

FIGURES: MEXICO-UNITED STATES MIGRATION (1990-2011)

SELENE GASPAR OLVERA*

Abstract

The purpose of this essay is to discuss the figures provided by statistics from the United States and Mexico since the nineties about the migratory process between both countries. I also look into the evolution of Mexican emigration to the United States and the growth of its offspring born and residing in the United States, as well as into fertility among Mexican migrants and their children, and their mobility within that country, based on information obtained from households to establish how rooted Mexicans and their children are in our neighboring country to the north. On the other hand, there is a review of the flow of people who head to the northern border attempting to cross it, the entry of Mexicans into the United States, and the return and recent immigration of United States nationals to Mexico. I finish with an analysis of the possible links among changes detected in the migratory pattern, the economic crisis that began in the United States at the end of 2007, and the strengthening of measures that have been implemented to restrain migration.

Key words: Migration, immigration, emigration, returning migrants, unemployment

*Migration should be, indeed, a possibility,
but not the last resort derived from a life
without options, without rights,
“without legal papers”.*

LETICIA CALDERÓN CHELIUS

INTRODUCTION

In studies carried out about migration, international migratory flows have been shown to be a result of an individual and family strategy against the lack of opportunities in the country of origin. Although the emigration of Mexicans to the United States is a complex, long-standing occurrence, it has been characterized by its virtual unidirectionality —89.4% of the emigration is to the United States (Censo de Población y Vivienda, 2010) —, driven mainly by the search for employment. Migration is maintained through several bonds, such as close family, social and cultural ties, and labor supply and demand. This has also been reinforced by socioeconomic and historical bonds whose origins and determining factors concern both countries. These bonds are patent through complex social and family networks that have prompted a relatively quick response of important segments, particularly those of the Mexican workforce, to the information and opportunities arising in the United States. All of this has contributed to a mass emigration to the United States, notwithstanding the fact that a significant number of people who have been born there are of Mexican origin.

Migration is mainly due to labor reasons (according to the ACS, 88% are 15-64 years old), lack of legal documents (according to Passel and Cohn [2011], 58% are undocumented) and a response, among other factors, to the workforce demand of certain economic segments in the United States (tertiary sector) and to the wage differences between both countries (Giorguli, Gaspar and Leite, 2006). Another element, strongly related to the labor factor —which undoubtedly has been an influence throughout history when Mexicans make the decision of leaving their country— has to do with the unfavorable and recurring economic conditions Mexico has experienced. Such a decision is of

course subject to existing economic conditions in the United States, as will be mentioned later. In any case, both the decision to migrate and the possibilities of gaining access to the United States have been partly determined by the restrictive measures the U.S. government has implemented. These measures have been directed to discouraging undocumented migration and, although it might be said that they have failed in the past, they are seemingly working now as expected.

The intensity of this phenomenon and the changes seen in the migratory pattern confirm that the elements that determine the migration and permanency of Mexicans in the United States are very diverse and complex (Massey, Pren and Durand, 2009; Passel and Cohn, 2009). The large-scale migration seen until 2006 has decreased significantly, due to the economic crisis that began in the United States at the end of 2007. This decline has been intensified by strengthening and increasing restrictive measures directed to restraining undocumented migration, and they have escalated as never before because of the attack to the Twin Towers in September 2001. Politically speaking, this has led to what Masey et al. (2002) called the era of “contradiction”. The significant changes in the intensity of emigration and in the recent migratory pattern that have been observed and identified as the “new elements of the migratory pattern” include more migrants of urban origin, migration of whole families, an increase in the length of stay in the United States, a growing number of female migrants, higher education levels, a larger number of Mexicans in tertiary sector activities, diverse places of origin and destination, and a larger return rate (without it being massive) (Cornelius and Marcelli, 2000; Durand, Massey and Mendoza, 2003; Gaspar and López, 2009).

There has been a significant decrease in the number of people who successfully cross the border. Fewer people of recent entry increasingly manage to stay in U.S. land, whereas those who had already settled have increased their time of stay. On the other hand, although flows towards the United States have decreased, they are still high, even above those seen prior to the economic recession that began in the United States in 2007. These flows consist mainly of undocumented people without migratory experience, even when they are exposed to more risks in transit and

considering that costs to cross the border have increased. Unemployment and the restrictive measures implemented within the United States have promoted a larger internal mobility of Mexicans and their offspring within the United States. Therefore, the more attractive states have lost their importance, furthering a larger dispersion to other U.S. states.

In this context, it is interesting to look into the evolution of the migration of Mexicans to the United States and the growth of their children, who have been born and reside there. The extent of the analysis starts off from the nineties. This horizon comprises exit flows towards the northern border with the purpose of crossing it, the entry of connationals into the United States, fertility among Mexican migrants (i.e. their offspring) and their internal mobility. Information about households is included, with an analysis of migrants who return and the recent immigration of United States nationals to Mexican territory. Special emphasis is made on the recent behavior this process represents, with the purpose of identifying changes in the migratory pattern and the possible causes that have prompted them. The statistical information here presented comes from my own estimations, based on the large number of data sources produced by government institutions from Mexico and the United States. Information from administrative records from both countries is also included.

EVOLUTION OF MEXICANS IN THE UNITED STATES 1970-2011

The United States have been and are, *par excellence*, the major destination for Mexican migrants. Nonetheless, estimating the number of Mexicans that Mexico loses year after year due to international migration is no easy task. The reasons are that a characteristic of this kind of migration is that it is predominantly undocumented and that the measuring instruments which so far have been used—in spite of their large amount and improved quality, both in Mexico and the United States—do not grasp all the complex elements of this phenomenon. U.S. polls underestimate certain population groups, particularly undocumented groups (Lowell, Perdenini and Passel, 2008). This is also seen in Mexican sources which have additionally several conceptual restrictions and time

incompatibilities (Corona, 2002; López y Gaspar, 2010; Corona, 2011).¹ It is too early to diagnose or establish that Mexican migration abroad, with the United States as its main destination, has come to an end. This would lead us to assume that the U.S. economy will not improve, that ours has done so and will continue doing so short-term, that it is able—and will continue being able—to absorb the available workforce in Mexico and that the information to measure international migration (polls or surveys) produced by both countries is perfect, as are the methods and questions used to measure it. We would likewise have to ignore the strengthening of family and social networks derived from the long migratory tradition of Mexicans to our neighboring country to the north,² and the fact that, so far, at least 34 million of people of Mexican origin reside in the United States, which is no small deal.

The past and present dynamics of this demographic phenomenon make it still more complex and, thus, of relevant importance for our country and for the United States, not only from a statistical perspective, but also from a political, social, cultural, security and human rights point of view (Partida, 2008).³ In the case of Mexico we also need to consider the triple role it plays in international migration as a country that expels its population, and acts as a destination and passage for thousands of migrants from different parts of the world, but mainly from Central America ((El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, etc.).

Although Mexican emigration to the United States has been taking place for a very long time, it was not until 1970 that the number of Mexicans began to be visible with the presence of almost 900 thousand Mexicans there. As of then, Mexico became one of the main sources of emigrants to the United States, preceded by Germany, Italy and Canada. In 1980, the number of connationals was little over two million; at the time Mexico was by large the main source of emigrants to the United States, followed by Germany. Ten years later, in 1990, the number of Mexicans doubled (4.4. million), with the Germans (1.1. million) and

1. Rodolfo Corona has written an extensive study about Mexican sources, where he analyzes their procedures and virtues.

2. For a detailed review about social and family networks, see Moctezuma (2011).

3. <http://www.conapo.gob.mx/00cifras/proyecta50/proyecciones.pdf>.

the Filipinos (one million) following it in order of importance as main immigrants to the United States. Between 1980 and 1990, 219 thousand Mexicans entered the United States each year. It has additionally been estimated that there were 18 thousand temporary migrants in 1990.

