Binational Dialogue on Mexican Migrants in the U.S. and in Mexico

Final report

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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

Migration experts have a saying: this is a field that does not allow for complacency. While experience unquestionably improves an expert's know-how, sometimes phenomena change in unexpected ways. This is the case of Mexico – United States and United States – Mexico migration during the first decade of the 21st century. While recent changes are understandable in retrospect, experts in neither country foresaw them. These changes have produced a window of opportunity allowing policy to finally regulate the flow and improve migrants' prospects. This report deals with the large and diverse population arising from migration in the United States and in Mexico. For the past sixty years, most studies of migration between the two countries have tended to focus on Mexico–U.S. migration, and most policy–oriented research has emphasized the role of U.S. legislation, policy and administrative practice on the flows and stocks related to migration. Often, the main Mexican contribution to the flow and the populations arising from it has been perceived as an intentional omission: the "policy of not having a policy".[ii]

This report widens that perspective in two respects. Firstly, it incorporates analysis of Mexican return migrants and their (dual-national) U.S.–born children. Secondly, together with an analysis of Mexican migrants in the United States, it also addresses integration in Mexico and the role of Mexican public policy.

From this perspective, both countries send and receive immigrants, there are large populations in both that are affected by migration, and both governments are accountable for these groups' access to the social goods they are entitled to. This increases the complexity of our analyses. To approach this complexity, we invited 28 top experts from both countries. In addition to their expertise on migration, each of these experts has specialized in a particular area and most have worked with a counterpart from the other country to arrive at the best, most up-to-date possible assessment. We have worked on the following subject areas: demographic dynamics, labor, education, health, personal security, and return migrants' access to social programs in Mexico. When the sources allow it, we focus not only on the migrants, but also on their children, their families and, occasionally, their communities.

Naturally, a binational perspective does not imply symmetrical analysis in every respect. The U.S. has received many times more Mexican immigrants than vice versa. In the United States, we analyze the integration of foreign-born persons and their children, while in Mexico we emphasize the integration of Mexican nationals and their children, who are in theory also Mexican. Social programs and services also differ markedly and, to further complicate the analysis, immigrants' entitlement to them has also varied on account of

changes in federal, state and local legislation and policy. The Mexican government has decentralized practically all social services since 1986; new and different federal programs have enlarged their coverage; and in the United States thousands of pieces of legislation and administrative provisions have been passed by state and local governments with the overt purpose of changing immigrants' access to these services.

Two major events defined the context of Mexico–U.S. migration this past decade: the worst economic crisis in the U.S. in seventy years (and a significant one in Mexico), and an altogether new level of immigration enforcement. Two major changes are evidenced in the flows themselves: much lower levels of Mexico–U.S. movements - producing a net migration balance of approximately zero – and a much larger return migration stock in Mexico. The interactions between context and flows will remain debatable, although a clearer picture will emerge when jobs regain momentum in the U.S. This dialogue was organized to explain how changes in the flows impacted the populations arising from them, and how both governments have reacted to these changes.

The study benefited enormously from the simultaneous publication of censuses and related statistics in the United States and Mexico. We were able to assess change in these populations from 2000 to 2010 in both countries, although each subject was also approached from the standpoint of other existing surveys, official statistics, field research and the most recent literature. This report summarizes some of our main findings. A book consisting of the detailed work and findings will be available in the Fall of 2013.[iii]

Although the study was based on this broad and complex approximation to migration, we have not attempted an exhaustive review. Our major concern is with vulnerable migrant groups. This emphasis excludes a detailed analysis of many important groups: Mexicans with a Ph.D. or a Master's degree, concentrating disproportionately in the U.S.; well-off Mexicans in the U.S. due to worsening security in Mexico; or the more than one hundred thousand U.S. non-Hispanic expats retiring in Mexico. And our perspective also excludes Mexico's most vulnerable immigrant group: documented and undocumented Central Americans living in, or attempting to cross through, Mexico.

This study is the outcome of a dialogue financed by the MacArthur Foundation and each of our institutions.

1. The policy context in Mexico and the United States

In Mexico and the U.S., the public relevance and political presence of migrants has shifted noticeably during the past 12 years. Both governments were actively engaged in seeking new policies to address their shared interests in Mexico-U.S. migration, but the situation changed markedly after 2001. The U.S. Congress failed to pass comprehensive reform in 2006 and 2007; although Mexico passed new legislation on migration within its sphere. But while the promise of the policies at the decade's start was sidelined, the U.S. federal government has stepped up border and interior enforcement while state and local actors are now active players. In the meantime, Mexican migration has significantly lessened and return migration poses new challenges for the Mexican government. Mexico-U.S. migration has, indeed, matured into a more complex phenomenon.

After Mexico–U.S. migration talks broke down in 2001, the Mexican president made numerous unsuccessful attempts to restart the dialogue and to push the U.S. Congress to agree on immigration reform. All migrants, documented and undocumented, were viewed in a positive light. President Fox's insistence on migration drew attention away from other significant issues for Mexico's participation in North American prosperity. By March, 2002, the Mexican government had agreed to a set of U.S. requests triggering significant changes in Mexican financial and border policies. These concessions were made in the hope that the U.S. government would move ahead with immigration reform. Migration "derailed" the U.S.—Mexico relationship, although it was also the case that the U.S. government was not receptive to Mexican openings in other sectors of the bilateral agenda. Understandably, in 2006 president Calderón de-emphasized migration in the bilateral agenda. The focus on Mexico–U.S. relations shifted to security, drugs, the arms trade and the economy. This occurred in spite of a record number of deportations, and the ensuing separation of hundreds of thousands of families, as well as the inability of many would-be migrants to cross the border. The new Peña Nieto government has also signaled it intends to center its agenda on the economy. This means that the Mexican government today is much less likely to participate in the U.S. discussion on immigration reform, although traditional diplomatic engagement is likely.

Attention to immigration reform has also waxed and waned in the United States. During the Bush Administration, Congress repeatedly debated immigration reforms that would address problems in U.S. immigration policies but little progress was made. With the economic crisis starting in 2008, immigration reform was taken off the legislative agenda. The Obama Administration used its executive authority to reshape enforcement policies, especially those related to removals of migrants, which reached record levels. At the same time, the administration emphasized the importance of prosecutorial discretion in determining who should be removed. The President also took action in the summer of 2012 to grant work authorization and defer any action on deportation of undocumented children who had grown up in the United States.

Since the 2012 election, the prospect for immigration reform in the United States has improved significantly although it is by no means certain that a deeply divided Congress will act soon.

There appears to be considerable consensus as to the contours of immigration reform—enforcement against unauthorized migration, measures to address the large population of undocumented migrants already in the country, and new admissions policies to enable the immigration system to respond to future demand for workers. Differences abound, however, when the discussion shifts to the details—the timing of change, the relative weight to be given to various modes of enforcement (e.g., border versus worksite); how to frame a program to legalize those who are currently in the country without legal status; the need for and nature of new admissions programs to fill jobs that undocumented migrants currently take; and what type of reforms to make in the permanent legal admission system.

For both Mexico and the United States, we believe, policy attention to the situation of immigrants needs to be more systematic and sustained, and it should extend well beyond a focus on immigration policy reform to address work, education, healthcare, personal security and other issues.

This binational dialogue supports an immigration reform in the U.S. that would not only address the status quo – millions of undocumented foreigners in the U.S., millions of jobs filled by ineligible individuals, millions stuck in various backlogs – but also ensure that the conditions that led to this situation are corrected. Unfortunately, however, the inadequacy of immigration policy in both countries is reflected in the fact that current conditions make it more difficult to integrate immigrants and allow them to make substantial contributions to both societies. This report details these problems and recommends that, together with immigration reform, these issues be dealt with from a binational platform.

1.1 Immigration has ramifications for the Mexican and the U.S. economy and society

For a number of reasons, Mexico–U.S. migration is comprised mostly of individuals with low levels of schooling. Although they may be more enterprising than average, many migrants are becoming an "underclass" both in the U.S. and in Mexico. As schooling rises in both countries, those with low levels of education are at a disadvantage in competing for higher paid jobs. Moreover, as undocumented workers and their families are increasingly pushed to live in the shadows, they do not have access to the services and protections available to the working poor. U.S. legislation dealing with immigration, welfare, and terrorism in 1996 and 1997 and their exclusion from the recent Health Care Act, together with thousands of state and local initiatives, have widened the gap between them and other immigrant groups. This gap is much larger in the U.S., but it is beginning to be observed in Mexico too. In certain regions and social groups, families still invest in low-

skill labor migration rather than education or local development, and this bodes ill for their future and the long-term future of the Mexican and U.S. economies.

There are a number of policy areas in which attention to migrants' and their families' well being is deficient, both in Mexico and in the United States. If policy does not enable them to provide for themselves adequately, they will lag behind and shall require emergency attention by social programs and services. Immigration reform in the U.S. might benefit these migrants and improve their future and their children's. But the socioeconomic distance between them and other social and immigrant groups will not diminish unless these policy areas are also addressed. In this brief we single out labor, education, health, personal security and access to program benefits as crucial areas for the human development of Mexican migrants when in the U.S. and upon their return to Mexico. This means "shared responsibility" over Mexican migrants entails a number of positive policy actions by both governments, independently of immigration reform.

In the past, both governments agreed to deal with bilateral issues from a common platform, but this effort stalled and was ultimately abandoned. In the late seventies, the Carter and López Portillo administrations put in place a mechanism to deal with their diverse and intense interactions, including migration and immigrant groups, when they were much smaller. Then called a Consultative Mechanism, it consisted of three main bilateral working groups: political, social and economic, with a number of sub-groups. The mechanism was strengthened in 1979, and reorganized in 1981 as a cabinet-level entity dealing with issues requiring a high level of attention.

The Binational Commission met once or twice annually. Its working group on migration and consular affairs was quite active, and in 1996 produced the first MOU on Consular Protection of Mexican and U.S. Nationals. This MOU defined the standards and procedures for the safe repatriation of nationals from either country. It included a number of procedural agreements for the effective prosecution of human smuggling and crimes against migrants. Observers viewed this MOU as a significant step forward in the treatment of each country's migrants, and some considered it, wishfully, as a first opening leading to a special migration relationship.

During the Bush-Fox presidencies, the Binational Commission changed its purpose and specialized in border crossing and security issues, in the aftermath of 9/11 and the 22-point agreement signed by Mexico at the U.S.'s request in March, 2002. Subsequently, consular, social and migration issues received far less systematic attention from both governments.

1.2 Policy reforms need to take into account the socio-economic status of undocumented migrants

The Mexican – origin population in the United States and Mexico's population arising from return migration include a diverse range of characteristics, as discussed in detail in each section of this report. Each group poses specific policy challenges and resulting frameworks should recognize their varied socio-economic situations.

Elderly migrants returning to Mexico to retire need good health services and would benefit enormously from Mexican non-contributive pensions as well as from pension totalization and from portable health insurance mechanisms (e.g., Medicare in particular), for those accruing the right to these services while in the U.S. The children of Mexican migrants returning to Mexico need access to school, but could also contribute much more to both countries if they received a bilingual education. Similarly with the youths who would be "DREAMers" in the U.S. but whose parents bring them back to Mexico. Thus Mexico is faced with a large number of return migrants, some of whom return voluntarily while others are deported from the United States. In some cases, they are returning with human and financial capital whereas in others they may require significant levels of assistance to reintegrate.

The Mexican origin population in the United States is also diverse although the largest proportion tends to fit the profile of the working poor—employed but in jobs that pay very low wages and offer few benefits. If the path to residence created by an immigration reform in the U.S. is too difficult for low wage workers to meet, a significant number of Mexican undocumented workers will not be able to benefit from new legislation. Moreover, if they are denied access to subsidies for affordable health care, they will remain severely disadvantaged compared to other workers in the U.S. labor force.

