CHILD AND FAMILY MIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES: CONTINUING FLOWS AND EVOLVING RESPONSES

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Presenters

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Marc R. Rosenblum is Deputy Director of MPI's U.S. Immigration Policy Program, where he works on U.S. immigration policy, immigration enforcement, and U.S. regional migration relations.

Dr. Rosenblum returned to MPI, where he had been a Senior Policy Analyst, after working as a specialist in immigration policy at the Congressional Research Service. He was a Council on Foreign Relations Fellow detailed to the office of U.S. Sen. Edward Kennedy during the 2006 Senate immigration debate and was involved in crafting the Senate's immigration legislation in 2006 and 2007. He also served as a member of President-elect Obama's Immigration Policy Transition Team in 2009.

He has published more than 60 academic journal articles, book chapters, and policy briefs on immigration, immigration policy, and U.S.-Latin American relations. He is the coeditor (with Daniel Tichenor) of *The Oxford Handbook of International Migration* (Oxford University Press).

Dr. Rosenblum earned his B.A. from Columbia University and his Ph.D. from the University of California, San Diego, and is an Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of New Orleans.
Overview

• Child and Family Migration Phenomenon
• U.S. Policies: Enforcement and Protection
• What Explains the Recent Surge?
• Policy Challenges and Responses
• Discussion and Recommendations: Federal and International issues
• State and Local Impact and Policy Issues
Unaccompanied Child Migration

- Apprehension of UACs, by Nationality

FY2015 numbers are a projection based on Oct. – Feb. data

Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection

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Total apprehensions of UACs at the border decreased from 21,403 to 12,509 during comparable periods* in FY14 and FY15.

The most significant reduction occurred in the Rio Grande Valley section, where apprehensions declined from 14,043 to 7,342 in the same periods.

* From October 1st to February 28th of FY2014 and FY2015.

Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Author: Gloriana Sojo-Lara
Unaccompanied Child Migration

- Monthly UAC Apprehensions, FY2010-FY2015

Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Mothers and Children (Family Units)

• Family Unit Apprehensions, FY2013-FY2015

Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Note: FY2015 numbers are a projection based on Oct. – Feb. data
Mothers and Children (Family Units)

- Monthly Family Unit Apprehensions, FY2014-FY2015

Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection
U.S. Immigration Control Policies

- Enforcement vs. Protection
  - Removal and Return
  - Immigration Detention
  - Asylum and Special Immigrant Juvenile (SIJ) Status
U.S. Immigration Control Policies

• Immigration Screening and Adjudication
  – Border adjudication (CBP)
  – Asylum Corps (USCIS)
  – Immigration Judges (EOIR)
U.S. Immigration Control Policies

• Special Rules for Unaccompanied Children
  – Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) of 2008
    • Rules for UACs from contiguous countries (Mexico and Canada)
      – Screening by CBP
    • Rules for all other UACs
      – Screening by CBP
      – Adjudication (EOIR)
      – Detention (HHS – ORR): least restrictive setting in best interest of the child
U.S. Immigration Control Policies

• Special rules for family units
  – 1997-2005: released
  – 2005-2009: detained
  – 2009-2014: released
  – June 2014- February 2015: detained
  – Currently: released
What Explains the Recent Surge?

• Structural push and pull factors
• Limits and unintended consequences of U.S. policy
• Immigrant smugglers and social networks
What Explains the Recent Surge?

• Structural push and pull factors
  – Violence in Central America
  – Economic insecurity
  – Family reunification
What Explains the Recent Surge?

- Limits and unintended consequences of U.S. policy
  - Average processing time to complete immigration adjudication = 483 days (Feb. 2015; TRAC)
  - Average wait time (including pending cases) = 597 days (Feb. 2015; TRAC)
  - Implications for immigration enforcement
  - Implications for immigrant protection
What Explains the Recent Surge?