In spite of the economic crisis the United States experienced in the nineties, there was a sustained growth in the number of connationals residing in our neighboring country to the north. At the end of 1994, Mexico experienced in turn a terrible economic crisis that led to the devaluation of the peso and to high unemployment rates, which acted as an additional incentive for migration to continue growing as it had done so throughout the decade. According to Ignacio Medina (2006), "... migration is intensified when there is not only a focal point of attraction in the destination pole, but also when the focal point of eviction, in the traditional point of eviction of origin of migrants, becomes critical." According to the 2010 ACS, 366 thousand connationals entered the United States every year from 1990 to 2000. However, this figure was higher, since the data from the ACS correspond to those migrants who until 2010 still remained in the United States. In the 1990 census it was estimated that 428 thousand Mexicans entered that country every year during that period of time.

The U.S. 2000 census⁴ counted 9.3 million Mexicans; that is, 4.9 million more than in 1990, a period of time when the Mexican population reached its highest absolute and relative growth, with a little over three out of every ten Mexicans (35%) stating they had lived in Mexico in 1995. Mexico remained the main source of emigrants to the United States, followed by the Philippines (1.4 millions) and Germany (1.2 millions). The United States Census Bureau estimated that there were 31 thousand temporary migrants from Mexico.

Everything seemed to indicate that the migration of Mexicans to the United States would decrease because of the 2001 events —the attack to the Twin Towers and the economic recession that started in the United States that same year. This was actually the case two months after the

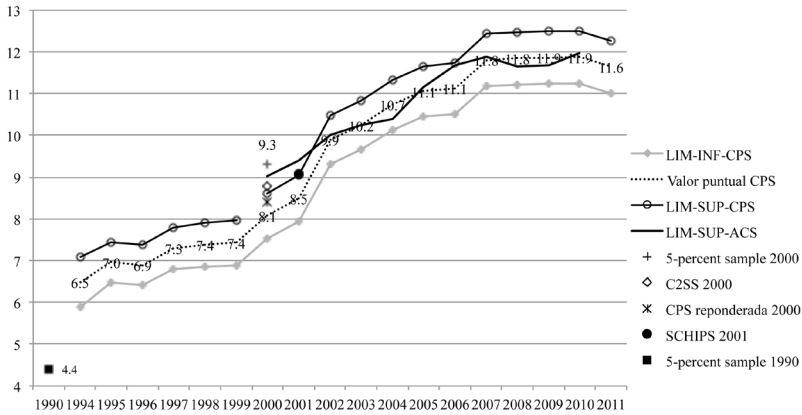
4. It should be pointed out that this number includes Mexicans who habitually live in the United States as well as those who work most of the year in an economic activity.

attack (Zúñiga and Gaspar, 2006). However, it may be verified that the number of Mexicans continued growing, although with less intensity, until at least 2007. From 2001 to 2007, the figure increased from 9.4 to 11.9 millions; that is, by 2.4 millions, which would amount approximately to 356 yearly entries in that period of time. According to the 2010 ACS, 388 thousand Mexicans entered the United each year: 22.7% of the total number of Mexicans in our neighboring country to the north.

Due to the economic crisis that began at the end of 2007, the number of Mexicans remained practically constant until 2010, with an increase of 68 thousand and the entry of 265 thousand Mexicans during that period. Even so, Mexico still ranked as the country with the largest number of connationals in the United States, with almost 12 million (ACS, 2010), followed by the Philippines (1.89 million) and India (1.81 million). When the whole decade (2000-2010) is taken into account, it is believed that 400 thousand Mexican migrants must have entered the United States to reach the estimated amount for 2010.

The most recent figure of Mexicans residing in the United States, estimated in 11.6 million, has been obtained from the March 2011 supplement of the Continuous Population Survey (CPS). This number represents 28.8% of the 40 million inhabitants born outside the United States who, together with their offspring (34 million), constitute the largest group of Hispanics (50 million or 67.4%). This number is significant for both countries, particularly for Mexico, since it represented 30% in relation to its own population in 2010. The composition by sex points to a prevalence of men with respect to Mexican migrant women in the whole range of the analysis horizon, particularly from 2007 to 2010. This period shows a yearly decline in migration entry (see Graph 1).⁵

5. Methodological differences between surveys must be considered for a correct interpretation. For instance, the ACS reports 11.67 and 11.96 million Mexicans from 2009 to 2010, whereas the CPS places that figure in 11.81 and 11.87 million, respectively. The difference between the estimated volumes in each instrument is due to, among other things, how statistical weights are estimated, the target population to which the survey is directed and the rules of residence established to conduct the survey. This is why this difference might not be statistically significant. A detailed explanation of existing methodological differences in surveys in the United States may be found in López and Gaspar (2010) and in López and Gaspar (unpublished), *El estado de la migración en México. Fuentes, procedimientos y estimaciones de la migración internacional, 1990-2010*, México, Conapo.



At least until 2005, Mexico was the main source of migrants to the United States worldwide, followed by China and Pakistan. From 2000 to 2005, the international yearly net loss of Mexicans ranged from 400 thousand —according to the United Nations International Migration Report (2009)— to 475 thousand, based on information from Conapo (2006). This placed Mexico as the country with the largest number of connationals outside its territory and in U.S. land. The Pew Hispanic Center recently published a study, estimating that 1.4 million Mexicans emigrated to the United States from 2005 to 2010; that is, almost half of those estimated to have entered that country from 1995 to 2002 (3 million). According to this study, during this same period of time, 1.4 million Mexicans moved from the United States to Mexico with their children. The study concluded that, in this period, Mexico’s international net migration was reduced to zero, and maybe even less. It should be pointed out that the authors have mentioned that this may not be accurately confirmed.⁶

6. <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2012/04/23/net-migration-from-mexico-falls-to-zero-and-perhaps-less/?src=prc-headline>

EVOLUTION OF U.S. NATIONALS OF MEXICAN ORIGIN 1990-2011

The increasing number of Mexicans settled in the United States has led to the current existence of a significant number of people of Mexican origin who have been born in that country, with Mexico as the main source of migrants in the United States for more than three decades. Given the characteristics that have predominated in this population (in productive and reproductive ages), it is not surprising that there has also been an increase in the number of United States-born children of Mexicans, i.e. the group that constitutes the second generation, which increased its population at a rate of 4.1% per year from 1994 to 2011.⁷ On the other hand, it would be necessary to add to these two populations those who, having been born in the United States, declare to be of Mexican origin (third generation or beyond).⁸ This population grew at a similar rate as the second generation (4.0% per year, from 1994 to 2011), but with a higher rate during the nineties. It is important to make a distinction between the groups of population that make up the one of Mexican origin⁹ in the United States, given that their social, economic and demographic characteristics vary according to their generation.

The U.S. population of Mexican origin doubled in 18 years, from 11 million in 1994 to 22 million in 2011. As a whole, it represents 8.3% of all U.S. nationals and 65.5% of the total population of Mexican origin living in the United States. This population has a different population structure (younger, 21 years of age) from the rest of the native population from that country (white non-Hispanic race, 40 years of age). See Table 1.

7. Born in the United States, but with one or both parents having been born in Mexico.

8. The question is based on self-identification. Origin might be seen as the heritage, nationality group, lineage or country of birth of a person or of their parents or ancestors before they arrived in the United States. Those who identify their origin as “Hispanic”, “Latino” or “Spanish” may be of any race.

9. When including an item related to birthplace of the person and their parents, the CPS allows the identification of children of Mexicans who were born and have lived in the United States (second generation), while the question about origin or ancestry helps to identify those who, having been born in the United States, declare to be of Mexican origin (third generation or beyond). The ACS, on the other hand, does not include the parent’s birthplace in its items. Instead of the question, it focuses on ancestry and origin (self-ascription).

