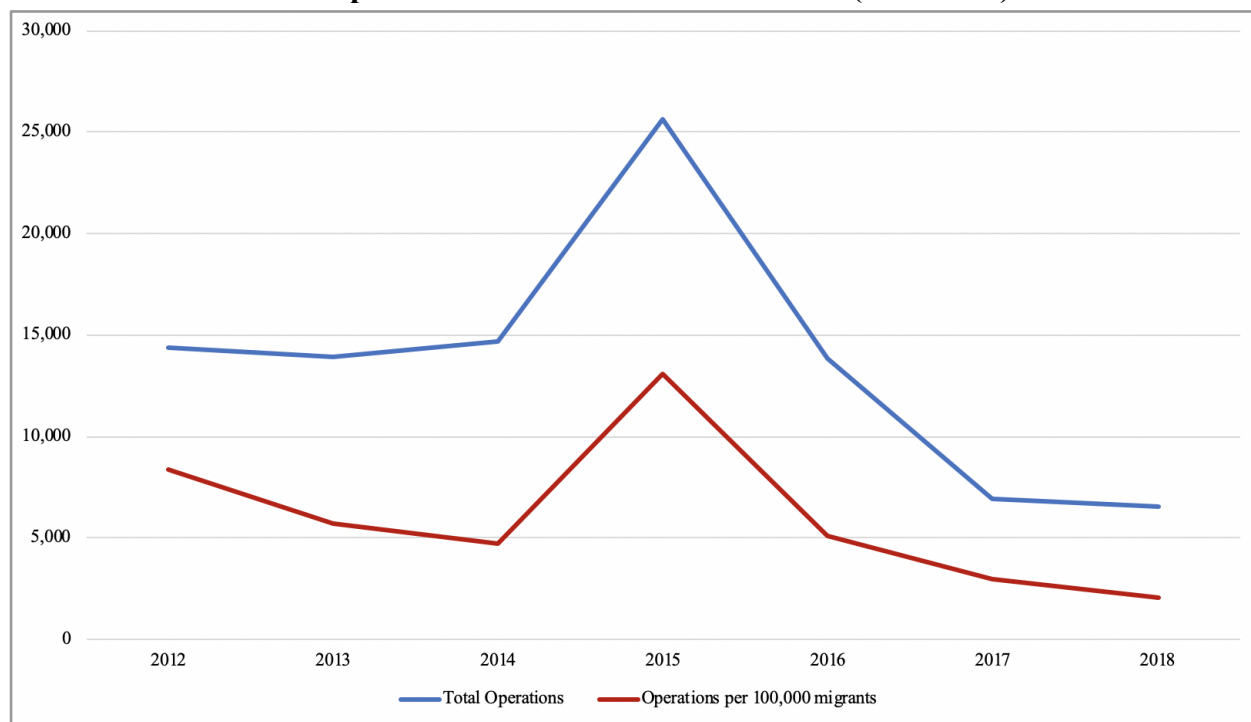
Migration patterns do not account for these declines. This report calculated the rate of INM operations using estimates of the Central American migrant population transiting through Mexico each year.³⁴ In the four years after Southern Border Program’s announcement, Central American

³⁴ To determine these rates, the authors calculated the number of Central American irregular migrants transiting through Mexico each year by developing a model that draws on a wide range of U.S. and Mexican migration enforcement statistics. For more information and access to the model, see: Stephanie Leutert and Sarah Spalding,

migration numbers fluctuated but ultimately increased from an estimated 311,000 Central Americans entering Mexico in 2014 to 314,000 in 2018. During the same time period, the number of INM operations declined significantly.

Figures 21 and 22 show the decline in INM operations and joint operations throughout the southern border region after 2015, both in terms of raw numbers and relative to the population of Central American migrants transiting Mexico. Similar trajectories between the two lines suggest that operational declines are due to changes to INM enforcement priorities, rather than changes in migration patterns. This decline in operations takes place amid only slightly declining numbers of INM personnel in the southern border region, raising questions about possible changes to workloads and activities within the agency.

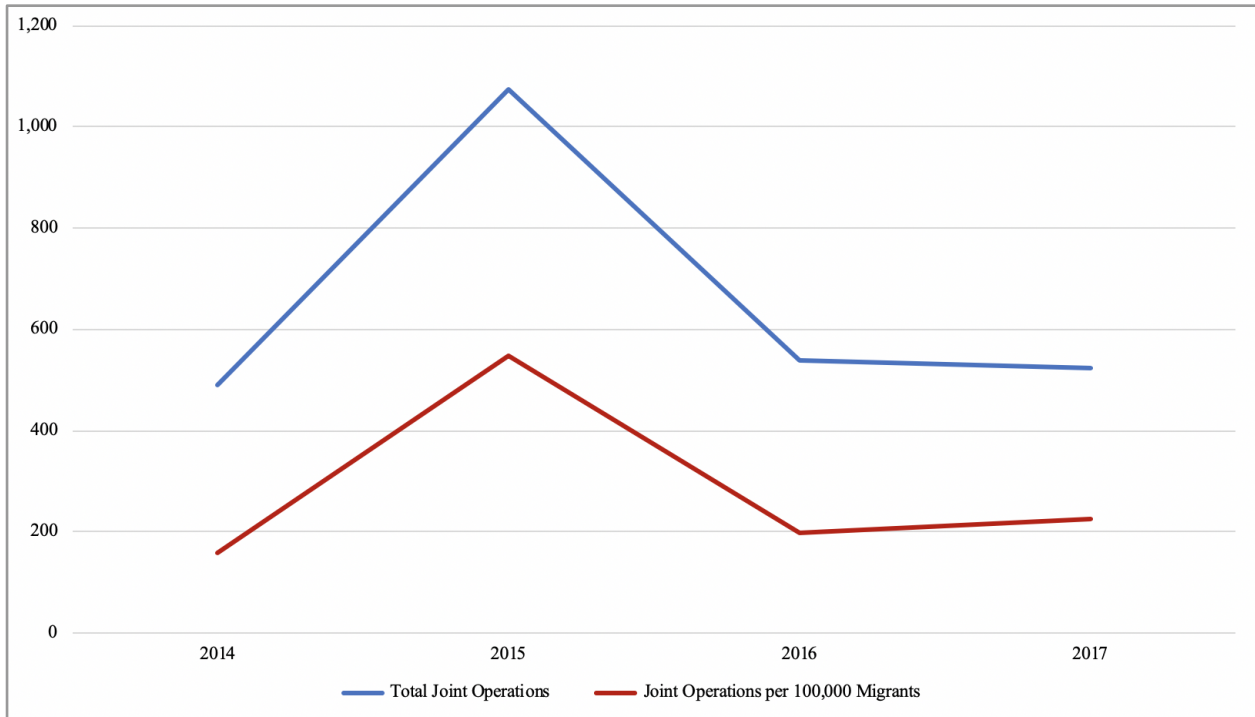
Figure 21
INM Operations in Southern Border States (2012-2018)



Source: INM transparency requests and authors' calculations

“How Many Central Americans Are Traveling North?” *Lawfare Blog*, March 14, 2019, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/how-many-central-americans-are-traveling-north>.

Figure 22
Joint Operations in Southern Border States (2014-2017)^{excvi}



Source: INM transparency request and authors' calculations³⁵³⁶

INM Joint Operations

Although the number of joint operations declined after 2015, they comprised a slightly larger proportion of INM's total operations by 2017, at roughly 8 percent (compared to 6 percent in 2015). Between September 2017 and June 2018, INM conducted 308 operations with the Navy, Army, Federal Police, Federal Attorney General's Office, and Mexico's tax authority (*Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público*, SHCP).^{excvii}

As previously described, the legal basis for some agencies' cooperation remains uncertain.^{excviii} This is particularly the case for state or municipal police, which are not authorized under the 2011 Migratory Act nor in any other publicly available documents to participate in migration control operations. When contacted via transparency requests, state level security forces stated that they were unable to produce evidence of agreements authorizing their participation in joint

³⁵ To determine these rates, the authors calculated the number of Central American irregular migrants transiting through Mexico each year by developing a model that draws on a wide range of U.S. and Mexican migration enforcement statistics. For more information and access to the model, see: Stephanie Leutert and Sarah Spalding, "How Many Central Americans Are Traveling North?" *Lawfare Blog*, March 14, 2019, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/how-many-central-americans-are-traveling-north>.

