

Mendel University in Brno

Faculty of Regional Development and International Studies

**The impact of Mexican migration on economic stability in selected
areas of labor market and security of the region close to the state
border**

Bachelor Thesis

Author: Natália Valachovičová

Supervisor: Ing. Zbyšek Korecki, Ph.D.

Brno 2015

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Acknowledgement:

I would like to express my acknowledgement to the supervisor of my thesis Ing. Zbyšek Korecki, Ph.D. for providing valuable advice, patience and precious time while elaborating this thesis.

Abstract

Bachelor thesis is focused on the analysis of Mexican migration to the USA; examines the security situation on both sides of the border and the effects of arrival of new work force on the stability of labor market in selected fields and regions in the USA.

Using demographic methods, I will analyze the waves of migration and its effects on stability and quality of the labor market in selected fields.

Theoretical part is focused on the theory of migration, theory of labor market, measurements of his quality and the main areas of the labor market provided by Mexican immigrants. Practical part provides an analysis of the aforementioned areas. In the following proposal part are mentioned some suggestions of possible scenarios of development.

Key words: labor market, Mexico, migration, security, USA

Abstrakt

Táto bakalárska práca je zameraná na analýzu mexickej migrácie do USA; skúma bezpečnostnú situáciu na oboch stranách hranice a efekty príchodu novej pracovnej sily na stabilitu pracovného trhu vo vybraných oblastiach a regiónoch v USA.

Použitím demografických metód analyzujem vlny migrácie a jej efekty na stabilitu a kvalitu pracovného trhu vo vybraných oblastiach.

Teoretická časť je zameraná na teóriu migrácie, teóriu pracovného trhu, merania jeho kvality a hlavné oblasti trhu práce poskytované mexickými prisťahovalcami. Analytická časť poskytuje analýzu vyššie uvedených oblastí. V nasledujúcej návrhovej časti sú spomenuté nejaké návrhy možných variant rozvoja.

Kľúčové slová: pracovný trh, Mexiko, migrácia, bezpečnosť, USA

List of abbreviations

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

IOM – International Organization for Migration

OECD – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

USA – United States of America

USD – United States Dollar

WWI – World War I

WWII – World War II

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Introduction

Nowadays, migration is becoming one of the biggest issues in both developed and developing world. This bachelor thesis is focused on migration of Mexican inhabitants into the USA and its impact on labor market and security of the region.

Migration of humanity extends far into history. People were forced to migrate from one place to another for several reasons. At first, the main reason was sustenance, then later, better living conditions or even for religious and political reasons. However, currently the economic and even environmental reasons have become quite popular as well. Over the centuries, migration has been gaining momentum and significance and the turn of 21st century represents the “age of migration”. This boom of migration was only affected by the economic crisis in the beginning of 2009 when labor demand declined, but there are some fields which were not affected by the crisis at all and actually created constant demand for labor.

Migration brings a number of positive and negative impacts. Migrants bring to their country of destination so called multiculturalism, but on the other hand, they are often criticized for taking the jobs from Americans.

According to Alexander (2007) a great number of migratory movements take place between Mexico and USA. USA directly borders Mexico and it had to face in its past with legal or illegal flows of Mexican immigrants, and their formation was largely influenced by the reform of the US immigration system. Since 1980, Mexicans make up the largest group of immigrants in the USA.

Mexican migration to the USA has undergone several stages. From the beginning of the migration it was supported by the USA, who suffered a lack of labor force. During WWII, the USA signed a series of laws and diplomatic agreements (known as the Bracero Program) which allowed Mexican workers to work temporarily in the USA.

These immigrants were mainly the agricultural workers and workers who were helping with the massive construction of railways across the country. Since 1990, migration increased substantially. Only later with the outbreak of the crisis in 2007 there was a decrease in the number of illegal immigrants from Mexico.

Labor migration has an impact on labor market in Mexico as well as in the USA. A significant part of migration is represented by remittances and brain drain.

Aim and methodology

The aim of the thesis is to analyze the migration of Mexican population to USA as well as the impact of migration on both countries and propose some suggestions which would contribute to improvement of this issue.

