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At Least 4% of Latin American, Caribbean People Live Outside Their Homelands

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Seventy percent of those migrants reside in the United States, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) said.

The number of migrants climbed from 26 million in 2000 to 28.5 million in 2010.

Mexico, with 11.8 million emigrants, accounts for nearly 40 percent of the total, followed by Colombia, nearly 2 million; El Salvador, 1.3 million; Cuba, 1.2 million; and the Dominican Republic, with 1 million.

Almost all of the Mexican emigrants are in the United States.

Around 2.4 million Latin American and Caribbean emigrants, or roughly 8 percent of the total, live in Spain.

Of the 7.6 million immigrants living in the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean, 63 percent are from elsewhere within the region, ECLAC said.

The largest group, 1.8 million, is from Argentina, followed by Venezuela, with 1.1 million.

While recent years have seen an increase in the number of Spaniards emigrating to Latin America amid high unemployment in the Iberian nation, the level is still far below the flow of people from the New World to Spain, ECLAC found.

Given the important role of migrants within the Latin American and Caribbean region, ECLAC is urging governments to take migration into account in their development plans and to establish a common position on the rights of immigrants.

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