³⁶ Figure 22 includes data for Chiapas, Oaxaca, and Tabasco. Veracruz's information was incomplete for the years 2014-2016 and was therefore excluded from the dataset.

INM operations.^{cxix} Despite this lack of clear legal authorization, in 2017, Veracruz state police partnered with INM in 12 different operations—more than 40 percent of the joint operations conducted in Veracruz that year.^{37cc} Veracruz’s police forces explicitly stated in a transparency request that they do not hold any joint agreements with INM.^{cci}

The lack of agreements with INM and guidelines for joint operations can have consequences for migrants. For example, in September 2018, irregular migrants filed a complaint with the CNDH accusing Veracruz state police, along with INM and Federal Police agents, of forcefully removing them from a train in a raid near Juan Rodríguez Clara, Veracruz. The migrants alleged that agents shot at them, beat them, and tortured some by cutting off their fingers. Officials from both agencies were also accused of attempting to hide the bodies of at least two people that had been killed during the operation.^{ccii}

In April 2019, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador announced that his newly-proposed National Guard (*Guardia Nacional*), a hybrid military-police force, would have the authority to review immigration documents and arrest migrants in cooperation with the INM. National Guard agents would be stationed throughout border zones and along highways.

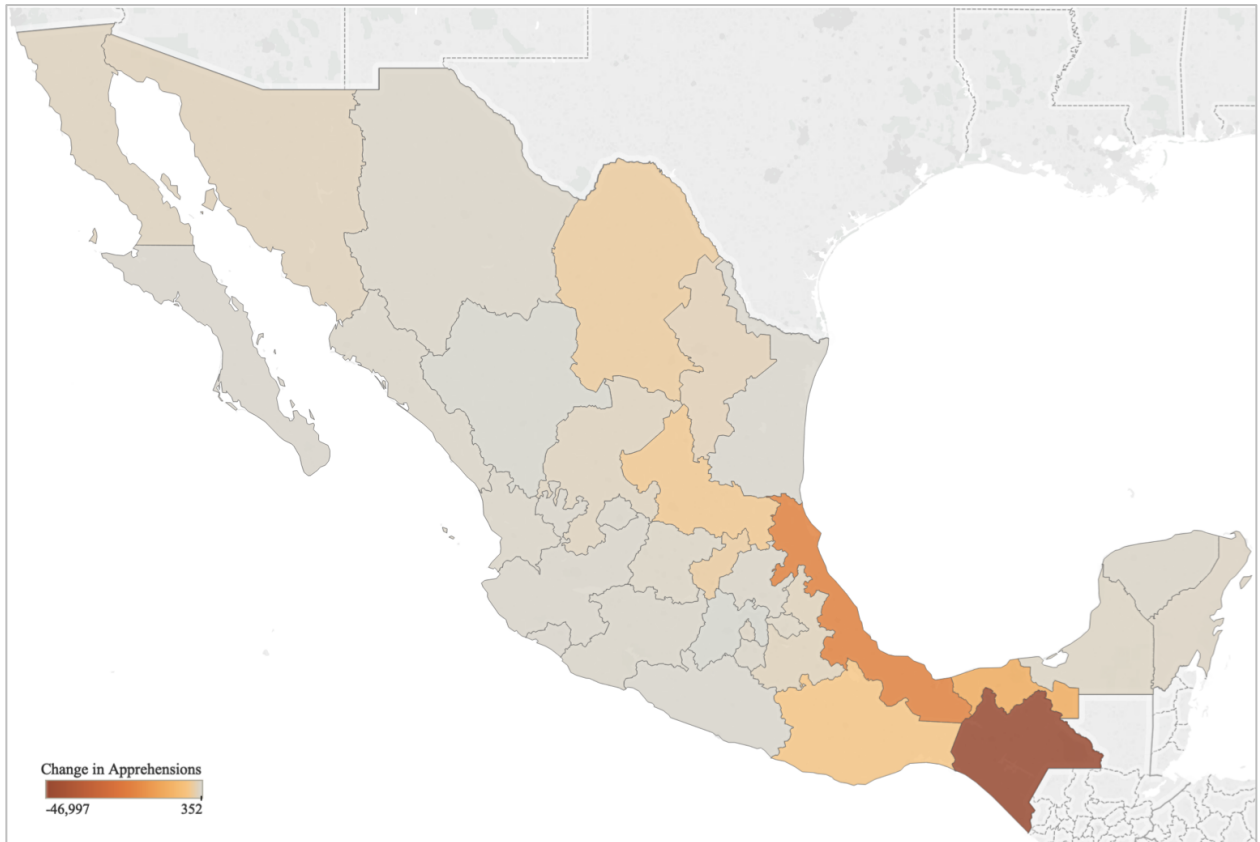
Effects Legacy

Apprehensions

In 2016—mirroring the decreasing number of operations—the number of apprehensions in Mexico’s southern border states also began to decline. From 2015 to 2016, apprehensions fell in nearly every state, with the largest drops in Chiapas, Tabasco, Veracruz, and Oaxaca. These apprehensions continued to drop in the following years, and apprehensions in the southern border states decreased by 55 percent from 2015 to 2018. Apprehensions in this region also decreased relative to total apprehensions across the country. In 2015, apprehensions in the southern border region made up 77 percent of Mexico’s total apprehensions, but by 2018, this had dropped to 69 percent. These levels are relatively consistent with pre-the Southern Border Program apprehension levels, suggesting a return to the status quo for Mexico’s migratory enforcement.

³⁷ Diego Lorente, coordinator of the Fray Matías de Córdoba Human Rights Center (*Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Matías de Córdoba*) reported that Grupo Beta, a small INM unit tasked with providing humanitarian aid to migrants, has also at times supported INM enforcement actions by transporting distressed migrants to INM agents, in violation of its mission.