1.3 A new and stronger Binational Commission is needed to provide effective attention to the needs and demands of both countries' nationals, and to monitor standards and procedures

After initial successes in the eighties and nineties, the U.S. – Mexico Binational Commission first ceased to deal with migrants' needs in order to address border and security issues, and then stopped operating altogether. And yet, today Mexico's return migrant and U.S.-born population and the U.S.'s population of Mexican birth or descent are much larger than 30 years ago, when the mechanism enjoyed a positive reputation among both governments. The design and implementation of a bilateral mechanism to monitor the performance of each country's services for each other's nationals, in the context of each country's applicable policy frameworks, is more necessary than ever. The Binational Commission may not have resolved every issue presented to it. But issues have not disappeared because the Commission no longer operates.

Both countries' policy environments are far more complex today than in the past. The agreements reached in the past, such as the binational school card (or transfer document), the numerous local MOUs concerning repatriation, agreements on bilateral coordination for criminal prosecution aren't operational today due to significant changes in the federal-state-local balance in both countries. Cases involving family law, pensions, and many new ones needed to guarantee access to school and higher education, or emergency and non-emergency health services, operate with little or no bilateral oversight.

In other words, even if flows remain at current lower levels, migration affects the lives of tens of millions of persons of both nationalities in both countries. To respond to their demands a new mechanism of bilateral consultation is needed. It should comprise high-level officials from agencies concerned with migration, immigration, and those populations affected by them. In Mexico, this body should include the following secretariats: Foreign Affairs, Interior, Health, Education, Revenue (especially customs), and at least in certain instances, the presidency and the Prosecution secretariat. To ensure Mexico's large decentralized ministries can in fact coordinate a common response to the needs of this population, it is advisable to include a representative of CONAGO, Mexico's conference of State Governors. In the United States, the mechanism should incorporate the following departments: Homeland Security, State, Justice, Health and Human Services and Education. A presence of state governments is also advisable, as in the Mexican counterpart.

The mechanism should probably be presided over by State and Foreign Affairs, or by the four ministries currently dealing with migration and immigration, which would also include Homeland Security and Interior. The implementation of such a mechanism would greatly improve the operation of administrative procedures to make the U.S. immigration reform work for the population it intends to benefit, in case it is approved. This mechanism could also improve governments' ability to manage future flows.

1.4 Mexico needs to act on violations of bilateral agreements concerning repatriations

In 2005, Mexico used the Binational Commission to address violations of the standards agreed upon in federal and local MOUs. This mechanism did not respond adequately. But instead of finding a new and more suitable institutional dialogue and monitor mechanism, the Mexican government became mostly silent on abuses and violations related to deportations, repatriations, family separation, or the placement of dual – national minors under the custody of social services when their family in Mexico was willing to receive them. This silence may have lessened tensions between the two governments but has had significant costs. First, many thousands of human rights violations of Mexicans in the U.S. have passed unnoticed to the government, in spite of efforts by understaffed consular and immigration offices. Secondly, the flight of middle class and affluent Mexican families threatens many aspects of economic, social and political life in the regions they flee.

Similarly but in much lesser numbers, Americans in Mexico have increased their interaction with the Mexican justice system but find that it often violates their rights. We recommend a new and more powerful Binational Commission address this issue effectively. While consular representation, consular agreements and MOUs already lay out a number of standards and procedures, there are no administrative entities responsible for enforcing them (clearly, the Mexican government should also act to stop the human rights violations of other nationals attempting to travel into or through Mexico).

1.5 Mexico needs to actively incorporate Mexican and Mexican – American youths arriving in Mexico

Hundreds of thousands of Mexican and Mexican- American youths arrived in Mexico recently. They are Mexican by birth or parentage, and therefore entitled to all corresponding rights, but many are also American citizens (see chapter on Population). These youths may contribute significantly to Mexico's development and to a binational economy drawing on each country's comparative advantage. A large, skilled, dual-national population that believes in both governments would be a major asset. At the time, the main feeling these youths convey is severe disappointment, mostly caused by the Mexican education system. We recommend the Mexican government to rapidly implement programs that speed their school registration and pay particular attention to their needs so they successfully adapt to Mexico. Mexico's public national and state universities should also develop specific programs easing their incorporation to Mexican higher education.

The old binational school card, designed to enable simplified movements for students from one educational system to another, is rarely used today and, worse yet, is often not recognized by the receiving school. Regardless of their dual or single nationality, these youths should have access to public education systems, and yet there are a number of obstacles. An education task force could, as part of the work of this Binational Commission, diagnose the obstacles, recommend actions and monitor procedures to facilitate trans-border school movements.

1.6 Return migrants in Mexico need simpler, easier paths of access to identity documents and social services and programs

Our evidence concerning affiliation to social services and programs by return migrants in Mexico shows that households with migrants or return migrants are affiliated to Mexican social programs and services to a similar extent than non-migrant households, although one source shows significant lower affiliation rates by migrants to Mexico's "Popular Health Insurance" system. Nevertheless, it also shows they must overcome very serious obstacles to do so. We join in the recommendation already made by other experts and by Mexico's social policy evaluation council (CONEVAL) in the sense that speeding and

simplifying access to social programs and services is a priority. We add to this recommendation that this simplification needs to take migrants' specific needs into account, therefore easing access to documents and other requirements when migrants return, and opening admission procedures allowing migrants and others to apply for these programs and services when need arises and not only during pre-set affiliation campaigns.

The Mexican identity system is dysfunctional. It demands an increasing number of documents and affidavits to prove someone's identity, it costs sums that are hard to come by for poor Mexicans, it takes a long time responding, and is an obstacle in the way of access to rights and services. Foreign school or birth certificates need to be "apostilladas" by a Mexican embassy; birth certificates are only valid for a short time, and so families need to repeat the procedure to get new ones; and almost no one knows how to obtain copies of consular birth certificates. Return migrants need effective advice to navigate the bureaucracy and get documents. But more importantly, the system must be fixed for everyone's benefit.

1.7 Mexican immigrants in the U.S. need access to basic services

Various reforms in the U.S. have made it harder for documented and undocumented immigrants to receive services and benefits, and their affiliation rates to services have gone down. Social incorporation of low-income immigrants, most of whom are working, depends on allowing them access to these benefits. While the logic of current initiatives in the U.S. proposing a moratorium in the access to services between applying for legal residence and obtaining residence is understandable, we urge U.S. Congress to consider that successful integration depends on their access to these programs and services. This is particularly relevant in the case of children of Mexican birth or origin.

Naturally, access depends on documentation. In the U.S., federal and state laws have tightened the requirements for driver licenses and other documents. Any significant change in immigration legislation needs to provide identity documents to regularized or new immigrants that will allow them access to basic services and activities, including the possibility of driving and buying insurance, which they have lost over the past decade.

While it is to be hoped that significant immigration reform would open institutional access to a large number of migrants who are unauthorized today, neither the reform nor this outcome can be taken for granted. And, given the large number of local dispositions and legislation that now regulate access by immigrants – and persons profiled as potential immigrants - change might take time. The case of health services is paradigmatic. Affiliation has fallen not just among undocumented immigrants, but among the Mexican-born in general. Catastrophic health expenditures could keep poorer immigrants and their children trapped in an underclass unless, along with immigration reform, access is open to the newly legalized.

1.8 In the U.S., workplace enforcement still needs substantial improvement

Mexico-U.S. flows correlate, above all, with U.S. labor demand. The single most important policy change leading to a long-term decline in undocumented immigration should consist of comprehensive immigration enforcement at the workplace.

The timing for an increase in enforcement is delicate. Access to legalization must be provided before workers are excluded from jobs. But the era of easy, penalty-free employment of undocumented workers must come to an end in order to ensure a large undocumented population does not grow again – and that delinquent employers do not enjoy an unfair advantage. Again, Mexico–U.S. cooperation in a Binational Commission to gauge the progress of workplace enforcement could lead to other forms of cooperation in the regulation of the flows to avoid the growth of a new undocumented population.

1.9 Mexico – U.S. migration today is not realizing its potential benefits to migrants and to both economies and societies

Each section of this reports performs a specific analysis of changes, and of the situation of migrants, around 2010-12. A generalized vision in Mexico, one that has been explicitly repeated in many academic analyses, states that without Mexico's sustained flow of unskilled, undocumented workers to the U.S., Mexico would lose an industry providing as much income as tourism; that it would endure much higher levels of poverty and social tension, and that poor rural households would suffer disproportionately. Also, remittances and other migration resources, it is said, finance households' access to food, health, education and home improvements. Partly because the past decade impacted migrants and their families negatively, and partly because Mexican – and binational – thinking on migration has evolved, the perspective offered in this report is less optimistic concerning migration. The benefits may not have disappeared, but the costs seem larger today.

In the United States, a shift towards negative attitudes towards migration and towards Mexican migrants is decades old. This shift prompted thousands of pieces of federal, state and local legislation, mostly limiting migrants' access to services and institutions. In both countries, therefore, the current nature of the flows is viewed as one with significant costs, even if academic analyses can point at positive impacts. In general, labor migration is a positive phenomenon for economic reasons. Today, however, flows between these two countries are not achieving their potential.

1.10 Binational cooperation, in the spirit of NAFTA, should govern the two countries' relationships on immigration

More than ever, smart, focused cooperation between Mexico and the U.S. might make the North American region far more competitive in the world economy. The two labor markets complement each other, Mexico has become a major manufacturing export power, and the future of service integration is bright. This, together with Mexico's own push for development, is the key to lowering Mexican emigration, and turning regular Mexican migration into a source of North American strength. Mexico is already offering Mexicans more extensive and improved social services and public goods, although violence is a serious problem. Mexican workers have more reasons to stay home, but jobs must be created at a faster pace. Mexico's better-educated workforce can contribute to help North America regain its status as an export superpower. But this vision needs serious policy commitment in both countries, and a binational platform to diagnose and foster actions to realize that vision.

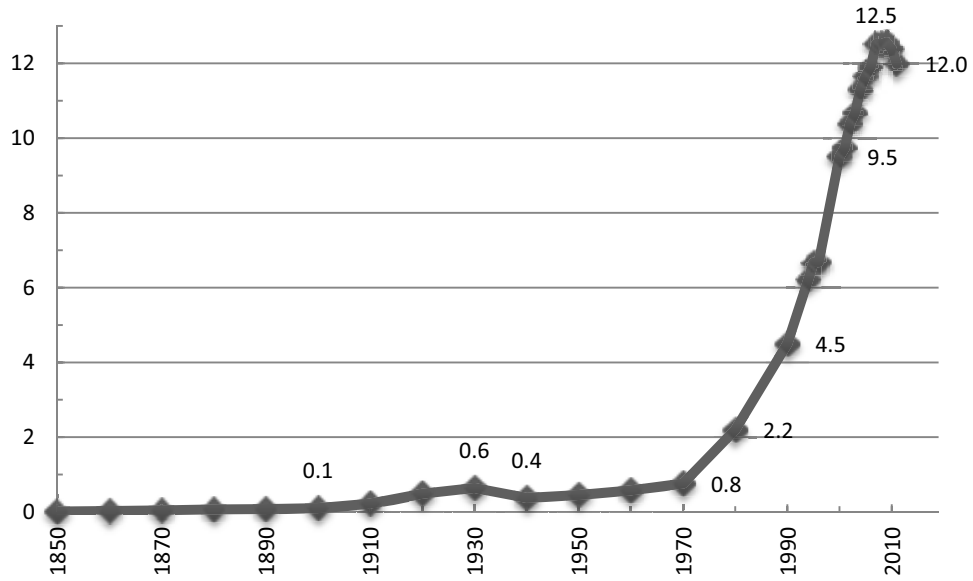
2. Population Change and Migration

Both Mexico and the United States are in a period of demographic transition, resulting largely from previous declines in fertility and high levels of emigration/immigration. Although they are not at the same stage in this transition, the U.S. is remarkable among developed societies in the sense that its population is growing and it is not aging as rapidly. Immigration is in large part responsible for the relative youth and the growth of the population of the U.S. The transition is affecting migration patterns in the following ways:

2.1 Mexican migration has slowed significantly in recent years

The Mexican-born population of the U.S. peaked in 2007 and then stopped growing. The decade ending in 2000 saw the largest number of Mexicans, approximately 5 million, moving to the U.S. The largest single-year net flow seems to have taken place in 2000 with approximately 750,000 migrants. Flows slowed in 2001-2003, but they regained momentum until the total Mexican population in the U.S. peaked at 12.7 million, with about 7 million unauthorized, in 2007.

