



FACT SHEET
EMPLOYMENT
AND MIGRATION
COUNTRIES OF
NORTHERN CENTRAL
AMERICA 2021

Migration and human mobility have special relevance in the Central American region, especially in the countries of Northern Central America (NCA), due to the number of people who have leave their places of origin, as a result of situations related to insecurity, social instability, natural disasters or the search for better job opportunities.

This document presents the labour and migratory profile of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, jointly and individually and identifies the functioning and deficiencies of the labour market related to migration, which relates to the increase in irregular migration, imbalances in the supply and demand of employment, and violations of labour rights.

Based on this, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has identified a series of proposals and priority work areas to support and provide technical assistance to ensure working conditions that guarantee decent work and regular, orderly, safe and fair labour migration; to promote the economic and social development of working people and their families.

1 DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC DYNAMICS

The population structure of the countries of the Northern Central American region (NCA), made up of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, conditions the structure of their respective labour markets. Therefore, the aggregate analysis of their demographic and economic information provides a general overview of their internal and regional dynamics.

1.1. Composition of the Working Age Population

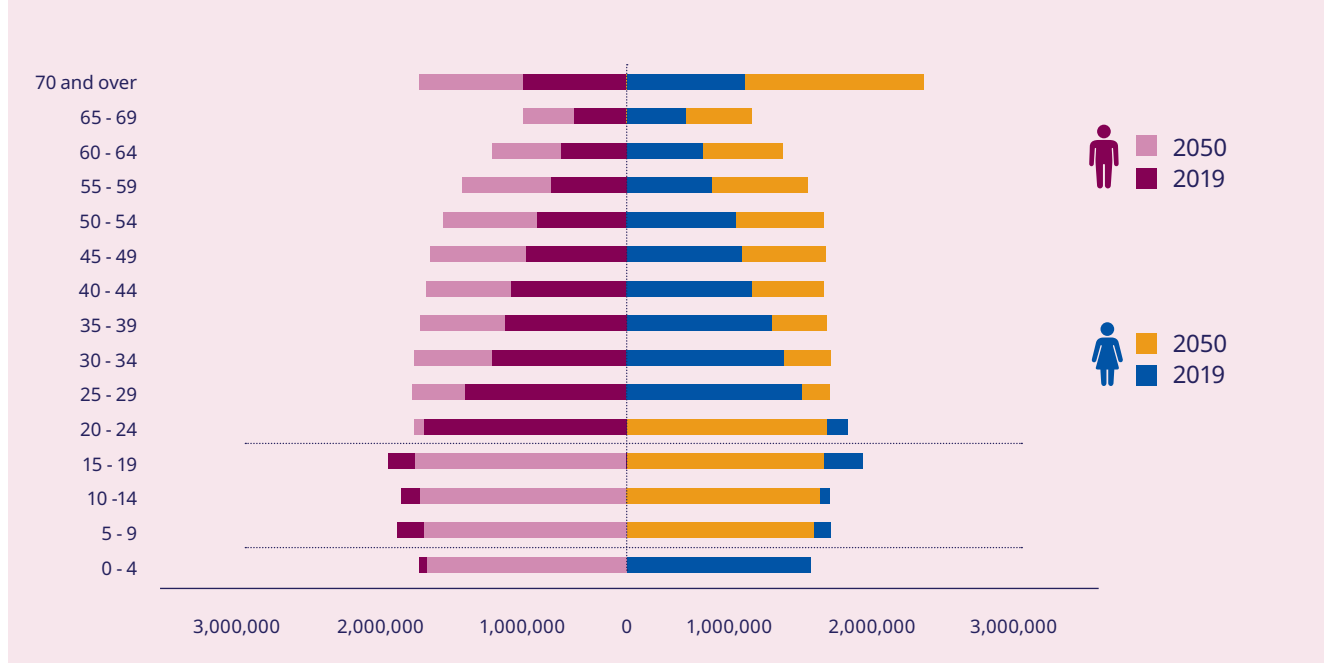
In Graph 1, it is observed that the NCA population pyramid has a regressive behaviour, towards the year 2050. The existence of a demographic bonus appears, located between 5 to 19 years of age, who represent 30.7% of the total population. One of the factors that affects the behaviour of the population bonus is the proportion (55.5%) of Guatemalans who are in this age range.

For the year 2019, the proportion of women in the region is 52.2%, which will decrease by 2050, reaching 51.4%; unlike men who will represent 47.8% (2019) and 48.6% (2050). This is reflected in the behaviour of the sex ratio, which varies from 91.6% to 94.5%, as indicated in Table 1.

The aging of the NCA population is related to the proportion of adults (40.5%) in 2050, who would require an effective social protection system, capable of meeting their needs in old age, given the increase in the aging index (62.4%) and the reduction in the dependency ratio (49.3%).



Graph 1. Population of Northern Central America; 2019 and 2050 (Projection)



Source: Developed by the author based on information from the statistics institutions of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.



Among the factors that influence the variation of these indicators is the behaviour of the Salvadoran population, which in comparison to Guatemala and Honduras, has the highest proportion of adults (42.0%) and older adults (21.4%); and at the same time for the year 2050, will have the lowest proportion of children (17.6%) in the NCA region.

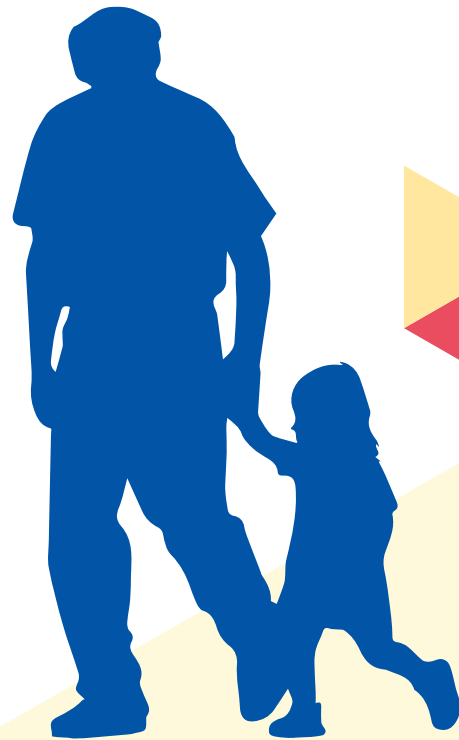


Table 1. Demographic Indicators of NCA, 2019 and 2050

Demographic Indicator	2019	2050
Age Groups		
Children (0 - 14)	28.6	20.3
Youth (15 - 29)	28.4	21.4
Adults (30 - 59)	31.8	40.5
Old age (60 and over)	11.2	17.7
Dependency ratio (%)	57.5	49.3
Sex ratio (%)	91.6	94.5
Ageing Index (%)	27.4	62.4

Source: author's own compilation based on information from the statistics institutions of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

Other indicators that influence these population behaviours are the following: the gross birth rate, global fertility rate, gross mortality rate and life expectancy at birth, as shown in Table 2.