Figure 23
Change in Apprehensions (2015-2018)³⁸

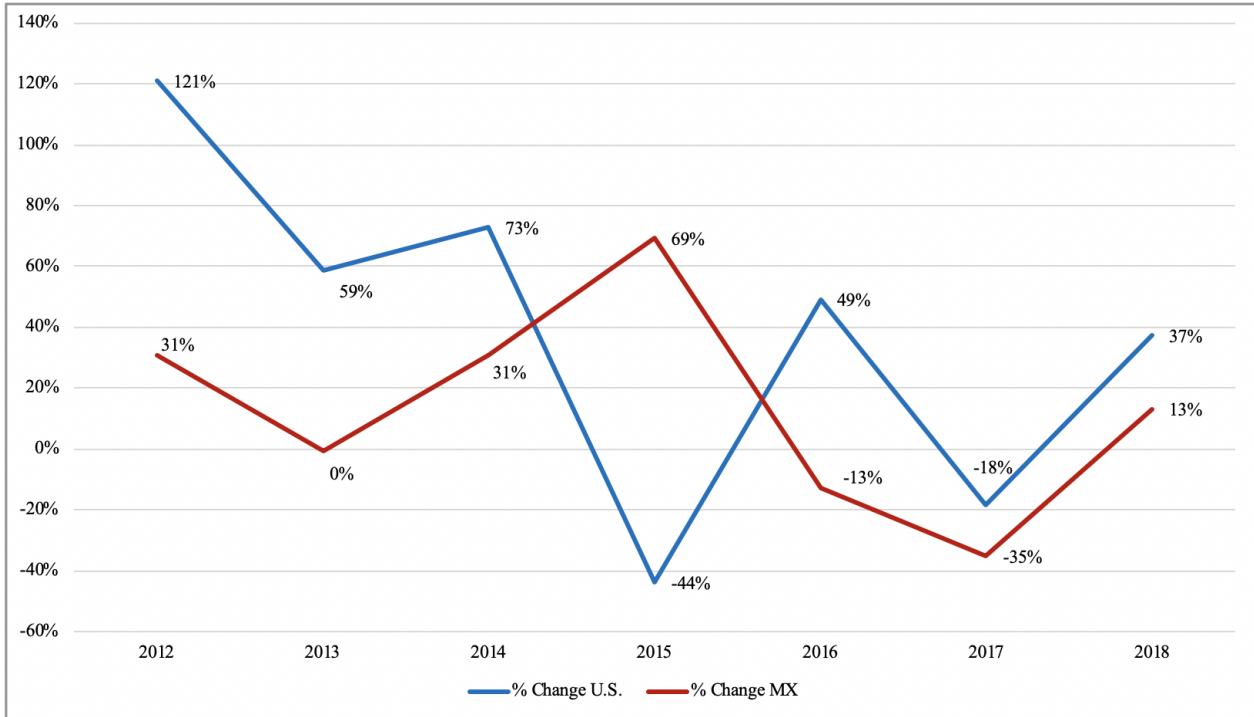


Source: SEGOB

This post-2015 reversal to pre-Southern Border Program migratory enforcement levels is also apparent when comparing Mexico's apprehensions to those at the U.S.-Mexico border. In 2016, as Mexico eased its migration efforts at the southern border, U.S. apprehensions increased by nearly 50 percent. From 2016 onward, Mexico and the United States began to once again follow similar apprehension patterns in terms of apprehensions. Similar to decreasing apprehensions, this trend also suggests that Mexico's migration enforcement has returned to the status quo.

³⁸ The gradient indicates the difference in apprehensions between the two years.

Figure 24
Percent Change in Apprehensions of Central Americans at the U.S. Southwest Border vs. Mexico (FY2012-2018)



Source: SEGOB, U.S. Customs and Border Protection

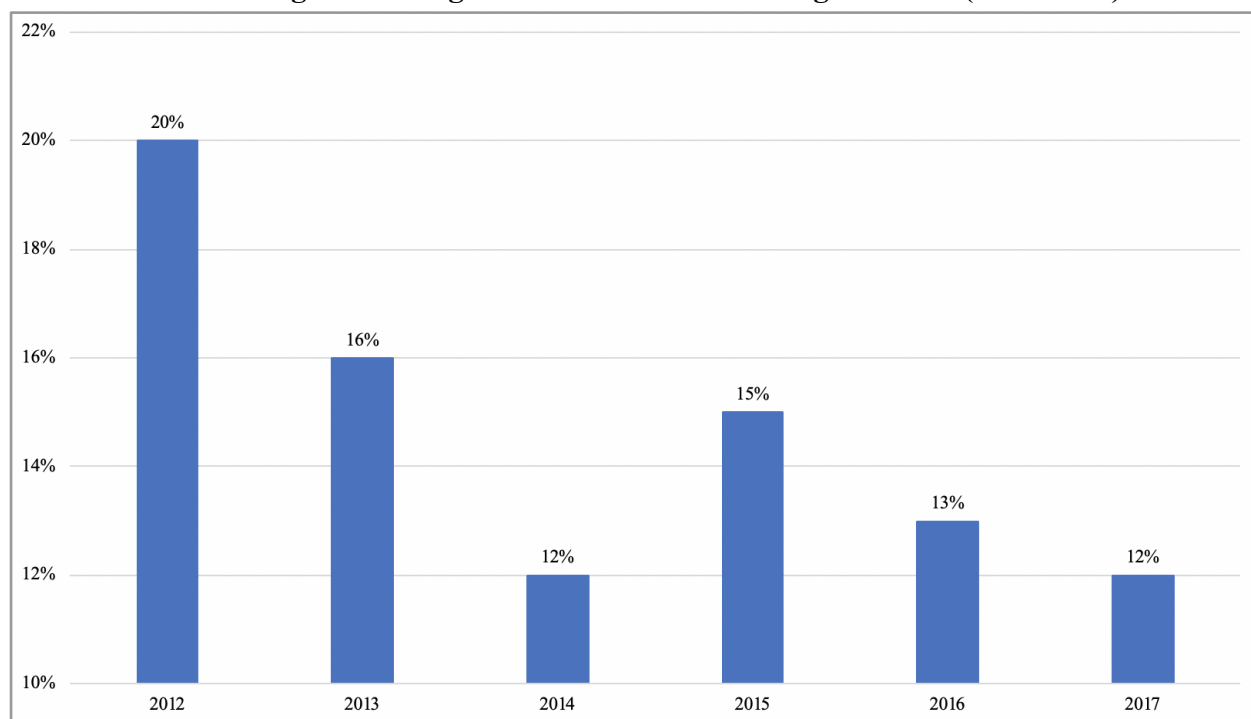
Lastly, apprehensions in Mexico did not decline because fewer people were migrating. In fact, the number of Central American migrants traveling through Mexico is estimated to have remained relatively steady since fiscal year 2016.^{cciii} During fiscal years 2015 to 2016, Mexico’s apprehension rate per 100,000 migrants declined by 37 percent, while the U.S. apprehension rate increased by 7 percent. This suggests a change in apprehension practices and policies rather than a shift in migration patterns.

Migrant Travel

After the Southern Border Program’s implementation, irregular migrants’ modes of transportation shifted. Most notably, while the percent of migrants reporting taking cars, trailers, and buses to cross through Mexico returned to pre-Southern Border Program levels, the use of rail travel never recovered.^{cciv} There are several possible explanations for why train usage has continued to decline despite fewer INM operations, including: 1) Migrants increasingly rely on guides, who tend to prefer transporting migrants in vehicles; and 2) There has been an increase in families and

unaccompanied minors transiting through Mexico, who tend to prefer the relative safety of cars, buses, and trailers to the hazards that come with riding atop a freight train.^{39ccv}

Figure 25
Percent of Migrants Using a Train to Transit Through Mexico (2012-2017)^{ccvi}



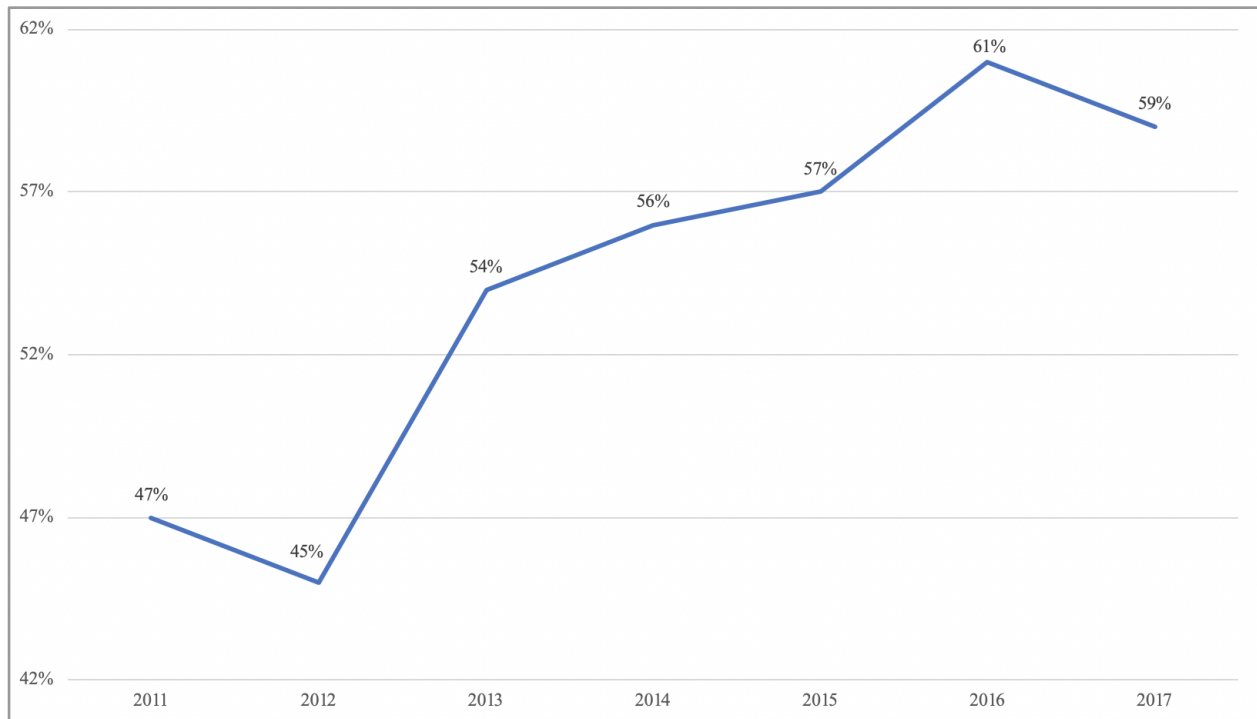
Source: COLEF

For two years after the Southern Border Program’s implementation, the percent of deported Central American migrants who reported using a guide in Mexico increased steadily.^{ccvii} From 2015 to 2016 the percent of migrants using a guide increased from 57 percent to 61 percent, although there was a slight decrease in 2017.⁴⁰ At the same time, the price of a guide also increased. As of 2017, the average price per person to transit through Mexico with a guide was \$4,241, an increase of 42 percent since 2014. This price does not include the additional price of crossing the U.S.-Mexico border.^{ccviii}

³⁹ According to COLEF surveys, Hondurans—generally single adults—have begun taking the train again at numbers that are higher than Guatemalans or Salvadorans.