Cuadro 1

CHILDREN BORN TO MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS,
THE LONG-TERM EFFECT OF IMMIGRATION

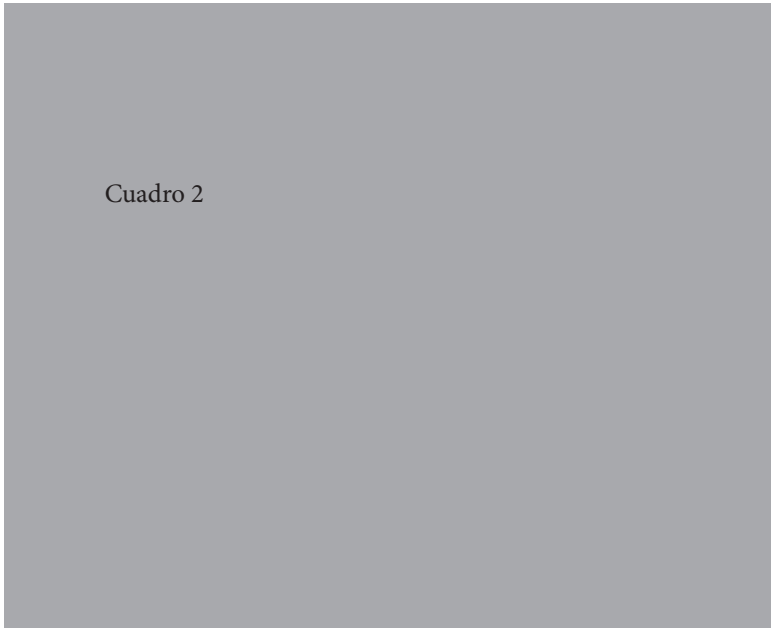
The growth of the Mexican immigration to the United States is reflected in the gradual increase in the number of its offspring born and living in that country. The ACS has an estimation of the numbers of births that took place in the year prior to a survey of 15-49 year-old women, based on the assumption of one birth per woman. The results indicate that 4.2 million children were born in 1999, out of which 8.5% were of women who had been born in Mexico and 6.1% of U.S. women of Mexican origin. Together they contributed 14.6% (616 births) to the total number of births that took place in the United States that year.

The young age composition of these women is visible in the higher rate of women who gave birth, when compared to other population groups under study. Ten years later, the number of births of Mexican women decreased, while the number of children they had increased. Mexican women living in the United States had 346 thousand children in 2009;

50% of these women had entered the United States in 2000 and 2010, and almost a quarter of them had arrived in 2005 and 2010. If we consider that the offspring of Mexicans increased by 11 million during the 1994-2011 period, then, on the average, Mexican women, or those of Mexican origin of a fertile age, had 605 thousand children per year (see Table 2).

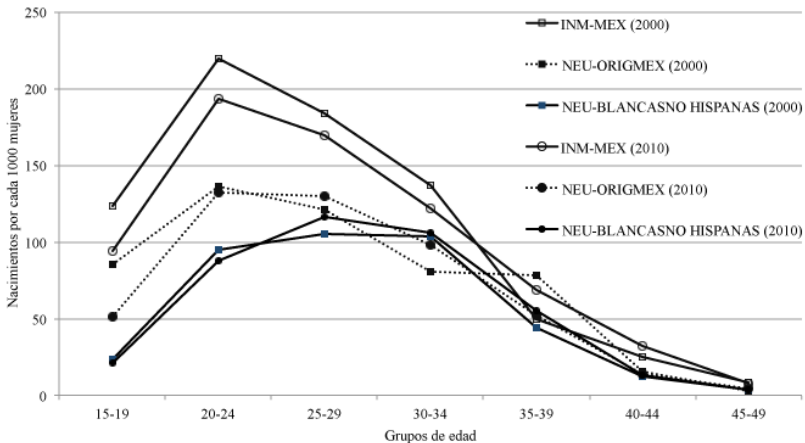
The following information shows the rate of fertility of the population residing in the United States by group of origin. The figures show in general terms that Mexican women living in the United States tend to have more children than women in Mexico. In 2009, women living in Mexico had a global fertility rate (GFR) of 2.4 children per woman (INEGI, 2010), whereas the GFR of Mexican women residing in the United States that same year rose to 3.1 children per woman (ACS, 2010). In spite of the fact that fertility among Mexican immigrant women in the United States has been the highest in every year and population group under study, it may be established that their fertility has declined.

Cuadro 2



Women of Mexican origin who were born in the United States are less fertile than their mothers. Likewise, their rate of fertility has been falling: their GFR decreased from 2.6 children per women in 1999 to 2.2 children per woman in 2009. Their contribution to the total number of births in 2009 (4.1 million) was of 8% (332 thousand births). See Table 2 and Graph 2.

According to Steven A. Camarota (2005), children born to immigrants are probably the most important long-term effect of immigration, and their fertility might be seen as a measure of immigrant integration. The fact that people are deciding to have more children might indicate that they are relatively optimistic about the future. A socio-demographic, labor and social study of children of Mexicans living in the United States, together with more knowledge about their fertility, will lead to more accurate conclusions about the impact of Mexican immigration on the growth of the U.S. population and the effect it has and will have on public services offered by the government. In addition it will show the effect the increasing numbers of U.S. nationals of Mexican origin will have on U.S. long-term policies, regarding the possibility of a migratory agreement that would benefit those of their parents, siblings, grandparent and relatives who are living illegally in the United States.



ROOTED HOUSEHOLDS

A review of the information about households will give us a good idea of how Mexicans and their children have settled in the United States. Statistics from ACS (2010) report that in a little over 10 million households (7.75), at least one person is of Mexican origin, and that in 8.1 million households, the head is a person of Mexican origin. In other words, 4.2 million households are headed by a person who was born in Mexico, one of two of these heads entered the United States before 1990, and almost 8 out of 10 entered that country before the year 2000, while the head in 3.9 million households is a U.S. national of Mexican origin. Households where every member is a person born in Mexico add up to 1.1 million (26% of the total number of households headed by a person born in Mexico); of these, 37% has a fully paid home or is in the process of paying it. In the case of households headed by a person who came from Mexico, 33.5% live in their own house—a fully paid home—, while 12.8% are still paying it. This relation between Mexican American households is 39% and 14%, respectively.

On the other hand, 24.4% Mexicans have acquired the United States citizenship, one of every two says he or she speaks English at home, and seven out of every ten entered the United States before 2000. These data reveal the strong roots of Mexicans in the United States, with an important component of settled families, something which will undoubtedly be decisive—or not— for the end of Mexican migration to our neighboring country to the north.

DECREASE OF MIGRATORY FLOWS/DECLINE IN THE ENTRY TO THE UNITED STATES

Recent information from both Mexico and the United States indicates that the magnitude of the flow of Mexicans who enter or go to the United States each year has decreased and that the number of Mexicans living in that country has remained practically constant since 2007. This behavior may be due to the reinforcement and increase in the measures implemented to restrain undocumented migration in the northern

border and within the United States, as well as to the economic crisis that country is experiencing, which has led to high unemployment rates. These rates have affected Mexicans and their offspring significantly, more than the assumption that, according to Rene Zenteno,¹⁰ “we are facing a new era of Mexico-United States migration, which has decreased and tends to be negative as result of Mexico’s economic improvement and the strong impact the access to schooling has had among young people.”

Even though the flow of migrants to the United States has decreased, information from the Survey on Migration in the Northern Border suggests that the flow is still high and that it has even remained close to 500 thousand (2010). This population continues leaving the country at a higher rate because of the same reasons as before: to look for a job and to work (63.4%, 2010). Before the current economic crisis in the United States, almost 8 out of 10 personas emigrated for that same reason.

