

Illegal Migrants on Way to US Border Down 39 Percent, Mexico Says

The Mexican government says the number of U.S.-bound illegal migrants traveling through its country has decreased by 39 percent since May, a result of its bolstered enforcement efforts.

Marcelo Ebrard, Mexico's foreign relations secretary, said Tuesday that the number of mostly Central American migrants traveling through the country to reach the U.S. dropped from 144,278 in May to 87,648 in June, [according to](#) the Associated Press.

Ebrard specifically credited Mexico's recent crackdown on illegal immigration, brought on largely by pressure from the Trump administration.

Faced with the threat of a five percent tax on all of its exports to the U.S., Mexico City [agreed to send](#) thousands more of its newly formed National Guard troops to its own southern border with Guatemala, a hotbed for illegal migrant crossings. It also agreed to more adamantly fight human smuggling and human trafficking operations.

"This is the first time we've heard anything like this kind of number of law enforcement being deployed in Mexico to address migration – not just at their southern border, but also on the transportation routes to the northern border and in coordinated patrols in key areas along our southwest border," acting Homeland Security Secretary Kevin McAleenan said in June about the bilateral agreement.

The number of illegal immigrants being encountered by U.S. Border Patrol agents [has dropped](#) since the agreement was

enacted.

Border Patrol agents apprehended or turned away a total of 104,344 illegal aliens in June, a 28 percent drop from the 144,278 encounters that took place in May – marking the first decrease in monthly apprehensions since January.

Mexico also agreed to hold more U.S. asylum-seekers as they wait for their claims to be processed in an immigration court, a policy known as “Remain in Mexico.”

However, questions remain as to whether the Mexican government has the resources [to provide shelter](#) for the thousands of Central American migrants hoping to gain asylum in the U.S.

“Who is offered shelter? The ones who need it, typically families,” Ebrard told the Associated Press. “But not everybody is asking for it, I would say that more than half aren’t asking for it.”

Corruption among Mexican law enforcement is also becoming a major obstacle as the government attempts to tackle the flow of illegal immigration.

Nearly a tenth of the National Immigration Institute’s officers were under investigation for corruption or other allegations, according to Francisco Garduno, leader of the agency.

Garduno said around 400 to 500 internal affairs investigations were taking place within the agency, with some immigration agents previously accused of helping migrant smugglers.

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