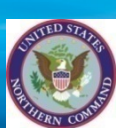


The William J. Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies (The Perry Center)



CAPSTONE Spouses' Update: Central America and the U.S. Southern Border Crisis

Professor Pat Paterson
May 13, 2019

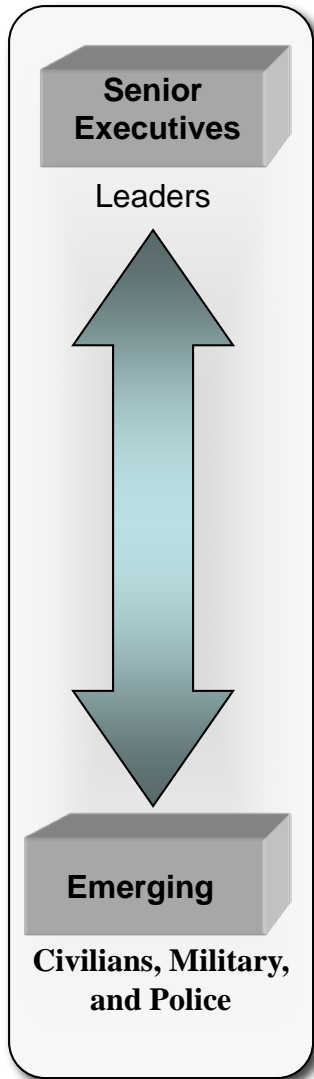


DoD Regional Academic Centers



Regional academic centers help inform policy for DOD/OSD and the Geographic Combatant Commanders.

Perry Center Educational Programs



Washington D.C.

In-Region

STRATEGIC INTERACTION

National Security Planning Workshops (NSPW)
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Terrorism and Counterinsurgency
Strategy and International Security
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SPECIALIZED

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Washington Strategy and Defense Seminar (WSDS)
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Cybersecurity

FOUNDATIONAL

Strategy and Defense Policy (SDP)
Perspectives of Homeland Security and Defense (PHSD)
Defense and Security in the Caribbean

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Problems in Latin America today



Government and societal collapse in Venezuela

Violence in Mexico

Transition to peace in Colombia

Crime wave in Brazil

Hurricane damage in the Caribbean

Organized Crime

Corruption

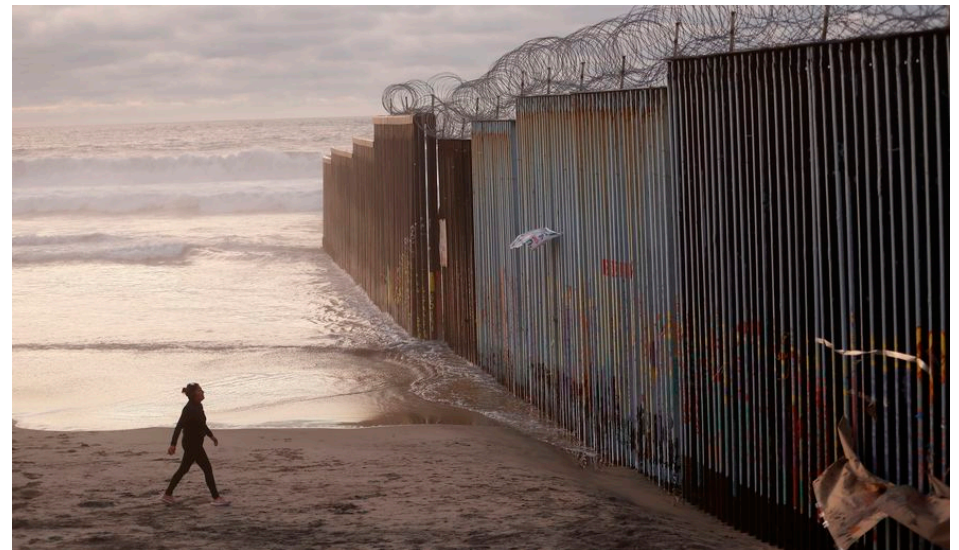
Natural disasters

Global Warming

Today's discussion: Central America and the U.S. Southern Border Crisis!

Agenda – Central America and the U.S. Southern Border Crisis

- Recent History, Central America
- Current problems
- US Aid to Central America and Mexico
- Migration history
- Migration fixes
- The border wall
- Solutions and Options



Brief History, Central America

Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras referred to as the Northern Triangle.

Conflicts in Central America

- El Salvador, 1980-1992
- Guatemala, 1960-1996
- Nicaragua, 1978-1990

Democracy consolidated in 1990s.

De facto political and economic control by wealthy elites.

Significant improvements in democracy and human rights.



Current Problems, Central America

Gang violence and organized crime

Poverty (50% of Guatemalans and Hondurans live in poverty)

Drug trafficking

Corruption and impunity results in little confidence in democracy.

