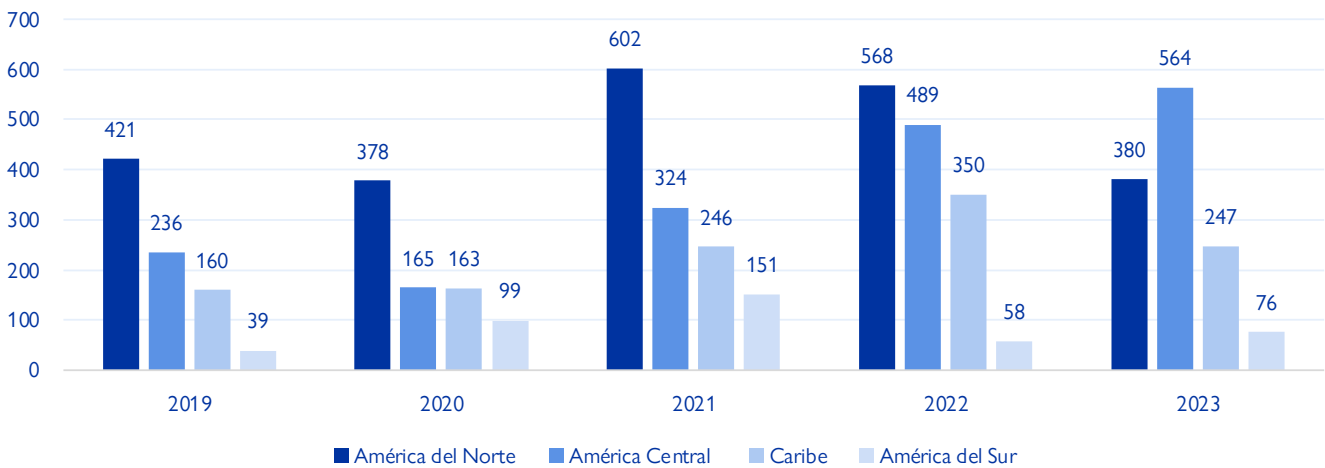


## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2014, IOM's Missing Migrants Project has recorded over 9,223 deaths along migration routes in the Americas. These fatalities are largely a consequence of the lack of accessible options for safe and regular migration in the region.

**At least 1,267 migrants died or disappeared in the Americas in 2023.** The highest numbers of deaths and disappearances were recorded in Central America (564), followed by North America (380), the Caribbean (247), and South America (76). Nearly 50 per cent of fatalities occurred along the U.S.-Mexico border, highlighting the dangers migrants who lack access to regular migration pathways face during irregular migratory journeys.

FIGURE 1. DECEASED MIGRANTS IN THE AMERICAS. 2019-2023.



Although the overall trend of migrant deaths in the Americas has increased since 2014, there was a 13.5 per cent decrease in fatalities in 2023 as compared to 2022, when 1,462 deaths were reported. Notably, there was a significant decline in recorded deaths in North America, dropping from 568 deaths in 2022 to 380 deaths in 2023. This decline is partly attributed to limited access to official information from over half of the border counties in the United States of America (USA). If official figures become available, the number of fatalities recorded in the USA would likely increase. Other regions of the Americas experienced significant increases in migrant deaths in 2023. The highest number of migrant deaths and disappearances in Central America (564) was recorded in 2023, with a 15 per cent increase in migrant deaths as compared to 2022. South America (76) experienced a 31 per cent rise as compared to 2022, with most fatalities recorded near the border between Peru and Chile due to harsh environmental conditions.

Over 35 per cent of fatalities in the Americas were due to drowning in rivers and seas, mainly at crossings between the USA and Mexico, (628) and from the Caribbean to the USA, (111). Vehicle accidents and dangerous transportation

accounted for another 23 per cent, (151) of which half of the cases occurred in Mexican territory.

Collecting data on deaths and disappearances during migratory transit remains a challenge. Many deaths occur in isolated areas or areas that are controlled by criminal groups, and limited media coverage means countless tragedies go unreported. The absence of coordinated systematic data collection by states and international and non-governmental organizations leaves too many stories untold.

The figures captured in this briefing are a powerful reminder of the urgent need for action. Each number represents a person, and a family left behind. The 2018 Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) called on the international community to save lives and coordinate efforts on missing migrants. The 2022 review of the GCM made it clear that, with some exceptions, little progress has been made on this commitment. The Missing Migrants Project calls for the creation of safer, regular migration routes to save migrant lives; and improved data collection and identification efforts to resolve cases of missing migrants.