In theoretical section of this thesis, I describe in general the theory of migration and labor market and analyze the causes, types and different motives of migration as well. I also focus on the impacts of migration on labor market in both countries and describe definitions related to migration such as remittances and brain drain. In practical section, I make an analysis of aforementioned areas and also examine the security situation on both sides of the border and the stability of labor market interrupted by arrival of new work force in selected fields and regions in the USA. Final proposal section debates the outcomes from the theoretical and practical part and discusses about suggested actions that are necessary to take to improve current issue.

The method used to develop this bachelor thesis is mainly based on data collection and structured interview which help me better understand this issue and provide essential information related to this topic. Collected data is later used for evaluation and formulation of conclusion and suggestion. In practical part SWOT analysis is attached to help me discover the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to the migration issue. At the end of the thesis, I propose suggestions and conclusions based

on analysis and obtain data in the practical section by deduction method for specification of possible actions that would ensure sustainable development of this still ongoing issue of Mexican migration to the USA.

The data used in this bachelor thesis was mainly found in available Internet sources and literature sources as well as scientific publications and professional articles. All sources are published in the References section.

1. Theoretical part

1.1 Migration and other key terms

Migration, according to IOM, is a process in which individuals or even groups of people decide to leave their homes for various reasons. The current mobility of people is higher than ever before in modern history and continues to rise sharply and is becoming one of the biggest issues of the 21st century. Almost all of the 200 countries in the world are the source, transit or destination countries for the migrants.

United Nations defines migration as *“a global phenomenon that is growing in scope, complexity and impact. Migration is both a cause and effect of broader development processes and an intrinsic feature of our ever globalizing world. While no substitute for development, migration can be a positive force for development when supported by the right set of policies”*.

On the other side, OECD refers to migration as *“all movements of people into (immigration) or out (emigration) of a specific country or countries. Migrant populations are defined on the ground of the place of birth (foreign-born) or of the citizenship (foreigners). Migrants are classed under one of several categories: family, free movements, work, humanitarian, accompanying family of workers, or other”*.

Although only 3% of the world’s population is immigrants, the country with the highest number is the United States. Asia, Latin America and Africa have net-out migration but North America, Europe and Oceania have net-in migration. The largest flow of migrants is to North America. (Lewishhistoricalsociety.com, 2013)

The end of 20th and beginning of 21st century is also known as “the age of migration” when the global society was defined by migration and mobility. This era has seen main developments in human mobility that affects all areas of the world. (Castles, Miller; 2003)

Other key terms mentioned later in this thesis will be explained below with the help of IOM.

- *Assimilation* - adjusting one ethnic minority to another. It is a typical outcome of migration and it has its political, economic, social, legal, cultural and religious aspects. Assimilation belongs to the most extreme versions of acculturation.
- *Border management* - simplification of flows of legal persons such as tourists, business people, migrants and so on across the border and trying to prevent any illegal entry into the country.
- *Labor migration* - people moving to different countries or regions in order to find employment. This kind of migration is addressed by most countries in their migration laws. Some countries try to regulate outward labor migration and seek possibilities abroad.
- *Smuggling* - illegal transfer of a person to another country in which he is not a resident in order to obtain financial or material compensation. In contrast to trafficking, it does not necessarily include a sign of violation of human rights.
- *Xenophobia* - a mix of different attitudes and prejudices that might exclude and reject people based on the perception that they come from another country.

1.2 Types of migration

There are a number of criteria by which we can sort migration (in terms of longevity, legality, motivation, age and gender of migrant, etc.). Basically, we can divide migration into *immigration* and *emigration*, based on whether the migrant is coming to

his country of destination or leaving his home country. Furthermore, we can distinguish between *forced* and *voluntary* migration. We may also divide migration into *international* and *internal* migration based on whether people move within the country or continent or beyond their borders. (National Geographic, 2005)

In terms of time duration, we can also divide migration into *temporary*, *permanent* and *circular* migration. Temporary or short-term migration is carried out for the purpose of recreation, short-term studies, business that lasts several months but no more than one year. Permanent or long-term migration is for the purpose of employment or long-term studies, etc. Circular or repeat migration is typical for migrants who repeatedly move between their destination country and their home country. (Palát, 2013)

Certainly worth mentioning is the concept of *chain migration* which plays an important role in this issue. This is a type of migration when a family member sends money to his or her family and is designed for their family's transfer to a new location. (National Geographic, 2005)

One of the most common types of migration is *labor migration*. More and more migrants are encouraged to cross borders in order to seek employment and security for not only themselves, but their families as well, due to conflicts, income inequalities or no employment opportunities. Migrant workers not only play a part in the growth and development of their countries of destination, but their home countries significantly benefit from their remittances and their gained experience as well. (ILO, 2015)

Palát also mentions *non-immigration* type of migration which is temporary migration for the purpose of studies or research and *innovative migration* which motivation is to improve living conditions by migrating to another country.

