



Hispanic Remittances 2026

International context, central bank data, sender profiles, and Zapp user motivations across major remittance corridors from the United States.

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Executive Summary

Remittances remain a primary economic lifeline for millions of Hispanic households in Mexico and Central America. This report, prepared by Zapp, a money transfer service operating through WhatsApp, examines the international context of remittances Hispanics send from the United States to Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, and El Salvador. It includes official data from central banks and analyzes the impact of these flows on each country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), as well as Zapp users' profiles and motivations for their money transfers.

\$168.6B

remittances received
in LATAM · 2025

Regional Overview



Latin America and the Caribbean was the region with the fastest remittance growth over the past decade, according to IFAD, September 2026.

A [report](#) by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), released in September 2026, identifies Latin America and the Caribbean as the region with the fastest growth in remittances over the past decade. Between 2016 and 2025, remittances to the region more than doubled, rising from \$72.6 billion to \$168.6 billion, an increase of 132%. The region's share of global remittances also grew, from 19% to 23%.

This growth far outpaced migration: during the same period, the number of people emigrating from Latin America rose 41% to about 44 million, confirming that migrants are sending increasingly larger amounts to their families. The United States remains the primary destination for Latin American migrants and the main source of remittances flowing into the region.

Mexico and Central America: The Hub of Regional Remittances

According to each country's central bank, Mexico is the region's leading recipient of remittances, with \$ 61.8 billion in 2025, followed by Guatemala (\$ 25.5 billion), Colombia (\$ 13.1 billion), the Dominican Republic (\$ 11.9 billion), and Honduras (\$ 12.2 billion). These five countries account for nearly 73% of the remittances flowing into Latin America and the Caribbean.

Despite adverse conditions, such as economic slowdowns, stricter immigration policies, and local currency fluctuations, immigrants continue to send money home, demonstrating resilience and an enduring commitment to supporting their families.

These findings echo what Zapp users have shared: 71% say sending money is a way to stay present in their families' lives and maintain an emotional connection across distances, rather than simply an obligation or routine.



71%

Zapp users say sending money is an expression of care and connection across distance—not an obligation or mere habit.

Where Does the Money Go

The latest data from central banks confirm that the first half of 2026 was, in most corridors, the best on record for that period of the year:

Country	Remittances (Jan-Jun 2026)	YoY Change
Mexico	\$30.8 billion	+3.1%
Guatemala	\$12.2 billion	+7%
Honduras	\$6.5 billion	+12.34%
El Salvador	\$5.1 billion	+4.5%
Nicaragua	No updated official figure available	N/A

In the case of Mexico, the leading recipient of remittances, 99.2% of total remittance inflows during the first half of 2026 were made via electronic transfers (\$30.5 billion).

Who Sends the Money

An analysis of Zapp user profiles reveals several insights into money transfer trends.

Age Profile and Household Characteristics

- The median age of remittance senders is 36, with 58% aged 30 to 49.
- They primarily work in construction, transportation, services, and agriculture.
- More than two-thirds are married, and half live in households of four to six people.

Weekly Schedule

- Half of all remittances are sent within seven days of the previous transfer, while a quarter are sent within three days.

Sending Frequency Increases with Age

- A user between the ages of 50 and 59 made an average of 10.1 transfers over nine months, whereas a user under 25 made 6.3.

36

median sender age

58%

are between 30 and 49 years old

51.4%

of transfers occur Friday through Sunday

3,923

Unique destinations registered in Mexico

- The peak occurs in the 50–59 age group, with a decline setting in after age 60. Older users send money more frequently but in somewhat smaller amounts per transaction.
- Typical remittances are under \$500, sent about every two weeks, with transfers peaking during the holiday season and around special family occasions.

Remittances Reach Far Beyond Major Cities

- So far in 2026, Zapp has recorded remittances sent to 3,923 destinations across Mexico.
- The top 10 recipient cities account for just 17.2% of total transfer volume, while 48.8% goes to smaller towns such as Ciudad Altamirano in Guerrero or Churumuco in Michoacán.
- Over a nine-month period, nearly 2,900 localities received less than \$10,000 each in remittances.

Money is Sent Outside of Banking Hours

- 43.3% of transfers take place outside the 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. window, based on the sender's local time.
- One in five (20.7%) occurs between 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., and 51.4% of the total volume is concentrated between Friday and Sunday.

What Drives Remittances

According to a recent Zapp survey of Mexican users in the United States, 73% of respondents said it would be harder this year to set aside the amount they typically send for an important occasion like Mother's Day. Meanwhile, 21% said it would be about the same as last year, and just 6% expected it to be easier.

Will it be harder to afford sending money this year?