**Table 2. Demographic Indicators of the NCA countries, 2019 and 2050
NCA birth, fertility, mortality and life expectancy (%)**

Indicator	Guatemala		El Salvador		Honduras	
	2019	2050	2019	2050	2019	2050
Birth	23.1	12.7	16.8	11.7	21.9	15.2
Fertility	2.6	1.7	1.8	1.8	2.5	2.2
Mortality	5.4	6.7	6.9	8.6	4.5	5.9
Life expectancy	73.0	78.6	73.5	78.3	76.4	81.2

Source: Developed by the author based on information from the statistics institutions of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

Table 3. NCA labour market indicators, 2019

During 2019, according to information from the statistics institutions of the NCA countries, data have been added to determine the values of the labour market indicators in the region. According to these data, the employment-work ratio reaches 56.7%, which implies that this proportion of the population has the capacity and is of age to access a job opportunity (see Table 3).

On the other hand, the unemployment rate of the NCA is 4.3%, influenced by the behaviour of unemployment in Guatemala, since it presents the lowest rate of the three countries. In the case of the underemployment rate, it refers to the proportion of people who are willing to work a greater number of hours or compensate for the reduction in working hours with another job.

Indicators	%
Labour force participation rate	59.3
Job-work ratio	56.7
Unemployment rate	4.3
Underemployment rate	27.0
Inactivity rate	40.7

Source: author's own compilation based on information from the statistics institutions of Guatemala, El Salvador y Honduras.

The value of this indicator for the NCA region is 27.0%, which higher than the individual value of each country. In this case, the main differences in the calculation of underemployment are due to methodological aspects, since in El Salvador only the employed population in the urban area is considered; while Guatemala and Honduras obtain this information at a general level (urban and rural).

With regard to unemployed people, 31.4% are between 20 to 24 years of age, a trend that in each one of the countries represents a proportion close to 25.0% in those ages. A similar situation is evident in the case of visible underemployment that at the regional level finds the highest proportion in age range 20 to 24 years (14.4%) (See Table 4).

It is important to highlight that the calculation of underemployment differs between the three countries, since Guatemala only estimates the visible part at the national level. As for El Salvador and Honduras, both consider visible and invisible underemployment, where the highest proportion of people in this condition are categorized as invisible underemployment (see Annex 1).

Table 4. Labour market indicators of NCA by ages, 2019

Ages	Employed	Unemployed	Sub-employed ^{1/}	Inactivity
10 - 14	1.1	0.1	0.8	7.9
15 - 19	9.4	17.5	9.8	22.1
20 - 24	13.4	31.4	14.4	11.6
25 - 29	12.2	16.4	12.7	7.6
30 - 34	11.4	11.1	11.2	6.1
35 - 39	10.6	7.4	10.6	5.5
40 - 44	9.8	4.3	9.5	5.0
45 - 49	8.6	3.0	8.0	4.7
50 - 54	7.4	3.1	7.2	4.5
55 - 59	5.4	1.7	5.2	4.5
60 - 64	4.3	1.6	4.4	4.8
65 - 69	3.0	0.9	2.9	4.3
70 and over	3.5	1.5	3.4	11.5

*Source: author's own compilation based on information from the statistics institutions of Guatemala, El Salvador y Honduras.
1/This indicator shows the information that corresponds to the visible under-employment, which is common to the three countries.*

The informality rate has not been included in this joint analysis, since Honduras does not estimate the proportion of people who are in the informal sector of the economy. However, in Guatemala and El Salvador the calculation of this indicator is considered with some methodological differences, since Guatemala takes into account the urban and rural areas for its estimation, while El Salvador only does so for employed persons in urban areas. Therefore, the informality rates for each country are 65.3% and 27.1% respectively.

In general, the countries of the NCA region should adopt public policy initiatives that allow them to take advantage of the demographic dividend in the coming years, with the aim of reducing unemployment, underemployment and informality rates within their economies. Thus generating the bases to promote the creation of formal jobs, and to improve working conditions and establish adequate mechanisms to ensure the social protection of workers in the old age stage.

1.2. Migration flow

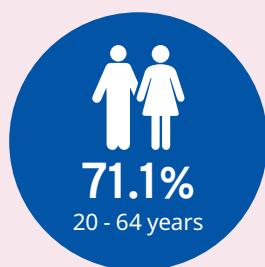
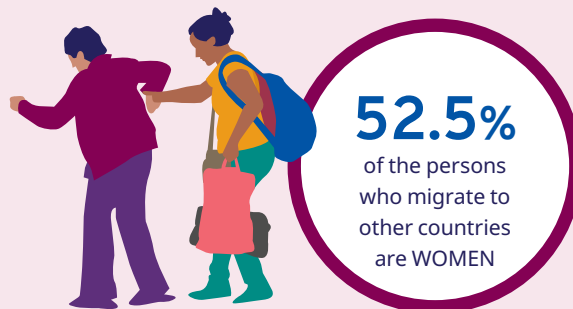
The information used for this section was obtained from the following sources:

a. Generalities (2020)

The data corresponds to the Stock of international migrants 2020, of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the United Nations Organization (UN).