Another type of migration is *seasonal migration*. Seasonal migration is a process when migrant moves to another city, region or country for a short period of time in response to climate and labor conditions. (National Geographic, 2005)

Migration can also be divided according to the level of qualification of migrants. High-skilled workers who have some kind of expertise or college degree tend to migrate more for better payment opportunities or easier legal processes. Even though they are still a minority, they play a big role in the economy of both countries. The host country receives a new highly skilled workforce with particular skills that are in short supply but their home country loses these highly qualified workers and this process is also referred as the “brain drain” where the developing country paid for the emigrant’s education and he decides to emigrate to another country so he does not contribute to the local economy in any way. (BBC, 2013)

According to the level of legality we can divide migration into *legal* and *illegal*. Legal migration means that migrant enters his country of destination legally and meets all the legal conditions. Illegal migrant contravenes these conditions by entering the country without having the appropriate legal documents, not entering the country at the border crossing points, expiration of visa, illegal work, etc. (Palát, 2013)

Migrants tend to use the service of human smugglers which are also called “coyotes” or “polleros”. These smugglers bring people across the border in exchange for money. Sometimes they become victims of human trafficking or are given false documents. There is still a growing number of migrants who will seek help for various reasons such as not having proper qualification to obtain a visa, an unwillingness to deal with bureaucracy, corruption, etc. (Wisegeeq.com, 2015)

Ravenstein’s Law of Migration

Ravenstein suggested a theory regarding human migration and his laws are

- Each flow of migration results in counter migration
- Migrants mostly prefer to move a short distance
- They choose big-city destinations if they move a long distance
- Urban residents migrate less than rural residents

- Young people move more internationally than whole families
(Lewishistoricalsociety.com, 2013)

1.3 Causes and motives of migration

1.3.1 Causes

People migrate for various reasons. They examine the advantages and disadvantages of staying in their country of origin or moving to another country for better opportunities and also the factors such as cultural and political barriers, living conditions, etc. These reasons can be classified as economic, social, political or environmental.

- Economic migration – moving to another country in order to improve the standard of living by getting a better paying job or pursuing a particular career
- Social migration – moving in order to be reunited with the families and friends who migrated before or for a higher quality of life
- Political migration – moving due to unacceptable environment conditions such as war or political persecution
- Environmental migration – includes causes caused by nature disasters such as earthquake, drought, etc. (InternetGeography.net, 2015)

1.3.2 Motives for migration

Motives for migration are closely connected to reasons for migration. Migration may happen as a result of push and pull factors. Push and Pull factors are efforts that can either force people to move to a new location or make them leave their old residences. They might be based on politics, economics, culture and environment.

Push factors are the reasons for emigrating because of a difficulty and are forceful.

- *Economic*

Most immigrants decide to leave their home countries for various reasons, however, the main reason they decide to leave is for more job opportunities and financial gain in which their own country cannot offer.

- *Cultural*

There are two main reasons which causes forced international migration: slavery and political prosecution. In Africa, people were taken from their homes and sold into slavery in Europe and the USA, among other countries. Once freed, the slaves were forced to stay where they were because they had no money or education to help aid them in their return to their own country. Wars also caused forced migration of ethnic groups in both Europe and Africa. Because of these wars, people were forced to flee their countries and became refugees and would not return to their home country in fear of persecution. They remained in the refugee camps for months, or even years before being placed in another country.

- *Environmental*

Often, migrants are pushed from their homes simply due to harsh physical circumstances. The biggest environmental threat would be water. Many people are forced to move due to water related disasters, such as tsunamis or low areas vulnerable to floods. However, a lack of water can also pose an equal threat.

Pull factors are factors which encourage migrants to move to different location because of something desirable.

- *Economic*

Migrants will immigrate to larger cities within different countries where jobs appear to be more available to them. Larger cities will offer more jobs than those of smaller urban areas. If they are looking for particular jobs, such as

construction or roofing, they will migrate to warmer dry areas where those jobs would be more easily available to them.