Weak government institutions

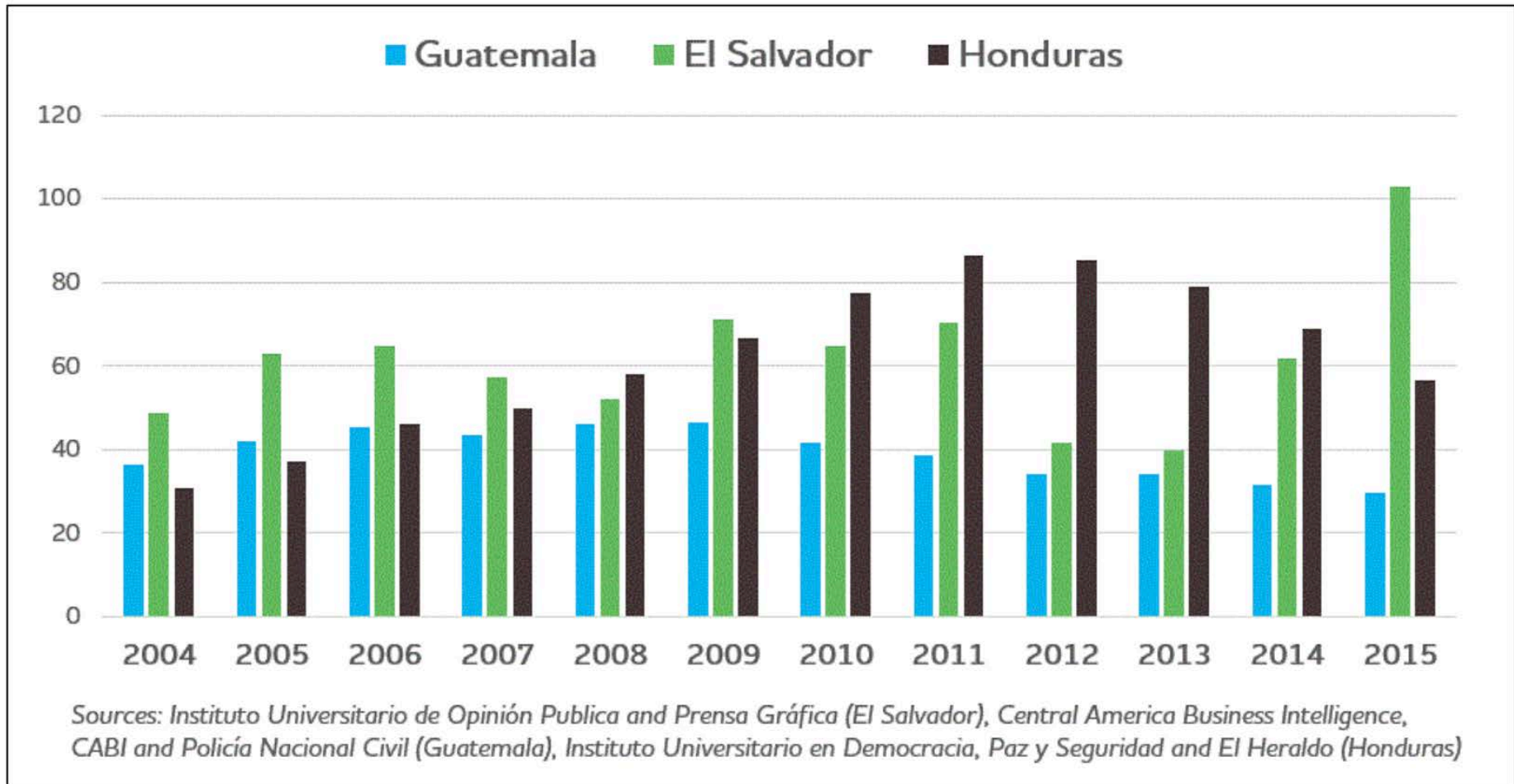
Disenfranchised kids (*the Ni-Ni's*) – nearly 1/3 of kids 15-24 have no employment nor education.

Climate change-induced drought and crop loss – 25% of Centam are agricultural-based farmers.



Homicide rate in Central América, 2004-2015

(homicides per 100,000 inhabitants)



Source: Washington Office on Latin America, *Five Facts About Migration From Central America's Northern Triangle*, January 15, 2016.

Fuente: Congressional Research Service, 29 August 2016

Air and Maritime Illicit Activity

Maritime Trafficking = 97%

Legend

- Maritime
- Air

Illicit drugs generate ~\$700M/year in each of N. Triangle countries.
90% of cocaine passes through Central America enroute the US.