⁴⁰ This trend comes from interviews of deported individuals. Generally, the respondents are single males while, on the whole, the demographics of migrants today are families and unaccompanied minors who would not be reflected in the data.

Figure 26
Percent of Migrants Using a Guide to Transit Through Mexico (2011-2017)

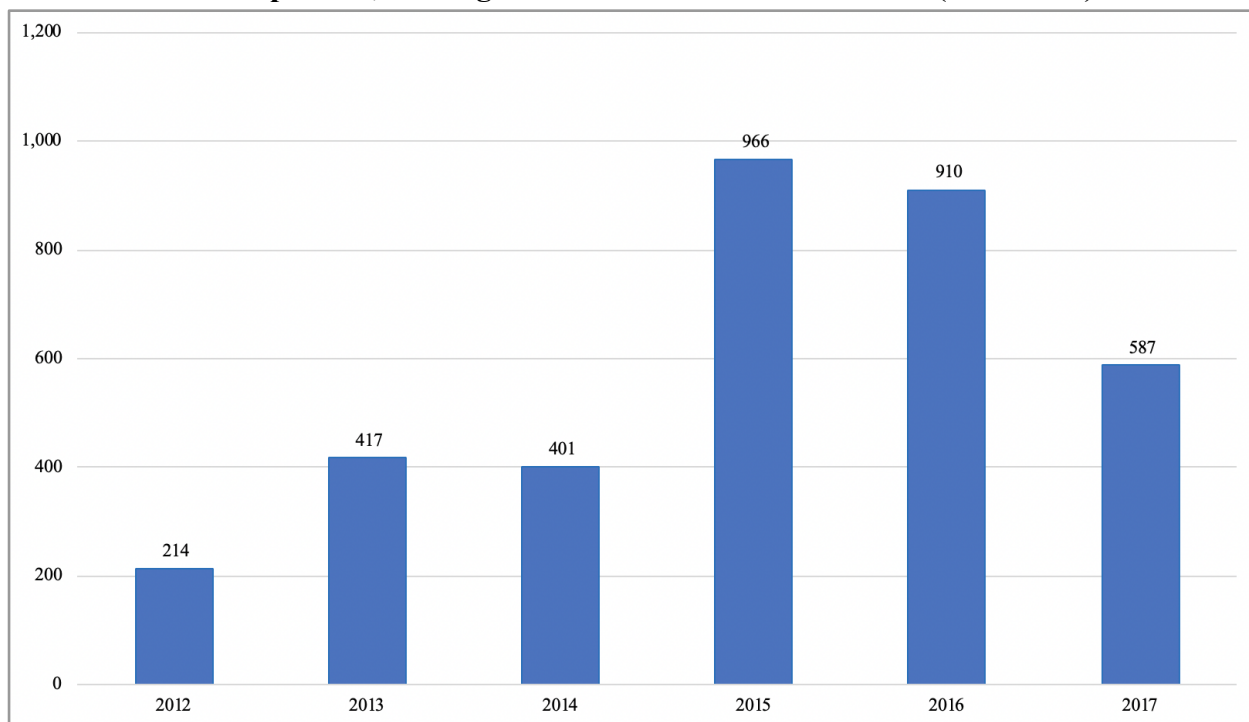


Source: COLEF

Crimes Against Migrants

Since migration enforcement operations under the Southern Border Program began to decline in 2016, crimes against migrants in the southern border region have also decreased. From 2015 to 2017, the rate of crime against migrants—as measured using crime data from state prosecutors’ offices and estimates of the number of migrants transiting Mexico—dropped by 39 percent. While 2017 levels are not as low as pre-Southern Border Program rates, the combination of the crime uptick in 2015, as INM operations increased, and the 2017 decline, as these operations decreased, suggests that the Southern Border Program may have had an influence on crimes against migrants. However, other factors may also have impacted the rates of crimes against migrants, such as motivations to report crimes, the overall security situation in the region, and shifting criminal dynamics (such as the decline of Los Zetas in the southern border region and the fragmenting of criminal groups), among others.^{ccix}

Figure 27
Crimes per 100,000 Migrants in Southern Border States (2012-2017)



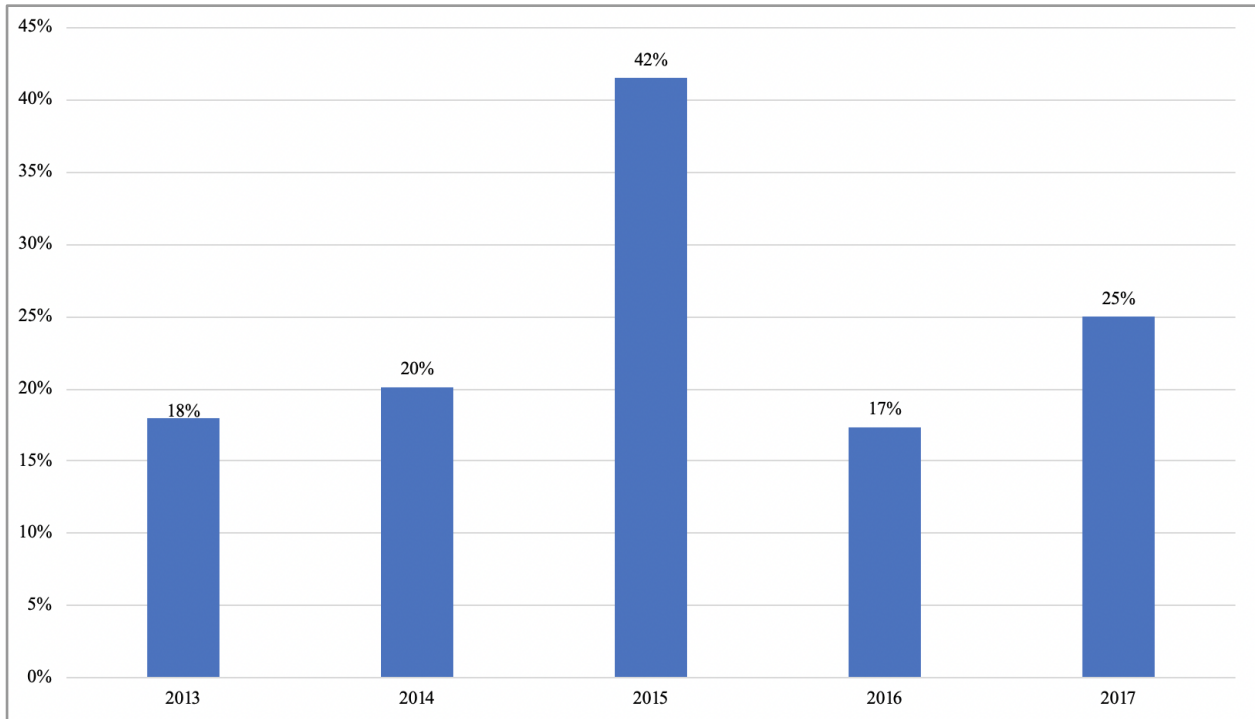
Source: Chiapas, Veracruz, Oaxaca, Tabasco State Prosecutors transparency requests and author's calculations

The percent of these crimes that were committed by Mexican authorities also decreased from 2015 levels. According to REDODEM, in 2015, 42 percent of crimes against migrants were committed by Mexican authorities, but this percent was 17 percent and 25 percent in 2016 and 2017, respectively. Additionally, in 2015, REDODEM reported that police forces accounted for 81 percent of crimes against migrants that were committed by authorities, but by 2017 this had dropped to 40.9 percent.^{41ccx} CNDH crime statistics indicate that INM continued to be the primary perpetrators, making up 77 percent of all abuses against migrants by authorities in 2018, and that police forces were responsible for 11 percent of human rights abuses against migrants in 2017.^{42ccxi}

⁴¹ This may not be due to an actual decrease, however, as INM abuses, undetermined authorities, and “other” were first added as response categories in 2016 and private train security was first mentioned in 2017. This may simply suggest that more authorities are now being accounted for rather than a true decline in police force abuses.