- *Cultural*

Government and political issues can act as pull factors as well by offering freedom. Some migrants will immigrate to more democratic countries where freedom of speech, and equality are acknowledged, such as in the USA. Having the choice to choose what their future holds, whether it is better education or choice of career regardless of sex or race will pull migrants toward these democratic countries.

- *Environmental*

Migrants will seek out environments which appeal to them. Different countries will attract different migrants. If people are looking for areas in which to retire, they may seek out warmer coastal areas. Others may want to avoid very hot, dry conditions and will seek out areas where seasons are more favorable to them. (Lewishistoricalociety.com, 2015)

1.4 Impacts of migration

Impacts on the host country

As a result of immigration, the host country is faced with both benefits and challenges. With more people coming into the country, it causes high pressure on the infrastructure and services. Migrants are being challenged to adjust to new environments with different laws, cultural norms, languages, etc... Host countries are challenged to assimilate immigrants into society and give them necessary support. (Boundless Economics, 2015)

Immigration can cause sustained economic growth and increase the labor force where new immigrants fill the gaps in job positions and skills. Immigrants are

required to pay taxes which bring more money to the economy. They also bring new innovations, ideas and culture into the country which can result in booming the production of the host country. (Embrace, 2013)

Since migrants are willing to work for low wages, it can result in being exploited by their employers and not given appropriate training. Many people believe a great number of immigrants may threaten national identity and national security by illegal immigration or terrorism. They are also often criticized for their dependency on welfare and cheapening labor. (Boundless Economics, 2015)

Impacts on the country of origin

When migrants move to another country, they look for positive changes in their future. While being employed in the host country, they make money which is sent to their families back home known as “remittances”. The unemployment rate gets lowered and should they return to their home country, they bring savings and skills along with them.

A high number of immigrants can weaken the home country because the population decreases and it also affects the economic spending and production level in the home country. The country loses highly-skilled people such as health workers who might never come back to their country. (Embrace, 2013)

1.4.1 Remittances

The World Bank describes remittances as *“the sum of personal transfers and compensation of employees. Personal transfers include all current transfers in cash or in kind between resident and nonresident individuals, independent of the source of income of the sender and the relationship between the households”*.

Remittances play an important role in the development of local economy and the strategies to reduce poverty. The total amount of remittances throughout the years has

been more stable and greater than the foreign direct investment and official development aid from other countries. Remittances, in result, increase the level consumption in receiving families. If saved and accumulated they contribute to economic growth by investing in infrastructure development which would increase income over time. Although they are not a cure for development issues, they complement government's efforts in developed and developing countries but are not a replacement for continuous assistance. (Maimbo, 2005)

Statistics show the estimated amount of remittances to developing countries in 2013 increased approximately 3.3% over the previous year totaling 404 billion USD in 2013. Including even the high-income countries, the estimated amount was 542 billion USD in the same year. The top receiving countries of remittances in 2013 were India (70 billion USD), China (60 billion USD), the Philippines (25 billion USD), and Mexico (22 billion USD). (World Bank, 2014)

1.4.2 Brain Drain/Gain

The international transfer of qualified workers is a brain gain for countries which get benefits from their skills and experiences and brain drain for home countries that loses those workers. The "brain gain countries" try to set their policies on immigration to attract workers and students whose skills and experience are needed. (Migrationpolicy.com, 2015)

Brain gain is a major problem in every corner of this world, mainly because of skilled workers who decide to work abroad rather than return home. They are attracted by more job opportunities or higher salaries, religious or political freedom and overall a better quality of life. The major effects are the loss of tax revenues, qualified workers, innovation, potential entrepreneurs and the country's investment in education. (Study.com, 2015)

2. Practical Part

This chapter describes the migration of Mexican citizens to the USA. At first, I describe the evolution of Mexican migration throughout the history, and then I analyze the causes and impacts of migration using the Push-Pull model and SWOT analysis at the end of the thesis.

2.1 Evolution of Mexican migration to the USA

In the past several decades, the region at the Mexican-American border has gone through some significant changes, mainly due to economic migration. The contradiction between lack of job opportunities in Mexico and its growing population leads to many Mexico's citizens leaving their home country. We will determine the main causes of their decisions and the impacts on both countries.