The destination – U.S. markets

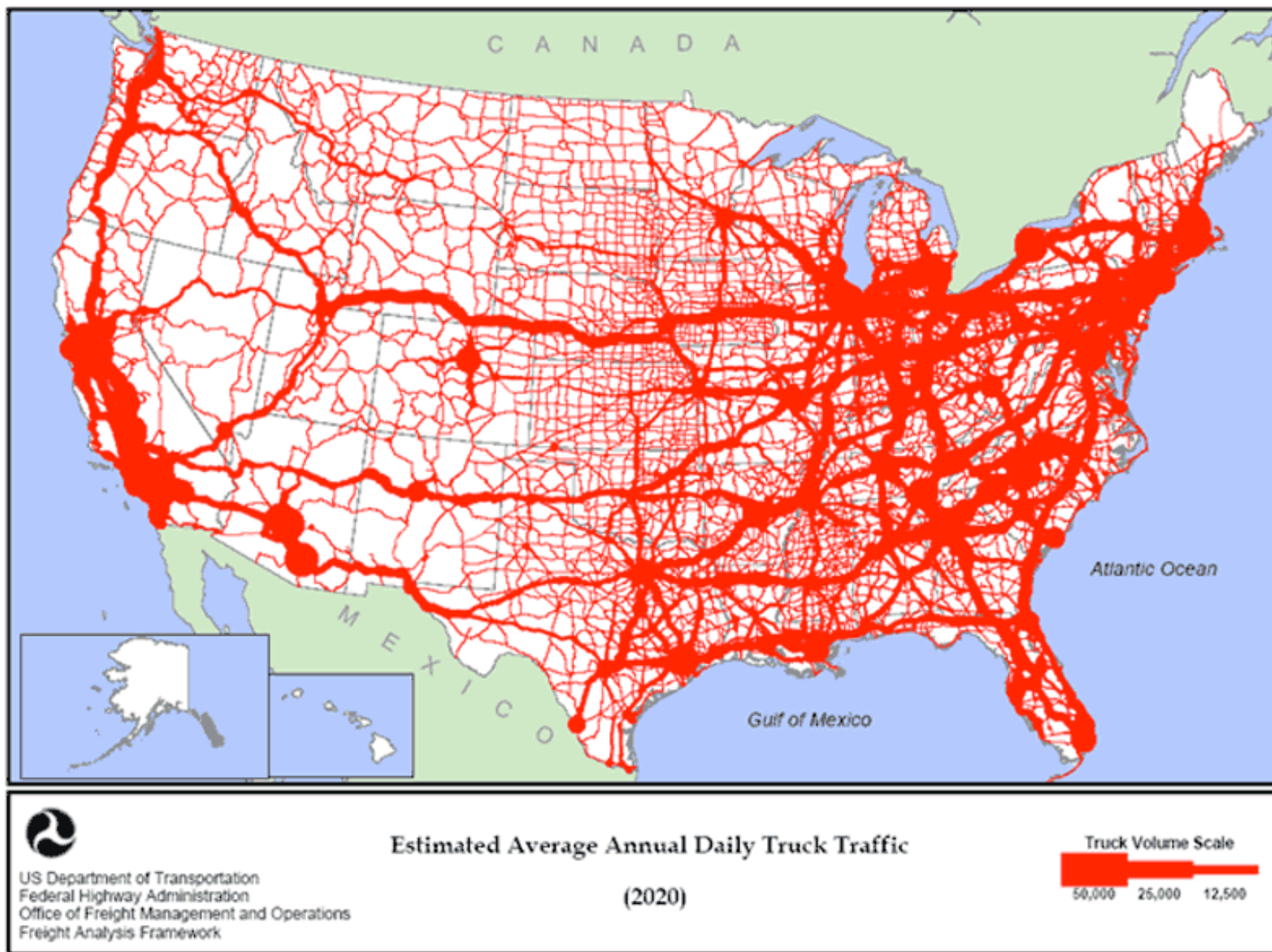
If 90% of the drugs that reach the U.S. come through Mexico and Central America, how does it get into the country?

US-Mexico Border



**500,000 vehicles enter the U.S. via the US-MX border each day (CBP).
25,000 people cross the San Diego-Tijuana foot bridge each day.**

Estimated Truck Traffic, 2020 (trucks/day)



Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration

México's Security Crisis

Long history of corruption and drug trafficking in Mexico

Violent cartels competing with each other for control of important drug trafficking corridors toward U.S.

In 2006, President Calderón ordered the military to the streets to combat DTOs.



Police Corruption in Mexico

Serious problems with police and government corruption in Mexico, some voluntary, some compelled by cartels.

Massacre of 43 students in Ayotzinapa, 26 Sept 2014.

March 2015, the UN reported that torture and a “culture of impunity and brutality” was widespread among Mexican security forces.



U.S. Customs agents killed by Mexican police, 2011.



Mexican Marine take control of Acapulco and arrest police officials, Sept 2018.

The “*Kingpin Strategy*” of Presidente Calderón

Success against traffickers: The armed forces have captured or killed most of the leaders of the cartels. But the violence continues to increase (mostly cartel against cartel).

More than 400 soldiers and sailors have died and more than 4,000 Mexican policemen. In total, 250,000 people have died since the violence began in 2006 and 30,000 more are missing.