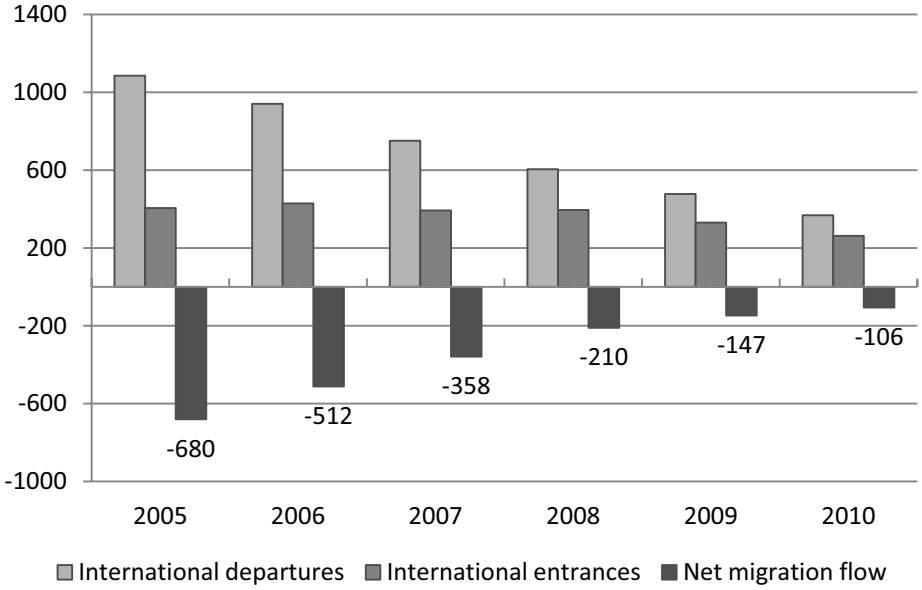
Figure 1. Mexican-Born Population in the United States: 1850-2011



Source: Figure 1, Chapter on Population Dynamics. Data from U.S. Censuses.

The movement slowed significantly after 2005. Between 2007 and 2010, the net flow was close to zero, but we estimate about 140,000 net Mexican immigrants moved to the U.S. in 2010. There are indications that immigration may be growing in 2011-12, albeit to levels much lower than those of the year 2000.

Figure 2. Mexico: Net Migration Flows and Balances, 2005-2010



Source: Mexico's National Employment Survey (Encuesta Nacional de Ocupación y Empleo, ENOE).

Net migration fell to these very low levels because many fewer persons left Mexico every year, particularly through unauthorized movements. All of the most reliable sources from Mexico and the U.S. show this change. Legal permanent immigration, by contrast, showed no change during this period. Mexicans continued to receive roughly the same number of U.S. legal permanent resident visas as they did in the late 90's (about 160,000 yearly).

The net result of a stable number of visas combined with smaller flows into the U.S. is that the legal share of the Mexican population has increased in both absolute and relative terms.[iv] While legal admissions accounted for about one quarter of the total flow in 1996-2000, in 2006-10 they represented more than two-thirds, and this share was growing. A factor supporting this trend is the growing use of H-2A, H-2B and H-1B visas by Mexicans, which means temporary labor movements are more likely to occur through legal channels, and they contribute less to the size of the undocumented population. Partly as a result of these changing conditions, Mexican sources show the percentage of Mexicans leaving for the United States with a valid visa has increased substantially.

Smaller movements relative to the Mexican population of the U.S. entail another change: a larger proportion of this population has lived in the U.S. for 10 years or more. This proportion was 56 percent in 2000 and by 2010 it had increased to 70 percent (58 percent of the unauthorized and 80 percent of legal residents). Consequently, the proportion that has formed a family in the U.S. and fathered or mothered U.S. children has also grown.

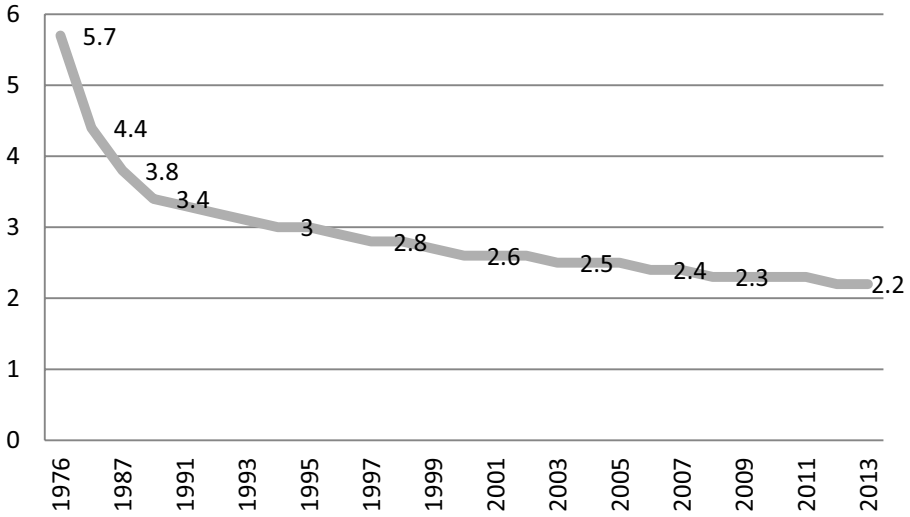
2.2 Mexico: population growth rate continues to decline but fertility is not falling as rapidly as expected, making predictions about future migration difficult

Mexico's population growth rate fell from 1.9 percent per year during 1990-2000 to 1.4 percent during the last decade. This is the outcome of a combination of factors, but mostly of falling fertility and high emigration levels. Both factors, however, played different roles at different times. Mexico–U.S. migration stayed at high levels from 2000 to 2005, and then dropped markedly. Fertility declined, but more gradually than expected.

Previous studies of Mexico–U.S. migration viewed population dynamics as a factor contributing substantially to a reduction in emigration. Mexico's Family Planning policies were extremely successful in 1970-2000. During that period, fertility declined from 6.5 children per woman to approximately 2.4. Mexican projections of the Global Fertility Rate (GFR) were 2.18 for 2006, and 1.89 for 2009. This latter figure would be below the population replacement rate. Official surveys, however, found higher rates: 2.33 in 2006 and 2.22 in 2009. Higher – than expected fertility estimates suggest this policy is no longer as effective and that the current drop in net Mexico–U.S. migration is not necessarily permanent. Mexican demographers estimate that fertility ceased to drop due to a number of factors, including a lower total budget for family planning, decentralization, and less accountability of health spending by state governments, although social factors are also likely.

One significant outcome of higher-than expected fertility levels in Mexico, combined with Mexico–U.S. migration after 2007, is that Mexico's "demographic bonus", a temporary state of affairs in which the population of working age outnumbers the population not of working age, was not transferred to the U.S.[v] Mexico could still enjoy the additional push for growth derived from this demographic bonus, provided it generates sufficient new jobs. In other words, a demographic scenario in which both the U.S. and Mexico lack enough new young workers is farther away than previously estimated.

Figure 3. Mexico´s Fertility Rate (1976-2013)

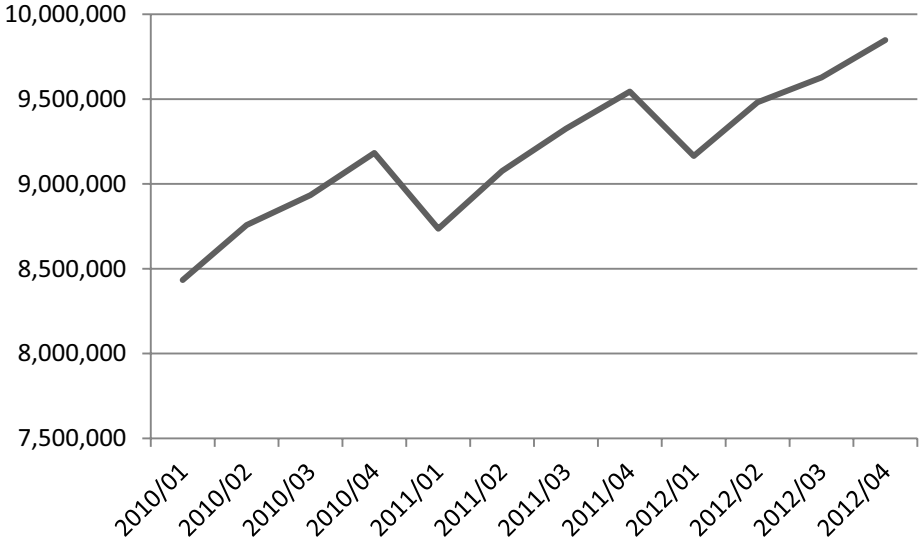


Source: Mexico´s National Institute of Statistic and Geography (INEGI) (http://www.inegi.org.mx/).

2.3 Demographic and economic factors in both countries, but especially in the U.S., could lead to renewed growth in the flows

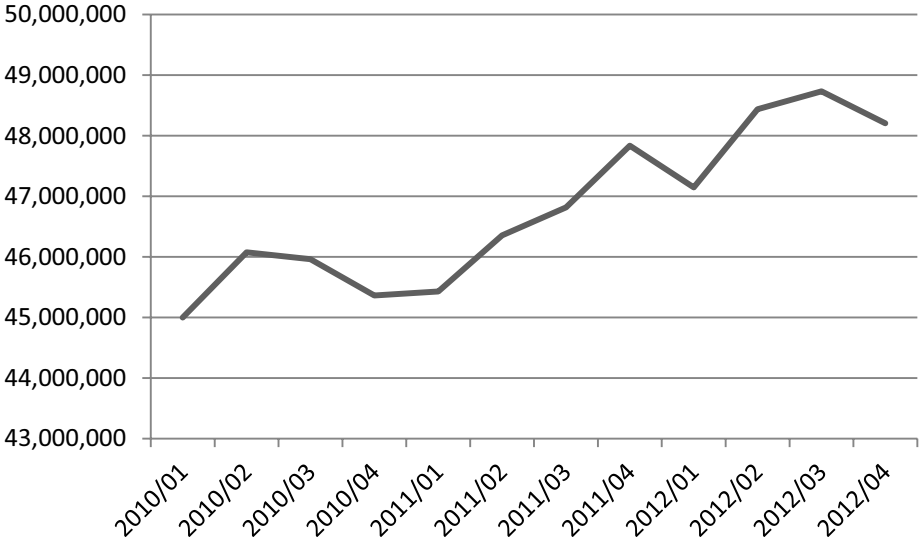
Mexico's population under the age of 15 is shrinking in relative terms as fertility falls. It comprised 34.2 percent of total population in 2000 and by 2010 it was down to 29.5 percent. Each birth cohort is smaller than the previous one. This is positive from the perspective of future emigration pressure, but insufficient to project substantially lower emigration on the sole basis of population dynamics. Mexico's recent (2010 – 2012) performance in terms of economic growth and job creation has improved and is above average for Latin America, but it still does not absorb the number of youths entering the labor market. Longer educational careers are contributing to lower job demand and will help Mexico raise its living standards in the future. The number of youth in high school and higher education is rising every year, but not fast enough to close the gap between job creation and job demand (see Education below).