2.1.1 Historical overview

The relationships between Mexico and the USA have become strained when the war between these two countries occurred. The Mexican-American war, 1846-1848 sparked much hatred and hostility toward the USA. With the USA being victorious, Mexico was forced to sign the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo which Mexico gave up nearly half of its national territory to the USA for 15 million USD. There are many reasons for the war but the most significant one was the long-standing dispute between the USA and Mexico which included the annexation of Texas. (Shane, 2005)

Mass migration of Mexicans into the USA started in the early decades of 20th century. It was mainly motivated by demands of labor in the USA and political chaos in Mexico. During the 20th century, many major reforms were implemented to the US immigration system and assisted in shaping the size and character of flows of Mexican immigrants. Mexicans remained the biggest groups of immigrants in the USA since 1980. (Terrazas, 2010)

The largest immigration flow originated in Mexico due to economic and political pressures. While largest state owners purchased more and more land, this caused fewer opportunities for Mexicans to get ahead financially, so families decided to supplement their incomes by seeking employment in the USA. Because their movements were not recorded, Mexicans would routinely travel back and forth across the border. However, census recorders counted 78 000 foreign-born Mexicans in the USA and by 1900 the number had risen to slightly more than 103 000. (Alexander, 2007)

The evolution of immigration of Mexicans to the USA can be divided into four main periods.

The first wave took place prior to WWII and included mainly agricultural workers which were recruited by private labor contractors. The number of Mexican immigrants in the USA rose from 105,200 in 1900 to 624,400 in 1930.(migrationpolicy.org) It was due to drying up of cheap Asian labor. When the USA joined the WWI, the demand for Mexican labor workers suddenly increased. It is estimated by 1911 and 1920 at least 219 000 Mexicans crossed the border to work in the USA. During WWI, US Congress contributed to the increase of Mexican migrants by relaxing immigration laws which would allow Mexican workers to enter the country to work to help solve the labor shortage crisis created by the war. During the war Mexicans would travel to northern states to work in heavy industry. However, prior to the war the majority of immigrants moved to the south-western region of the USA and worked in agriculture and construction. (Alexander, 2007)

However, after the war, nativism had intensified which led to the creation of US Border Patrol whose aim was to reduce the flows of Mexican immigrants. Nevertheless there was still a huge demand for unskilled workers which encouraged the Mexicans to cross the border legally or illegally. (Harvard magazine, 2007)

The second wave started with the implementation of the Bracero program, from 1942 to 1964, and consisted of mostly workers from agriculture. During the mobilization of the

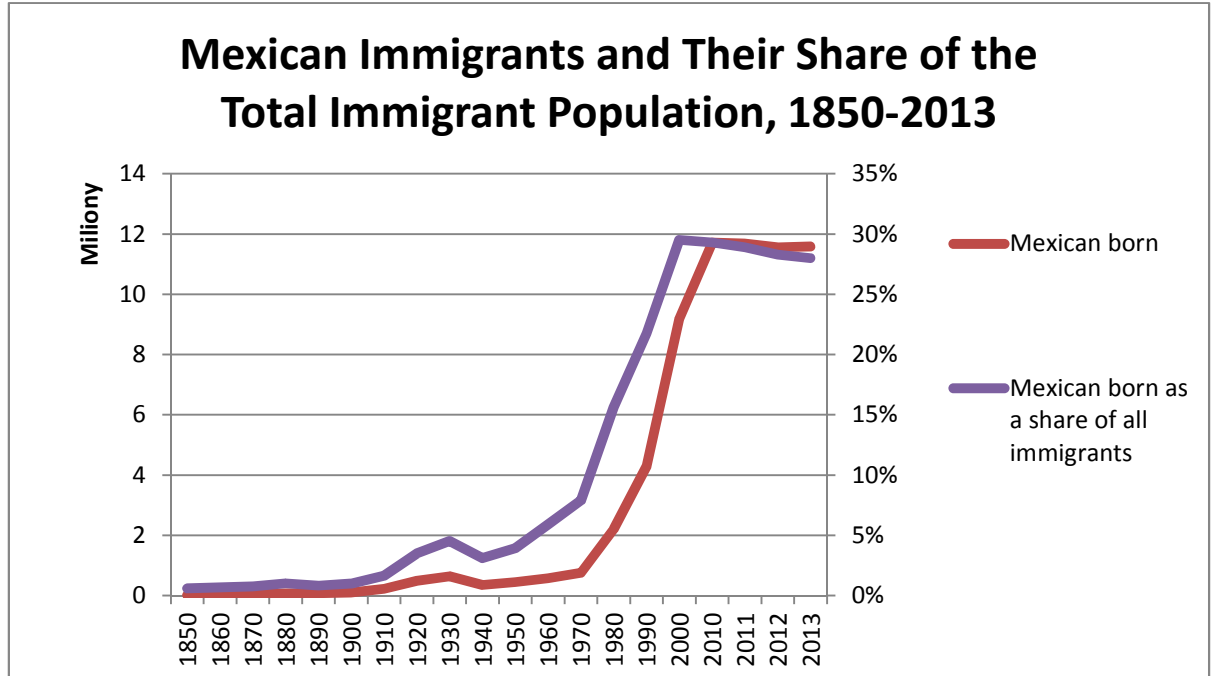
USA for WWII, they had to face the struggle of recruitment of Mexican workers due to the stricter immigration policies. This bilateral guest worker program was introduced in order to strengthen U.S.-Mexican relations. Under this agreement, Mexican workers were assured the minimum wage, health benefits, housing, etc. When the war was over, the USA requested changes that undermined the program's protections of labor. The Bracero program had a continuing influence on the US-Mexico migration policies system. Almost 50,000 farms were employing more than 400,000 Mexican workers a year in the late 1950s. The program was supported by both governments. (FAS.org, 2012)