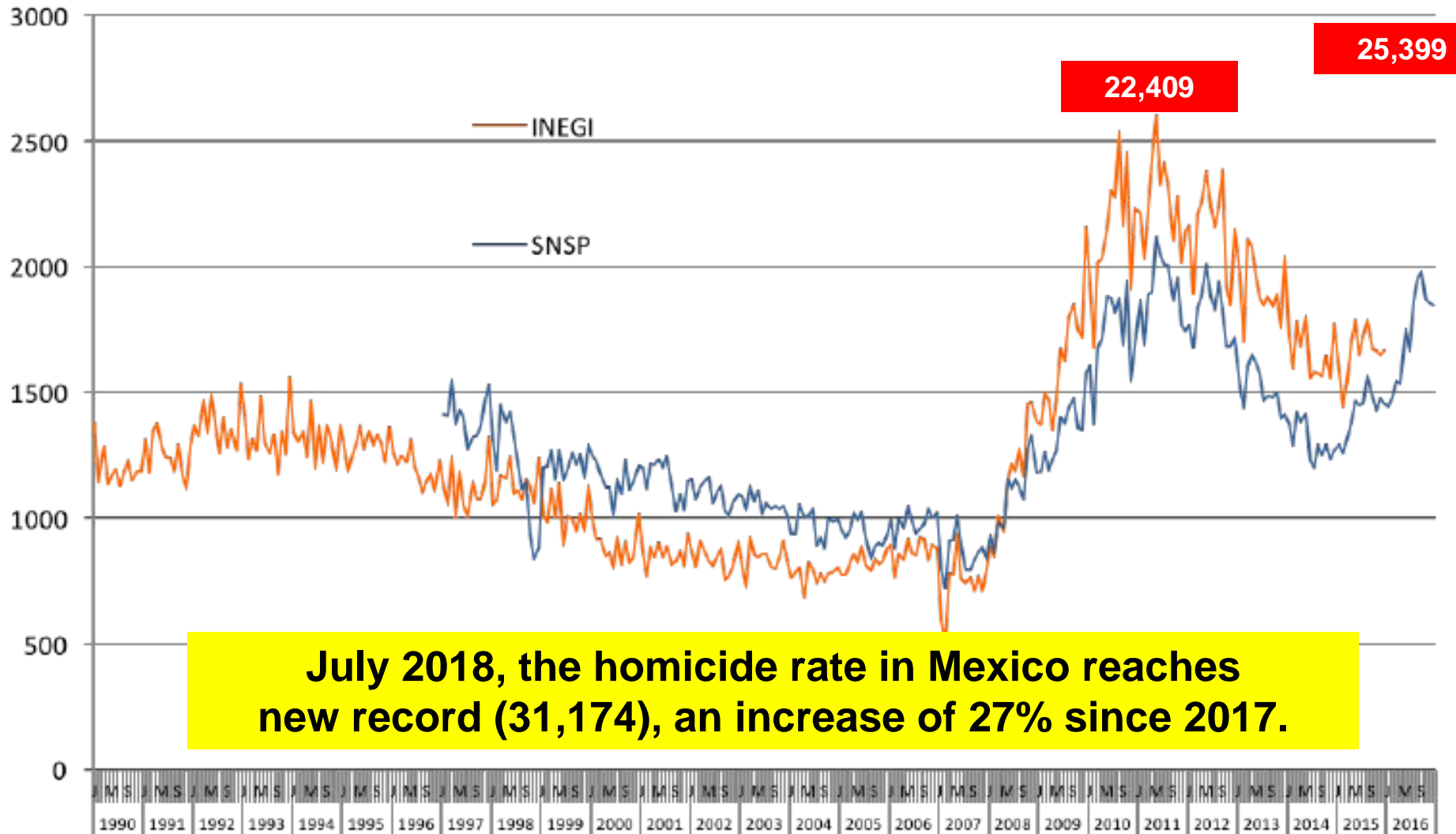
Internal Security Law, December 21, 2017.

Development of National Guard (hybrid force)



"We [the military] do not ask to be here. We do not like it. We do not study how to persecute criminals. We are doing things that do not correspond to our training because there is no one else to do them." General Salvador Cienfuegos, Secretary of National Defense (SEDENA), February 13, 2017.

Monthly homicides in Mexico, 2006-2016



July 2018, the homicide rate in Mexico reaches new record (31,174), an increase of 27% since 2017.

Sources: INEGI and SNSP.