Figure 4. Mexican GDP 2010 to 2012 (millions of constant pesos of 2003)



Source: Mexico´s National Institute of Statistic and Geography (INEGI) (http://www.inegi.org.mx/).

Figure 5. Mexico: Employed Population (2010-2012)



Source: Mexico´s National Institute of Statistic and Geography (INEGI) (http://www.inegi.org.mx/).

Mexico's economic growth during the last decade was disappointing: 0.24 percent per capita p.a., although it has accelerated notably in 2010 – 12. Nevertheless the formal labor force, during that period, expanded at a rate of 5 percent per year. Also, the population employed in agriculture decreased systematically since the seventies but has expanded since 2007. From 2010 to 2012, employment in the primary sector in Mexico has grown 10 percent from six million to 6.7 million, and remained stable in relative terms. This seems to be related to export farm jobs. This is particularly relevant because the international emigration rate is three times higher in rural areas. If jobs begin to appear in rural areas, international emigration pressure may diminish markedly.[vi]

Since undocumented emigration has not disappeared altogether, and it is strongly influenced by the availability of jobs in the U.S., renewed demand for workers in the U.S., in the absence of policy changes in both countries, could lead to larger migration flows when the U.S. economy fully recovers. Another factor contributing to future migration is population ageing in the U.S., where the vanguard of the baby boomers is beginning to retire. As that cohort ages, not only are there likely to be shortages in many occupations but demand will likely grow for workers to provide a range of skilled and unskilled health and social care services—occupations now heavily dependent on foreign workers.

2.4 The U.S. - Mexico return migration flow has not increased, but Mexico's return migrant population is larger than ever

The Mexican – born population arriving in Mexico from the U.S. is large, diverse and growing. Mexico's National Employment Survey (ENOE), in which return migrants provide information about their trip, finds that the number of persons moving back to Mexico every year has not increased (see Figures 1 and 2). However, these return migrants are staying in Mexico. In the past, return migrants tended to leave Mexico again. This "return to stay" phenomenon has led to a very large increase the total number of returnees in Mexico.

In 2005, approximately 230,000 Mexican individuals responding to the Mexican census stated they had been living in the U.S. in the year 2000. By the year 2010, those reporting living in the U.S. in 2005 rose to 980,000, or more than four times as many. This large group presents challenges for reintegration in Mexico associated to their different reasons for return. Deportations (apprehensions, repatriations and removals) have increased markedly, and they account for a larger share of total returns than before. But by no means all returns should be considered the outcome of personal failure or immigration enforcement. Among returns, many result from successfully achieving the targets of migration; others from family decisions or worsening health; and others still from decisions strongly influenced by the effective near-total closure of the border for illegal crossings, so that, for example, a wife and her U.S. – born children decide to migrate to Mexico to join a deported spouse.

There are also growing numbers of U.S. citizens living in Mexico: the Mexican census reports this population doubled from 2000 to 2010, from 343,000 to 739,000. Although not proper "return migrants," this stock of U.S. – born individuals is in Mexico mostly because their parents are Mexican, and they have returned to Mexico. There are at least three groups within this flow from the U.S. into Mexico: 77 percent are minors, mostly born to Mexican parents. The number of expatriates moving to traditional Mexican international retirement communities does not seem to have grown. Finally, there is the business, governmental and international community with their families. Education in Spanish as a second language is the main need for the largest group. We believe this population is of interest to both countries.

2.5 Mexico's return migrants do not "go home" to the village of their birth: they seek opportunities elsewhere

An important change has taken place in the geography of return migration. It reflects a relative decline in return to traditional areas of emigration, the introduction of new areas of expulsion and new destinations for return. The 1990s were characterized by return migration to Center-Western states, those with the highest emigration rates. However, data for 2005 and 2010 show a disproportionate return to northern, southern and southeastern states that had low out-migration levels, and to metropolitan areas providing employment opportunities. These changes point at an increasing proportion of migrants who do not return to their communities of origin, and also at a connection between international and internal migration.[vii]

2.6 Population trends in Mexico may contribute to further reducing emigration from Mexico, but economic and policy factors will play a major role

In summary, the trends in Mexico–U.S. migration from 2007 to 2011 signal that migration patterns respond to economic, social and policy conditions. Mexican population dynamics will also help diminish future flows. But population and economic trends are insufficient to forecast with any certainty that the flow will remain within manageable proportions in the future. Policy must intervene, and we believe binational collaboration will be essential in finding effective solutions.

It is Mexico's responsibility to make the best of the current return flow for its own development purposes, and to afford these returning migrants the benefits that they are entitled to as Mexican citizens (or as their offspring, who by definition are Mexican citizens too). It is the United States' responsibility to devise coherent immigration policies that respond to future demand for labor and family reunification through legal channels while taking advantage of the current lull in unauthorized migration to regularize the status of those already in the country.

3. Labor and Employment

We examined the role of Mexican-born workers in the U.S. and Mexican economies and labor markets. The emphasis is on changes over the past decade in the number and characteristics of Mexican-born workers in the US, projections for the decade ahead, and the impacts of returned Mexicans on the Mexican economy, labor market, and development in migrant areas of origin. The methodology involved review and analysis of economic, labor market, and development data and conducting case studies.

3.1 Mexican immigrants in the United States have been adversely affected by the recent economic crisis

Mexican immigrant workers in the U.S. made significant gains during the housing boom. At that time, Mexican men showed higher participation and lower unemployment rates than other groups. Since the recession hit the economy, the opposite is true. Unauthorized Mexican-born workers with little education are struggling in the U.S. labor market, as reflected in lower employment rates and higher unemployment rates in 2010-11 compared to earlier periods as well as declining real wages. Jobs that provided upward mobility for low-skilled Mexican-born workers, such as those who moved from agriculture to construction or meatpacking, may be harder to find due to the rising use of E-Verify to check new hires in meatpacking. One response may be more self-employment, although efforts to curb mis-classification of employees as independent contractors are spreading.

3.2 Future patterns of employment for low-wage Mexican workers are difficult to project

U.S. employment growth is projected to slow significantly in the 2010-2020 decade compared to 2000-2010. The slow economic recovery from the recession of 2007-09, and an even slower recovery in the U.S. housing sector, is likely to reduce growth in the types of jobs that have been filled by large numbers of low-skilled Mexican-born workers. That is, the period between 2003 and 2007 may turn out to be the peak of such job creation. On the other hand, in sectors such as gardening and in-home care, a supply of willing workers can create a demand for their services by lowering prices and stimulating demand. Hence, net job creation will be contingent on the interaction of immigration, demographics, enforcement, and tax and related policies.

3.3 Mexicans in the U.S. labor force show higher levels of education relative to Mexico but lower relative to U.S. workers

The human capital of Mexican-born workers in the U.S. aged 16 to 54 has improved significantly; however, in 2010 most had not finished high school and only half spoke English well.[viii] A higher share of Mexican-born workers in 2010 was employed in services such as food preparation and materials handling; employment in production occupations declined. It should be emphasized that neither 2000 nor 2010 were "normal" years; 2000 marked the peak of a U.S. economic boom, while 2010 reflects the effects of the worst recession in a half century.

3.4 The employment and housing picture for Mexican returnees is mixed

Almost a million Mexicans returned to Mexico between 2005 and 2010 according to the 2010 Mexican Census. A quarter of returned Mexicans were employed and they had slightly higher wages than all Mexican employees, although a larger share was employed without a wage.

Table 1. Mexico: Employed Population and Employed Return Migrants by Minimum Wage (m. w.), 2000 and 2010

Year	Income range	% of total employed population	% of employed return migrants
2000	Without income	8.8	15.2
	Up to 1 m. w.	13.0	21.2
	From 1 to 2 m.w.	32.1	34.2
	From 2 to 5 m.w.	33.5	18.0
	From 5 to 10 m.w.	8.5	7.0
	10 and more m. w.	4.1	4.4
2010	Without income	8.3	12.4
	Up to 1 m. w.	9.6	7.3
	From 1 to 2 m.w.	24.0	22.0
	From 2 to 5 m.w.	42.8	45.1
	From 5 to 10 m.w.	10.7	9.2
	10 and more m. w.	4.6	4.0

Source: Table 7, Chapter on Work and Employment. Based on data from Mexico´s National Institute of Statistic and Geography (INEGI).

Mexico's informal sector, which employs over half of Mexico's 45 million workers, may be a better absorber of surplus workers than the U.S. labor market. Employment in agriculture and other primary industries fell from 16 percent of Mexican workers in 2000 to 13 percent in 2010, but recently seems to demand more workers, mostly in export agriculture. Mexico has developed new growth centers that are employing large numbers of Mexican workers, including better-educated new labor force entrants. In some of these growth centers, there have been marked improvements in the status of returned migrants, with more having formal sector jobs, suggesting that Mexican policies that encourage the creation of formal sector jobs can help returned migrants to achieve upward mobility and anchor returned Mexicans and new workforce entrants in Mexico.

Most returned Mexicans have better housing than non-migrants and higher levels of self employment. However, the *municipios* (counties) sending the most migrants abroad are generally as poor in 2010 as they were in 2000, suggesting that remittances and returns have not jumpstarted development in these areas.

Mexican development policy should aim to support employment growth in medium-sized cities, some of which are growing rapidly, and to which return migrants are arriving. If the status quo continues, some 1.8 million Mexicans who could have been expected to move to the U.S. between 2010 and 2020 will remain in Mexico, making faster growth and regional development imperative.

3.5 U.S. enforcement actions at the national, state and local levels are counter-productive

At the time of this writing, the prospects for comprehensive immigration reform in the United States appear promising. In the absence of such legislation, a combination of I-9 audits, state and local police cooperation under Secure Communities with federal immigration enforcement agents and state-level attrition-through-enforcement laws is likely to continue.

However, with the large number of mixed status families, in which many unauthorized live in households with US-born children, most of the unauthorized are likely to stay in the United States. The enforcement actions may increase the circulation of unauthorized Mexican workers between employers and push some into claiming they are self-employed, even if working regularly for the same employer, making it harder for them to obtain the experience and training necessary to climb the U.S. job ladder.

U.S. federal and state governments should consider the implications of these enforcement efforts. Most unauthorized workers detected by current workplace enforcement efforts are not removed from the US, but those who remain are less likely to gain the experience

that would improve their productivity and upward mobility, which makes their U.S.-born children also unlikely to achieve economic mobility, as shown in the chapter on education.

3.6 Temporary worker programs have helped improve flow management, but their future is uncertain and bilateral cooperation is necessary. Mexican social programs, in particular, can help manage temporary flows

United States low-skill temporary worker programs have admitted more Mexicans recently, and this has contributed to the legality of the flows – and possibly to more returns to Mexico. This contribution should be recognized and their role in migration management enhanced. In the medium term, however, the U.S. and Mexican governments could explore new policies to take advantage of changes in migration patterns in Mexico and the U.S. to identify new labor migration models. For example, family participation in Mexico's *Oportunidades* program, combined with refunds of U.S. Social Security and Unemployment Insurance taxes, could support a binational temporary worker program that encouraged workers to return and provided them with payments that could be matched to encourage development. Mexico's new Popular Health Insurance should also be offered to returning migrants. At the same time, though, policy makers should be aware that Mexico may not be a sustainable source of low-wage workers in coming decades. The Mexican and U.S. governments may want to reshape assumptions in some U.S. sectors that low-skilled unauthorized or temporary workers will continue to be available. If Mexican emigration pressures decline for economic growth and fertility reasons, U.S. employers may seek low-skilled workers elsewhere if labor, tax, trade, and migration policies continue to create a demand for low-skilled workers.