⁴² As previously mentioned, the discrepancy in reporting from REDODEM and CNDH can likely be attributed to the difference in sources and the sources’ motivations to disclose sensitive information. REDODEM receives its data from interviews with migrants at shelters while CNDH is an official government body and receives formal complaints from victims.

Figure 28
Percent of Crimes Against Migrants Committed by Authorities (2013-2017)



Source: REDODEM

Chapter 7: Recommendations

This chapter offers four policy recommendations to regularize migration, establish the legality of joint operations, increase government transparency, and boost development in Mexico's southern border region.

1. Increase Legal Pathways and Foster Orderly Migration in Mexico

Under Mexico's 2011 Migratory Law, unauthorized migration is considered an administrative infraction with a fine of up to MX\$5,000 (US\$260).^{ccxii} The law states: "In no event is irregular migratory status on its own considered the perpetration of a crime, nor will it be considered the perpetration of illicit acts by the migrant as the result of his or her not being documented."^{ccxiii} In line with this law, the Southern Border Program's first point of action was to create regularized, orderly migration into Mexico. However, despite Mexican legislation and the Southern Border Program's stated objectives, the program has focused overwhelmingly on arresting, detaining, and deporting migrants.

This policy proposal outlines a long-term path to move toward regularized and orderly migration. It is an approach that is designed to encourage migrants to present themselves to immigration authorities upon entering Mexico instead of seeking clandestine routes to evade detection. Creating these new legal pathways would fulfill Mexico's legal obligations and decrease migrants' vulnerability to crimes.

The López Obrador administration should extend the geographic range of regional worker visas. As the first point of action for the Southern Border Program, former President Peña Nieto announced that Mexico would issue more temporary entry permits for Guatemalans and Belizeans seeking to visit or work in Mexico. These permits were not granted to citizens of Honduras or El Salvador, two of the major sending countries for transit migrants. In March 2019, President López Obrador extended Border Worker Visitor Cards (*Tarjeta de Visitante Trabajador Fronterizo*, TVTF) to Hondurans and Salvadorans, allowing citizens of all Northern Triangle countries to work in the southern border states of Chiapas, Tabasco, Campeche, and Quintana Roo for up to one year, with the option of renewal.^{ccxiv}

However, many of the states included in TVTFs have small labor markets and high unemployment rates.^{ccxv} Migrants may face difficulties securing employment in the southern border region and may continue onward to other parts of the country or to the United States without migratory documentation. Additionally, in these small labor markets with high unemployment rates, the presence of abundant immigrant labor may also pose an unwelcome source of job competition for Mexican workers.

Yet, the López Obrador administration has also noted that many states throughout Mexico face labor shortages.^{ccxvi} TVTFs should be extended to these states, as determined by the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (*Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social*, STPS). For example, TVTFs could be extended northward to Mexico's central region, a manufacturing hub with numerous employment opportunities for citizens and non-citizens alike. As Mexico's economy continues to improve, the López Obrador administration could extend these visas to include all Mexican states.

To assist migrants in finding jobs and obtaining the offer-of-employment letters required for TVTFs, civil society groups and private sector associations should network with trade and business associations to identify employment opportunities for migrants, creating and relying on a migrant-employer database to remotely help interested workers.

INM should continue to grant humanitarian visas for Central American migrants in need of international protection. Under the 2011 Migratory Law, INM grants humanitarian visas (*Tarjetas de Visitante por Razones Humanitarias*, TVRH) to foreigners who: 1) are the victims or witnesses of a crime in Mexico; 2) are unaccompanied minors; or 3) have requested asylum, refugee status, or complementary protection, and whose applications are still in process. According to the law, INM may also grant humanitarian visas to “foreigners who do not fall under the foregoing categories when there is a humanitarian cause or cause for public interest that makes their admission into Mexico or regularization necessary.”^{ccxvii} Humanitarian visas allow recipients to live, work, access education and basic medical services, and travel in Mexico for one year.

Individuals from the Northern Triangle should be able to receive these visas for any of the reasons listed above. They should also qualify if they might be eligible for international protection. These visas could be granted to migrants identified as “vulnerable” in Articles 2 and 73 of the 2011 Migratory Law, including: women; minors and adolescents; indigenous individuals; differently-abled individuals; the elderly; and crime victims.^{ccxviii}

Individuals who do not fit into these categories could apply for a humanitarian visa and receive special screening. These interviews, along with humanitarian visa processing, could take place at INM offices in Tabasco and Chiapas. They could also take place at application centers for Border Worker Visitor Cards or at Mexican consulates located in Northern Triangle countries. In addition to the interview process, INM should screen humanitarian visa applicants for criminal records, taking their biometrics information and registering their identity documents, if available. To encourage migrants' long-term stay in Mexico, humanitarian visa cards could allow recipients the option of applying for more permanent legal status in Mexico, if they meet certain standards.^{ccxix}

Inform migrants of their international rights, of their legal and employment options, and of safety conditions within Mexican territory. INM should collaborate with civil society groups via the INM Citizens Council, UNHCR, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to

provide migrants with up-to-date and accurate information about 1) applying for refugee status in Mexico; 2) the locations of REDODEM migrant shelters throughout Mexico; 3) employers and municipalities willing to hire migrant workers; 4) information about current U.S.-Mexico policies such as metering and the Migrant Protection Protocols; 5) their national and international rights as migrants; and 6) processes for seeking legal protection in other countries, including but not limited to the United States, Canada, Costa Rica, Panama, and Belize. To reduce costs, INM and the INM Citizens Council could seek assistance from civil society groups and NGOs in communicating this information to migrants.^{43ccxx}

INM could also work with the UNHCR to connect employers throughout Mexico with recipients of humanitarian visas and Border Worker Visitors Cards, facilitating migrants' dispersal throughout Mexico and working to prevent an unsustainable concentration of migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border. They could also extend IOM's "municipal job fair for migrants" (*feria municipal de empleo para personas en contexto de migración*), held in Tijuana for the second year running, to other welcoming municipalities throughout Mexico.^{ccxxi}

2. Clarify Legal Mandates for Authorities Engaging in Migratory Operations

As of April 2019, INM appears to have signed collaboration agreements with the Federal Police and the Navy.⁴⁴ However, according to INM data, the agency has conducted joint operations with a range of other actors, including state and municipal police forces, the Army, and state prosecutor's offices. Although the number of these joint operations began to decrease in 2016, they continue to occur on a regular basis.^{ccxxii} The lack of explicit legal authority, accountability mechanisms, and use of force guidelines for most of the agencies engaged in these joint operations creates opportunities for abuse of power and puts migrants at risk.

The Migratory Law or its implementing legislation should explicitly delineate guidelines for all authorities that can engage in joint migratory enforcement operations. To achieve this legislative clarity, Mexico's Congress should update Articles 81, 96, and 105 of the Migratory Law and Article 83 of the Implementing Guidelines of the Migratory Law to expressly state that only entities listed in these articles are authorized to support INM operationally. These articles should require that INM create joint agreements with the other entities that clearly delineate responsibilities and define appropriate use of force as they relate to migration enforcement.

The proposed National Guard provides an opportunity to implement these changes. The Mexican government should incorporate guidelines surrounding the National Guard's responsibilities, protocols, and use of force during joint operations with INM into new legislation. Using the

⁴³ The UNHCR and IOM are already involved in similar activities.