Paramilitary groups in Michoacán, México



U.S. Aid to Central America

Merida Initiative, 2008

Central American Regional Security initiative, 2010

Central America's own Alliance for Prosperity, 2014 (\$22 Bn)

U.S. Strategy for Engagement in Central America (Mar 2015)

Most aid provided straight to civil society groups, not to the governments

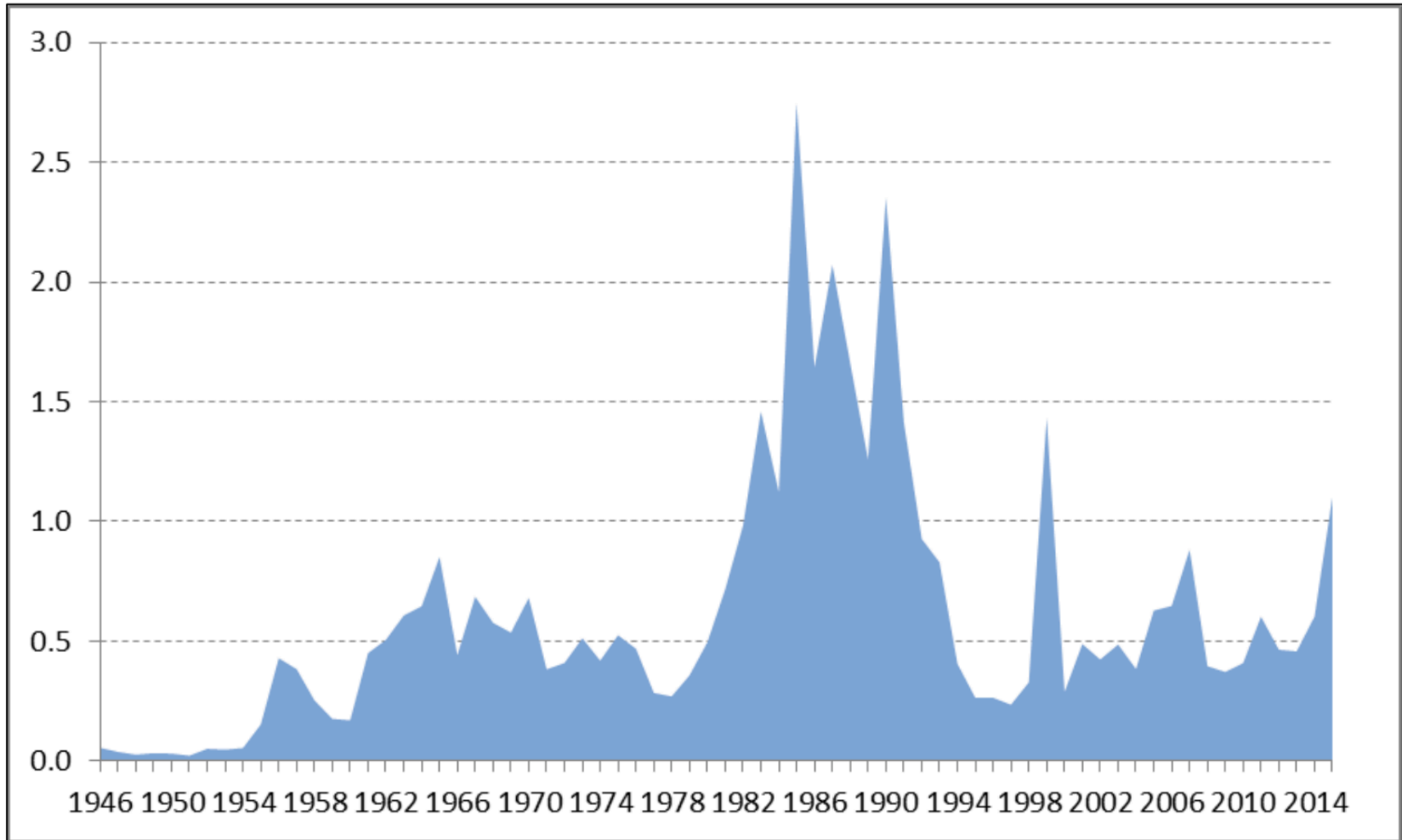
\$1.2 Bn in aid 2008-2015.

\$2.1 Bn in aid since 2016.



Figure 4. U.S. Assistance to Central America: FY1946-FY2015

(obligations in billions of constant 2015 U.S. dollars)



Source: CRS presentation of data from USAID, *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants: Obligations and Loan Authorizations, July 1, 1945-September 30, 2015*, January 10, 2017, at <https://explorer.usaid.gov/reports.html>.

Note: Includes aid obligations from all U.S. government agencies.

Source: Congressional Research Service, “U.S. Strategy for Engagement in Central America” 08 Jan 2019, p. 21.

U.S. Aid to Central America

Some success: reduced crime and violence, steady econ growth, but insufficient taxes and elite corruption undermines gains.

President Trump has maintained the same aid objectives as Obama (2015);

- 1. Promote prosperity**
- 2. Strengthen governance**
- 3. Improve security**

Trump Administration cutting aid to many international organizations, refocusing efforts on U.S. needs.