The third wave started after the termination of the Bracero program. After 1965, US government made changes in their immigration policies which ended quotas based on race and introduced first numerical limits on Mexico and other Latin American countries. The number of illegal workers began to increase due to fast growth of population and decline of economic conditions in Mexico.

The issue of illegal immigration got worse throughout the 1970s. The government of Mexico became aware of the fact that they had a stake in Mexican workers going abroad while they were taking the underemployment problem along them. They were also afraid that the USA would attempt to tie better border control in Mexico to trade concessions. Nevertheless, this situation remained until 1980s. (Harvard Magazine, 2007)

The fourth wave was initiated by passing the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. IRCA resulted in legalization of almost 2.3 million undocumented workers from Mexico in return for stricter border enforcement and penalties for American employers who were hiring illegal workers. Immigrants started to settle in the USA along with their families permanently due to more and more difficulties while crossing the border and newly opened jobs that were created for low-skilled workers from foreign countries. More than 7.5 million of immigrants from Mexico arrived between 1990 and 2010. (Batalova, Zong; 2014)

Graph 1: Mexican Immigrants and Their Share of the Total Immigrant Population, 1850-2013



Source: www.migrationpolicy.org, edited by author

In the graph we can see the line that represents aforementioned periods of implementation of migration policies. Mexican migration began at the beginning of 19th century and was focused mainly on agricultural workers. The total number of Mexican immigrants reached over a half million between 1920 and 1930 in the USA. During this period, a high rate of migration was noticed which was later decreased due to several immigration reforms. Since 1930 until 1980 the number of was rising and in 1980 there was already 15% of Mexican population that were legal citizens. Since 1970, it comes to doubling the total Mexican population size in the USA throughout each decade. At the end of 2011 there have been approximately 12 million Mexican migrants already in the USA.

2.1.2 Current situation

The complicated situation of illegal immigrants in the USA led both governments to take part in solving this issue. After the attack of 9/11 the opinions on immigration had drastically changed throughout the country.

Beginning of the 1980s hatred towards immigrants, especially towards Mexicans, continues into the 21st century. Many Americans claim that Mexicans and other Spanish-speaking countries are to blame for not only street crime and nation's drug problem, but also the breakdown of the country's historical, cultural and moral identity. They also feel that Mexicans and other Spanish-speaking immigrants have placed strains on their welfare and education systems. (Bender, 2008)