101,871
persons have entered the NCAT


3,888,164
persons have abandoned the NCAT

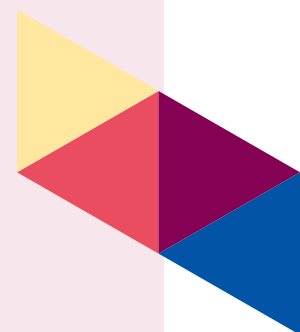


Countries of origin

Nicaragua	Mexico	USA	Other
24.6%	21.8%	21.3%	32.2%

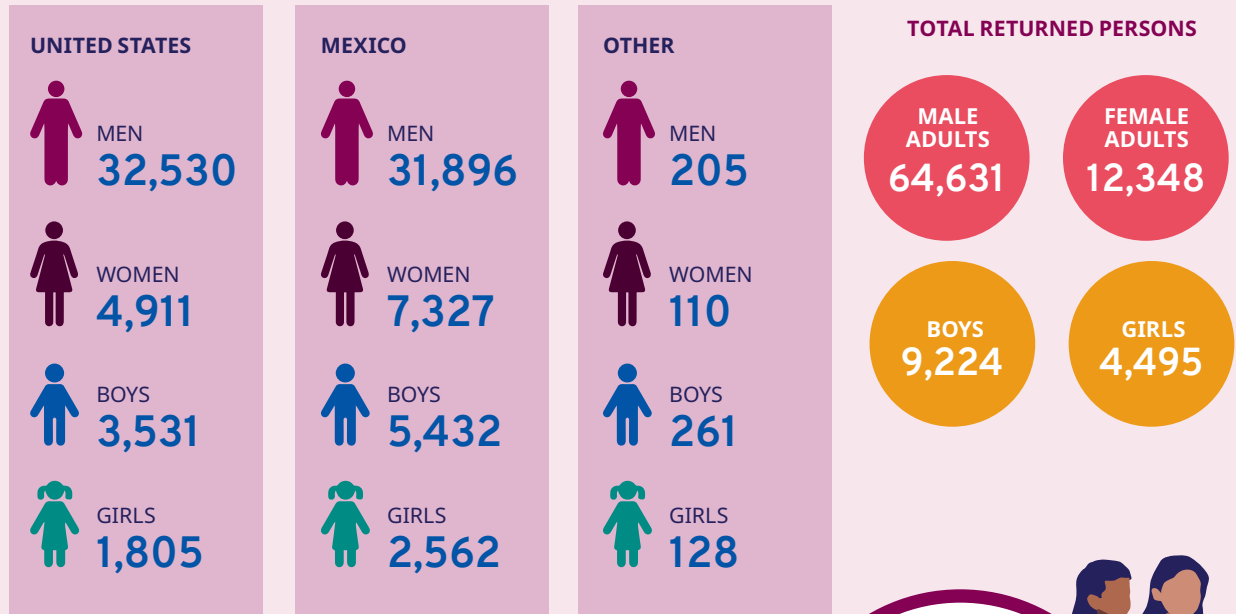
Destination countries

USA	Spain	Mexico	Other
87.7%	3.1%	2.6%	6.5%

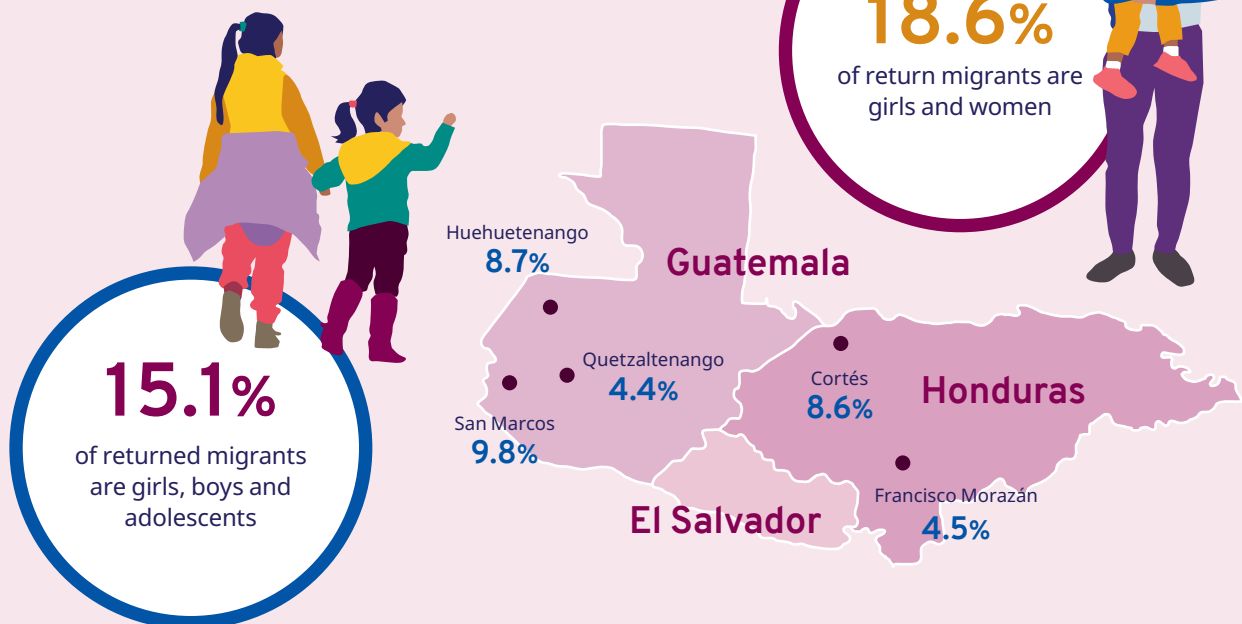


b. Return migrants (2020)

The data presented are from the information of the Guatemalan Migration Institute (IGM), the National Centre for Information of the Social Sector of Honduras (CENISS) and the Human Mobility Information Management Initiative of the Northern Triangle (NTMI) of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in the case of El Salvador.



Main departments of origin of return migrants

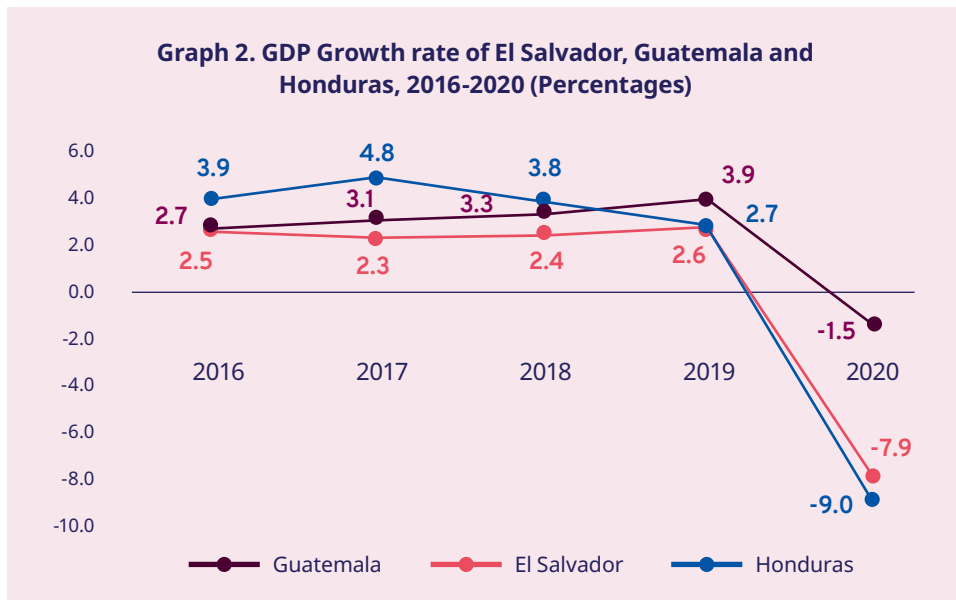


Regarding return migrant children, the breakdown between accompanied and unaccompanied is not included, since the levels of breakdown in Guatemala and Honduras are different; and in the case of El Salvador, such information is not available on official sites or on the NTMI platform.

Furthermore, an estimated 76,979 adults are return migrants. At the same time, 13,719 are return migrant girls, boys and adolescents; those who have completed the migratory cycle in an accompanied or unaccompanied manner. The details of the information for Guatemala and Honduras can be found in Annex 2, the disaggregation of this information corresponds to the details published by the respective migration institutions of each country.

1.3. Macroeconomic Context

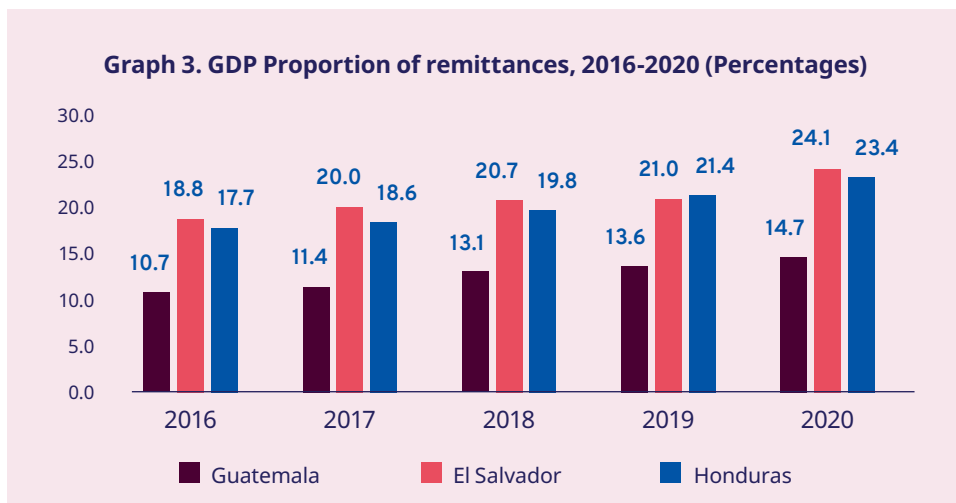
During 2016-2020, the NCA countries present some economic stability given the behaviour of the growth rates of their respective Gross Domestic Product (GDP), where the highest growth corresponds to Honduras, between the years 2016 and 2018. However, Guatemala maintained the highest growth rate in the 2019-2020 period, unlike the other countries (see Graph 2).