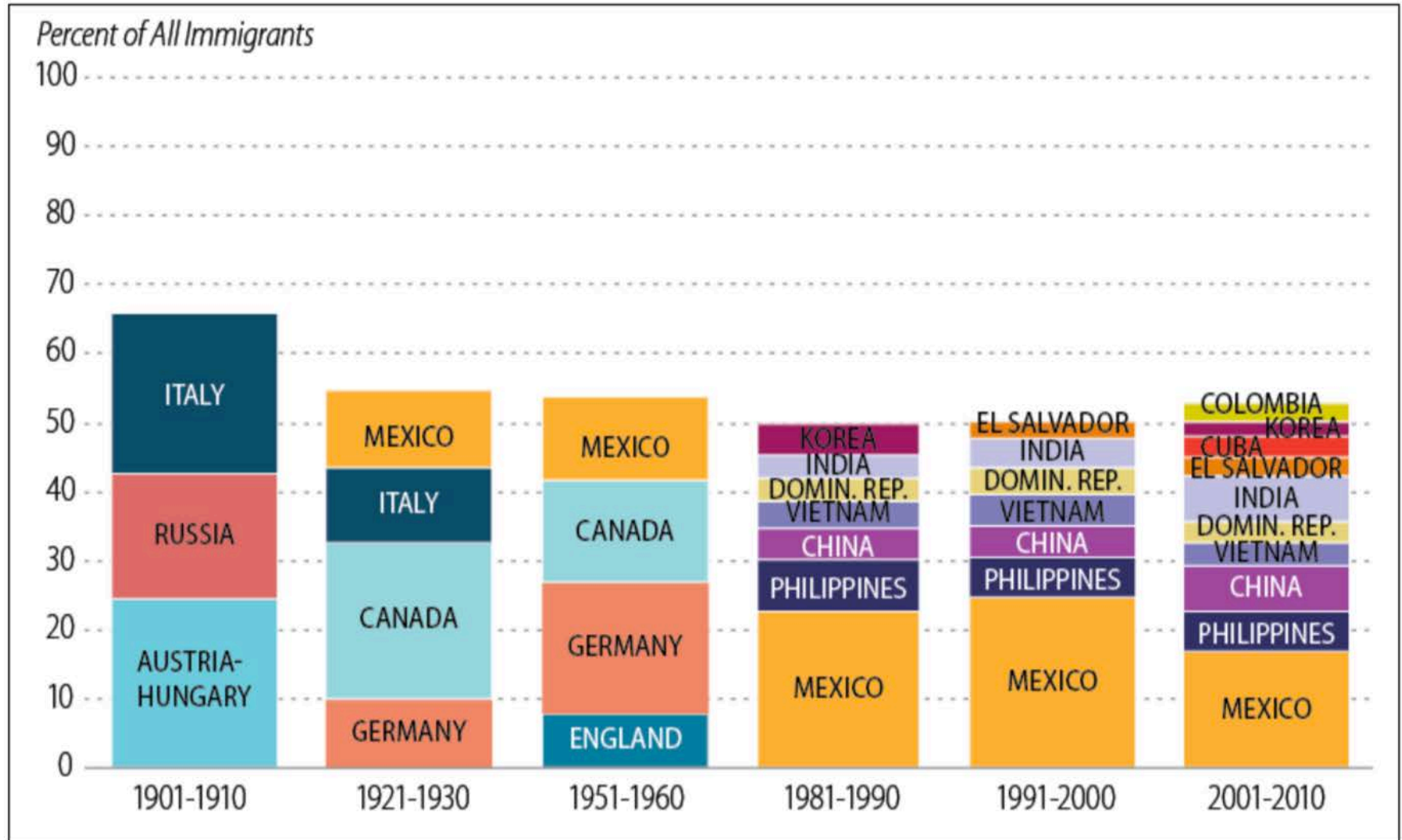
White House proposed aid reductions not approved by Congress.



