

Covid-19 and (Im)Mobility in the Americas

NICARAGUA

October - December 2020

1. **Poverty Rate (defined by unsatisfied basic needs):** 35% of total population.
2. **Migration Facts**
 - a. Country of origin: About 680,000 Nicaraguans, or 11% of the population, reside abroad mainly in the US. (44%), Costa Rica (43%), and Spain (4%).
 - b. Destination country: Around 43,000 immigrants or 0.65% of the total population live in Nicaragua. The main countries of origin are Honduras (31%), Costa Rica (27%), and the US (9%).
 - c. Transit country: migrants from Central American, Caribbean, South American, Asian, and African countries transit Nicaragua en route to the US.
3. **State Measures**
 - As of December 2020, the Nicaraguan consulates do not attend to visa applications.
 - The country's land borders are closed to tourists, only fellow citizens and residents who have proven their immigration status and have health insurance are admitted. In order to enter and leave the country, travelers must show a negative PCR test.
 - Se dio una prórroga para validar carnet de refugio de nicaragüenses en Costa Rica hasta finalizar el mes de enero del 2021.
 - An extension was given for Nicaraguans in Costa Rica to validate their refugee cards until the end of January 2021.
4. **Migrant Situation Alerts**

Nicaraguan emigration

- Nicaraguans who work in Costa Rica [cannot visit their country](#) due to the restrictions that the government has placed on entry (health insurance, PCR test). This impossibility is accentuated by the Christmas holiday.
- Nicaraguan emigrants, along with thousands of migrants from Central America, are stranded in Guatemala or Mexico waiting for the United States to process their refugee application.

Nicaraguan refugees

- About 100,000 people have fled the Ortega government, especially to Costa Rica. Many of them are asylum seekers, however during [2020 they have faced obstacles and setbacks](#) in their migration processes due to the pandemic.

- Many refugee documents have expired, and despite the extension granted by the Costa Rican government, access to health and public safety is restricted.

Irregularized migrants in transit, mostly Central American, but also South American, Caribbean, Asian, and African (population extremely vulnerable to Covid-19)

- The vast majority have been stranded in a waiting time until the borders are opened to be able to continue their transit north.
- They migrate in highly precarious conditions.
- Many do not have a place to quarantine.
- Many do not have sources of income since they were in the middle of migratory transit.
- If they get sick, they have limited access to health rights due to being illegal and for fear of being detained and deported.
- Limited housing conditions: overcrowding, in places that are not necessarily healthy, which prevent good health conditions.

5. Social Responses

- *Migrant resistance:*
 - o Spokesperson for the Nicaraguan Human Rights Collective Never +, stated that the entry restrictions for Nicaraguan migrants, especially from Costa Rica, [undermine the right to a family and the project of a dignified life.](#)
- *Solidarity networks:*
 - o The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights pointed to difficulties in regularizing the refugee situation of Nicaraguans in Costa Rica, as a sign that their right to protection is being undermined.