Table 2. Nonimmigrant Admissions in the U.S. by Temporary Worker Program (H1B, H2A and H2B), 2006-2011

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Temporary workers in specialty occupations (H1B)	431,853	461,730	409,619	339,243	454,763	494,565
Seasonal agricultural workers (H2A)	46,432	87,316	173,103	149,763	139,406	188,411
Seasonal nonagricultural workers (H2B)	97,279	75,727	104,618	56,381	69,395	79,794

Source: Table 25, *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2011*, U.S. Department of Homeland Security. http://www.dhs.gov/yearbook-immigration-statistics-2011-2.

4. Education

We document the "educational well-being" of Mexican-origin children and youth who have been affected—whether directly or less directly—by international migration. We define well-being in terms of the quantity and quality of schooling children of Mexican immigrants receive in both U.S. and Mexican settings. We measure "quantity" through enrollment rates and years of school completion. "Quality" includes how well Mexican-origin children perform on standardized tests of academic achievement. We synthesize a large body of research and provide some original analyses of nationally representative data sets. Student groups we analyze include: a) those remaining in Mexico while family members work and reside in the U.S., b) immigrant returnees to Mexico, c) first-generation immigrants in the U.S., and d) the children and grandchildren of Mexican immigrants in the U.S.

4.1 Mexican enrollments are up but international tests call for improvement

A growing proportion of Mexican youth stay in school longer. As tables three and four show, growth is particularly marked at the senior high school and college levels. Also notable is the fact that growth is faster in rural areas, thanks in part to a new generation of social programs. Achievement, as measured by international (PISA) or national (EXCALE) standards, shows less positive trends.

Table 3. Mexico: Population Ages 5 to 19 by Educational Level

	2000 %	2010 %
No school	4.77	2.19
Primary school (1st -6th grade)	51.36	46.33
Secondary (7th-9th)	21.45	23.59
Senior High School (10th-12th)	7.76	11.66

Source: Mexican Census, Mexico´s National Institute of Geography and Statistics (INEGI).

Table 4. Mexico: Population Ages 20 to 24 with Educational Level Higher than Secondary

	2000 %	2010 %
Senior High School (10th-12th)	17.01	26.07
Higher Education	15.09	24.41

Source: Mexican Census Mexico´s National Institute of Geography and Statistics (INEGI).

Table 5. Mexico: Percentage of Students Obtaining "Insufficient" Grade in Maths and Spanish, PISA Evaluation

	Maths		Spanish	
	2006 %	2010 %	2006 %	2010 %
6th grade	20.98	19.73	20.66	17.02
9th grade	61.13	52.59	40.70	39.71

Source: Secretariat of Public Education (Mexico).

Table 6. Mexico: Percentage of 6th Grade Students with "Insufficient" Grade in Maths and Spanish, (Excale test) by Type of School

	Maths			Spanish		
	2005 %	2007 %	2009 %	2005 %	2007 %	2009 %
Public urban schools	13.6	12.5	10.0	13.2	10.6	10.0
Public rural schools	23.7	19.9	15.7	25.8	20.5	20.0
Indigenous schools	43.2	37.4	33.9	47.3	42.4	43.6
Small-community schools (Conafe)	28.2	n.a.	31.0	32.5	n.a.	34.6
Private education	2.7	2.4	1.9	2.0	1.6	1.8
National	**17.4**	**14.7**	**12.3**	**18.0**	**13.8**	**14.1**

Source: INEE (2005, 2007 y 2009). Mexico´s National Test of Educational Quality and Achievement (*Exámenes de la Calidad y el Logro Educativos*, Excale).

4.2 Emigration adverse for educational performance which remittances offset to some degree

Data from Mexico's 2010 Census show that 6.5 percent of the population below 19 years of age in Mexico has been exposed to an international migration experience in the last five years. This includes 2.7 million minors. In a 2008 nationally representative sample of 9th grade students in Mexico, 1 in 4 students reported having at least one parent who had ever migrated to the United States.

Early studies found modest positive effects of exposure to migration on school attainment. In recent years, however, fairly consistent evidence suggests that adolescents living in communities with high rates of family emigration are less likely to be enrolled in school and have lower educational attainment. A new finding from our research shows family migration exposure to be negatively related with student achievement. This relationship is particularly pronounced for those attending rural schools (now 1 in 5 of all middle-school students). Though school enrollment and attainment have dramatically improved over the past couple decades for students in rural settings the same cannot be said about school quality. Given the overrepresentation of Mexican family migration from rural communities, this finding is alarming.

At the same time, some research has found educational benefits associated with remittance income in rural settings. Higher rates of high school completion and youth's educational aspirations have been associated with remittance income. In other words, not all migrant households benefit from remittances, but those who do may be able to allow children to remain in school longer. These effects are stronger for rural youth whose mothers are more educated. It remains unclear whether or not remittances can buffer the negative educational impacts of family separation corollary to migration.

4.3 The increased number of Mexican returnees face challenges

The number of returnees grew substantially over the past decade (especially along the border region and in traditional migration states) even though the absolute size remains relatively small (around 650,000 students, near 2 percent of the population below 19 in 2010). Limited attention has been given to the school experiences of returnees, an increasingly significant topic given the growing size of the population. Some research shows that returnees with experience in U.S. schools have higher educational aspirations than their peers without migration exposure; and that their educational strengths (e.g., English proficiency) fly under the radar of educators and decision makers in Mexico.

Migration plays a significant role in schooling in Mexico. This influence, however, is not linear. Immigrants born in the U.S. show the highest probability of school enrolment, while return migrants and circular migrants show the lowest. Also, enrolment rates decrease systematically as a municipality's emigration rate rises. This speaks positively of Mexican incorporation of the children of Mexican migrants born abroad who are brought

to Mexico by their parents. But it also signals that other kinds of migration are a source of vulnerability from the point of view of schooling. Naturally, when migration and remittances are analyzed jointly, the combination of these two factors produces a more favorable outcome.

Table7. Mexico: Probabilities of Being Enrolled in School by Exposure to International Migration (ages 14 to 18), 2010

Variables	Men		Women	
	Probability	*Sig.*	Probability	*Sig.*
Migration experience				
No migration experience (reference)	0.637	*	0.640	
Households with returned migrants	0.618	*	0.586	*
Households that receive remittances	0.675	*	0.672	
Born in US and living in a Mexican headed household	0.707	*	0.692	*
Return migrants	0.542	*	0.567	*
Circular migrants	0.439	*	0.626	
Municipal migration prevalence				
Low or null	0.655	*	0.640	*
Medium	0.620	*	0.621	*
High	0.605	*	0.601	*

* p<.001

Source: Table 5, Chapter on Education. Authors estimations from the Mexican Census 2010 (INEGI).

Migration relates not only to the propensity to enroll in school, but to performance as well. When arranged by household migration characteristics, the most successful students are those who state they have relatives abroad. Yet having one or both parents migrating systematically correlates with lower scores in standard tests. As said earlier, results may change when migration and remittances are taken together.

Table 8. Average score of Mexican 9th grade students on the Excale Exam by exposure to international migration. Mexico, 2008

		School Type		
Spanish writing	Average score	General	Technical	Distance learning (Telesecundaria)
No migration experience	493.5	496.6	491.3	446.2
Relatives migrated	511.9	512.6	516.8	471.7
One parent only	481.6	481.5	491.5	459.6
Both parents	481.3	480.0	481.7	429.0
		Lower secondary		
Spahish reading	Average score	General	Technical	Distance learning (Telesecundaria)
No migration experience	498.7	504.1	507.7	432.0
Relatives migrated	508.4	515.7	520.0	447.1
One parent only	490.1	496.3	499.5	457.3
Both parents	480.6	491.7	496.8	409.1
		Lower secondary		
Mathematics	Average score	General	Technical	Distance learning (Telesecundaria)
No migration experience	500.8	505.7	491.7	468.9
Relatives migrated	514.6	513.9	510.3	487.1
One parent only	491.2	491.9	489.2	481.5
Both parents	492.9	494.4	476.8	473.2

Source: Table 8, Chapter on Education. Data from INEE 2008
Note: National Mean: 500, National Standard Deviation: 100

4.4 In the U.S. second generation outcomes improve over the first, but then progress stalls

Currently 1 in 7 (around 12 million) of all children enrolled in U.S. primary and secondary schools are of Mexican origin. Most are second-generation students, meaning they have at least one Mexican-born parent. Most are born in the U.S. but remain intimately connected with the language, customs, values, and ambitions of their Mexican parents and grandparents.

Mexican-born students in U.S. schools face particular challenges, especially integrating into a new society, neighborhood and the cultural norms of schooling. They are less likely than their U.S.-born Mexican-American counterparts to perform well in and complete high school, even though many have a strong educational ethic. Part of the reason for this is the bifurcated way Mexican-born adolescents perceive school and labor (i.e., as either/or pursuits), more so than other U.S. ethnic groups.

Research in developmental psychology shows that Mexican-born students in U.S. schools struggle to preserve the cultural assets associated with families, mental health and positive interpersonal relationships. This contributes to their poor academic achievement. Residential and associated school segregation also contributes to the educational disadvantages of Mexican-origin students in U.S. schools. Inadequate teacher preparation (e.g., to address students' cultural and linguistic needs) and poor teacher quality in these schools constrain learning opportunities for first-generation students.

First-generation high school dropout rates, though decreasing over the last decade, are higher among undocumented than documented students. In 2010, 45 percent of undocumented Mexican-born persons ages 18-24 years did not complete high school, compared to 35 percent of documented Mexican-born persons.

Children and grandchildren of Mexican immigrants in the U.S. are a large (over 8 million in K-12 schools) and diverse group. By most accounts, the educational problems encountered by the first generation persist through the second and third, though to lesser degrees. School attainment rates increase substantially from the first to the second generation, but not from the second to the third. There remains a school attainment gap of over one year between the grandchildren of Mexican immigrants and White, non-Hispanic peers.

Table 9. U.S: Years of Schooling Completed by Generation among Mexican-Origin Respondents and their Parents

Generation of Respondent	Males		Females	
	Father's average education	Respondent's average education	Mother's average education	Respondent's average education
0	5.7	N/A	4.7	N/A
1st	7.4	9.6	6.6	8.5
2nd	11.7	12.9	11.2	12.8
3rd-only	12.6	13.4	11.8	13.6
Approximate period of high school attendance	1950-1980	1980-2000	1950-1980	1980-2000
3rd+ non-Hispanic whites	14.6	14.5	14.0	14.9

Source: Table 10, Chapter on Education, Immigration and Intergenerational Mobility in Metropolitan Los Angeles (IIMLA) Data.

Family socioeconomic differences do not explain this persistent gap. These same trends are found in terms of academic achievement. While performance differences (in math and reading) between Mexican-origin students and their White, non-Hispanic peers are cut in half from the first to the third immigrant generation, the gaps persist. Moreover, Mexican-origin students perform substantially lower on academic tasks than their Puerto Rican, South American, and Cuban origin peers.

The parents' legal status affects the school attainment of second-generation Mexican-origin students. Those whose parents never attain legal status average two fewer years of attainment than their Mexican-American peers with documented or citizen parents. This effect shrinks but persists into the 3rd generation—i.e., children with unauthorized grandparents demonstrate lower attainment levels than their 3rd generation peers.

