Return migration to Mexico: Policy response, measurement challenges and data needs

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*International Forum on Migration Statistics*

OECD-OIM, Paris, January 15th, 2017
El migrante que se suicidó en Tijuana había sido deportado varias veces

Guadalupe Olivas se tiró por un puente al no poder volver a Estados Unidos. Era viudo, tenía tres hijos y había sido detenido por vender mariguana. 
Characteristics of Return

• **Rise in return of Mexican immigrants from the U.S.**
  • Decline of circularity and increasing durations of stay
  • Increase in deportations
  • Changing economic conditions in the U.S. → Great Recession and slow recovery
    (González-Barrera 2015; Masferrer & Roberts 2016; Parrado & Flippen 2016; Villarreal 2014)

• **New sites of return**
  • Northern border areas, tourist centers, large metropolitan areas
    (Masferrer & Roberts, 2012; Rivera 2011, 2013; Vargas Valle 2015)
Characteristics of Return

• **Linked migrations**
  • Family migration remains a critical pull for return
  • Witness an increase in U.S.-born accompanying parents, siblings, and spouses
  • “Going to a home you have never been to” creates challenges to integration in various domains, particularly for U.S.-born minors

(Masferrer, Pederzini, Passel & Livingston 2012; van Hook & Zhang, 2011; Medina & Menjívar 2015; Zúñiga & Hamann 2015 Rendall and Torr 2008; Glick and Yabiku 2016)

→ Selection into return is changing, accompanied by evolution in the patterns and challenges of resettlement
¿Why is it important to think in the demography and geography of return?

**Demography**
- ¿How many?
- ¿Who?
- ¿With whom?
- ¿How and why are they returning?
- ¿How prepared?

**Geography**
- ¿Where?
- ¿To the community of origin?
- ¿What is the context of reception?
- ¿Why there?

→ **Focalized public policies**
What is the impact of deportation, unpreparedness and family return?
US-Mexico flows by place of birth and age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of birth</th>
<th>Population living in Mexico that lived in US 5 years before (thousands)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

US-Mexico flows: Working-age population and minors

Where are returnees arriving? Are they settling in their communities of origin? Where they there before?
Returnees by state (total)

FUENTE: Cálculos propios con base en Censos 2000 y 2010 y EIG 2015, INEGI.
Rate of return

• Aims to relate returnees to population at risk of returning
  (Masferrer & Roberts, 2012)

• Calculated for 2005 and 2015, without differentiating by place of birth

\[
\text{Rate of return (t, t+5)} = \frac{\text{Population that were living in the US in t, but were in Mexico in t+5}}{\text{Population that left during the period t-5 to t and were in US in t}}
\]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residence in US 5 years ago (Inter-censal return)</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country of birth</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emigration, return, and non-return (5-year period)</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of return (Return/emigration)</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rate of return: old and new destinations

2005

2015

FUENTE: Cálculos propios con base en Censos 2000 y 2010 y E/I 2015. INEGI

FUENTE: Cálculos propios con base en Censos 2000 y 2010 y E/I 2015. INEGI
Increased rate and variation between states
What explains changes in economic integration and labor market incorporation of returnees?
Labor Market Incorporation

- **Historically, return migration connected to processes of development**
  - Increased likelihood of self-employment
  - Skill formation in the U.S.
    (Hagan, Hernandez-Leon and Demonsant 2015; Lindstrom 2013; Parrado & Gutierrez 2016; Gutierrez & Parrado 2016)

- **Recent returnees engaging differently in the labor market**
  - Lower likelihood of becoming employers and lower earnings for recent arrival cohorts
  - For prime-age men, change in earnings related to increasing engagement in the informal sector and occupation
    (Parrado & Gutierrez 2016; Gutierrez & Parrado 2016)
Employment Status: Men

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Mover</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>78.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Migrant</td>
<td>83.4</td>
<td>84.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returnees from U.S.</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>74.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent U.S.-born</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>78.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Self-employed**
- **Wage/salary worker**
Employment Status: Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Mover</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>79.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal migrant</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>82.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returnees from U.S.</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>72.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent U.S.-born</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>79.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Self-employed**
- **Wage/salary worker**
Adjusted Annual Income:
By Gender, 2000-2015
Deterioration of wages continued after the recession for men.
The gap closes for women as well. Sharpest decline among those aged 40-59.
How are minors integrating? How do schooling experiences vary by destination, age, and migration experience?

Menores Retornados

Menores Nacidos en EUA

FUENTE: Cálculos propios con base en EIC 2015, INEGI

CEDUA Centro de Estudios Demográficos Urbanos y Ambientales
Small gap in terms of school attendance for returnees, recent US-born, and non-migrants

5 - 12 years

13 - 17 years

'Invisible' Children: Raised In The U.S., Now Struggling In Mexico

November 13, 2016 · 6:01 AM ET

Claudio Sanchez

Deported Students Find Challenges At School In Tijuana

April 03, 2017 · By Claudio Sanchez

Students engage in a class project at the Escuela 20 Noviembre school in Tijuana, Mexico.
Changes in the nature of return

• Demographic changes
  • Different dimensions of integration
  • Mixed status families, family separation and return of complete households

• Geographic changes
  • Emigration and return
  • Going back to a different-new community
    • Local development, remittances, social and human capital
    • Integration rather than reincorporation
    • Policies at destination not at origin: transportation support to go back?
Challenges and data limitations

• Conceptual definitions of return
  • Residence 5 years ago: 1 year ago is not available

• Place of birth
  • Not available in 2005 and 2015
  • Not available in 2000 or 2010 for non-returnees
  • Problematic because returnees are joined by US-born family members (especially minors)

• Whole-household migrants
  • Out-migration: Omission results in an underestimate of female migrants, child migrants, and migrants from the border (Hamilton and Savinar, 2015)
  • Return migration: captured

• Different influences of geography of return in 2005 and 2015
  • Violence and insecurity
  • Foreign-born population
Thank you.

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