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Migrate north



Sources: Page/12

In the last nine years, more than four thousand migrants have died trying to cross the U.S. border.

The [border between the United States and Mexico](#) is more than 3,000 kilometers long with a wall that borders more than a thousand kilometers and that a few years ago was the campaign promise of former US President Donald Trump. West of the border, the Sonoran Desert, and to the east, the Rio Grande (or Rio Grande in Texas), mark the landscape of a border considered **deadly**.

Deadly due to **weather conditions**, [traffic accidents](#), the violence to which migrants are

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exposed, and **the immigration policies** applied by both Joe Biden in the United States and Andrés Manuel López Obrador in Mexico.

Title 42, the legacy of Donald Trump

In 2014, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) began recording the [number of migrants who die or go missing en route to the destination country](#).

On the U.S.-Mexico border alone, the organization recorded that **more than 4,400 people died or went missing trying to cross into the United States**.

The number of deaths per year had an evident increase with the immigration policies left by former US President Donald Trump. In **2020, 474 migrants** who attempted to cross the U.S. border died or went missing.

In 2021, the number of deaths reached 729 and in 2022 it registered a slight decrease with 669 people losing their lives on the way.



Image:

AFP

The immigration policy known as **Title 42**, implemented in 2020, is a rule that provides for the **immediate expulsion of migrants** as a health measure to prevent the spread of coronavirus, it is still in force despite the fact that the worst stage of the pandemic has already passed and that the United States has a new president since 2021.

However, one of the modifications that Title 42 had was to expand its scope: now immigration authorities in Washington can also expel migrants from Haiti, Venezuela, Nicaragua and Cuba who arrive by land.

Dying in waiting

Biden also added new restrictions on asylum applications: migrants must apply in their countries of origin or in the country of transit. On the ground, this translates into **months of waiting for migrants** who meanwhile look for ways to survive until authorities see their cases.

In that wait, 40 people died in a fire inside a migrant detention center of the National Institute of Migration of Mexico. The incident is being investigated by the Mexican prosecutor's office that [has already arrested five alleged direct culprits of the deaths.](#)

The migrants who were inside the migrant station came mainly from the so-called **Northern Triangle: Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.** There were also migrants from Venezuela and Colombia. Immigration authorities have not yet specified from which countries the fatalities are.

Mexico's migration policies were also criticized by international organizations such as Amnesty International (AI). In 2019, the Mexican government deployed more than **20,000 military personnel to the borders** following threats from the Trump administration about possible trade sanctions against its southern neighbor.

"**Mexican authorities continued to work with U.S. authorities** to prevent people from other countries from seeking safety in the United States," Amnesty International said in a report released last week.



Vigil outside the migrant detention center where 39 people died in a fire. Image: AFP
According to that organization, Mexican authorities detained more than 280,000 people "overcrowded immigration detention centers" and also expelled more than 98,000 migrants, mainly Central Americans. Among them, [they expelled thousands of children](#)

In 2022 alone, the United States and Mexico **expelled more than 190,000 Central American migrants**, including 35,000 children, according to IOM data. Compared to 2021, expulsions from Mexican territory rose by 17.4%. While in US territory expulsions had an increase of 169.2% compared to 2021.

Since taking office, **Biden has expelled more than 4.5 million people** even though many have migrated to escape **violence or poverty** in their home countries or because **natural disasters** have wiped out their crops and their chances of survival.

The danger of anti-migrant policies

That is why, although migration policies are increasingly harsh, migration does not stop. [It only becomes more dangerous](#) for people looking to improve their living conditions and be able to send some money to their relatives in the countries of origin.

Of the 4,400 migrants who died trying to cross the U.S.-Mexico border, **2,193 died in unknown conditions**. In this regard, IOM explains that due to the **danger of the route**, the data on these deaths were impossible to record.

The journey made by thousands of migrants every year not only presents difficulties due to the geographical conditions of the area, but also due to the violence experienced by the communities they transit as well as organized crime aimed at those who migrate and the inhabitants of the place. Added to this are the increasingly restrictive anti-immigrant policies in both Mexico and the United States.



Image:

AFP

In this context, IOM explains that "the victim may not be adequately identified as a migrant", a factor that complicates the documentation of migrant deaths and disappearances.

The causes of death of **the more than four thousand migrants** who have died since 2014 are: drowning (975 deaths), extreme environmental conditions/lack of shelter, food, water (644), vehicle accidents/deaths linked to dangerous transport (337), violence (134), accidental death (63) and illness/lack of access to health care (54).

The migration agency explained that on the way migrants are exposed to exploitation, violence, extortion, human trafficking, sexual violence, kidnapping and recruitment to integrate organized criminal groups.

In this scenario, **the questioning of the anti-migrant policies** that come down from North America returns to the center of the discussion on the human rights of people who already suffer a first expulsion in their countries of origin: either due to lack of employment, poverty, violence, criminal gangs and natural disasters increasingly destructive due to global warming.

Source: <https://www.pagina12.com.ar/537428-en-los-ultimos-9-anos-murieron-mas-de-4-mil-migrantes-intent>

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