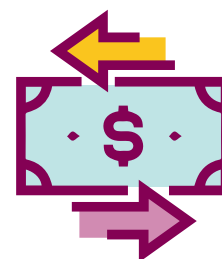
Source: author's own compilation based on the information from the Bank of Guatemala (BANGUAT), Central Reserve Bank of El Salvador (BCR) and Central Bank of Honduras (BCH).

In addition, the growth rates of the NCA countries presented negative values during 2020 as a consequence of the economic effects derived from the COVID-19 pandemic. The recovery projections according to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) are estimated to be higher than 3.5% for Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras in the year 2021.

Regarding international remittances, as shown in the Graph 3, there is a substantial increase during the 2016-2020 period, between 4.0% and 6.0% for each of the NCA countries. Likewise, it is evident that El Salvador and Honduras have the highest proportion of this external flow in relation to GDP, which is close to 25.0% in 2020, making it a source of important financing for the growth and economic development of these countries.



Source: author's own compilation based on information from the Bank of Guatemala (BANGUAT), Central Reserve Bank of El Salvador (BCR) and Central Bank of Honduras (BCH).



Regarding the behaviour of public finances, the fiscal deficit of each of the countries has increased during the period of analysis, reaching its highest point in 2020, as a consequence of the economic support (extension in the payment of taxes, food packages, production subsidies, among others) provided to the population to reduce the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on households and the productive apparatus (see Table 5).

With regard to the above, the volume of the debt of the Non-Financial Public Sector (NFPS) has increased as a proportion of GDP, especially in El Salvador and Honduras, whose values are located at 66.6% and 58.9% respectively, unlike Guatemala, which presented a total debt volume of 31.6% for the year 2020.



Table 5. NCA Tax Indicators, 2016-2020

Indicators	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Tax deficit					
Guatemala	-0.8	-1.1	-1.7	-2.2	-4.9
El Salvador	-1.0	-0.3	-1.3	-1.8	-9.0
Honduras	-0.5	-0.8	-0.9	-0.9	-5.5
Total debt					
Guatemala	25.0	25.2	26.5	26.5	31.6
El Salvador	52.2	52.2	51.4	51.7	66.6
Honduras	46.3	47.4	48.5	48.6	58.9
Foreign debt					
Guatemala	12.0	11.4	11.6	11.8	13.6
El Salvador	36.5	37.2	35.5	35.8	43.6
Honduras	3.4	3.7	3.6	3.4	3.1

Source: author's own compilation based on information from the Ministry of Public Finances of Guatemala (MINFIN), Central Reserve Bank of El Salvador (BCR) and Secretariat of Finances of Honduras (SEFIN).

Regarding the composition of public debt, the highest proportion corresponds to external debt in the case of Guatemala and El Salvador, for the period 2016-2020, unlike Honduras where the internal debt is responsible for financing the fiscal deficit of the SPNF (see Table 5).

Analysing the productive structure of the NCA countries, it is observed that the branch of economic activity "trade and repair of vehicles" (19.1%) is the most representative in Guatemala; while in El Salvador and Honduras, the main contribution of production is through the branch "manufacturing industries" with values of 14.9% and 16.0% respectively (see Table 6).
















However, the branches of economic activity related to trade and services (tertiary sector) contribute jointly more than 60.0% to the economies of Guatemala and El Salvador, unlike Honduras where this economic sector contributes more than 55.0%. Therefore, it is inferred that the tertiary sector predominates in the productive apparatus of the three countries; so it would be expected that the distribution of employment in the different branches of economic activity is related to this structure.

Regarding the poverty situation, according to information available from the statistical institutions of the NCA countries, a reduction is perceived in the number of people who are below the national poverty threshold, during 2019, 32.7% of the population in El Salvador was categorized in a situation of poverty, this being the lowest rate.

In the case of Honduras, 64.7% of the people were in a situation of poverty, which is the highest value of the NCA countries. While Guatemala, in 2014¹ it was estimated that 59.3% of its population was below the national poverty line.



Table 6. GDP Distribution of the NCA countries per economic activity, 2020

	GTM	SLV	HND		GTM	SLV	HND
 Agriculture, cattle breeding, forestry and fishing	10.2	5.1	12.1	 Information and communications	3.8	3.3	3.6
 Quarry exploitation and mining	0.5	0.3	0.6	 Financial and insurance activities	3.9	7.4	6.2
 Manufacturing Industries	14.1	14.9	16.0	 Professional and business real estate activities	14.2	13.4	9.7
 Electricity, water and waste management	2.4	3.2	3.8	 Public Administration and Defence	4.4	8.4	5.8
 Construction	5.1	5.5	5.4	 Teaching	4.8	4.9	7.5
 Vehicle trade and repair	19.1	11.6	14.1	 Health care activities	2.7	3.6	3.6
 Transport and storage	2.9	4.2	2.0	 Other service activities	3.7	2.4	2.5
 Lodging and food activities	2.4	2.4	3.3				

Source: author's own compilation based on information from the Bank of Guatemala (BANGUAT), Central Reserve Bank of El Salvador (BCR) and Central Bank of Honduras (BCH).

¹ In Guatemala's case, the information used for the description of poverty conditions, only include data from the years 2000, 2006, 2011 and 2014; from the National Life Conditions Survey (ENCOVI) that is carried out every five years, which is why the Statistics Compendium does not have a continues series for this indicator.

2 MAINSTREAMING EMPLOYMENT IN NCA

An important aspect to consider in the analysis of the labour market of the NCA countries is the distribution of employed persons by branches of economic activity, occupational groups, educational levels, access and use of technology, as well as the coverage of the social security systems, based on their affiliation and contribution to the health and social welfare regimes.

2.1. Work and technology

The distribution of the employed population by branches of economic activity, occupational groups and educational levels are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Generalities of the NCA labour market, 2019

Categories	Quantities	Percentages
Activity Branch		
Agriculture, cattle breeding, hunting, forestry	3,893,896	27.5
Trade, hotels and restaurants	2,798,791	19.8
Manufacturing Industries	1,865,134	13.2
Occupation Groups		
Basic Occupations	3,345,449	23.6
Service and trade workers	3,048,477	21.5
Officers, artisans and operators	2,061,653	14.6
Education Level		
None	1,597,291	11.3
Basic Education	7,342,946	51.8
Middle Education	3,697,015	26.1
Higher Education	1,502,696	10.6
Other ^{1/}	22,049	0.2
Employment Condition^{2/}		
Fully employed	8,952,196	64.8
Sub-employed	3,733,048	27.0
Total employed persons	13,823,747	100.0

Source: author's own compilation based on information from the statistics institutions of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

1/ In the category others are included the persons in special education of El Salvador, and those who indicated "Do not know/Do not answer" in Honduras.