4.5 Deepen the commitment of binational institutions to understand and improve educational wellbeing of children of immigrant in both countries

Binational policies are needed to address educational deficits. Such cooperation can be achieved by establishing an education task force within the Binational Commission currently maintained by U.S. and Mexico state departments; and expanding the budgets, evaluation, and, thereby, impact of binational programs designed by the federal and state institutions.

4.6 Establish research grant competitions to address knowledge gaps

In order to address gaps in our understanding, there is need to strengthen existing and establish new funding mechanisms to better understand the relationships between educational wellbeing and the culture of migration in Mexican communities. In addition to government funding, incentives should be provided for private and non-profit foundations to support research. Important knowledge gaps include: identifying regions, municipalities, and schools where immigrant returnees and those remaining behind are concentrated; better understanding relationships between family migration exposure and educational wellbeing; and identifying the curricular and instructional supports that returnees and children remaining behind need in order to stay enrolled and succeed in school.

4.7 Enhance the quality of learning opportunities in rural Mexican schools

Rural children perform much lower on tests of academic performance than their urban and suburban peers (see Table 6). Children in rural schools with migrant parents perform even worse. Targeted federal initiatives should improve learning opportunities by better distributing learning materials across schools; increasing the amount of instructional time in the classroom; linking school curricula and instruction with future and concurrent labor

opportunities; training pre- and in service teachers to associate school curricula with the lives and interests of rural students through high-quality instruction; and increasing public and non-governmental financing for research and innovation activities to support the above-mentioned activities.

4.8 Evaluate and strengthen current federal programs designed to improve educational wellbeing for children in migrant-sending communities

The programs to be assessed include *Oportunidades; Programa Escuelas de Calidad; Programa de Escuelas de Tiempo Completo; Tres Por Uno;* and *Carrera Magisterial*.[ix]

4.9 Identify and address the immediate administrative challenges faced by school personnel in Mexico to integrate the increasing number of immigrant returnees

Education ministries should work with local schools leaders to identify and address these challenges by using extant data to identify regions where returnee students are concentrated; surveying teachers, school leaders, parents, and possibly students to identify the particular challenges associated with returnee integration; specifying administrative procedures for returnee school enrollment in Mexico; designing assessment protocols to understand content and linguistic competencies of returnees upon arrival; and designing teacher training and other transition programs to facilitate school integration for returnee students.

4.10 Integrate the educational needs of Mexican immigrant students in the United States into the accountability and assessment systems associated with the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA or No Child Left Behind [NCLB])

This can be accomplished by including national origin and self and parent birth information of students on state and federal student assessments; requiring states to establish common and rigorous English language learner (ELL) membership criteria for accountability purposes; making explicit the amount of time ELL students need to acquire English language proficiency, requiring states honor these timelines through English and content instruction; allowing states with an interest in bilingualism to make appropriate adaptations to assessment and accountability systems; requiring teacher credentialing programs in states receiving Title II and Title III funds to address the language, academic, and cultural needs of Mexican-American students and other ELLs; and providing monetary incentives for high-quality teachers to serve and remain in districts and schools with high immigrant and ELL student populations.

4.11 Increase investment in research and innovation activities that address the educational needs of Mexican-American students

We recommend identifying the causes and consequences of lower school attainment and achievement outcomes among unauthorized students; conducting research and deriving policy recommendations based on successful experiences of bilingual education and on successful cases of Mexican-born students integration into the educational system; understanding relationships between academic, language, and socio-emotional competencies of Mexican-American students; designing, testing, and evaluating pre- and in-service teacher training initiatives that improve student performance by addressing the socio-emotional, language, academic, and cultural needs of Mexican-American students; designing, testing, and evaluating programs for Mexican- American adolescents that link school curricula and instruction with future and concurrent labor opportunities; and incentivizing local innovations that address the above activities through public-private partnerships that seek to improve student achievement and attainment.

The same recommendation is valid for Mexico. While Mexican-American students in Mexico would seem to have the advantage of some bilingualism, they seem to integrate poorly in Mexican schools, and their needs must be taken into account to improve this process.

4.12 Pass legislation designed to improve high school and college completion for Mexican-origin and other underrepresented groups

This includes passing the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, initially introduced to the U.S. Senate in 2001, as part of comprehensive immigration reform; establishing a fair path to citizenship for Mexican-origin students (and their parents); increasing Pell grants and other federal funding for Mexican-American and other underrepresented college students; incentivizing states and school districts to desegregate schools by student ethnicity, language, and poverty status; and attracting and retaining high-quality teachers to high-needs primary and secondary schools.

5. Health Status and Health Care

Mexico-U.S. migrants, and return migrants, demonstrate vulnerability in various dimensions with deleterious health consequences, strongly influenced by their right to access quality health care services. The sources of vulnerability and the health of migrants vary noticeably throughout the migration process. We approach migrant health across these different stages: in the sending community, prior to migration; in-transit; during their time in the United States and throughout their adaptation process; and upon return for those doing so. We also analyzed government and non-government responses to these challenges.

5.1 Mexico–U.S. migrants seem to be positively selected in terms of their health at departure

U.S. migrants tend to be in relatively favorable health when contrasted to those left behind (though only a handful of studies directly compare these two groups and more research is needed). Yet, it is difficult to gauge what this implies with respect to health selection, as health conditions in source communities have been changing rapidly with the ongoing nutrition and epidemiological transitions in Mexico, as well as the expansion of national social and health programs such as *Oportunidades* and *Seguro Popular*, particularly in poor communities.

This initial state is altered by migration itself. Migrant households tend to accumulate assets including better housing and seem to benefit from higher levels of infant and child nutrition related to higher incomes brought by migration, but several health problems have been detected disproportionately among migrants, their families, and communities, such as sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/ AIDS, chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension, and mental health problems such as depression, anxiety and phobias.

5.2 Migrants encounter acute vulnerability in transit

Most notably, migrants are highly vulnerable to the dangers of crossing the border without proper documents. Although these dangers have existed since undocumented crossing became a massive phenomenon, they seem to have increased over time as enforcement in high-transit urban border corridors escalated in the mid-1990s. Some of the worst dangers associated with undocumented migration are most likely faced before migrants reach the border. Although these seem to be considerably higher among migrants from Central and South America navigating Mexican territory without documents, they are also rising among Mexican migrants in-transit to the U.S., with corresponding physical and mental health consequences. In recent years, migrants have been subjected to kidnapping, torture, and even death by members of criminal

organizations, especially in certain states in Northern Mexico. Migrants have increasingly faced mistreatment and abuse by smugglers both in the Mexican and U.S. The risk of injury and death during the crossing seems to be nontrivial and certainly associated with the vulnerability of migrants both in the United States and in Mexico.

In transit, migrants are exposed to high-risk conditions associated with the environment including dehydration, heat stroke and hypothermia. Migrants are also vulnerable to other risks, such as human rights abuses and violence during their journey, which in some cases can lead to death. In other words, the social context in which migrants experience daily life in their places of origin and the hostile environment to which they are exposed in transit are to a large degree responsible for their health status later in their life. The relatively stable number of migrant deaths on both sides of the border in spite of falling absolute numbers in the Mexico–U.S. irregular migration flow point at an increasing mortality rate.

5.3 Migrant health deteriorates throughout adaptation to the United States

Despite the challenges faced at the border and during the process of adaptation to U.S. society, Mexicans in the United States tend to have better physical health than expected given their lower than average socioeconomic status in the United States. First and foremost, Mexican immigrants (as several other immigrant groups) have consistently lower mortality than whites. This advantage appears to derive not merely from biases in mortality statistics, but also from a relatively favorable morbidity and associated risk factors among migrants, although this general result varies across health outcomes. Most notably, Mexican immigrants exhibit a health advantage in specific chronic conditions such as hypertension and some types of cancer; and tend to exhibit a low prevalence of smoking.

Mexican migrants show several health disadvantages too, most of them associated with social vulnerability. Migrant men tend to experience higher risks of HIV infection, diabetes, and work-related accidents, the latter due to both the nature of the jobs in which they are employed and their poor working conditions. The cumulative effects of repetitive manual work might explain why old-age disability rates are higher among Mexicans than U.S.-born individuals. As such, some of the immigrant mortality advantage found among migrants may translate into a longer unhealthy life.

The immigrant health advantage in the United States seems to be short-lived, however. Individuals with longer durations of stay or a higher level of acculturation to U.S. mainstream culture have worse health than others. The most common pathway appears to be adoption of less healthy habits: lower consumption of fruit, vegetables, and fiber, and with other sorts of dietary changes generally regarded as unfavorable. Smoking prevalence and alcohol use also rise with duration in the United States, as do disability rates, chronic disease prevalence, and allostatic load (a biomarker of cumulative stress

levels). Finally, immigrant mortality is higher for those with longer durations of stay or younger ages at migration.

Although immigrant adaptation to unhealthy lifestyles may be at play, the cumulative disadvantage faced by Mexican migrants in the United States may further explain why migrant health erodes over time. Access to quality health care is another factor, explored below.

5.4 The health of migrants upon return is generally poor

Migrants return home for a variety of economic, family, and health reasons. The motivations for return seem to be highly associated with the reasons for the initial migration, although the evidence on this stage of the migration process is limited. Nevertheless, in general the health status of return migrants compares poorly to that of immigrants remaining in the United States in measures such as self-rated health, height, hypertension and smoking; return migrants appear to have higher mortality too. Compared to Mexican residents who never went to the United States, return migrants appear to have more physical disabilities as well. This body of evidence is based mostly on retrospective studies of older adults who returned to Mexico either at a young or old age.

5.5 Access to health services for migrants on both sides of the border is limited by law and practical impediments

In Mexico, public spending on health for the uninsured has risen very rapidly and significantly, and two large-scale new systems for the provision of health services to the population have been implemented: the Social Health Protection System launched in 2002, and Medical Insurance for a New Generation inaugurated in 2007. The Health Secretariat strived to achieve universal health coverage by 2012. It fell short of the goal, but coverage did increase faster than at any other time since the 1940's.