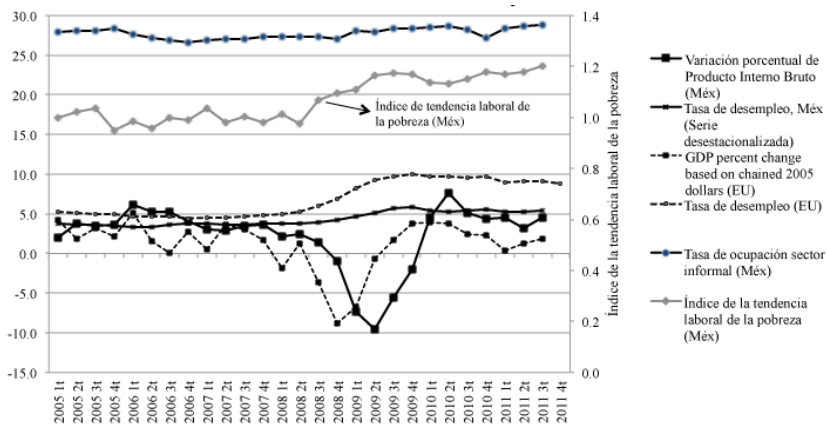
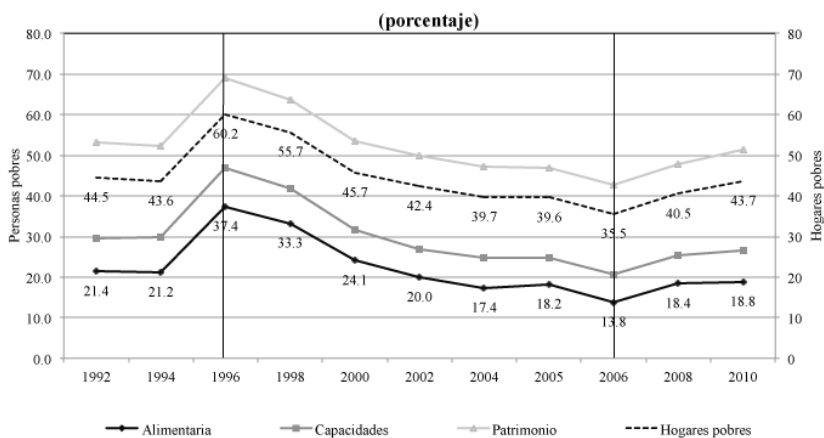
On the other hand, based on the three traditional poverty lines estimated by CONEVAL, we see that, although the number of poor people was decreasing (1996-2005), it started to increase as of 2006. It has been likewise estimated that in that year, 42% of the population and 35.5% of the households lived in adverse conditions that did not allow them to fulfill their basic food, health, housing, education, transportation, clothing, and footwear needs. It has been estimated that 51.3% of the population and 43.7% of households are currently in this situation. In 2011, 25.75% (79,283) of those who wanted to get a high school education did not get a place in any of the options available.¹¹ In addition, there are around seven million young people who do not study or work —*ninis*—, who are without doubt looking actively for a job or who have dropped out of school because of persisting economic pressures in Mexico.¹² Similarly, the informal employment rate has been on the rise; data on the matter are very eloquent (see Graphs 3 and 4).

10. Former sub secretary of Population, Migration and Religious Affairs of the Interior Ministry, during the celebration of the World Population Day (see Margarita Vega, “Cae migración a EU, dice Segob”, *Reforma*. July 12, 2011).

11. <http://www.comipems.org.mx/>

12. <http://www.sep.gob.mx/work/models/sep1/Resource/2249/1/images/vf-jovenes-educacion-ninis.pdf>

FIGURES: MEXICO-UNITED STATES MIGRATION (1990-2011)



Dr. Jeffrey S. Passel is of the opinion that “immigrants who are already in the United States would rather not return to Mexico, as many of them believe that the economy in the United States will improve”. If they did return to Mexico, their economic condition might not be better than the one they have in the United States. Wage inequality between both countries makes the difference in the main economic segments in which Mexicans who emigrate to the United States are employed (Giorguli and Gaspar, 2008): a person who works in the manufacturing sector in the United States earns 46 thousand dollars, whereas the mean wage in Mexico is 26 thousand (SIMDE-UAZ, 2011).

Rafael Alarcón (2008) considers that the crisis “will no doubt have an impact on the life of Mexican migrants and their families, who will have to make do with their social and economic resources and strategies to remain in the United States, since a return to Mexico may be an extreme decision to be made when they run out of other options.” It has been so, as confirmed by data: in spite of the fact that the situation has been difficult for Mexicans and their offspring these last three years, there has not been a mass return to Mexico; the volume of Mexicans in the United States has remained close to 12 million since 2007. On the other hand, the Mexican economy has not improved sufficiently and there are no definite signs too warrant that it will continue improving, just as there are no signs warranting that the economic crisis in the United States will continue worsening. The Federal Reserve of the United States hopes that the economic activity and conditions of the labor market will improve gradually. There are even signs of a moderate economic recovery, as well as a recovery of jobs. (See Graph 4).

While the increase in vigilance in the borders have made the danger and costs to enter the United States higher, “once the people are inside, they do not want to go back”. One of every two migrants admits they will remain in the United States as long as possible (Emifnorte, 2010). In addition, although historic international evidence indicates that an economic recession in the countries of destination tends to decrease migratory flows, “they do not revert them”, whereas economic crises in

the countries of origin tend to encourage emigration.¹³ As a matter of fact, the latter has been a decisive factor in the emigration of Mexicans abroad. In a study presented by Bancomer in November 2010,¹⁴ “Mexico’s Migration Situation”, the authors mention that employment in the United States is the most influential variable in the decision to emigrate there—it ranks above the lack of opportunities in Mexico and the wage differences between both countries. Therefore, when employment in the United States increases, Mexican migration does so too, and the opposite happens when employment decreases, since the main drive for Mexican migration to the United States is the employment demand for Mexican workers. In economic crises, job offers decrease, and when there are fewer positions available, the incentives to emigrate are reduced, and vice versa (García Zamora, 2011)¹⁵. This situation implies a close relationship with an economic recovery in the United States.

With Mexican statistics it is possible to corroborate that the migrant population is today less successful when it comes to crossing the border, and even less so when it comes to staying in the United States. Nonetheless, even though the flow of migrants who head to the northern border with this purpose shows a declining pattern, the number has been close to 500 thousand (Emifnorte, 201). Mexican statistics also confirm that migration to the United States increased in absolute terms from 1995 to 1999, with an average of 300 thousand emigrants, whereas it began to decrease as of 2007 by 1%, and by 9% between 2008 and 2009. On the other hand, out of the total number of people who left the country in 2005, only 2.9% returned. In 2007, 202 thousand people left and 23% returned. As time passes, the proportion of people who return has increased with respect to those who left that same year. In other words, as time passes, migrants are less successful—a situation that might be due also to less circularity among Mexican migrant and a larger component of undocumented

13. <http://www.ceed.udg.mx/investigacion/migracion-y-desarrollo>

14. <http://www.foroconsultivo.org.mx/innovacion.gaceta/component/content/article/11-columna-invitada/18-la-crisis-economica-en-estados-unidos-y-el-retorno-de-los-migrantes-mexicanos>

15. http://www.bbvaesearch.com/KETD/fbin/mult/1011_SitMigracionMexico_04_tcm346234630.pdf?ts=12112010

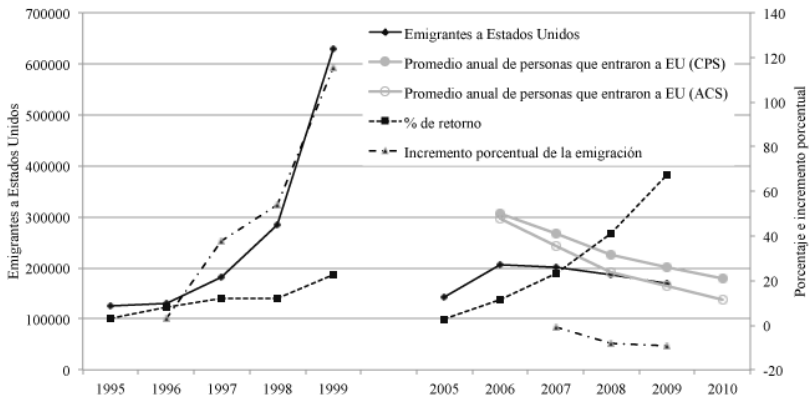
population without migratory experience. Nine out of ten people have these characteristics.¹⁶ (See Graph 5 and Table 3)

Emifnorte reports that the decrease in the south-north flow began in 2008 with 748 thousand Mexicans, which were 500 thousand in 2010. The facts that thousands of connationals continue heading to the northern border with the purpose of crossing it, in spite of the restrictive measures implemented in the United States and the additional risks and costs implied, may be due to the inability of the Mexican economy to generate enough jobs and favorable conditions. These situations have made searching for a job one of the main causes of migration to the United States.