2/ In the number and percentages of fully employed and under-employed persons, those in the rural area of El Salvador are not included due to calculation methodological aspects.

From the above, it is possible to deduce that the highest proportion of employed persons are in the primary sector (agriculture, livestock, hunting and forestry), categorized into elementary occupations, have a basic education level, and it is estimated that 27.0% are in a situation of visible underemployment.

However, by focusing the analysis on the occupational groups of the NCA, it is possible to identify the characteristics of the people based on their educational level and age groups, to outline the type of technical skills that each of them possess, based on their concentration therein, as indicated in Table 8.



Table 8. Technical characteristics of NCA occupations, 2019

Occupations	Characterization
Basic occupations	People who mostly have a basic education level, and are between 15 and 24 years of age.
Service and trade workers	In particular, they are people between 20 and 29 years of age, who have a level of secondary education.
Officials, operators and craftsmen	Mainly, it concentrates people between the ages of 35 and 44, who have a basic education level.
Farmers and agricultural workers	Predominance of people with a basic education level, who are between the ages of 15 and 24.
Administrative support staff	Prevalence of people with a secondary education level, aged between 20 and 29 years.
Machine operators and assemblers	It concentrates people who have a level of basic education, who are between the ages of 35 and 44.
Medium level technicians and professionals	People with a higher education level (higher proportion) and a medium, who are between 25 and 29 years old.
Professionals, scientists and technicians	Predominance of people with a higher education level, whose ages are between 25 and 34 years.
Directors and managers	In particular, they are people with a higher education level, who are aged 30 to 34 years, and 40 to 44 years.
Military occupations	Mainly, they are people between 20 and 24 years of age, who have a basic education level.

Source: author's own compilation based on information from the statistics institutions of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.




Table 9. Access and use of technology in NCA, 2019

Considering the characterization of people by their occupations, educational level and ages, it is possible to identify their access and use of technology through electronic devices and the internet, as shown in Table 9.

Based on the information from the statistical institutions of the NCA countries, the highest proportion of employed persons access the internet through their cell phones, with Honduras representing the highest proportion (95.6%), followed by Guatemala and El Salvador, where 81.8% and 60.4% do so under this modality respectively.

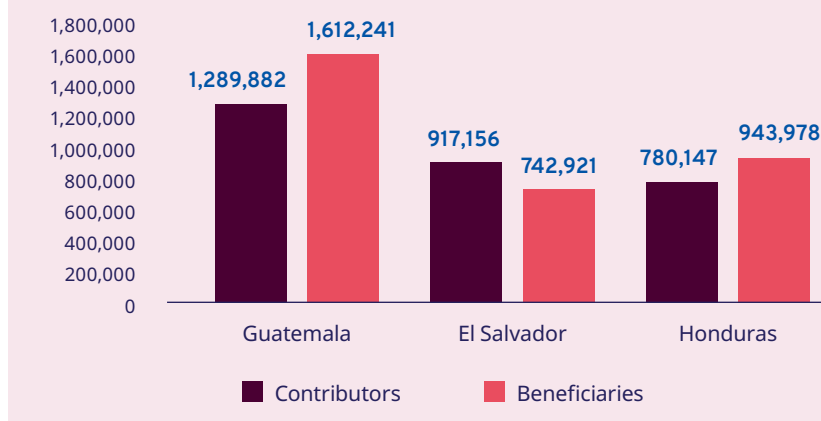
Regarding the use of the internet, the majority do so to communicate, either by email or chat, being Honduras the one that represents the largest proportion (88.7%); whilst in Guatemala it is 79.8% and 78.1% in El Salvador.



		Personas ocupadas por acceso y uso de la tecnología (2019)		
		Guatemala	El Salvador	Honduras
Use of cell phones		79.3%	92.7%	75.9%
Use of computer		44.6%	18.8%	17.2%
Use of the internet		53.8%	54.4%	46.7%

Source: author's own compilation based on information from the statistics institutions of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

Graph 4. Contributing and beneficiary population of the NCA health scheme, 2020



Source: author's own compilation based on information from the health scheme institutions of the social security systems of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

2.2. Social protection in NCA

In the NCA countries, the social security systems are made up of the health and social security regime, where the main difference is in the latter, since Guatemala and Honduras maintain public pension regimes, unlike El Salvador, where there is a mainly private regime (higher proportion of the employed population) and to a lesser extent the public.

2.2.1. Health Regime

This regime includes health care for contributors and their beneficiaries, as well as benefits for occupational or work-related risks. Therefore, the government institutions that provide this type of services are the Guatemalan Social Security Institute (IGSS), the Salvadoran Social Security Institute (ISSS) and the Honduran Social Security Institute (IHSS).

Graph 4 shows the number of people affiliated with social security institutions in the NCA countries, who make contributions and their beneficiaries, including other members of the family.

It is important to highlight that the compilation of statistical data from these institutions is different between the NCA countries, since in the case of Guatemala and El Salvador, the information is disaggregated by department, branch of economic activity, sector of activity, among others; while in Honduras, the level of detail of the information is presented at the territorial level.

However, regarding the distribution of contributors to the health system of the social security system in Guatemala, they are concentrated in service activities (56.6%). While, in El Salvador, they are located mainly in commerce, hotels, food, transportation and storage (23.0%). (See Annex 5).

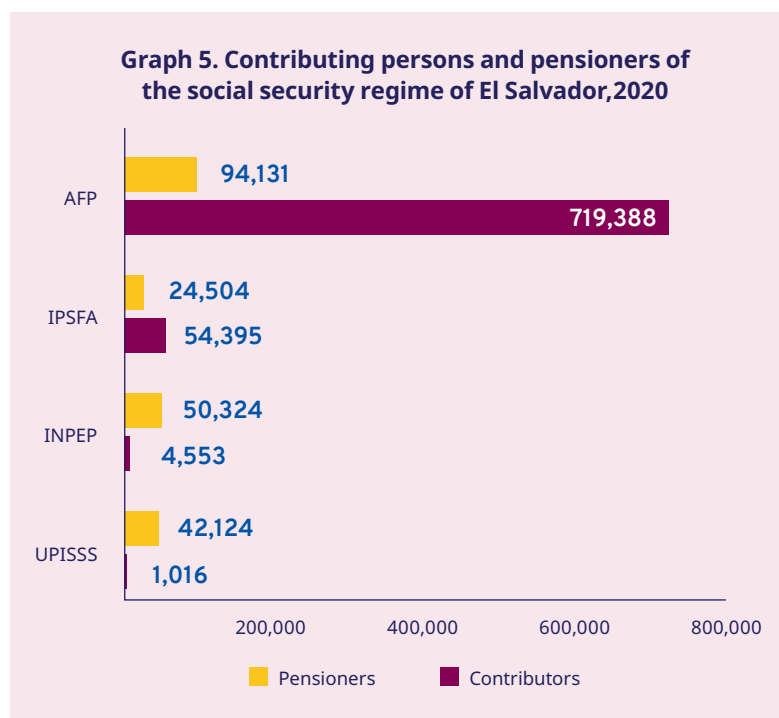
2.2.2. Social security regime

As previously indicated, the social security regimes are different among the NCA countries, which is why, in Table 10, the detail of the government institutions and private entities that make up these systems in each country is presented.