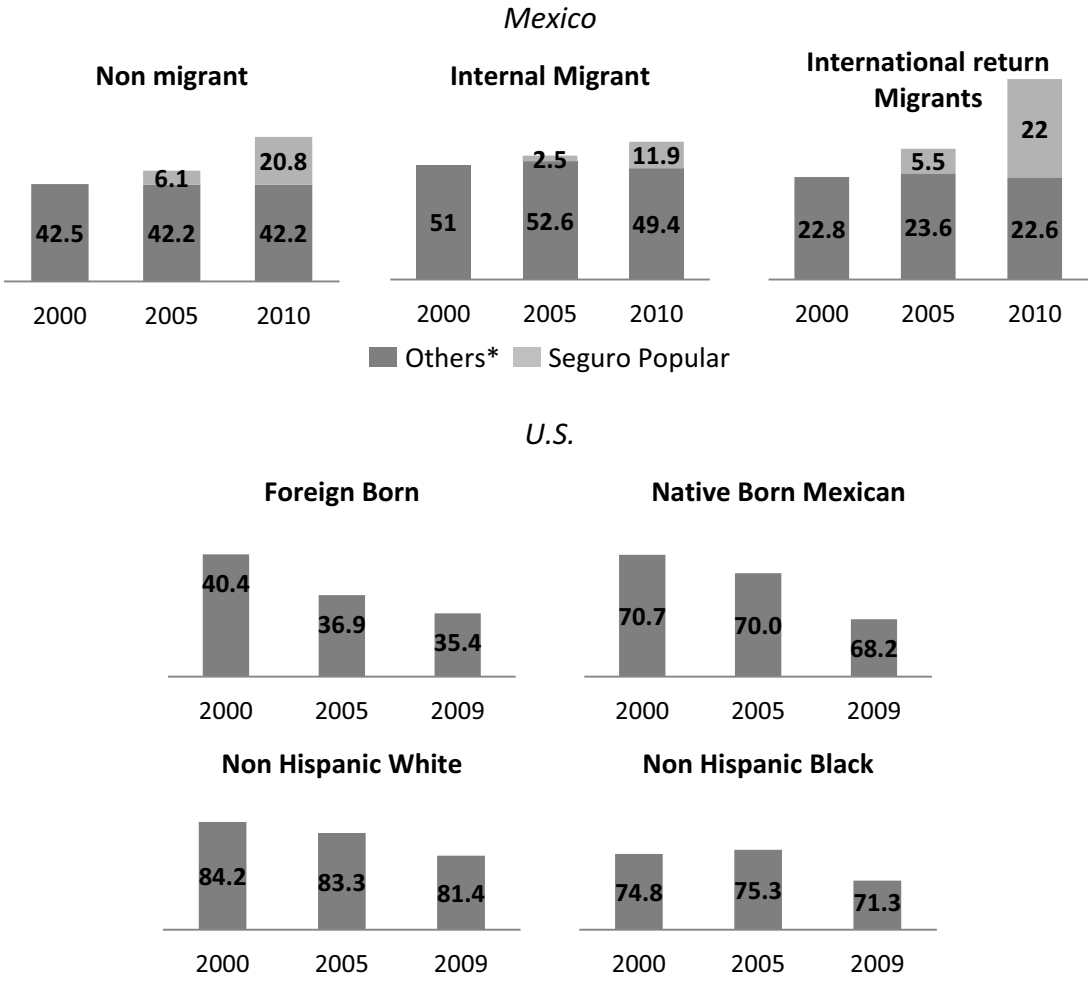
The legal framework in Mexico recognizes that "every person has the right to health care." But migrant groups pose a challenge to the Mexican health system in at least two ways. First, they are not always home, can easily miss mandatory check-ups or re-affiliation deadlines, and they might need attention away from home, as they travel North or South. Second, they have specific health needs and undergo risks that may impact themselves, their families and their communities. Decision makers lack adequate information to estimate the relevance of these problems.

In the U.S., Mexico-born non-U.S. citizens have increasingly lower coverage rates. This tendency can be observed since the late 1990's when some immigrant groups (including most permanent residents with less than 5 years in the country) were excluded from Medicaid as a direct result of immigration and welfare reform in 1996. Immigrants generally have less access to health insurance and a regular source of care and tend to use

health care less relative to comparable native populations. Non-government organizations attempt to fill the gap in health care coverage for disadvantaged groups such as immigrants, but manage to do so for basic services only at best. The resulting delay in treatment and late detection of fatal diseases negatively impacts the health of immigrants disproportionately. The children of immigrants, even those who are legal U.S. citizens, are less likely to have a regular source of care and insurance. The recent health care reform legislation is not expected to benefit undocumented immigrants in any way, since they will be unable to obtain any public or private coverage and will become a larger share of the uninsured population.

Over the past decade, health coverage among Mexican migrants has gone in opposite directions in the U.S. and Mexico. In the U.S., Mexican immigrants have seen their coverage fall, from 40.4 to 35.4 percent. International return migrants in Mexico have increased their coverage in Social Security or Health Insurance (see Figure 6). These rates are below Mexican averages, but rising. This includes those affiliated under the Popular Health Insurance System, whose standards of care are adequate on paper and per capita spending has increased notably. But the actual quality of care at the health center or hospital level has yet to meet that standard.

Figure 6. Mexico and U.S. Insurance Rates (Ages 18 to 49)



Source: Figure 1, Health Chapter. Data for Mexico uses the Population Census 2000, 2010 and Inter-Census Count 2005 and Health Ministry Statistics. For the U.S. data comes from the National Health Interview Survey weighted estimates of any health insurance coverage.
*Insurance coverage "Others" includes IMSS, ISSSTE, ISSSTE at state level, PEMEX, Defense/Marine; Private and other institutions.

5.6 A binational approach is needed that takes into account the social and working conditions of migrants in order to devise and operate appropriate care mechanisms

The cumulative impact of poor or inaccessible health care and increased exposure to risk, starting at the departure community and throughout the entire migration process, means that the health status of migrants and migrant communities in both countries is significantly poor, and that they reach old age in a particularly vulnerable condition. While better, more carefully targeted attention – and better information – at the national levels is called for, we strongly suggest that a transnational governmental response is required to improve the health and the general prospects of this population. This should include

public and private attention providers during the various stages of the migration process, and will benefit from collaboration from local, national and global health organizations.

From both a business and a rights perspective, health issues keep turning up in the bilateral relationship. Basic health insurance for transnational workers is necessary; insurance mechanisms that allow repatriation of ill immigrants have been discussed; a more ambitious binational worker health insurance system has also been on the table in Mexico – U.S. talks on health; preventive health screenings and health advice are available in Mexican consulates (*Ventanilla de Salud* program), but not for the population at large; large health insurance corporations and service providers can improve their costs and the range of their services through a binational hospital service arrangement. The list is quite long, but implementation has been very small-scale or deficient. Binational mechanisms for the attention of the many diverse populations of interest to the United States and Mexico should also be taken up – and implemented - by the renewed and stronger Binational Commission we are recommending.

Also, improving migrant health is largely dependent on upgrading working conditions and education. Migrants, in particular, must work in less risky conditions; jobs should provide them with access to health care; and educational policies should inform them of the behaviors that increase and lessen their health risks. The longer the delay in addressing the health conditions of migrants, the higher the social costs to them, their communities and governments.

6. Fear, Insecurity and Migration

Mexican migrants have been affected by two different trends regarding their security in the United States and in Mexico. In the U.S., federal legislation first passed in 1996-7 excluded many documented and undocumented groups from government benefits; repatriations and removals have increased remarkably; and many recent state and local bills have banned undocumented and some documented groups from state benefits and services while subjecting them to possible deportation if they reveal their situation to public institutions. In short, a growing number of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans in the United States are marginalized or self-excluded from a large number of institutional services.

In Mexico, the war on organized crime has meant that personal insecurity has risen markedly since 2007. While this violence has affected the Mexican territory unevenly, with some areas remaining calm and others suffering disproportionately, fear, lack of information and systematic or haphazard episodes of violence have affected the population in general. In both countries, personal insecurity has become a hallmark of the migrant experience.

6.1 A combination of deportations, fear, and increasingly difficult access to institutions has segregated undocumented and, to a lesser extent, documented Mexican immigrants in the United States

In the U.S., living and working conditions have worsened considerably for Mexican (and other Hispanic) immigrants and their communities since the 1990's. Undocumented Mexican and Central American immigrants show higher levels of stress than documented migrants since the late 1990's. By 1996-2000, both legal and unauthorized immigrant households were reacting to legal changes by shying away from needed services, as well as not showing up for school, PTA meetings and other forms of community participation.

Fieldwork at migrant shelters along the Mexican side of the border at the beginning of the past decade found that 30-50 percent of the migrants lodging there had been removed or repatriated from the U.S. By 2011-2012, qualitative interviews with shelter staff in Juarez and Tijuana found this group comprised the vast majority of the guests there. They are a diverse group, including U.S. citizens with a criminal record, residents, and unauthorized immigrants. The staff point out that a significant proportion have poor or no social networks and family in Mexico. Most of these migrants are stuck at the border. Some are trying to re-enter the United States.

6.2 In Mexico, in general, violence seems to have slowed emigration

In Mexico, we studied the relationship between murder rates and the migration intensity index (this index comprises remittances, return or circular migrants and household members in the U.S.). We also analyzed household out migration finding that, in general, higher murder rates are associated with lower emigration rates. The study controls for a number of other variables at both the household and the municipality level. While the study does not inquire into the specific reasons for this, it is likely that higher insecurity levels during travel within Mexico and the need for families to remain together to face threats to their property or their personal safety could explain this outcome.

Table 10. Estimation: Municipal level model with National Data. Dependent variable: Percentage of dwellings with emigrants to the US

Independent variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Intercept	3.958**	1.841**	-1.569**
	(44.269)	(19.382)	(-6.637)
Rate of deaths related to Organized Crime[1]	-0.046**	-0.061**	-0.026**
	(-3.983)	(-6.443)	(-2.870)
Rate of deaths related to Organized Crime squared	0.000**	0.000**	0.000**
	(-2.375)	(-4.578)	(2.227)
Social network in the US[2]	--	0.357**	0.367**
	--	(35.011)	(37.600)
Percentage of population earning up to 2 min wage	--	--	0.050**
	--	--	(13.877)
Percentage of indigenous population	--	--	0.046**
	--	--	(5.234)
R squared	0.008	0.340	0.418
F statistic	9.538	418.306	349.603
Sig. F	0.000	0.000	0.000
N	2455	2442	2442

Source: Table 7, Chapter on Fear, Insecurity and Migration. Authors own calculations.

[1]Defined as deaths in the 2006-2011 period due to aggressions or executions and in clashes.

[2]Percentage of dwellings with emigrants in the US between 1995 and 2000.

t statistics in parenthesis.

6.3 Along the border, however, the population leaves the most violent areas

The study also explored this relationship in all Northern border municipalities. These municipalities have been severely affected by violence, as criminal groups vie for control of border crossing points for the drug trade. In this second analysis, higher violence results in higher emigration, as common sense would predict. A small but highly visible group within this larger flow is that of better-off Mexicans. U.S. sources show that Mexican immigrants arriving in the U.S. Southwest after 2005 are more affluent and educated, younger and more likely to be naturalized U.S. citizens than those arriving earlier.

Table 11. Estimation: Border Municipality Data.
Dependent variable: Percentage of Dwellings with Emigrants to the U.S.

Independent variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Intercept	1.445**	0.660**	0.294*
	(16.922)	(6.516)	(1.674)
Rate of deaths related to organized crime[1]	0.001	0.004**	0.004**
	(0.485)	(2.212)	(2.059)
Social network in the US[2]	--	1.077**	1.003**
	--	(10.940)	(9.982)
Percentage of population earning up to 2 min wage	--	--	0.010**
	--	--	(2.689)
Percentage of indigenous population	--	--	-0.141**
	--	--	(-1.966)
R squared	0.001	0.305	0.327
F statistic	0.235	60.011	32.958
Sig. F	0.628	0.000	0.000
N	275	275	275

Source: Table 13, Chapter on Fear, Insecurity and Migration, authors own calculations.
[1]Defined as deaths in the 2006-2011 period due to aggressions or executions and in clashes per every 10,000 inh.
[2]Percentage of dwellings with emigrants between 2005 and 2010.
t statistics in perenthesis.

6.4 Deportations adversely affect children

The stress induced on the parents by the likelihood of deportation can have a dramatic effect on children. In this sense, lack of authorization produces stress in children even without deportation. However, deportation of one or both parents has an even greater

impact. According to the DHS, 108,434 alien parents of U.S. children were deported from 1998 to 2007, but this is an underestimation. In addition, the number of deportees rose after 2007. The children of deported parents are often cared for by other relatives. But this is not always possible and they spend varying periods under the authority of child protection services, possibly being forever separated from their parents. The U.S. government and society prides itself in protecting children's interest. As of this writing, separation is common when a parent or an entire family is apprehended or deported. Separation and being under the custody of child protection services are contrary to their interest. And bilateral cooperation should be much enhanced to successfully protect them. U.S. agencies should be made accountable for the welfare of the children of detained or deported parents.