⁴⁴ The federal Attorney General's Office also has a joint agreement with INM for information sharing. The agreement does not address operations.

National Guard as a model, the Mexican government should develop and enact similar guidelines for all other agencies that support INM in its operations.

The INM and Attorney General's Office should establish accountability mechanisms to ensure authorities operate within their legal mandates and do not abuse their powers. The INM should establish and fully fund its Internal Affairs Unit—which was mandated in SEGOB's 2013 Internal Regulations—in order to investigate INM agents who are alleged to be involved in misconduct. It should refer any serious cases to the Attorney General's office.^{ccxxiii} Mexico's Congress should provide INM with the necessary funding to establish this unit. In the interim, the INM's current Internal Control Body—a unit in the INM that imposes administrative sanctions on agents if they do not fulfill their duties—should implement sanctions on agents engaging in misconduct and use its discretion to remove agents if necessary.^{45ccxxiv} Both the Internal Control Body and the Internal Affairs Unit should be required to report all significant violations to the Attorney General to take the appropriate legal action.^{ccxxv}

As part of this effort, the INM should also ensure that individuals can anonymously report wrongdoings without penalty. Mexico's 2017 General Law of Administrative Responsibilities, a sweeping anti-corruption law, provides a whistleblowing framework that applies to all levels of government. It does not, however, prohibit dismissal or punishment should an individual's identity be disclosed.^{ccxxvi} To ensure these protections for INM and other government employees, Mexico should prohibit employers from dismissing or punishing any whistleblowers without due process. To foster agency integrity and encourage the use of the anonymous reporting systems, INM should also implement an internal campaign promoting a culture of openness and integrity.^{ccxxvii}

3. Increase Transparency for the Southern Border Program and CAIMFS

SEGOB has published only limited information on CAIMFS, which acts as the governing body of the Southern Border Program. There is no public information outlining CAIMFS's objectives and programs, legal backing, annual budgets, staffing numbers, or contact information. Similarly, there is limited public information regarding the Southern Border Program's official documentation, annual budget, data reports, or contact information of its staff. This lack of public data presents a challenge to accountability or for measuring the program's success.

This lack of publicly available information regarding CAIMFS and the Southern Border Program is not in accordance with Mexico's transparency laws. Article 74 of the Federal Law of Transparency and Access to Public Governmental Information (*Ley Federal de Transparencia y Acceso a la Información Pública Gubernamental*) requires a publicly available website for

⁴⁵ Currently, decisions to remove agents are often at the discretion of the INM commissioner.

government agencies with up-to-date information.⁴⁶ Articles 70 and 79 of the General Law of Transparency and Access to Public Information (*Ley General de Transparencia y Acceso a la Información Pública*) require specific details be made publicly available regarding government programs, such as the Southern Border Program.^{ccxxviii}

SEGOB should comply with the Federal Law of Transparency by creating a public website for CAIMFS. The CAIMFS website should be modeled off INM’s website. INM, like CAIMFS, falls under the umbrella of SEGOB. The CAIMFS website should include CAIMFS’s objectives and programs; the agency’s legal authority to operate and how it complies with the transparency laws; CAIMFS’s organizational chart both internally and within SEGOB; relevant open data for CAIMFS; annual reports highlighting CAIMFS data and activities; annual CAIMFS budgets; press releases that mention CAIMFS; and contact information for questions or complaints regarding CAIMFS.

SEGOB should make information on the Southern Border Program publicly available. As part of its objectives and programs, the CAIMFS website should include data and reports regarding the current status of the Southern Border Program. Publicly available information should include the program’s period of validity; design, objectives, and scope; budget amounts that were approved, modified and exercised; citizen complaint or grievance procedures; enforceability mechanisms; indicators of success; operating rules or equivalent documents; and periodic reports on evaluations and their results.^{ccxxix}

4. Focus on Economic Growth to Develop Mexico’s Southern Border States

Mexico’s Southern Border Program focused almost exclusively on securing the border region by cracking down on unauthorized migration. As a result, the Southern Border Program failed to uphold its objectives of protecting migrants and promoting development across the region. To create a prosperous and safe southern border region, there should be increased humanitarian assistance programs that focus on enhancing well-being for both migrants and residents, as well as economic development in the region.

Support economic development in southern Mexico. President López Obrador has promised that his administration will invest US\$25 billion in Mexico’s southern border states, which is the least developed part of the country and the entry point for almost all irregular migrants.^{ccxxx} Economic development and humanitarian efforts should stimulate economic growth and promote job creation, prioritizing youth, under-employed individuals, and migrants and refugees. While these development efforts are currently being led by the Ministry of Foreign Relations (*Secretaría de*

⁴⁶ Article 70 of the General Law of Transparency has a specific list of data that needs to be made public by government programs.

Relaciones Exteriores, SRE) and the U.S. Department of State, they should include the newly created Council for Investment Promotion, Employment, and Economic Growth (*Consejo para el Fomento a la Inversión, el Empleo y el Crecimiento Económico*) and the Ministry of Wellbeing (*Secretaría de Bienestar*, Bienestar).^{ccxxxii}

Appendix 1: Southern Border Proposals

Comprehensive Migratory Policy Proposal in the Southern Border (*Propuesta de Política Migratoria Integral en la Frontera Sur de México*)

- **Years:** Proposed in December 2005
- **Leadership:** President Vicente Fox, PAN
- **Objectives/Context:** The Comprehensive Migratory Policy Proposal in the Southern Border sought to establish four strategic implementations: 1) facilitate migration along Mexico's southern border, 2) protect the rights of migrants, 3) improve measures of security along the southern border, and 4) update Mexico's immigration laws.^{ccxxxii}
- **Responsible Organizations:** The proposal was put forth by INM.^{ccxxxiii}
- **Funding:** The Mexican government.^{ccxxxiv}
- **Execution/Implementation:** The proposal was never implemented.^{ccxxxv}

Plan to Reorder the Southern Border (*Plan de Reordenamiento de la Frontera Sur*)

- **Years:** Announced in 2006.
- **Leadership:** President Felipe Calderón, PAN
- **Objectives/Context:** The plan aimed to establish orderly migration and promote security in the border region. The proposed plan had five specific objectives: 1) protect human rights of migrants, 2) facilitate migrant documentation and help regularize their migration, 3) strengthen controls at ports of entry and fight corruption in migration services, 4) modernize infrastructure to international standards, and 5) carry out these actions to guarantee security, coexistence, and development in the southern border region.

To achieve these objectives, Calderón detailed four steps: 1) establish Mixed Operation Units (*Unidades Mixtas de Operación*) to work with the police in Chiapas, 2) release new migratory forms for temporary agricultural workers and visitors, 3) review the migratory status of individuals in the border area, and 4) intensify punishments for corruption and violence toward migrants.^{ccxxxvi} The president also stated that he would propose bilateral commitments to combat migrant smuggling, human trafficking, document falsification, and organized crime.^{ccxxxvii}

- **Responsible Organizations:** Presented by the Secretary of Public Security García Luna.^{ccxxxviii} Would have been run by the Mixed Operation Units in collaboration with local state police forces in Chiapas.^{ccxxxix}
- **Funding:** The Mexican government.^{ccxli}
- **Execution/Implementation:** The plan was never implemented.^{ccxli} However, a December 2008 official document mentions the plan as a part of the 2007-2012 National Development Plan and details temporary visas, among other elements.^{ccxlii}

- **Analysis:** There were conflicting reports and documents regarding the plan's implementation, but it does not appear to have advanced beyond the initial announcement.^{ccxliii}

Appendix 2: CAIMFS Project Collaboration

Figure 29

Number of Social Programs Conducted by CAIMFS and Partnering Agencies (2014-2015)

