

# Increased migration at U.S. border linked to climate change, violence in Central America

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Thousands of families and children from Central America continue to

arrive at the U.S.-Mexico border, as the Biden Administration is developing strategies to address these migration challenges. Given that the number of migrants is expected to increase, policy research and analysis on the drivers for migration are vital for implementing long-term solutions.

A new [policy brief released by the Duke Center for International Development](#) (DCID) provides key insights into the factors that drive migrants from Honduras to the U.S. border.

"Migration from Honduras to the U.S. has been growing for years and increased sharply in 2019," says Sarah Bermeo, Duke's Sanford School of Public Policy associate professor and Duke Center for International Development director of graduate studies. "Our research suggests that this is a result of persistent violence coupled with sharp increases in food insecurity linked to climate change."

Bermeo and co-author David Leblang, professor of politics and public [policy](#) at the University of Virginia, used data obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request and linked the location (state) of birth for nearly 320,000 Honduran families apprehended between 2012 and 2019 to local measures of rainfall volatility and homicide rates in Honduras.

The results indicate decreases in precipitation are associated with increased migrant flows, and the magnitude of this effect increases with higher levels of violence. According to Bermeo, these findings can inform discussions about root causes of migration and policy responses.

"The Biden administration has pledged foreign aid to address the root causes of [migration](#)," Bermeo says. "A multi-track approach to address both agricultural resilience and the difficult knot of violence, corruption and poor governance has the best chance of reducing the need for

Hondurans to migrate."

**More information:** Honduras Migration: Climate Change, Violence, & Assistance: [dcid.sanford.duke.edu/wp-conte ... licy-Brief-Final.pdf](https://dcid.sanford.duke.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Policy-Brief-Final.pdf)

Provided by Duke University School of Nursing

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