U.S. Immigration Trends – Source Countries

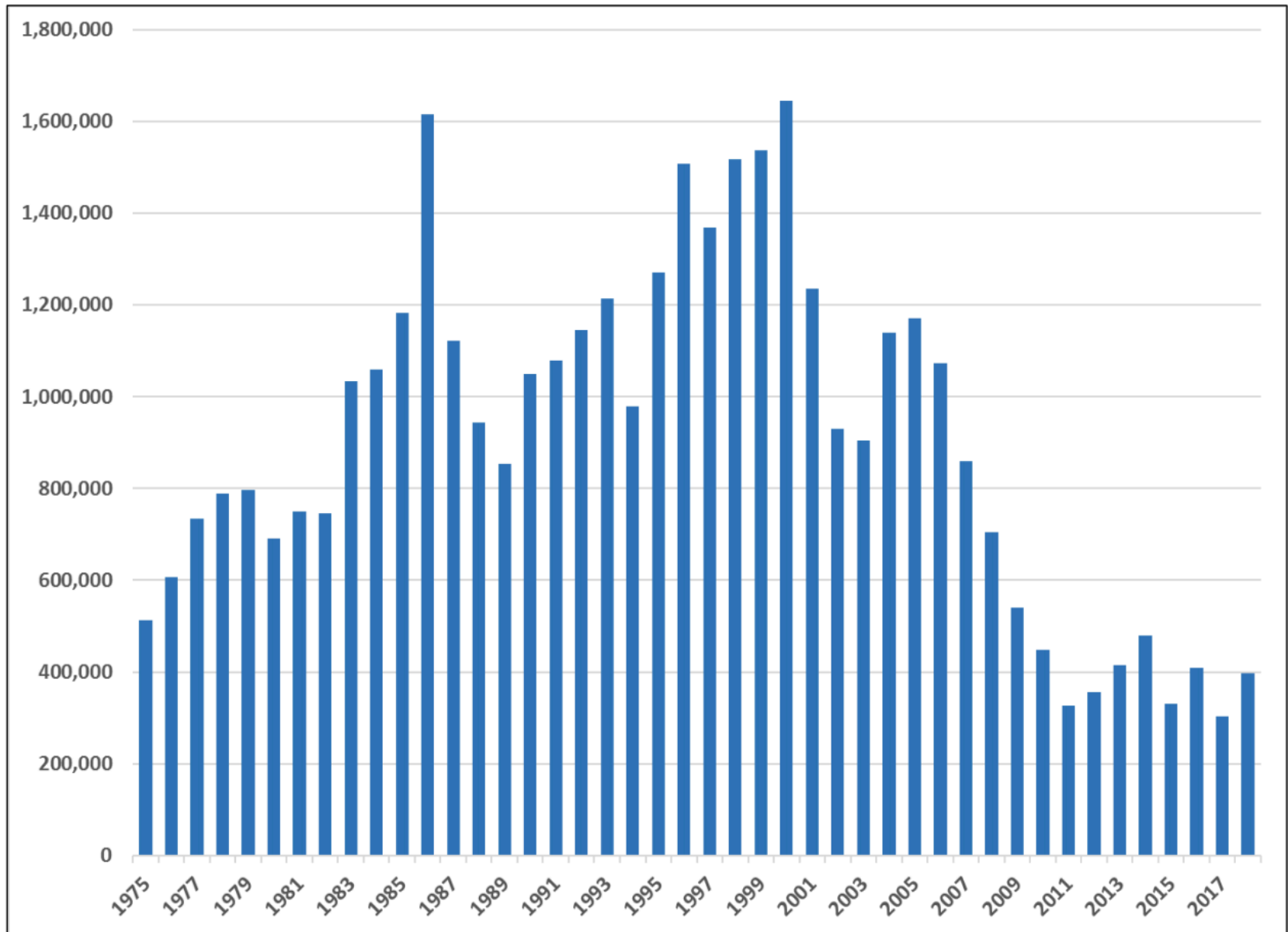
Figure 2. Top Sending Countries Comprising at Least Half of All LPRs

(Selected decades, 1901-2010)



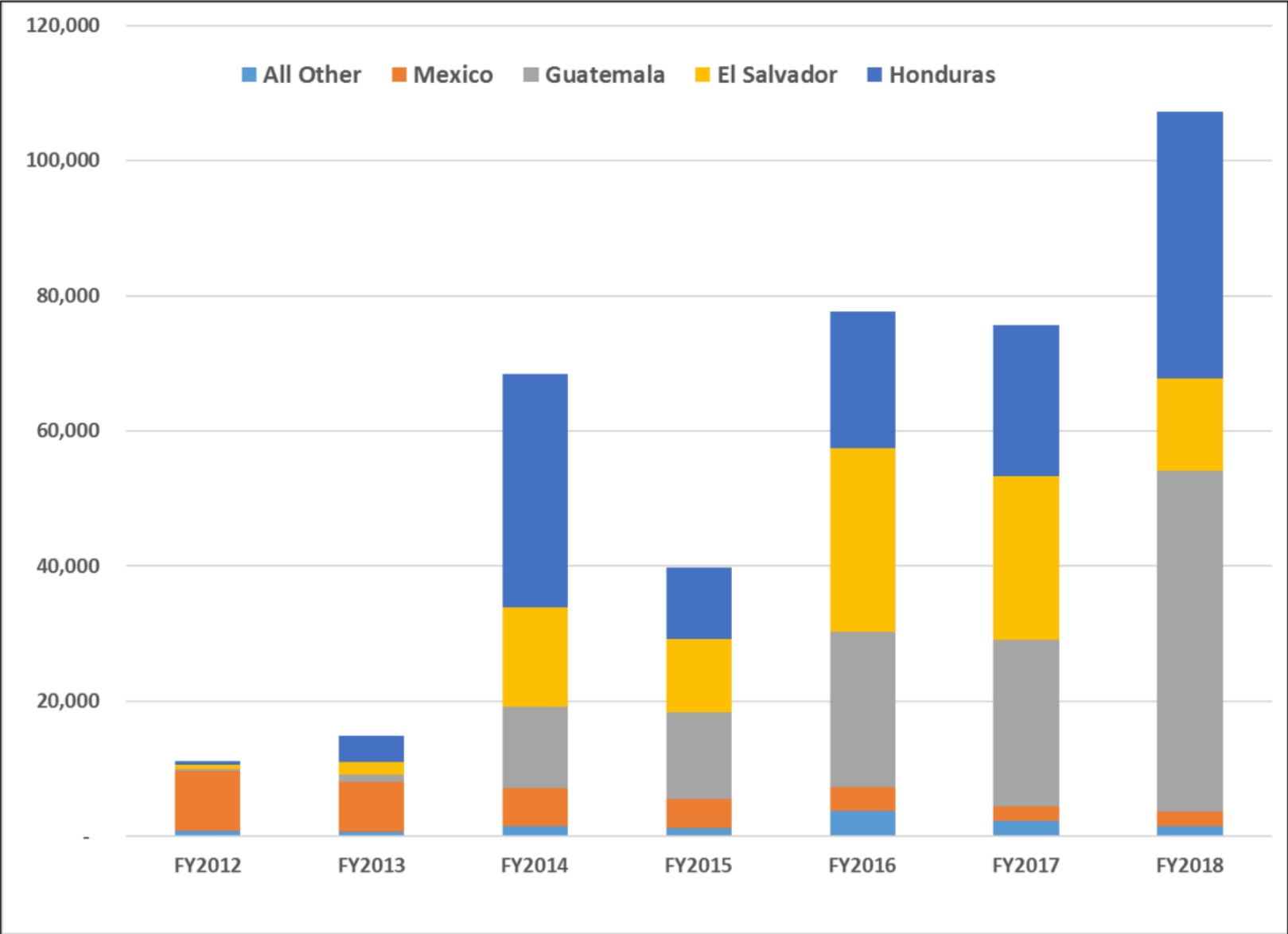
Source: CRS analysis of Table 2, 2010 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics, DHS Office of Immigration Statistics.