A bit more	45%
A lot more	28%
About the same as last year	21%
Less than last year	6%

73%

Zapp users said it will be harder to afford their usual remittance amount this year.

The main reasons were rising expenses (38%), lower income or unstable work (22%), and stricter immigration policies (12%), among others. These findings suggest that, for now, the cost of living and employment uncertainty weigh more heavily than the immigration environment when it comes to sending remittances.

Why will it be harder for you to come up with the money?

Rising expenses	38%
Lower income or unstable work	22%
Stricter immigration policies	12%
Changes in my employment situation	7%
I prefer to be more careful with money	5%
Another reason	1%

Regarding the meaning senders attach to remittances, 7 in 10 say that sending money is a way to stay present in their families' lives, not an obligation or a habit.

Sending money is...

A way to be present from afar	71%
A way to show gratitude	37%
A habit	6%
An obligation	3%
Other	1%

It is also important to understand how the money is used once it arrives. In most cases, it goes toward essential needs. Forty-one percent of senders' remittances help cover basic expenses, such as food, while 21% go toward healthcare costs, including medication and medical care. Together, these figures demonstrate how remittances directly impact families' daily lives.

Stated purpose of the funds received (multiple selections)

Food or daily expenses	41%
For the recipient to use as they wish	26%
A special expense or purchase	25%
Medications or medical care	21%
Savings or investments	5%

Consistent with the Global Context

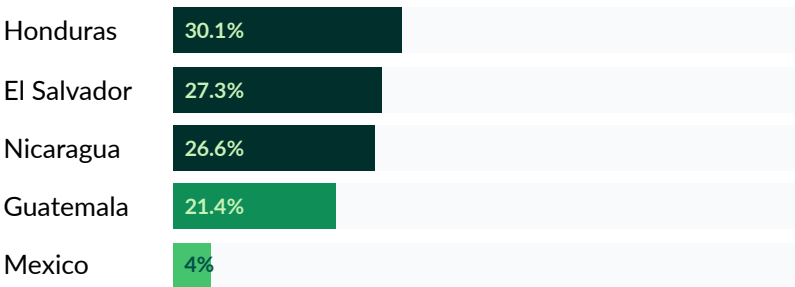
These findings align with the broader global picture described by IFAD: nearly three-quarters of remittances sent to low- and middle-income countries go toward immediate needs, such as food, housing, and basic services. The remaining quarter, more than \$180 billion annually worldwide, goes to health, education, savings, and entrepreneurial ventures.

Economic Impact

Beyond absolute figures, the true significance of remittances is measured relative to each economy's size. The following data, based on the latest estimates from central banks and multilateral organizations, show that in several Central American countries, remittances account for more than a quarter of national GDP.

Central America drove the region's growth, accounting for 31.8% of total remittances to Latin America in 2025, up from 28.3% in 2024, according to the [Inter-American Development Bank](#).

Remittances as a % of GDP



Globally, remittance flows to low- and middle-income countries reached \$728.6 billion in 2025—nearly double the figure from a decade earlier and exceeding both official development assistance and foreign direct investment directed at those economies. In Honduras, remittances already account for more than half of the country's foreign currency earnings (53.1%, according to the Central Bank of Honduras), surpassing exports of goods and services (33.9%).

61%

Digitally Originated LATAM
Remittances • 2026

In 2026, more than [61%](#) of remittances sent to Latin America were initiated through digital channels, including debit or credit cards, mobile apps, and online payment platforms.

The impact extends to rural areas as well: according to IFAD, approximately \$233 billion, nearly one-third of all remittances sent to low- and middle-income countries, reaches rural communities, where formal employment, financial services, and public social safety nets tend to be more limited.

Key Takeaways

Record figures in 2026

Remittances to Mexico and Central America reached record levels in 2026 across key corridors (Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador), despite a more restrictive immigration and economic environment in the United States.

Structural reliance in Central America

Reliance on remittances in Central American countries like Honduras and El Salvador reaches nearly one-third of national GDP, far exceeding the contribution of exports, tourism, and foreign investment.



Frequent transfers, remote destinations

Remittances are frequent and reach areas far beyond major cities. Most users send money weekly, with users aged 50 to 59 sending most frequently. In Mexico, transfers are widely distributed: the top ten cities account for just 17.2% of the volume, while 48.8% goes to destinations outside the top one hundred recipient locations.

Consistent and caring purpose

The purpose of remittances is clear: the majority of funds cover immediate needs such as food, healthcare, and housing. They serve as a financial safety net for families rather than an occasional gesture, while also helping sender's remain present in their loved ones' lives despite the distance.

\$233B

reach rural communities globally

Sources

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