Partnering Agencies	# Programs
Ministry of Wellbeing (<i>Secretaría de Bienestar</i> , Bienestar)	11
Rural Supply Program (<i>Programa de Abasto Rural</i> , Bienestar-DICONSA) / National Institute for Women (<i>Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres</i> , INMUJERES) / Social Supply Program for Milk (<i>Programa de Abasto Social de Leche</i> , LICONSA)	3
Ministry of Agriculture, Cattle, Rural Development, Fishing, and Nutrition (<i>Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca, y Alimentación</i> , SAGARPA)	8
Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (<i>Secretaría del Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales</i> , SEMARNAT)	4
SEMARNAT / Ministry of Communications and Transport (<i>Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Transportes</i> , SCT) / Bienestar	1
Ministry of Health (<i>Secretaría de Salud</i> , SSA)	5
National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (<i>Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas</i> , CDI)	2
Ministry of Public Education (<i>Secretaría de Educación Pública</i> , SEP)	2
SEP / National Council for Education Development (<i>Consejo Nacional de Fomento Educativo</i> , CONAFE) / National Institute for Adult Education (<i>Instituto Nacional para la Educación de los Adultos</i> , INEA)	2
Ministry of the Economy (<i>Secretaría de Economía</i> , SE) / Microfinance Fund for Rural Women (<i>Fondo de Microfinanciamiento a Mujeres Rurales</i> , FOMMUR) / National Institute for Social Economy (<i>Instituto Nacional para la Economía Social</i> , INAES)	2
Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, (<i>Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social</i> , STPS)	1
National System for Integral Family Development (<i>Sistema Nacional para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia</i> , DIF)	1
Ministry of Agrarian, Land, and Urban Development, (<i>Secretaría de Desarrollo Agrario, Territorial, y Urbano</i> , SEDATU)	1
Total	43

Source: SEGOB report of CAIMFS's activities for its first year

Appendix 3: CAIMFS Organizational Structure (2014-2019)

Figure 30 includes the CAIMFS organizational chart for 2014 -2015. Figure 31 includes the CAIMFS organizational chart for 2019.

Figure 30
CAIMFS Organizational Structure (2014-2015)

Level	Position
KII	General Director for the Design of Public Policies and “B” Strategies General Director of Agreements, Integration, and Monitoring
LII	General Director for the Analysis for the Design of Public Policy and Strategies in Chiapas Associate General Director for Agreements Associate General Director for Integration and Monitoring
MII	Mid-Level Director of Monitoring and Connections A (4 positions) Mid-Level Director of Monitoring and Connections B (2 positions) Director of Agreements Director of Monitoring Director of Control Administrative Coordinator
NAI	Subdirector of Linkages with Federal Requests (3 positions) Subdirector of Linkages with State Requests Subdirector of Coordination with Federal Authorities (2 positions) Subdirector of Coordination with State Authorities (4 positions) Subdirector of Links A Subdirector of Dictation of Agreements and Agreements A Subdirector of Dictation of Agreements and Agreements B Subdirector for Agreement Applications in Chiapas and Tabasco Subdirector for Verification and Evaluation in Campeche and Quintana Roo Subdirector for Verification and Evaluation in Chiapas and Tabasco Subdirector for Human Resources and Budget Subdirector for Material Resources and General Services
OII	Head of the Monitoring Department (5 positions) Head of the Department for Links for the Attention (4 positions) Department Head Liaison (3 positions) Department Head Liaison for Protection Head of the Subscription Department in Chiapas Head of the Validation Office A Head of the Department for Control and the Guard of the Agreements Head of the Document Integration Department A Head of the Document Integration Department B Head of the Document Integration Department C Head of the Analysis Department B Head of the Human Resources Department Head of the Department for Material Resources and General Services
P23	Secretary for the Coordinator A Secretary for the General Director A Secretary for the General Director C Chauffeur for the General Director A Chauffeur for the General Director B Chauffeur for the General Director C

	Analyst for Requests with Federal Authorities B Analyst for Requests with Federal Authorities D Analyst for Requests with State Authorities B Analyst for Requests with State Authorities C Analyst for Protection with Federal Authorities A Analyst for Protection with State Authorities B Analyst for Protection with State Authorities C Analyst for Protection with State Authorities D Management Control A Management Control B
P32	Chauffeur for Coordinator B

Source: SEGOB transparency request

Figure 31
CAIMFS Organizational Structure 2019

	Position
1	Rear Admiral of the Marine Secretariat
2	General Director for Agreements for the Coordinating Mechanism for Comprehensive Attention to Migration for the Southern Border
3	Secretary for the Development of the Southern Border of Chiapas
4	Representative for the Ministry of National Defense
5	General Director of Personnel and the Border Commission as a Representative of the Federal Police
6	General Director Attached to Social Participation for the part of the Ministry of Social Development
7	Director for the Operating Center for Contingencies as a Representative of the Federal Ministry for Health

Source: SEGOB transparency request

Appendix 4: Additional Enforcement Infrastructure Information

Figure 32
CAITFs^{cexliv}

Location	Location Details	Opened	Status	Facility Details
Catazajá	Carretera Villahermosa - Escarsega Km 113 +740 S/N, Catazaja, Chiapas, C.P. 29980	2015	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mexico plans to modernize these facilities • Construction costs: MX\$387.2 million • This CAITF had first federal prosecutor's office, which opened on March 3, 2016
Huixtla	10 Km Al Noroeste por Carretera Huixtla, A Villa Comaltitlan Km. 10 , Rancho Cerro Gordo, Huixtla,	2014	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First CAITF facility in Mexico • Mexico plans to modernize these facilities

	Chiapas, C.P. 30640			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction costs: MX\$207 million
Trinitaria	Carretera Comitán-La Trinitaria Km 8+400, Colonia Michoacán, Trinitaria, Chiapas, C.P. 30160	2015	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facility staffed with ~100 personnel Mexico plans to modernize these facilities Construction costs: MX\$337.8 million
Palenque	Rancho Verde property, Chiapas	N/A	Planned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction was expected to begin in 2016
Frontera	Centla Municipality, Tabasco	N/A	Planned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction was expected to begin in 2017

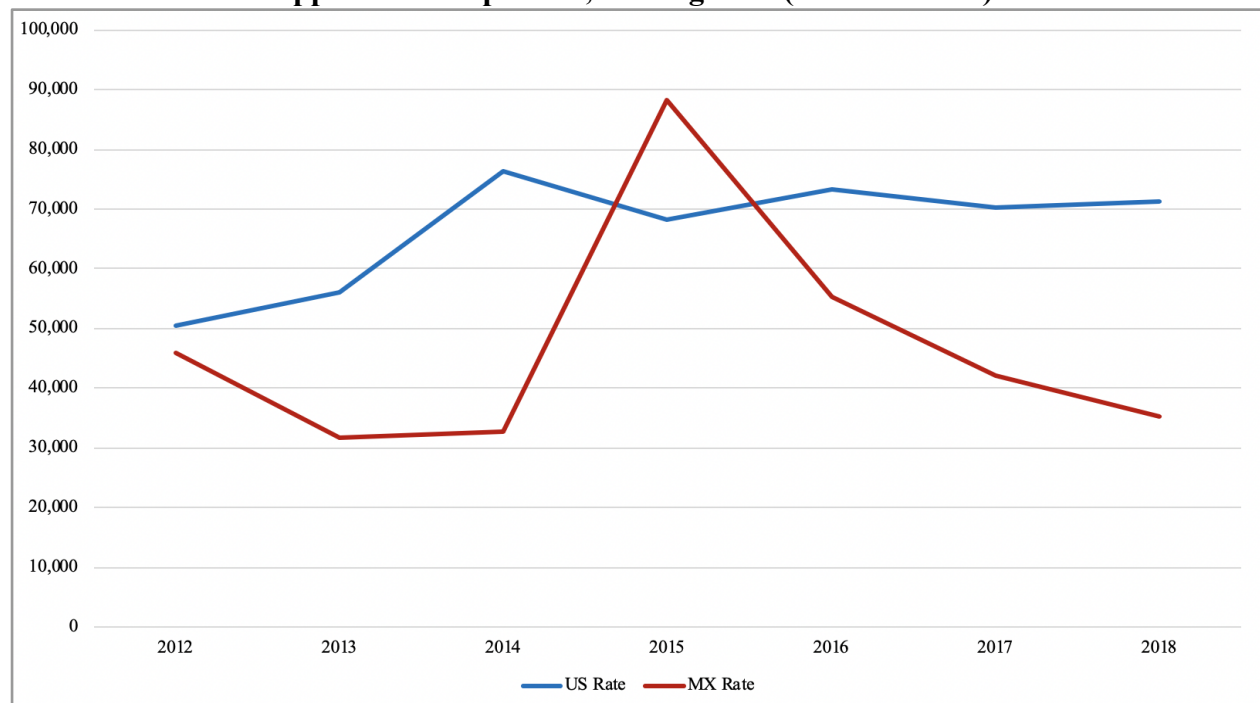
Figure 33
INM Budget for CAITFs in MX\$ (2014-2018)