Figure I. Total Apprehensions at the Southwest Border by U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, FY1975-FY2018



Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Border Patrol, "Stats and Summaries," <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/media-resources/stats>.

Figure 2. Total Family Unit Apprehensions at the Southwest Border by U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, FY2012-FY2018



Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Border Patrol, "Stats and Summaries," <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/media-resources/stats>.

Caravans of thousands fleeing violence and poverty in Northern Triangle countries



Migration Trends to the U.S.

Difference b/t “migrant” and “refugee”

Increasing number of migrants from Central American (Northern Triangle countries)

2000 – 98% men

2015 - majority are women and children.

Escaping violence, corruption, and poverty in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.

Unaccompanied minors crisis



Current US Policy on Migration (pt 1)

3 agencies under Dept of Homeland Security: ICE, CBP, and USCIS.

Current crisis is much less than historical trends.

3.2M persons born in Central America live in U.S.. Approx 58% (1.9M) are here illegally.

96,000 deported in 2018.

524,000 sent back from Mexico to Centam from 2015-2018.

Number of unauthorized migrants dropped to 11.3M in 2014 from 12.2M in 2007.



Current US Policy on Migration (pt 2)

Terrorists? No. Criminals? Some, but vast majority are men, women, and children trying to escape problems in their countries.

U.S. refugee law says we must permit people to apply for asylum if they are fearful of violence or persecution.

Huge case backlog: 700,000 cases.

Once released, 50% don't show up for asylum hearings.

Unaccompanied minors crisis, 2014-2015.

Moral obligation to help those in need?



A security crisis? A foreign invasion? A humanitarian crisis?

Domestic Solutions to Migration Crisis

Zero tolerance policy and family separation? (May-June 2018, cancelled under public outcry)

Reject asylum petition if refugees don't enter at a proper port of entry? (Dec 2018, overruled by courts)

Declare a national emergency? (Feb 2019)

Build a wall? (Feb 2019)

Deploy the U.S. military? (Feb 2019)

Increase processing ability for asylum requests by Dept of Justice.

Reforms to U.S. immigration laws (Congressional gridlock).



Potential blowback to migration fixes?

Conditional aid (75%) on improvements in governance and security

Cut off aid to Northern Triangle countries until they fix the problem?

Authority to cut aid – Congress or President?

Remittances from U.S. represent 20% of GDP in Honduras and El Salvador, 10% in Guatemala.

Close the border? Economically not viable.



President Trump and fmr DHS Secretary Nielsen



Conference on Prosperity and Security in Central America, Oct 2018

US-Mexico Border

US-Mexico border is almost 2000 miles long.

Second longest and most active border b/t 2 nations in world.

About 75 major ports of entry.

5 million trucks and 17 million cars cross the border each year.

25,000 people cross the border every day between Tijuana and San Diego.



The Border Wall

President Trump has called for building a *“big beautiful wall.”*

Currently about 700 miles of fencing or wall.

Bush (2006) ordered 6000 national guards to border and Obama (2010) placed another 1,200 troops on the border.

Currently about 4000-5000 US soldiers deployed to border.

35-day government shutdown (longest in US history) over border wall in Jan 2019.



Central American Solutions to Migration Crisis

Improve governability in Northern Triangle

Reduce corruption, raise taxes

Provided better employment opportunities

Opportunities for excluded youth.

Improve the capacity of the security forces.

Reduce inequality and political and economic exclusion



Questions?



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