• Immigrant smugglers and social networks
  – Change in smuggler business model
  – Interaction with U.S. adjudication problems
  – Misinformation campaign
Policy Challenges and Responses

• The challenge of responding to mixed flows
  – Policy challenges
  – Political challenges
Policy Challenges and Responses

• Policy responses in 2014-15
  – Institutional reforms
  – Enhanced enforcement
  – Changes to adjudication process
  – Information campaign to deter exits
  – In-country processing
Discussion and Recommendations

• Limitations of recent policy changes
  – Failure to address basic drivers of migration
  – Much greater focus on enforcement than protection
Discussion and Recommendations

- Policies to address drivers of migration:
  - Investments in security and economic development
    - Plan for the Alliance for Prosperity in the Northern Triangle
    - U.S. support
  - Changes to facilitate legal flows from Central America
    - Short-term reforms
    - Long-term reforms
Discussion and Recommendations

• Policies to balance enforcement and protection
  – U.S. in-country processing
  – Screening/adjudication in Mexico and Central America
  – Adjudication in United States
    • By USCIS
    • Immigration court reform
    • Alternatives to detention
Margie McHugh is Director of the Migration Policy Institute’s National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy. The Center is a national hub for leaders in government, community affairs, business and academia to obtain the insights and knowledge they need to respond to the challenges and opportunities that today’s high rates of immigration pose for communities across the United States. It provides in-depth research, policy analysis, technical assistance, training and information resource services on a broad range of immigrant integration issues.

Ms. McHugh’s work focuses on education quality and access issues for immigrants and their children from early childhood through K-12 and adult, post-secondary and workforce skills programs. She also leads the Center’s work seeking a more coordinated federal response to immigrant integration needs and impacts, and more workable systems for recognition of the education and work experience immigrants bring with them to the United States.
UACs Released to Sponsors by County 2014-15

*From October 1st to February 28th of FY2014 and FY2015.
**Fewer than 50 UACs were released to sponsors in both years in counties in Hawaii and Alaska.
## Top Counties for UACs Released to Sponsors 2014-15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total Number of Unaccompanied Children Released in FY 2014 and FY 2015 (OCT. 2014 – FEB. 2015)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TX</td>
<td>Harris County</td>
<td>4,544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Los Angeles County</td>
<td>3,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Suffolk County</td>
<td>1,778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>Miami-Dade County</td>
<td>1,702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Nassau County</td>
<td>1,559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD</td>
<td>Prince George's County</td>
<td>1,522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VA</td>
<td>Fairfax County</td>
<td>1,514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>Palm Beach County</td>
<td>1,366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TX</td>
<td>Dallas County</td>
<td>1,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD</td>
<td>Montgomery County</td>
<td>1,265</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unaccompanied Children’s Placement

- Child transferred to care and custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (within HHS)
- Care and placement provided through ORR-contracted agencies
- Placement based on least restrictive setting that is in best interests of child
- Case managers interview prospective sponsors and verify identity
- Most children are released to immediate family members
State and Local Impacts

• Health and Mental Health
  ➢ Trauma related to journey, country conditions
  ➢ Family reunification dynamics
  ➢ Challenges of acculturation

• K-12 Education
  ➢ Many secondary schools are ill prepared to serve late arriving students
  ➢ SIFE students pose unique challenges
  ➢ Education costs a major point of contention: compulsory service; funded mainly by local taxes

• Family Unit Impacts on Horizon
Possible Solutions

• Revitalize Emergency Immigrant Education Program (under ESEA reauthorization)
  - However, formula driven and low per pupil amount

• HR5611: Public School Emergency Relief Act
  - Up to $12,000 per student for a range of education, health and counseling costs ($720m for 60,000)

• Special appropriation: $14 million for LEAs
  - Included in December 2014 budget resolution; 35 states with significant increase eligible; roughly $233 per student if calculated on base of 60,000
Possible Solutions

• **11.21.14 Presidential Memorandum** established White House Task Force on New Americans; charged with creating National Integration Plan

• **Select Recommendations:**
  - Multi-stakeholder group creates goals and benchmarks for effective integration of late-arriving refugee and immigrant youth; and
  - Establishes cost ranges for services effective in supporting desired educational and socio-emotional outcomes; and
  - Suggests new federal funding approach for essential academic and non-academic supports
Q&A

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