In 1995, three out of ten Mexicans headed to the United States with the purpose of working, while six out of ten did so to look for a job (90%). This relation has not changed so far, nor has the wish of migrants to improve their standard of living and that of their families. A second major cause of migration is family reunification. Although this was not a significant reason in 1995, its importance has grown since 2000. The flow of people is mainly due to employment reasons, even if the majority lacks migratory experience and legal papers. Other interesting aspects are the fact that two out of ten say they plan to stay in the United States as long as possible, three out of ten hire a *pollero* (smuggler of migrants) and the perception that there has been a larger number of women in this migration flow.

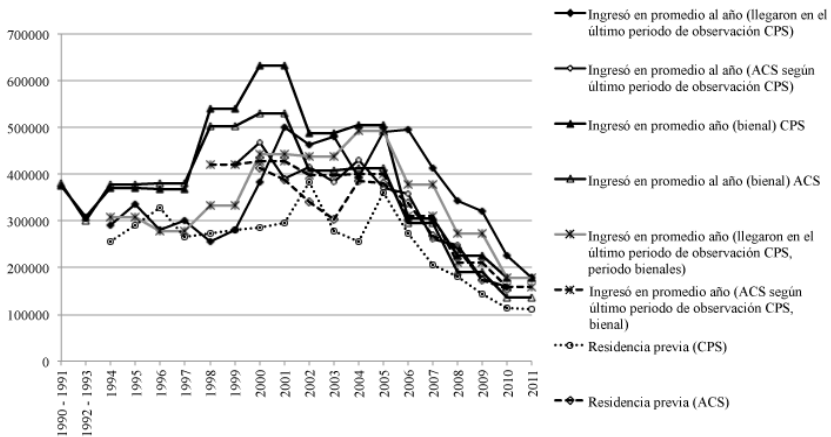
The flow of people who have been turned back by the border patrol has as characteristic a lack of migratory experience and a larger employment component. Statistics of administrative records in Mexico and the United States report a larger number of detainments and deportations compared to this survey, although with the same decreasing pattern. Regarding the return flow, it may be stated that it has not been massive and that the number of people who return is increasingly lower. Three out of ten were returned by the “*migra*” and of these, one out of two plan to return to the United States someday (see Tables 3 and 4).

16. According to the Estudio Binacional, Mexican sources underestimate between 20 and 30% of international migration.



Cuadro 3

The number of Mexicans entering the United States year after year has also decreased, although with less force, something observed regardless of the source (ACS or CPS) or the procedure used. This decrease started even before the beginning of the economic recession in the United States (2007). However, the resolution of the people who cross the border each year has a large margin that depends to a large extent, as may be seen, on the chosen source and on the procedure used. This margin could be larger since, as mentioned, these surveys underestimate undocumented emigrants. Even so, it is possible to anticipate this behavior due particularly to the increasingly stricter measures to discourage migration, the high unemployment rates still seen in our neighboring country and the fact that, as stressed before, the majority of those who are part of the current flow to the United States lack migratory experience and legal papers¹⁷



17. The information from the ACS shows more consistency in the statistics derived from the two questions used to estimate the number of people who enter the United States than the information given by the CPS. The larger size of the sample and its design has enabled us to have a stronger estimation of the number of people who go every year to live or work in the United States.

INCREASE IN THE ACTIONS AGAINST MIGRANTS, ECONOMIC RECESSION AND UNEMPLOYMENT

As a result of the attack to the Twin Towers in 2001, the United States has made very significant investments in national security: the budget for the Border Patrol went from 4,300 billion dollars in 2000 to 56,336 billion dollars in 2011; that is, the amount increased 12-fold during that period of time. In addition, in 2006 the US Department of Homeland Security began the construction of a fence along the border between Mexico and the United States. Along with these measures, many states have passed anti-immigrant laws that criminalize undocumented migrants. Statistics from the Department of Homeland Security and estimations from the Pew Hispanic Center point out that Mexico is by far the main country of origin of undocumented migrants, whose number has been estimated to have increased from 8.4 million in 2000 to 12 million in 2007, year in which it reached a historic high. Nonetheless, restrictive measures and unemployment have reduced the number of undocumented migrants: in 2010 they were an estimated 11.2 million; that is, 800 thousand less than in 2007. The decrease in population has declined, mainly among Mexicans. It has been estimated that in 2007 there were 7 million Mexicans without documents, while in 2010 that figure was 6.5 million. Even so, Mexicans still continue to make up the largest group of non-authorized immigrants: 58% of the total number (Passel and Cohn, 2010). (See Table 10).

As mentioned above, emigration to the United States is a difficult process that involves great risks and costs to the thousands of people who year after year decide to leave their country, looking for better opportunities. Every year, close to 400 people—most of them Mexican—die in their attempt to cross the border. This is why it is critical for decision-makers from both countries to promote the necessary mechanisms to prevent the criminalization of migrants and, instead, privilege their individual guarantees and physical integrity.

Demetrius Papademetriou, an expert in the migratory system of the United States, has pointed out that an integral, fair and impartial migratory reform must include:

- Sufficiently comprehensive, flexible and realistic legal channels of entry into the United States,
- Alternatives for the millions of undocumented residents to eventually legalize their migratory condition, and
- Measures to guarantee the observance of the migratory law and the strengthening of internal security (taken from García Zamora, 2008).¹⁸

Let's not forget that the 42 million migrants —documented or not, and regardless of their origin— contribute great economic benefits to the United States. Although it is true that they require public services, which represent a burden for the U.S. government, it is also a fact that with their work, purchases, and tax payments they produce resources that benefit the country. On the other hand, even if they are undocumented, they use and purchase goods and services that have a fiscal burden, thus making a contribution to the government expense. A study carried out by Raúl Delgado Wise, Humberto Márquez Covarrubias and Héctor Rodríguez Ramírez (2009) shows the contribution of Mexicans to the United States economy. Some of the most important findings of this study are:

- Mexicans satisfy the increase in labor demand,
- They make a direct contribution to the GDP (531.6 billion dollars in 2008), and
- They stimulate the internal market through purchases (400 billion dollars in 2008).

The direct contribution Mexicans make to the GDP continues to be an important factor in U.S. economy: in 2010 it was 586 billion dollars, whereas the contribution made by their children totaled 626 billion dollars. From 1994 to 2010, the United States' GDP grew 4,219 billion dollars (2010 prices) in real terms, out of which 358 billion were contributed by Mexicans (8% of this increase), while Mexicans born in the United States contributed 273 billion dollars (6%). (Delgado and Gaspar, 2010).

18. [http://sd.pcm.gob.pe/contenido/803/Rodolfo Garcia Zamora-01.07.08.ppt](http://sd.pcm.gob.pe/contenido/803/Rodolfo%20Garcia%20Zamora-01.07.08.ppt)