6.5 Neither the U.S. nor the Mexican government are adequately protecting the rights and safety of migrants deported to Mexico

The U.S. and Mexican governments have signed federal and local agreements to guarantee minimum standards for the treatment and repatriation of unauthorized or delinquent migrants. But these agreements are often violated by U.S. authorities and migrants end up in extremely dangerous situations given crime levels in Mexican border towns. This can also result from excessive workloads on both governments, but especially on the Mexican consular and migration services, because they were never intended to handle hundreds of thousands of deportees. ICE should stop deporting undocumented immigrants at night, at unmanned border stations, or in other situations that place these persons in severe danger. The Mexican government, on the other hand, should increase its staff to be able to receive them and send them swiftly and safely on their way to the interior of Mexico.

6.6 Facilitating (re)integration of returnees would enhance their personal security and their socioeconomic status

The Mexican government should operate a special program to promote the integration of return migrants. This should include facilities to provide documents, speeding up their socioeconomic tests, so they can access health and education services and join social programs, and providing general support to help them set up back in Mexico, especially when they lack immediate relatives. This could be done by DIFs (Comprehensive Family Development Services). Due to the severity of unemployment during 2008-9, Mexico increased the coverage of its job-placement programs. Facilitating access to these programs for returning migrants is likely to improve their well being and their contribution to the Mexican economy.

7. Migration, return migration and access to social programs in Mexico

In addition to economic factors, access to better social services in the U.S. has been argued to be one more factor modifying migration behavior. In this final section we examine the relationship between access to Mexican social programs and migration. We focus on *Oportunidades* and the Popular Health Insurance System because they possess the largest coverage among poor households.[x]

7.1 In poor Mexican regions, a combination of migration and social programs effectively improves households' socioeconomic status

In poor Mexican regions,[xi] poorer households (those with food insecurity) without migrants abroad show higher affiliation rates in social programs. This can either be interpreted as the effect of correct targeting (social programs are delivered more frequently to poorer households),[xii] or as evidence that program affiliation by itself has not substantially raised the household's living standard.

Table 12. Food security index and beneficiaries in the household: *Oportunidades* and *Seguro Popular*

	Beneficiaries of *Oportunidades*		**Beneficiaries of *Seguro Popular***	
	Yes %	**No %**	**Yes %**	**No %**
With food security deficits	47.9	52.1	48.2	51.8
With no food security deficits	55.0	45.0	51.6	48.4

Source: Tables 3 and 4, Chapter on Access to Social Programs. Data from ZAP-2009 Survey.

On the contrary, households that are both affiliated and have a member in the U.S. exhibit lower food insecurity levels and better quality housing. In other words, the combination of social programs and migration, most likely through remittances, cash transfers, and savings derived from access to services, seems to substantially improve a household's socioeconomic status.

Table 13. Migration, Food Security Index, and Beneficiaries of:
Oportunidades and *Seguro Popular*

		Beneficiaries of *Oportunidades*		**Beneficiaries of *Seguro Popular***	
		Yes %	**No %**	**Yes %**	**No %**
Households with international migrants	With food security deficits	42.3	57.7	47.3	52.7
	With no food security deficits	54.0	46.0	57.2	42.9
Households without international migrants	With food security deficits	55.2	44.8	51.7	48.3
	With no food security deficits	47.5	52.5	48.2	51.8

Source: Tables 7 and 9, Chapter on Access to Social Programs. Data from ZAP-2009 Survey.

7.2 In these regions also, migrant households have nearly as much social program coverage as others, but nationally this might not be the case

Affiliation rates are not substantially different when migrant and non-migrant households are compared. Households with members abroad tend to show only slightly higher affiliation rates. There is no discrimination against migrant households in this sense. Nevertheless, health survey statistics (Figure 4, section 5.5) analyzed by the health team showed that, according to nationally representative surveys, return migrant households significantly lag behind others in their affiliation rates to the Popular Health Insurance System.

Table 14. Migration and Beneficiaries of:
Oportunidades, *Seguro Popular* and *70 y más*

	Beneficiaries of *Oportunidades*		**Beneficiaries of *Seguro Popular***		**Beneficiaries of *70 y más***	
	Yes %	**No %**	**Yes %**	**No %**	**Yes %**	**No %**
Households with international migrants	51.3	48.7	54.2	45.8	79.6	20.4
Households with no international migrants	50.1	49.9	49.4	50.6	74.6	25.4

Source: Tables 6, 8, and 10, Chapter on Access to Social Programs. Data from ZAP-2009 Survey.

7.3 Affiliation to Mexico's most important social programs is associated with mobility to the U.S. and back

A different analysis, of a national panel survey with nationwide representation,[xiii] shows that, in rural areas, program affiliation is associated with differences in migration behavior. Rural households affiliated to the largest programs (*Oportunidades* and the Popular Health Insurance System) were at once more likely to see a member departing between the panel's first and second observation but also a member returning.

It would seem that these two programs together provide households with a secure basis for undertaking the risks of allowing – or promoting – the migration of one able member, but these programs are also sufficiently significant to increase the likelihood of migrants returning.

Table 15. Migration and Participation in a Social Program:
Oportunidades and *Seguro Popular*, MxFLS 2002-2005

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Oportunidades	0.805***	0.749***		0.746***	0.454***	0.642***
	(0.102)	(0.109)		(0.11)	(0.124)	(0.127)
Seguro Popular		0.0508	0.231	0.0393	-0.0551	-0.0146
		(0.179)	(0.171)	(0.178)	(0.177)	(0.182)
Previous migration				0.904***	0.918***	0.885***
				(0.185)	(0.186)	(0.188)
Sanitation Conditions						0.159
						(0.183)
No electricity						-1.236**
						(0.595)
Floor						0.157
						(0.161)
Walls						-0.317
						(0.268)
Ceiling						-0.131
						(0.125)
Telephone						0.225*
						(0.118)
Property Status						0.380***
						(0.133)
Other Sanitary						-0.0957
						(0.0861)
Toilet						-0.0583
						(0.157)
Sewage						0.123
						(0.139)
Rural					0.616***	
					(0.116)	
Constant	-2.887***	-2.874***	-2.727***	-2.920***	-3.165***	-3.254***
	(0.0544)	(0.0583)	(0.0506)	(0.0608)	(0.0795)	(0.166)
Observations	8,135	7,166	7,362	7,082	7,082	7,073

Source: Table 14, Chapter on Access to Social Programs. Author´s own calculations based on data from ZAP-2009 Survey. Robust standard errors in parentheses.

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

7.4 Our ethnographic analysis shed light on a number of ways in which access to these programs and basic services is rendered difficult for return migrants

First and foremost, return migrants do not have all the requisite documents to process their affiliation. This is worse for deported migrants, who sometimes lack any documentation, but is true of most return migrants. Lately, growing insecurity and document fraud have led authorities to make access to these documents increasingly difficult, if not for all, then clearly for people lacking computers and know-how. Additionally, they have expiration dates. If the return migrant was absent for a few years or more, it is almost certain that (s)he will have to apply for several different documents.

7.5 Local authorities should not, but sometimes do, exercise discretion in providing copies of documents

Local authorities exercise discretion and block access to documents such as birth certificates, when they feel migrants or their children, especially those born abroad, should not be entitled to benefits such as school enrolment. Older migrants with U.S. pensions have been denied documents because they already have a pension and local authorities try to stop them from enrolling in the Mexican (modest) non-contributive pension scheme. Civil registration offices are part of the municipality system: very poor municipalities have neither the training nor resources, for example, to retrieve copies of Mexican consular birth certificates. Therefore they do not provide them to children born in the U.S. These children can sometimes be enrolled in school without proper documents, but they can be denied a certificate of school completion unless they provide them. In traditional sending areas, there are persons specializing in obtaining the right documents for program or school enrolment and to have them “stamped”, for a significant fee. In very poor areas with a weaker migration tradition, often there is simply no way to get them, and the consequences can be serious.

7.6 Recommendations to improve conditions for return migrants

- Not all migrants are particularly vulnerable. Some arrive in the U.S. or return to Mexico in a position of strength, having acquired or reinforced their assets, skills and social and institutional know-how. Nevertheless, migration poses risks and entails a process of adaptation that can take a toll on parents, spouses and children. Risks and vulnerability are made worse by lack of documents, language competence, or education. This final section provides evidence to argue that the Mexican government should improve its ability to provide returning immigrants with all three factors to improve their ability to get ahead in Mexico. This involves the Secretariats of Education, Health, Labor and Social Development. Nevertheless, this recommendation is identical in the case of the U.S.

- Affiliation to Mexican social programs can help improve management of Mexico–U.S. temporary migration (as stated in the labor section). These social programs lower household vulnerability while the migrant is away and increase incentives for return to Mexico, but also provide channels to improve savings, return taxes, and maintain their health through regular check-ups.
- More ambitiously, bilateral agreement on basic social protections for all migrants, including pension totalization, health care, and other basic social services should greatly enhance the ability of migrants to adapt in either the U.S. or Mexico. Old bilateral agreements on this subject, such as the agreement on a "binational" school completion certificate, should be updated and enforced. The main problem has been decentralization. Each state in the U.S. and Mexico follows its own procedures and it is worrying that there are no uniform standards; principals and teachers exercise discretion in allowing or blocking school access to children arriving from the United States or other countries.

NOTES

[i] Laura Pedraza provided invaluable assistance in the preparation of this final report.

[ii] Sidney Weintraub, Francisco Alba, Rafael Fernández de Castro and Manuel García y Griego (1988), "Responses to Migration Issues," in *Migration between Mexico and the United States. Binational Study,* Vol. 1., ed. Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform (Austin). In that chapter, the authors state that the period in which Mexico had a "policy of not having a policy" had come to an end. Unfortunately, after a period of far more intensive engagement in migration issues, the Mexican government again de-emphasized migration from 2006 to 2012.

[iii] Pre-publication copies are available from ppe.laura@gmail.com

[iv] The number increased steadily from 4.5 million in 2000 to 6.3 million in 2005 and reaching a peak of 7.0 million unauthorized Mexican immigrants in the U.S. in 2007.

[v] Francisco Alba (2011), "¿Se estarán ampliando algunas de las oportunidades de la transición demográfica?", *Coyuntura Demográfica* 1:10-14.

[vi] A point recently made by J. Edward Taylor, Diane Charlton y Antonio Yúnez-Naude (2012), "The end of Farm Labor Abundance", *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy* 34(4): 587-598.

[vii] From the Chapter on Population Dynamics and also in Claudia Masferrer and Bryan R. Roberts (2012), "Going Back Home? Changing Demography and Geography of Mexican Return Migration", *Population Research and Policy Review* 31(4): 465-496.

[viii] There were 4.6 million Mexican-born workers in the U.S. in 2000 and 7 million in 2010. About two-thirds did not complete high school in 2000, and 55 percent did not complete high school in 2010. The number who arrived in the previous five years was 1.2 million in 2000 and 900,000 in 2010.

[ix] Also known as *Servicio Magisterial de Carrera*. A new education law has just been passed. It includes new rules for this system.

[x] Oportunidades provides cash transfers and services to 5.8 million poor families, provided they attend schools and clinics. Transfers average about 60 dollars/mo. Popular Health Insurance is intended to provide zero-cost health services to uninsured families at a level substantially above that of regular "open coverage" clinics, which is very basic. It does not however fund any treatment.

[xi] We refer to a territorial classification called ZAP in Mexico, for Priority Attention Zone. At the time of the study it comprised the poorer half the Mexican territory but only 17% of the Mexican population.

[xii] The *Oportunidades* program is targeted in the strict sense: households must pass a socioeconomic test before they join. The "Popular Health Insurance" system, on the contrary, is aimed at the uninsured, not those below a certain socioeconomic level, but they are also poorer than the insured.

[xiii] In Mexico, each state and sometimes each principal and municipal employee follow their own criteria. A single standard must be set and enforced, mostly through the operation of an on-line document system linking the U.S. and Mexico's civil/school record systems.