Table 10. Government institutions that make up the social security regimes in the NCA countries

Guatemala	El Salvador	Honduras
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instituto Guatemalteco de Seguridad Social (IGSS) (Guatemalan Institute of Social Security) • Instituto de Previsión Militar (IPM) (Institute of Military Provision) • Oficina Nacional de Servicio Civil (ONSEC) (National Office of Civil Service) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instituto Salvadoreño del Seguro Social (ISSS) (Salvadorian Social Security Institute) • Unidad de Pensiones del ISSS (UPISSS) (Pensions Unit of the ISSS) • Instituto Nacional de Pensiones de Empleados Públicos (INPEP) (National Institute of Public Employee's Pensions) • Instituto de Previsión Social de la Fuerza Armada (IPSFA) (Institute of Social Provision of the Armed Force) • Administradoras de Fondos de Pensiones (Administrators of Pension Funds) (AFP)^{1/} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instituto Hondureño de Seguridad Social (IHSS)(Honduran Social Security Institute) • Instituto Nacional de Jubilaciones y Pensiones de los Empleados y Funcionarios del Poder Ejecutivo (INJUPEMP) (National Institute of Retirement and Pensions of Employees and Officers of the Executive Branch) • Instituto Nacional de Previsión del Magisterio (INPREMA)(National Institute of Teacher Provisions) • Instituto de Previsión Social de los Empleados de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras (INPREUNAH) (Institute of Social Provision of the Employees of the National Autonomous University of Honduras)

Source: author's own compilation based on information from the social security regimes of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.
^{1/} The AFP are part of the private social security system in El Salvador.



Likewise, it is important to mention that in the case of Guatemala and Honduras, the same number of people contributing to the IGSS and IHSS are covered by the social security regime. Unlike El Salvador, where those who contribute to the ISSS health system do not necessarily contribute to the social security system, the distribution of which by institution and entities is shown in Graph 5. It is evident here that the AFPs concentrate more than 90.0% of contributors and approximately 45.0% of pensioners, which implies that most of the population is in the private pension system.

Source: author's own compilation based on information from the Superintendence of the Financial System (SSF) and the Social Security Institute of the Armed Forces (IPSFA).



3 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF VULNERABLE GROUPS

In this section, the main indicators of the labour market for population groups in conditions of vulnerability are briefly presented, such as women, young people and indigenous populations.

3.1. Participation of groups in condition of vulnerability in the NCA labour market

In the case of indigenous populations, Guatemala is the only country in the NCA region that maintains statistical records in its National Survey of Employment and Income (ENEI) of the Xinka, Garífuna and Maya peoples. When analysing the participation of these populations in the labour market, it is identified that 82.6% are employed in the informal sector, while their visible underemployment rate is located at 5.7%. Likewise, 46.3% are employed in the agricultural sector, and 34.4% are categorized in elementary occupations.

Women (2019)

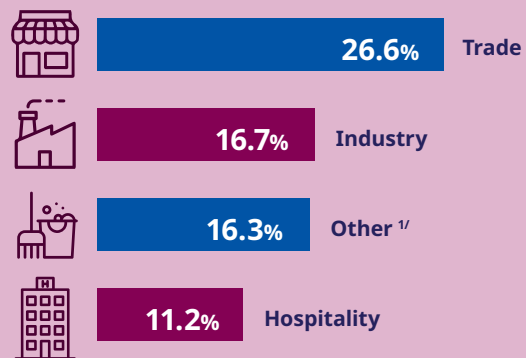
LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS ON WOMEN

General Indicators	%
Participation rate in the PET	41.1
Employment-population ratio	39.2
Unemployment rate	4.8
Visible underemployment rate	9.5
Inactivity rate	58.9

Source: author's own compilation based on data from statistics institutions of the NCA countries.



EMPLOYMENT IN THE MAIN BRANCHES OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY OF WOMEN



Source: author's own compilation based on data of the statistics institutions of the NCA countries.

^{1/} Includes the activities of households as employers.

EMPLOYMENT BY MAIN GROUPS OF EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN

Employment groups	%
Service and trade workers	29.9
Basic occupations	15.5
Administrative support personnel	15.4
Officers, operators and artisans	10.1
Machinery operator and assemblers	7.2

Source: author's own compilation based on data from the statistics institutions of the NCA countries.

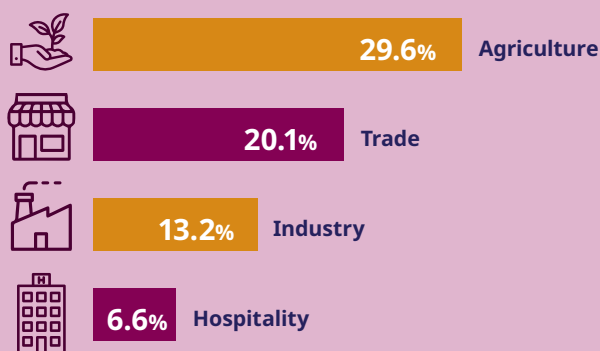
Young Persons (2019)

YOUTH LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

General Indicators	%
Participation rate in PET	57.6
Employment-population	53.7
Unemployment rate	6.7
Visible sub-employment rate	8.4
Inactivity rate	42.4

Source: author's own compilation based on data from the statistics institutions of the NCA countries.

EMPLOYMENT IN THE MAIN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY BRANCHES



Source: author's own compilation based on the data from the statistics institutions of the NCA countries.

MAIN EMPLOYMENT GROUPS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Employment Groups	%
Basic occupations	27.6
Service and trade workers	24.0
Officials, operators and artisans	14.9
Farmers and agricultural workers	13.6
Administrative support personnel	6.3

Source: author's own compilation based on the data from the statistics institutions of the NCA countries.



4 APPROACH

Based on the analysis of the economic, migratory and labour market behaviour of the NCA countries, the efforts of the International Labour Organization (ILO) support the design and formulation of public policies aimed at creating job opportunities based on decent work and the promotion of regular and equitable migration for all people.

The approach to tackle the root causes of migration must consider the entire migratory cycle, as well as the creation of new job opportunities (national and regular migration) to generate the conditions that reduce the propensity of people to migrate irregularly.

The ILO strategy to help mitigate the causes of irregular migration, as well as to promote safe, orderly and regular labor migration, with decent work at the centre, takes into consideration the following areas of action:



Employment and labour rights. Aimed at promoting the guarantee of the rights of workers, through the improvement of their working conditions and the strengthening of institutions to apply and comply with current legislation on the subject, promoting fundamental rights at work, including freedom of association and collective bargaining, based on International Labour Standards; Likewise, it is important to promote the creation and access of the population to formal jobs, to reduce the propensity of people to work in the informal sector, or find themselves in a condition of underemployment.



Development and productive transformation. Focused on the diversification and transformation of the productive apparatus, which should be oriented towards environmental sustainability; as well as the creation and strengthening of enterprises as energizers of economic growth processes, and to encourage the transition from the informal economy to the formal economy. In addition, it is important to guarantee favourable regulatory environments for the attraction of national and foreign investments, which stimulate growth with equity. Likewise, tri-national programs or projects must be developed that promote the economic and social development of people, through the revitalization of national productive apparatuses or in specific territorial areas.