TABLE 4
Steps to stop international migration to the United States 2000-2011

Year	Budget for border patrol (Billions of dollars)	Deported (INNS)	Total deaths	Repatriation of Mexicans from the United States 3/	Anti-immigrant laws or acts	Born in Mexico	Born in the U.S. of Mexican parents	Born in the U.S., third generation or more of Mexican origin	White non-Hispanic native	Other natives	Total	Number of undocumented immigrants (millions) 4/	Born in Mexico
1994	999,890				Proposition 187 in 1994	11.2	10.9	11.2	5.7	12.5			
1995	1,293,508	61			Operations such as Gatekeeper (California), Sateguard (Arizona) and Rio Grande (Texas)	11.3	12.3	8.6	4.7	10.3	3.0	2	
1996	1,523,141	87			Construction of the fence (23 km. between San Diego and Tijuana)	11.1	11.1	8.1	4.6	11.4	3.5		
1997	1,387,650	149				9.0	9.6	10.4	4.3	11.0	4.0		
1998	1,522,918	300				7.3	8.9	7.5	4.0	9.4	3.9		
1999	1,534,515	329				6.7	8.6	6.8	3.6	8.8	4.8		
2000	4,300	1,636,883	383	1,150,906		7.2	7.7	6.8	3.5	7.9	8.4	4.6	
2001	4,800	1,224,046	336	791,256		8.0	9.6	5.9	3.7	8.7	9.3	4.8	
2002	5,510	917,994	320	583,408		8.8	9.8	6.9	5.1	11.0	9.4	5.2	
2003	31,182	882,012	340	559,949	Department of Homeland Security 2	9.6	9.0	7.3	5.2	11.0	9.7	5.5	
2004	36,489	1,142,807	369	525,115	Arizona: SB1070	7.5	10.7	8.8	5.1	10.0	10.4	6.0	
2005	41,018	1,023,888	441	557,357	Florida: 2040 SB	6.2	8.2	6.4	4.6	10.2	11.1	6.3	
2006	41,067	1,057,253	425	530,132	Indiana: SB890	5.0	6.4	6.1	4.2	9.7	11.3	6.5	
2007	47,455	854,261	409	528,473	Georgia: HB87	5.5	6.4	6.0	4.0	8.2	12.0	7.0	
2008	52,544	693,592	344	577,826	Oklahoma: HB462	8.2	7.8	7.1	4.4	9.2	11.6	6.8	
2009	55,115	528,139	369	601,356	Tennessee: HB1380	13.3	14.6	10.3	8.1	13.7	11.1	6.7	
2010	55,388		334	469,268	Others in Texas and Utah, Alabama, South Carolina	12.6	16.4	13.1	8.7	15.9	11.2	6.5	
2011	56,336		257			11.9	14.6	12.7	7.7	15.3			

Source: SIMDE UAZ, Estimation and development based on U.S. General Accounting Office; U.S. Department of Homeland Security; Public Policy Institute of California. Data from the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SRE) and the Centro de Estudios Migratorios del Instituto Nacional de Migración based on information recorded in official repatriation points and Grupos Beta. *U.S. Department of Homeland Security and <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2011/02/01/unauthorized-immigrant-population-national-and-state-trends-2010/>

** The Alabama HB56 Immigration Act was issued on June 9 and will be implemented on September 1. It grants police the power to arrest individuals if they suspect them of being undocumented and requires public schools to determine the status of students.

** The South Carolina SB20 was approved by the Senate on June 21 and is similar to Arizona's in that it criminalizes undocumented residence. It will be implemented in January 2012. It also requires local police (state and county) to check the immigration status of suspects and all businesses to review who they hire.

** Georgia HB87 was issued on May 13 and will be implemented on July 1, 2011. It allows police to arrest undocumented migrants, makes the presentation of false employment documents or information a felony and imposes penalties to those who knowingly transport or shelter undocumented immigrants.

** Indiana SB 590 immigration law allows police officers local (State and municipal) ask for residency documents to persons who are detained for minor infractions, of transit, if the officer has a "reasonable suspicion" that the detainee is undocumented.

** Texas immigration law currently debates 40 bills to combat illegal immigration.

** Utah immigration law requires people to prove their immigration status if they are arrested for serious crimes (from drug related offences to murder). It also gives police discretionary power to check the immigration status of people held accountable for traffic violations and other misdemeanors. The law that was blocked by a judge.

** The National Immigration Forum (NIF) reported on Wisconsin LRB 1116/1, which has been circulating since February and, if approved, would require state approval and issuance of an identity card similar to the "Real ID" (Real ID Act), approved by Federal Congress in April 2005.

** Other initiatives:

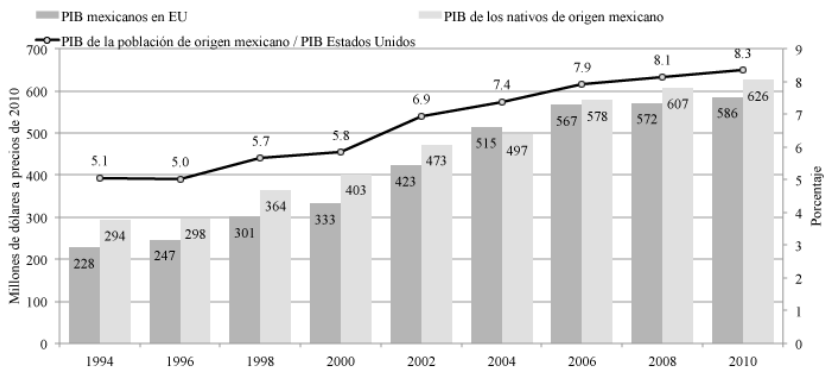
Other states to have pursued anti-immigrant initiatives are: Alaska, Arkansas, Arizona, South Carolina, Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, New Mexico, Montana, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia and Wyoming.

1/ California approves Proposition 187 in 1994, banning illegal immigrants from receiving health and education services.

2/ The Department of Homeland Security is created to track down immigrants.

3/ Only applies to Mexicans detained by U.S. immigration authorities following the Program of Voluntary Repatriation (Programa de Repatriación Voluntaria al Interior, PRVI)

4/ <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2011/02/01/Unauthorized-immigrant-population-brnational-and-state-trends-2010/>

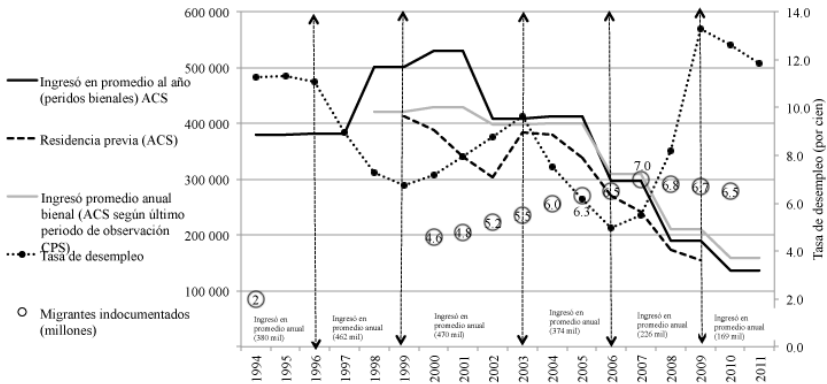


UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

The entry of Mexicans into the United States, as well as their employment opportunities, increase or decrease according to prevailing economic conditions in that country. At the beginning of the nineties, the U.S. economy experienced a significant decline that mainly affected the jobs of Mexicans and their children: the unemployment rate among Mexican immigrants from 1994 to 1996 was a little over 11%, whereas their children's rose from 10.9 to 11%. In spite of the high unemployment rates, an average of 380 thousand Mexicans entered the country annually (see Graphs 6 and 8). At the beginning of 1994, the Mexican economy underwent a significant collapse that contributed to increase Mexican migration into the United States. This flow intensified particularly as of 1997, with the recovery of the United States' economy and employment. From 1997 to 1999, 462 thousand Mexican immigrants entered each year, and the unemployment rate fell from 9 to 6.7%. In 2000, there was a growth in the unemployment rate among Mexicans which continued until 2003, when the product of the 2001 economic crisis rose from 7.2 to 9.6%. Even so, 470 thousand Mexicans entered the United States yearly from 2000 to 2003. The United States population of Mexican origin had an unemployment rate close to 8%; those most affected by this crisis were native non-Hispanic African Americans, with a 7.9% rate in 2000 and 11.6% in 2003.

In the following three years (2004, 2005 and 2006), employment among Mexicans recovered, and 9 out of 10 managed to get a job, while the yearly entry during that period was of 374 thousand Mexicans. The rapid growth of the unemployment rate is a factor that allows us to confirm the strong impact of the economic crisis which began at the end of 2007 on the labor market of the United States. Regardless of the origin of its population, this rate was 5.1% at the beginning of 2007, indicator that reached its highest historic value of 10.3 per 100 actively economic persons in 2010. U.S. nationals of Mexican origin have unemployment rates which are much higher than the national mean and even higher than those who were born in Mexico and native non-Hispanic whites, with the latter having the lowest unemployment rates in all of the years

that have been studied. Thus, in the employment category, those most affected by the current economic crisis in the United States were not Mexicans by birth, but their children, who had a 16.4% rate, while the rate of the population that makes up the third or fourth generation was 13.1% (2010). Even so, however, the highest unemployment rate, 17.1%, is found among African Americans.