CAITF	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Huixtla	\$910,905.30	\$1,082,851.20	\$1,093,086.36	\$695,873.88	\$761,722.80
La Trinitaria	N/A	\$467,482.05	\$801,397.80	\$801,397.80	\$801,397.80
Playas de Catazajá	N/A	\$779,080.96	\$989,559.84	\$1,599,575.56	\$1,351,822.68

Source: INM transparency request

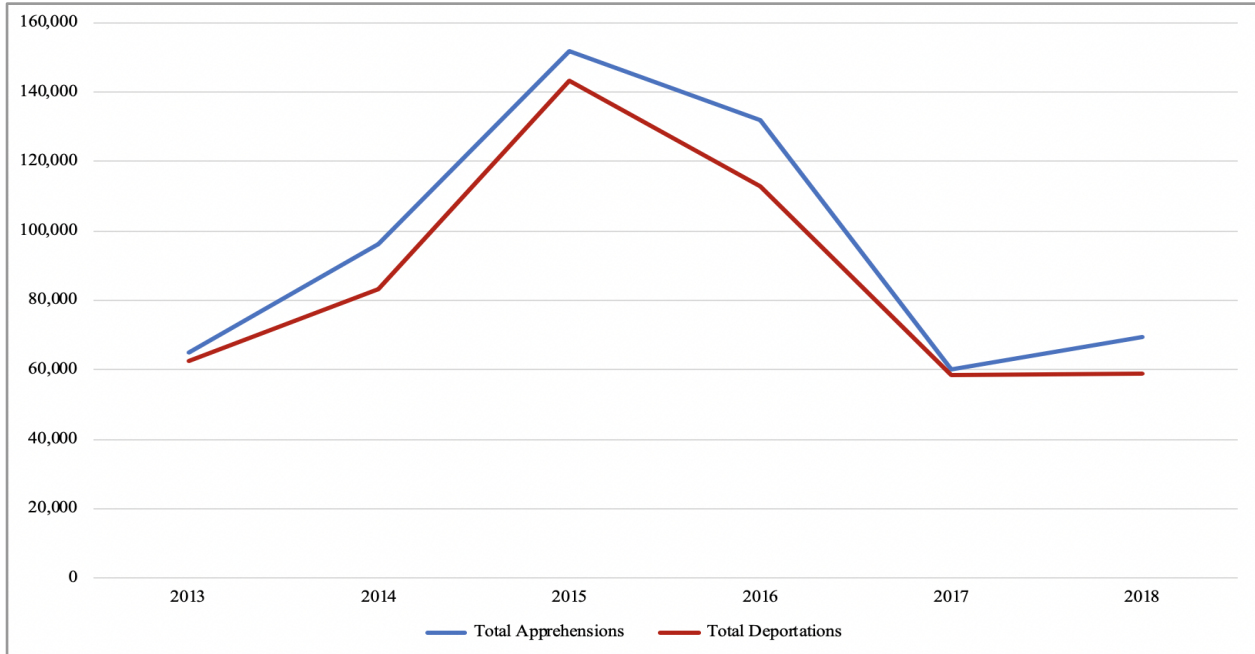
Appendix 5: Apprehensions & Deportations

Figure 34
Apprehensions per 100,000 Migrants (FY 2012-2018)



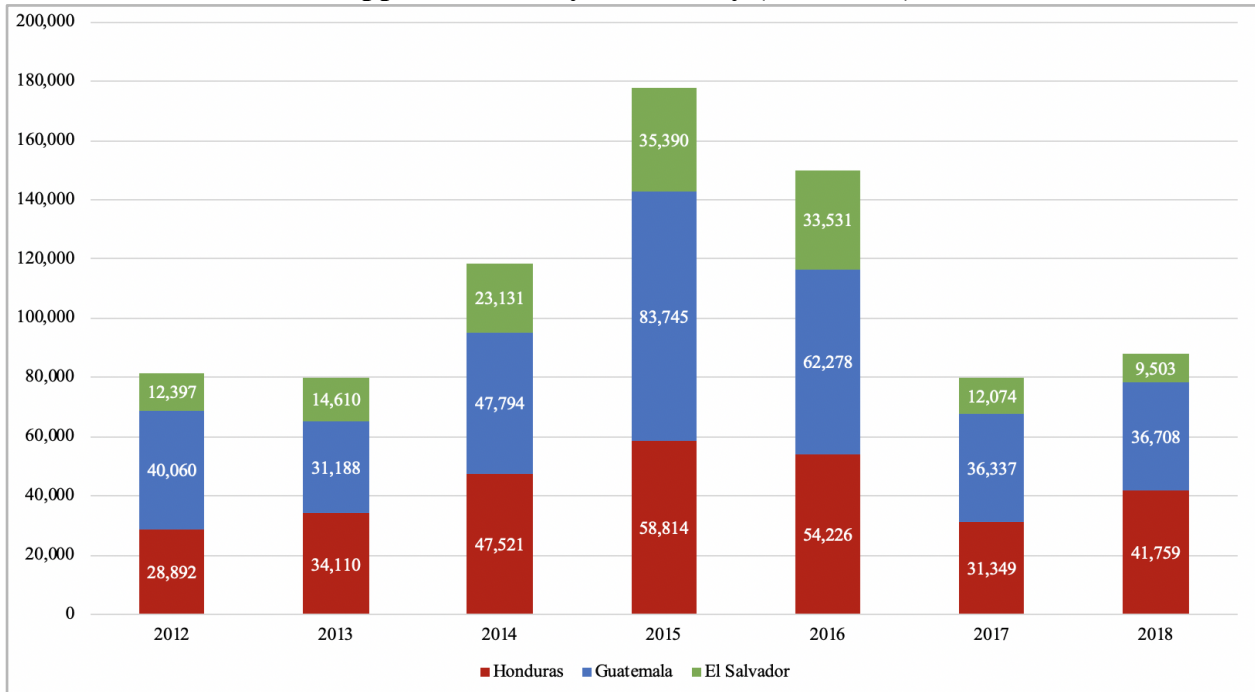
Source: SEGOB, U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Figure 35
Apprehensions versus Deportations in Southern Border States (2013-2018)



Source: SEGOB

Figure 36
Apprehensions by Nationality (2012-2018)



Source: SEGOB

Appendix 6: Routes

Figure 37
Routes to the United States-Mexico Border



Source: Train routes, major highways, and COLEF

Appendix 7: Perpetrators of Crimes Against Migrants

Figure 38
Percent of Total Crimes Committed by Authorities (2013-2017) ^{ccxlv}

Year	Percent of Crimes (%)
2013	18
2014	20.16
2015	41.51
2016	17.39
2017	25

Source: REDODEM

Figure 39
Authorities Responsible for Crimes Against Migrants (%) (2013-2017)⁴⁷

Authority	2013^{ccxlv}	2014	2015^{ccxlv}	2016^{ccxlv}	2017^{ccxlv}
Army	4	0.71	1.73	1.30	1.92
Federal Police	35	38.33	53.34	21.80	13.46
INM Agents	4	.	.	12.60	15.13
Judicial (PGR)	.	0.64	1.38	2.17	.
Municipal Police	31	25.05	14.86	21.28	17.18
Navy	.	0.21	1.04	0.76	0.38
Other	.	.	.	11.18	15.51
State Police	10	10.92	12.90	10.20	10.26
Train Private Security	23.33
Undetermined Authority	16	15.85	8.99	19.10	2.82
Veracruz Auxiliary Police	.	0.64	0.81	.	.

Source: REDODEM

⁴⁷ A “.” indicates that data was not provided in reports.

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