Green Jobs. Adopt a sustainable vision related to the generation of green jobs, which would reduce the environmental impact of companies and economic sectors, facilitating their adaptation to climate change, allowing economic and social development in a sustainable way, through employment-intensive infrastructure programs aimed at resilience, especially in rural areas or common or specific natural protected areas between countries.



Technification and social protection. To take advantage of the demographic bonus, before its exhaustion, it is essential to develop human talent, strengthening the skills and capacities of people to improve their employability, especially those who are in vulnerable conditions. Similarly, coverage and affiliation of people to social security must be sought and strengthened, with the aim of ensuring access to this type of service.



Regular migration and labour mobility. The approach to the root causes of migration is related to the generation of conditions and opportunities that allow linking labour market policies with regular migration, therefore, the participation of actors in the world of work (government institutions, employers' organizations and workers' organizations), as well as actors related to migration (government institutions related to the issue, recruitment agencies, among others), will facilitate the design of public policies aimed at equitable, fair and ethical recruitment; based on International Labour Standards.



Support for vulnerable groups. Develop public policy initiatives aimed at strengthening labour market conditions, which allow people access to paid job opportunities, or through the generation of productive enterprises, which encourage women, young people, people with disabilities and populations indigenous people to participate in them; and the development of training and support processes that encourage their roots and affect their family and community environments, to reduce their propensity to start the migratory cycle. In this sense, the participation of employers' organizations is important to support the employability and strengthening of productive enterprises through their integration into value chains



Social and economic re-integration. Aimed at promoting the integration of return migrant workers to their communities of origin, through decentralized public policies that allow the use and certification of labour skills and abilities (acquired abroad), in coordination with government institutions of professional training, Employers' Organizations and other actors, whose objective should be focused on the creation of conditions that promote the roots of return migrants to reduce their propensity to start the migratory cycle again, and reduce their stigmatization in their communities of origin.



Strengthening the registration and generation of statistical information. Focused on strengthening the records and production of data on the labour market and migrants, especially during the return phase, with the aim of having the necessary statistics for the formulation and implementation of public policies aimed at having a general panorama and details of the working conditions of the people, as well as the location and specific profiles of those who carry out the migratory cycle, both from household surveys and from the reception of return migrants.



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ANNEX 1. Distribution of the Working Age Population of NCA, by labour market segment and age groups, 2019

Indicators	10 - 14	15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29	30 - 34	35 - 39	40 - 44	45 - 49	50 - 54	55 - 59	60 - 64	65 - 69	70 and over	Total
WAP	-	2,056,152	1,650,517	1,298,760	1,200,508	1,080,210	944,184	857,422	717,088	581,435	500,329	418,771	699,983	12,005,359
EIP	-	1,267,214	593,802	422,500	354,810	318,217	286,021	277,187	235,240	225,669	232,868	197,479	479,417	4,890,424
EAP	-	788,938	1,056,715	876,260	845,698	761,993	658,163	580,235	481,848	355,766	267,461	221,292	220,566	7,114,935
Employed	-	755,106	983,522	849,042	826,067	749,948	653,987	578,219	477,465	354,125	266,524	221,292	220,566	6,935,863
Unemployed	-	33,832	73,193	27,218	19,631	12,045	4,176	2,016	4,383	1,641	937	-	-	179,072
Subemployed ^{1/}	-	102,953	105,938	87,444	83,214	83,438	60,172	42,843	37,108	21,210	16,268	14,185	13,187	667,960
Informal	-	95,969	334,776	335,456	343,100	268,057	222,624	169,729	126,368	81,734	50,014	19,218	17,346	2,064,391
WAP	-	522,839	669,922	544,209	464,592	431,723	436,127	360,384	363,990	287,996	250,676	198,354	464,933	4,995,745
EIP	-	342,824	262,972	143,453	105,692	96,151	88,768	81,471	99,792	98,674	103,957	114,603	352,522	1,890,879
EAP	-	180,015	406,950	400,756	358,900	335,572	347,359	278,913	264,198	189,322	146,719	83,751	112,411	3,104,866
Employed	-	150,391	357,659	368,421	336,820	322,766	337,934	271,780	255,314	182,870	140,422	79,462	104,282	2,908,121
Unemployed	-	29,624	49,291	32,335	22,080	12,806	9,425	7,133	8,884	6,452	6,297	4,289	8,129	196,745
Subemployed ^{1/}	-	6,428	10,960	14,040	11,229	14,724	11,474	15,117	10,034	10,179	8,835	6,311	8,492	127,823
Invisible Subemp	-	32,730	75,353	64,075	52,756	50,051	53,227	40,426	46,501	34,239	29,721	19,050	27,283	525,412
Informal	-	45,284	86,238	80,506	77,625	84,963	92,628	75,976	79,708	55,225	46,471	27,902	35,099	787,625
WAP	925,794	1,014,001	882,313	694,392	586,054	539,421	503,455	453,962	399,210	334,907	323,106	238,278	465,176	7,360,069
EIP	779,780	578,373	294,406	190,265	140,474	130,008	121,890	111,915	108,606	117,559	137,639	118,581	310,277	3,139,773
EAP	146,014	435,628	587,907	504,127	445,580	409,413	381,565	342,047	290,604	217,348	185,467	119,697	154,899	4,220,296
Employed	145,694	391,316	517,035	462,506	418,979	388,422	368,527	332,584	284,913	214,751	182,990	118,537	153,509	3,979,763
Unemployed	320	44,312	70,872	41,621	26,601	20,991	13,038	9,463	5,691	2,597	2,477	1,160	1,390	240,533
Sub-employed ^{1/}	10,972	54,058	58,284	45,967	50,372	33,889	46,495	41,402	26,870	22,257	16,888	10,467	5,335	423,256
Invisible Sub-empl	18,765	168,468	286,077	262,874	219,781	214,849	182,962	157,235	148,444	107,612	92,883	56,742	71,905	1,988,597

Source: author's own compilation based on information from the statistics institutions of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

^{1/} This indicator refers to the visible sub-employment, which is common to all the NCA countries.

^{2/} The sub-employment indicator has been calculate with regard to the persons employed in the urban area.

ANNEX 2. Distribution of return migrant children accompanied and not accompanied from Guatemala and Honduras, 2020.

Categories	Guatemala			Honduras
	Boys	Girls	Total	
United States				
Accompanied children	605	450	1,055	798
Non accompanied children	1,314	448	1,762	1,111
Mexico				
Accompanied children	1,039	724	1,763	1,712
Non accompanied children	1,752	502	2,254	1,772
Other countries				
Accompanied children	-	-	-	104
Non accompanied children	-	-	-	181
Total	4,710	2,124	6,834	5,678

Source: author's own compilation, based on information from the Instituto Guatemalteco de Migración (IGM) and from the Centro Nacional de Información del Sector Social (CENISS)

ANNEX 3. Distribution of the NCA employed population by sex, economic activity branches and occupational groups, 2019.