It is worth pointing out that in 2011, all the groups under study experienced a decrease in the unemployment rate with respect to the previous year. Nonetheless, employment among Mexicans underwent a recovery as of 2010 (12.6%): from 13.3% to 11.9% between 2009 and 2011. It is important here to emphasize that the remittances sent also recovered as of 2010. According to information from Banco de México, money transferences in 2011 between the United States and Mexico were made for the amount of 22,730.9 million dollars; that is, a 6.9% increase with respect to those made the previous year (21,271.2 million dollars; a 1% increase with respect to 2009). Furthermore, based on a sample of the 2010 Mexican census, a little over one million census households (3.6%)¹⁹

¹⁹ “Census household” is equivalent to “census housing” in the 2010 Censo de Población y Vivienda.

received remittances from abroad, with these households being home to almost four million people. The analysis in the following graph was made considering the number of Mexicans who entered the United States annually, according to different ACS procedures. The groups are based on the behavior of the unemployment rate among Mexicans (see Graph 8).

INTERNAL MOBILITY OF MEXICANS IN THE UNITED STATES

The increasing number of anti-immigrant laws that have been enacted in several U.S. states, together with high unemployment rates, have led to important changes in recent years regarding the internal mobility of Mexicans who live in the United States. Since the nineties, each of the U.S. states has had Mexican-born people among its inhabitants, with the state of California being, since then, the major destination for Mexican emigrants (2.5 million in 1990 or 56.8%), followed by Texas (21.5) which, in percentages, kept approximately the same number of Mexican migrants in the following twenty years (20.5% in 2000 and 21.2% in 2010). As of 2000, there has been a larger dispersion. California has had a percentage decrease in Mexican migrants who have preferred other states. This reduction has become more noticeable with the passage of time (42.6% in 2000 and 36.8% in 2010).

In regional terms,²⁰ and according to 1990 census data, eight out of ten Mexican migrants were located in the traditional region made up by California, Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico. This region has been losing importance in favor of others. The states that have contributed to this reduction are Arizona and California, which had a percentage decrease of 19.8% and 1.9%, respectively, from 2007 to 2010. The lowest concentration of Mexican immigrants is found in this region, but the lower attraction to

20. *Southwest First Phase*: Arizona, California, Nuevo México y Texas; *Southwest Expansion*: Idaho, Oregon, Nevada, Utah y Washington; *Great Lakes*: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan y Wisconsin; *East Coast*: North Carolina, South Carolina, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island y Virginia; *Great Plains*: Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma y Wyoming; *Other regions*: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, North Dakota, South Dakota, Hawaii, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, Ohio, Tennessee, Vermont and West Virginia.

these two states contributed particularly to a larger mobility of Mexicans. The East Coast stands out in this regard since, as of 2000, it appears as the second region with the highest concentration of Mexicans, followed by the Great Lakes, currently with 8.3% Mexicans. Although the region classified as “Other” only includes 4% (ACS, 2010), it is the one with the highest percentage growth (24.5%, 2007–2010) (see map).

An analysis of the growth rate in the 2001–2010 period shows that 16 states had negative growth rates, among which the main ones were East Virginia (8.3%), Arizona (5.4%), Hawaii (4%), Florida (3.8%), and Michigan (3.4%). The rest of the states had positive growth rates, with the main ones being Montana (29%), North Dakota (26%), Louisiana (19.1%) and the District of Columbia (11.2%). The first three were part of the region classified as “Other” (see map).

The numerical impact of the entry and exit of Mexicans on U.S. territory is measured more precisely with the Net Internal Migration Balance (NIMB=NB), which refers to the difference of immigrants minus emigrants, a figure related to the “unemployment rate” (UR) to show the impact this indicator has had on the internal mobility of Mexicans. Results obtained, based on ACS 2010, indicate that 29 states had *positive profits*, among which the following were the main five states: New Mexico (NB: 5,725, UR: 11.9%), Minnesota (NB: 3,919, UR: 7%), Texas (NB: 3,274, UR: 8.7%), Washington (NB: 3,251, UR: 12%) and Ohio (NB: 1,902, UR: 8.9%). The states with the *highest losses*, due mostly to economic factors (high unemployment rate) and xenophobic measures (enactment and application of anti-immigrant laws), were California (NB: 7,536, UR: 12.3%), Georgia (NB: 5,646, UR: 10.3%), Nevada (NB: 3,762, UR: 15.2%), Illinois (NB: 3,389, UR: 10.8%), Florida (NB: 3,166, UR: 10.7%), Carolina del Norte (NB: 3,134, UR: 12.7%), Arizona (NB: 2,818, UR: 13.2%), Kansas (NB: 2,197, UR: 8.9%), Iowa (NB: 1,248, UR: 11.3%). (See map and Table 4).



RETURN AND RECENT IMMIGRATION OF U.S. NATIONALS TO MEXICO

The strengthening of migratory controls in the United States and the militarization of the northern border has led to important changes in the migratory pattern, with the most important one being the loss of circularity: the immediate return of men and women has become less frequent. In general terms, times of stay of Mexicans in the United States have increased from an average of 11 months from 1990 to 1995 to 13 months from 1995 to 2000, and to almost 20 months from 2005 to 2009. In other words, besides the loss of circularity, migrant communities have had longer continued stays in the United States (Massey, Durand and Malone, 2002; Zúñiga and Gaspar, 2009, among others).

The return of connationals to Mexico has depended on the duration of the economic recession in the United States and their economic capacity to cope with the situation, which has been very adequate, according to the recent behavior revealed in information from both countries: there has not been a mass return to Mexico, although there are reports of some families that have come back with their children (see Graph 9). According to census data from 2010, the number of emigrants to the United States has decreased in absolute and relative terms, and even if the number of returns has been on the rise, 34% remained less than a year in the United States and a majority of the migrants were people who left Mexico in the last two years of the 2005-2010 period (34%). (See Graph 5). From 2005 to 2010, a little over a million migrants left Mexico to live in another country (89.4% to the United States), and 32.7% (351 thousand) returned within that same period. This percentage was higher than the estimated one for the period from 1995 to 2000 (17.7% of the 1.5 million who emigrated).²¹

Mexicans are the largest population group of immigrants in the United States (29% of the 242 million immigrants), but U.S. nationals are also the most numerous group of international immigrants in Mexico (76.8% of 968 thousand). This situation has probably something

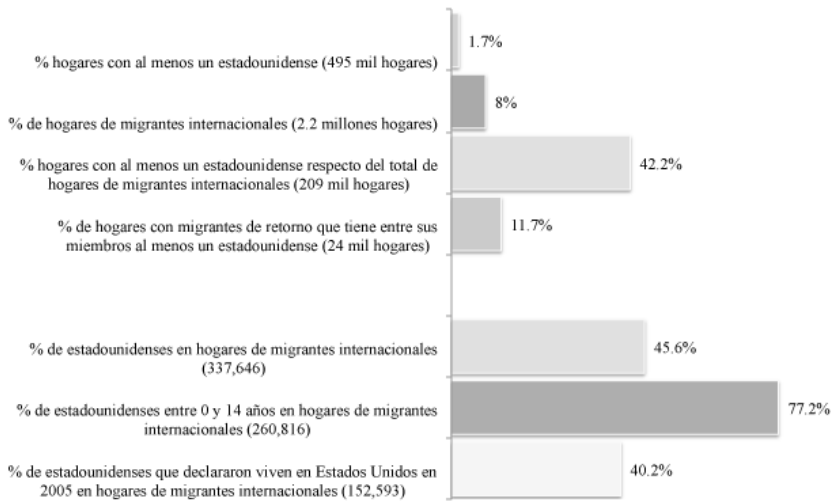
21. This figure excludes those who did not specify current place of residence, so, during the period from 1995 to 2000, 1,633,052 people left Mexico, and 97.1% headed to the United States (CGPV, 2000).

to do with the geographical proximity and the emigration of Mexicans to the United States, because seven out of every ten U.S. nationals in Mexico is between 0 and 14 years of age, a fact that makes us think that a considerable part of this population is of Mexican ancestry or origin; that is, United States-born children of Mexican migrants who returned with their parents (Corona, 2011, Moctezuma and Gaspar, 2011).²² In order to support this hypothesis with data, I present the following statistics. Out of the total number of people born abroad (968,271), 22.3% (222,702) lived in the United States in 2005, and were mainly U.S. nationals (70.6%, 157, 228), with a large component in ages between 5 and 14 years (53%, 83,331 minors).

