

ACTION SHEET

NOVEMBER 2019



On the borders, reality becomes denser. Supporting the Regional Development Strategy for the Northern Mexican Border

Line of action:
TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

Area:
GOVERNANCE

Scope:
MEXICO

Diagnostic study on the legal, programmatic and institutional framework in the northern border region in Mexico.

BORDER, HUMAN MOBILITY AND TERRITORY

Over the last 12 years, migration in Mexico has started to change profoundly in terms of numbers, patterns and impacts, that is, a significant transformation in migration dynamics has been experienced in this region of the country. It has been observed that this new dynamic has brought consequences of a social, economic and cultural nature to the different border cities and to the region in general. As a result of the latest migration-related events that have taken place on the border between Mexico and the US, the Mexican Ministry of Agrarian, Territorial and Urban Development (SEDATU) asked the EUROsociAL+ Programme for support to analyse the migratory processes and population mobility and their socio-economic impact on the cities along the northern border of Mexico. The Colegio de la Frontera Norte de México (COLEF) has been the agent that has collaborated with EUROsociAL+ in undertaking a diagnostic study focusing on the problems related to migration in all its phases and stages in a context of economic, social and political crisis regarding how the phenomenon is handled. The research was carried out by a team of experts who also led a series of focus



groups in the border municipalities involved. The diagnosis will be presented at a workshop attended by state and municipal authorities in order to lay the foundations for the design of the Northern Mexican Border Regional Development Strategy.

Currently, the northern Mexican Border region has formed a close relationship with the United States; there are permanent exchanges of goods and services in both directions, as well as an immense flow of people who cross each day in both directions.

¹ Trías, 1985

Consortium led by:



The decrease in the percentage of migrants who would seek to return to the United States has sometimes been interpreted by the border society as a problem since they suggest that the migrant population represents a burden and even a security problem. The clearest and most recent example of this is the case of the Central Americans who arrived in Tijuana with the intention of crossing to the United States

- ▶ The Baja California border region has the highest number of immigrants (168,000); 38.4% of the population was born in a non-border state or outside Mexico. This percentage increases to over 50% in municipalities such as Tijuana and Tecate (Baja California).
- ▶ Between 2001 and 2018, Baja California and Sonora received most of the migrants deported from the US. Jointly, 67% of the events recorded took place in these two states.
- ▶ Men make up the vast majority of Mexicans repatriated from the United States, totalling 91% versus 9% women. But it is also observed that the vast majority of repatriation events involve young migrants; almost half are between 20 and 29 years old.
- ▶ Between January and October 2018 9,348 minors were handed over to the Mexican authorities by their American peers, which represents 6% of the total.

THE DIAGNOSTIC STUDY

The Study carried out a precise and substantive analysis of the different frameworks that affect the sustainable development of the populations, a reduction in the gender gap and migratory aspects, specifically:

1. The region's legal framework, with special emphasis on international, federal, state and municipal legal instruments and regulations.
2. The region's programmatic framework, with special emphasis on existing programmes, projects, actions and investments.
3. The region's institutional framework, mapping the players involved, both at the public (federal, state, municipal) and private levels.
4. An analysis of the political, economic, social and technological aspects in which the purpose of this study is framed.
5. The flows of migrants repatriated or deported from the United States to the border cities in Mexico, changes in trends and the profiles of the people affected.

Some of the data provided by the Study regarding the flows of migrants repatriated or deported from the United States to the Mexican border cities are shown in the box.

The main conclusions include:

- Almost complete absence of municipal governments in the institutional and programmatic framework related to gender gaps and migration.
- Limited municipal regulatory framework in relation to sustainable development, gender gaps and migration.
- The absence of adequate coordination in the implementation of public policies to achieve development in the region, advance gender equality and contribute to solving the problems generated by migration that the states and municipalities face due to their closeness to the United States.

NEXT STEPS

This Diagnosis provides valuable inputs for the development of the lines of action and the specific projects that will be part of the **Northern Border Strategy**, which will serve to allow the border states and municipalities to address the new migration and economic reality. Real public policy solutions will be sought that can be implemented by both the Federal Government and the State and Municipal Governments within the scope of their respective competences following the new international geopolitical reality in the United States. The EUROsociAL+ Programme is considering providing support in this regard to the institutions involved.