Categories	Guatemala			El Salvador			Honduras		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Economic activity branches									
Agriculture, cattle breeding, forestry and fishing	1,899,824	307,957	2,207,781	432,992	40,854	473,846	1,087,056	125,213	1,212,269
Mine and quarry exploitation	9,215	-	9,215	1,849	73	1,922	13,867	-	13,867
Manufacturing Industries	486,414	409,946	896,360	230,106	201,607	431,713	273,268	263,793	537,061
Power, water and sanitation supply	32,061	5,622	37,683	16,043	6,326	22,369	33,161	6,594	39,755
Construction	436,754	11,590	448,344	194,072	4,501	198,573	237,155	8,356	245,511
Vehicle trade and repair	763,207	632,207	1,395,414	294,287	346,305	640,592	349,275	413,510	762,785
Transport and storage	203,310	12,584	215,894	106,245	10,540	116,785	114,001	5,970	119,971
Hospitality and meal service	131,315	261,247	392,562	62,419	185,926	248,345	45,193	139,579	184,772
Information and communications	35,086	8,273	43,359	18,184	7,489	25,673	17,339	10,489	27,828
Financial and insurance activities	53,376	44,616	97,992	16,475	16,158	32,633	23,408	19,442	42,850
Real Estate activities	12,766	2,944	15,710	5,427	1,942	7,369	3,044	2,084	5,128
Professional, scientific and technical activities	57,956	43,770	101,726	20,880	15,327	36,207	22,163	16,192	38,355
Administrative and support activities	128,462	36,832	165,294	73,133	25,486	98,619	45,043	22,702	67,745
Public administration and defence	139,306	49,257	188,563	83,228	31,756	114,984	62,490	55,835	118,325
Teaching	127,728	210,263	337,991	40,251	51,763	92,014	43,885	99,459	143,344
Health and social assistance activities	45,019	102,733	147,752	25,738	45,604	71,342	36,653	61,355	98,008
Other service activities	155,613	416,861	572,474	81,739	213,390	295,129	99,233	221,469	320,702
Total	4,717,412	2,556,702	7,274,114	1,703,068	1,205,047	2,908,115	2,506,234	1,472,042	3,978,276

Categories	Guatemala			El Salvador			Honduras		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
	Occupational Groups								
Military Occupations	6,061	-	6,061	10,133	1,116	11,249	2,228	51,285	53,513
Directors and executives	50,203	30,081	80,284	23,040	18,304	41,344	49,495	117,131	166,626
Professionals, scientists and intellectuals	129,161	193,815	322,976	77,371	55,767	133,138	77,766	98,409	176,175
Technicians and medium level professionals	168,704	112,339	281,043	84,231	83,597	167,828	138,667	59,349	198,016
Administrative support personnel	240,255	205,295	445,550	74,174	61,657	135,831	62,200	538,689	600,889
Service workers and salespersons	821,293	950,274	1,771,567	321,510	553,083	874,593	342,679	59,638	402,317
Farmers and agricultural workers	766,857	87,207	854,064	206,487	12,263	218,750	508,924	225,289	734,213
Officials, operators and crafts persons	863,761	374,267	1,238,028	295,780	125,756	421,536	372,790	29,299	402,089
Installation, mach and assembly Operators	363,893	29,162	393,055	167,829	55,326	223,155	169,626	291,901	461,527
Basic occupations	1,307,224	574,262	1,881,486	442,519	238,175	680,694	782,766	503	783,269
Total	4,717,412	2,556,702	7,274,114	1,703,074	1,205,044	2,908,118	2,507,141	1,471,493	3,978,634

Source: author's own compilation based on information from the statistics institutions of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

ANNEX 4. Contributors of the social security institutions of the health regime of Guatemala and El Salvador, 2020.

Branches of economic activity	Guatemala		El Salvador	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing	91,565	7.1	12,953	1.6
Manufacturing Industries, mine and quarry exploitation, power, water and others	192,534	14.9	178,169	21.4
Construction	17,971	1.4	22,515	2.7
Trade, restaurants and hotels, transport and storage ^{1/}	257,350	20.0	191,498	23.0
Information and Communications ^{2/}	-	-	18,070	2.2
Financial and Insurance Activities	64,062	5.0	31,305	3.8
Real Estate Activities ^{3/}	150,762	11.6	6,389	0.8
Professional, scientific, technical, administrative and support services	-	-	121,434	14.6
Public Administration and defence	320,775	24.9	177,364	21.3
Services ^{4/}	194,863	15.1	66,795	8.0
Domestic Service ^{2/}	-	-	1,822	0.2
Salvadorians Abroad (SALEX) ^{2/}	-	-	62	0.0
Independent workers ^{2/}	-	-	2,539	0.3
Total	1,289,882	100.0	830,915	100.0

Source: author's own compilation based on statistical data from the IGSS and ISSS.

1/ In this category are included the persons employed in the branch "Information and communications", for the case of Guatemala.

2/ This category applies only to El Salvador.

3/ In the case of Guatemala, this category includes the persons employed in the branches "Professional, scientific and technical Activities" and "Administrative and support services activities".

4/ This category includes the economic activity branches of "Teaching", "Social and health services", "Other service activities", "Households with domestic service" and "Extraterritorial organizations and entities", in the case of Guatemala.

ANNEX 5. Distribution of the NCA young people employed by sex, economic activity branches and occupational groups, 2019.

Categories	Guatemala	El Salvador	Honduras	Total
Economic Activity Branches				
Agriculture, cattle breeding, forestry and fishing	919,915	150,859	431,488	1,502,262
Mine and quarry exploitation	3,369	450	7,599	11,418
Manufacturing Industries	353,817	134,499	183,482	671,798
Power, steam, air conditioned, water supply and solid wastes	12,772	5,833	13,263	31,868
Construction	187,008	61,215	88,445	336,668
Wholesale and retail, and vehicle repair	558,117	197,055	266,722	1,021,894
Transport and storage	60,483	31,409	43,214	135,106
Hospitality and food services	167,859	90,760	74,922	333,541
Information and communications	15,660	12,965	13,654	42,279
Financial and insurance activities	55,724	10,963	16,050	82,737
Real Estate Activities	2,494	1,018	687	4,199
Professional, scientific and technical activities	36,703	12,688	11,601	60,992
Administrative and support activities	63,728	35,145	21,148	120,021
Public Administration and Defence	50,304	23,254	32,559	106,117
Teaching	83,491	13,241	30,730	127,462
Health and social assistance activities	40,876	13,766	29,600	84,242
Other service activities	224,957	81,350	104,566	410,873
Total	2,837,277	876,470	1,369,730	5,083,477
Occupational Groups				
Military Occupations	5,671	7,498	2,411	15,580
Directors and executives	20,317	6,716	21,127	48,160
Professionals, scientists and intellectuals	83,406	29,879	48,434	161,719
Technicians and mid-level professionals	98,379	41,636	84,444	224,459
Administrative support personnel	204,742	60,932	55,223	320,897
Service workers and salespersons	676,131	260,895	284,627	1,221,653
Farmers and qualified agricultural, forestry and fishing workers,	561,118	36,198	93,636	690,952
Officials, operators and artisans	460,299	110,101	187,338	757,738
Installation, machine and assembly operators	104,984	66,590	67,000	238,574
Basic occupations	622,230	256,026	525,672	1,403,928
Total	2,837,277	876,471	1,369,912	5,083,660

Source: author's own compilation based on information from the statistical institutions of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.