



NORTH AMERICA 2.0




INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES TO ADDRESS MIGRATION IN NORTH AMERICA

By Andrew Selee and Carlos Heredia

May 2021
Working Paper*

This working paper will be published as a
chapter in the forthcoming book,



was doubling down on its mostly family-based immigration policies, which also served as a de facto integration strategy, and keeping a clear distinction between temporary visas (including those for foreign students studying in U.S. universities) and permanent residency. Canada, meanwhile, was increasingly orienting its visa program toward those with high levels of human capital who could meet specific needs in the Canadian

Action on Childhood Arrival) program, which would allow business, government, and economic activity in general to benefit from the talent of more than 600,000 immigrant youth (of which over three-quarters were born in Mexico), was targeted for elimination by the Trump

be rapidly returned to Mexico to await the adjudication of their asylum claims.⁸ However, as of July 17, 2020, MPP had processed 63,623 individuals, of which only 523 had been granted relief; that is only eight out of every thousand cases.⁹ Although the Government of Mexico committed to providing documentation, education, healthcare, and employment for those waiting in Mexico under MPP, support for these migrants has been minimal. Furthermore, several human rights and humanitarian organizations who work with migrants and asylum seekers have pointed out that the MPP policy endangers their lives, as they are vulnerable and trapped in areas known for violence, extortion, and kidnapping.¹⁰

Even as the U.S. government, through a set of overlapping rules, programs, and agreements, has sought to limit the right to access to asylum at the border as a way of deterring migration, **the** Mexican government actually vastly increased its asylum system to accommodate those fleeing from violence in Central America and elsewhere.¹¹ The two countries have agreed on an enforcement-first strategy, imposed from Washingt

Should future governments of Canada, the United States and Mexico wish to cooperate more closely on migration issues, the meaning of smart border management will slowly translate into joint border management, constructing common approaches to shared border challenges. Indeed, some key efforts already are underway to comanage border installations, experiment with preinspection facilities inside each other's countries, and create trusted traveler programs.¹⁴

There is also an opportunity to discuss priorities for attracting global talent within the framework of USMCA, not as coordinated policy but as an attempt to create the optimal conditions for economic success within the regional trading bloc. This discussion could include looking at how the three countri

have a unique opportunity to enter a new era of cooperation to manage, rather than suppress, the ongoing flow of migrants who inevitably will move within the free trade zone that has been created among the three countries.¹⁶ Issues of migration have remained largely off the table to date in the discussion of North American integration, but their inclusion would help build a more prosperous, equitable, and sustainable future for all who live within the North American region.

Carlos A. Heredia, PhD, is an economist with extensive experience in international relations. Since 2009, he has been an associate professor at the Center for Research and Teaching in Economics in Mexico City, where he teaches U.S. politics, North American integration, and Central American and Mexican Migration studies. Dr. Heredia sits on the advisory board of the Mexico Institute at the Wilson Center. He served in Mexico's 57th Congress as a member of the Chamber of Deputies.

Andrew Selee, PhD, is the president of the Migration Policy Institute and author of *Vanishing Frontiers: TTJ0 g0 G[[TJETQ00000912 0 62 92 re WBF 8120 g0 Gbf]-1EM3hing*

agreement; and Comisión Mexicana de Ayuda a Refugiados, “Solicitantes de la condición de refugiado en México, julio 2020,” July 2020, <https://www.gob.mx/comar/articulos/julio-2020?idiom=es>.

¹² Ariel