The analysis of this population at the household level allows a better assessment of the raised hypothesis. The 2010 Mexican census counted 28.7 million census households; the members of 495 thousand (1.7%) included at least a person born in the United States; 209 of these households (42.2%) were linked to households of Mexicans who emigrated to the United States²³ and were estimated to be a little over 2.2 million. These were inhabited by 8% of the total of residents in Mexico and 45.6% of the total of U.S. nationals in the country (337, 646), of which 77.2% were between 0 and 14 years of age. A relevant fact is that out of the total number of U.S. nationals in households linked to the emigration of Mexicans, 40% (152,593) said they had lived in the United States in 2005 and, among them, 7 out of 10 were between 5 and 14 years of age (69.2%, 105,606 minors). These figures confirm the hypothesis about the return of Mexicans with United States-born children. In addition, it may be seen that out of the 209 thousand households with U.S. nationals, linked to international migrant households, 11.7% (little over 24 thousand households) had among their members a person who had returned to Mexico between 2005 and 2009 (see graph 9).

22. <http://estepais.com/site/?p=33525>

23. Households linked to the emigration of Mexicans to the United States: among its members there is at least one person who emigrated during the 2005-2010 period, regardless of the fact that they might have returned or not, or there are one or more persons who lived in 2005 outside Mexico or they are households that receive remittances.

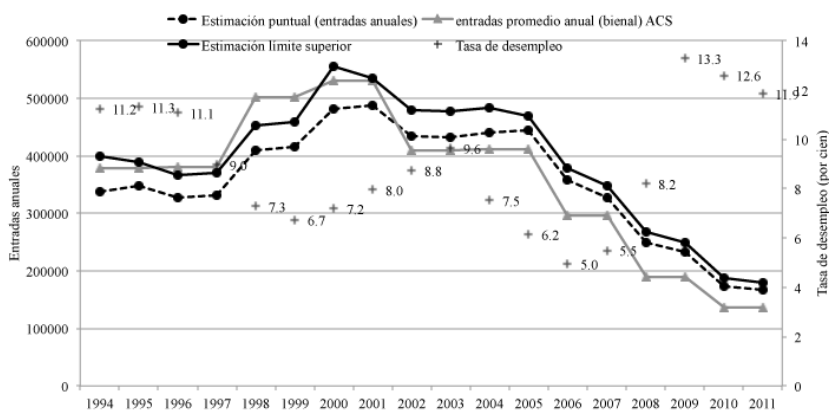


ANNUAL MIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES (UNITED STATES SOURCES)

The following graph shows the mean annual number of arrivals of Mexicans in the United States as of 1994. The estimation of this flow was based on the question about year of entry. An underestimation was considered to be equal to the range between point estimate and upper limit. The “item of the year” (ACS) or “period of arrival” (CPS) usually offers a general view of changes with time in international migration in the United States (Passel, 2011).²⁴ According to this procedure, annual flow of entry to the United States from 1994 to 1996 increased to 385 thousand people. In the following two years, the number was 428 thousand and continued increasing until it reached its peak between 2000 and 2003 (511 thousand people). In the following three years

24. The ACS focuses the question about year of entry into the United States on individual years, whereas the CPS considers periods of two to three years, depending on the year when the survey was taken. These surveys also include the question about previous residence (a year before). However, in spite of the fact that these surveys result in consistent figures, the volumes derived from this question are lower and do not agree with those that integrate demographic changes (Passel, 2010).

(2004-2006), the flow remained close to 445 thousand. The decrease was a result of the economic crisis that began in 2001, which led to an increase in the unemployment rate. The number of Mexicans who arrived in the United States began to decrease as of 2006. This decline became more noticeable at the beginning of the last economic recession. In 2007, 348 thousand Mexicans entered the United States, and this figure continued dropping, while the unemployment rate continued increasing. From 2007 to 2009, 288 thousand Mexicans entered the United States and 183 did so between 2010 and 2011.



If we consider that United States' surveys have particularly underestimated the undocumented population (of which 58% are Mexican) and that a flow of Mexicans entered the United States as shown here, it may be concluded, based on the sharp decrease seen as of 2007, that there were 12.5 million Mexicans living in the United States in 2010 (see Graph 10).

I additionally considered the following information. According to the 2010 Mexican population census, 1,112,273 people left the country²⁵ (994,869 headed to the United States) during the 2005-2010 period. In those same years, 350,719 people returned; that is, 723,310 did not return.

25. 6.95 with another country as destination and 3.60 did not specify any destination.

Moreover, it has been estimated that 1,080,654²⁶ people lived outside Mexico in 2005. Out of these, 994,474 lived in the United States (Mexicans and other nationalities are included in this number). The 152,593 U.S. nationals who said they were living in the United States in 2005 and who belonged to households linked to the international of migration of Mexicans, presumably of Mexican origin, must also be considered.

On the other hand, according to the ACS and CPS, approximately 1.6 million Mexicans entered the United States from 2005 to 2010. Based on the question about previous residence made by the ACS, it is estimated that out of the number of residents in 2005, 429,266 lived in Mexico in 2004 (87.3% were Mexican, 1.6% U.S. nationals and 11.1% other nationalities). If we only consider the 87.3% (379,872 Mexicans residing in the United States in 2005), 1.3% had as previous residence a country other than Mexico in 2004 and 1.6% (37,143) were U.S. nationals of Mexican origin. This relation was as follows in 2010: 190,742 people lived in Mexico in 2009 (76.4% were Mexican, 2.8% U.S. nationals and 20.8% other nationalities.), and out of the 147,771 Mexicans residing in 2009 in the United States, 3.7% came from a country other than Mexico and 2.8% (25,799) were U.S. nationals of Mexican origin. If we consider that the questions of the Mexican census underestimate emigration and that United States' sources underestimate the undocumented, when adding the data here presented and the fact that emigration of Mexicans to other countries has been increasingly important, we see that international net migration might not be zero.

CONCLUSIONS

To summarize. The migratory process between Mexico and the United States and its current dynamics has changed considerably, due mainly to the anti-immigrant measures implemented in the northern border and within several U.S. states, although owing also to the economic recessions in the United States. Emigration of Mexicans to the United States follows a pattern of behavior in periods of recession: when the

26. Mexican surveys underestimate this fact.

unemployment rate increases, the flow of Mexicans slows down, and when economic conditions improve, Mexican emigration is restored, although with less force.

On the other hand, once the border is crossed, the loss of circularity leads to longer times of stay, since Mexicans are not willing to run the risk of returning, given the personal and economic costs involved. Together with this assessment, it may be said that Mexican migrants who returned to Mexico did so with their United States-born Mexican children, even though we cannot speak of a mass return, since the Mexicans living in the United States would rather remain there, as indicated by their own words (“as long as possible”).

Family and social networks in both countries, the roots of Mexicans and their children in the United States —the information here presented confirms the importance of these roots— and the prevailing conditions in both countries are crucial when making the decision to migrate to the United States or to any other part of the world for people who are still in Mexico and have not managed to fulfill their dreams with what their country offers.

This complex demographic phenomenon has many aspects and modalities, as well as many figures from information sources and methods that enable us to measure it. Nonetheless, it is necessary to analyze it as a whole so that we may measure and understand it more accurately. This requires, above all, demarcating this phenomenon from the numeric requirements of some institutions.

Lastly, I reiterate the idea presented by Leticia Calderón Chelius in the opening conference of the Second National Migration Week: “Bringing migration to light is acknowledging that, in this country, the young man without education and a fate forged by unemployment or who survives by doing menial, unproductive jobs, without any social esteem, can be as much an emigrant as the young man who is the pride of his family, who learned English and computing, and who simply is unemployed or does not find a job on a par with his expectations, his dreams, his personal challenges.”

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