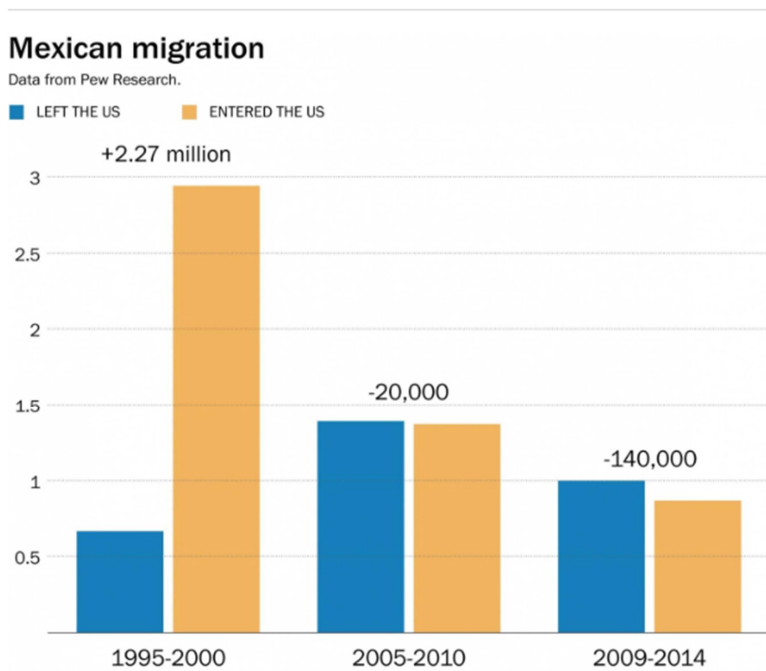
Demographic Characteristics indicate that Mexican immigrants in the USA in 2008 had the average median income of 40,736 USD. The median age of Mexican immigrants was 25 years old and 61.6% spoke English fluently. Surprisingly, only 9% had a BA degree of age 25 or older. Overall, Mexican immigrants had the highest rate of religion with 75% being Catholic among the other Latino groups in the USA. (Barreto, Segura; 2014)

In 2006, the US government began to build a fence on the border with Mexico and together with the US Border Patrol try to lower the number of unauthorized immigrants trying to cross the border illegally. Illegal immigration results in millions of dollars which is being used for border patrols and prisons. Plenty of Americans agree that immigrants from Mexico drain the economy. The immigrants are often criticized for keeping wages low. Although others believe that low-wage jobs that are usually performed by illegal immigrants benefit the economy of the country since there is not enough people who would be willing to take low-wage job and the gap of unwanted job positions is being filled. (BBC, 2015)

In the 21st century, fewer Mexicans are moving to the USA while the number of Mexicans leaving the USA and moving back to their home country is increasing

(including deported people). Between 2005 and 2010, 1.4 million Mexicans which resided in the USA before, went back to live in Mexico. This number is almost double the number of those who returned to Mexico from USA between 1995 and 2000. The decreasing number of Mexican immigrants is the result of the slowly recovering economy that was affected by the Great Recession and stricter immigration laws. (Pew Research Center, 2013)

Graph 2: Mexican migration (leaving and entering the USA)



Source: www.pewresearch.org

It is very unlikely to experience another big wave of migration between the USA and Mexico for at least 20 to 40 years. Some people believe we should not see the slowdown of Mexican migration as the end of the immigration boom of the USA. There is a big group of foreign workers who enter the country on working visa, sometimes they overstay their legal status or often sponsor their whole families to come along them. Furthermore, Mexican immigrants in the USA have become more settled, became older on average and have achieved higher education levels. (USA Today, 2015)

The wave of Mexican immigration may possibly continue as soon as the economy of the USA recovers. Even if it does not, the USA has already hit record immigration numbers.

The number of Mexicans attempting to cross the border illegally declined recently; in 2005 it was more than 1 million of Mexicans compared to 286,000 in 2011. But on the other side, the deportation rates increased sharply due to arrests for other criminal violations or being picked up at work sites. (Pew Research Centre, 2013)

Illegal immigration have become an often discussed issue at the 2016 presidential campaigns where Democrats widely support ways to obtain citizenship for illegal migrants as well as protecting young people that where brought to the USA illegally as children. In these campaigns, Republicans strongly disagree with them, while they demand tougher border security. (Pew Research Centre, 2015)

2.2 Destinations

Immigrants from Mexico were traditionally settling in states such as California or Texas which were close to the border and now are home to more than half of the group of immigrants coming from Mexico. However in the last two decades, we can see a trend of Mexican born moving more to the nontraditional areas of the USA. These areas include states such as Georgia, North Caroline, Ohio, Nebraska, etc. Among these states, Alabama, South Caroline and Tennessee experienced the fastest growth of immigrant population at the beginning of the 21st century. 35.5% of all immigrants in new destinations in 2009 were Mexican-born while 30.9% of immigrants were in traditional areas.

The majority of immigrants in the 2008-2012 period tend to settle in the state of California (37%), Texas (21%) and Illinois (6%). Most popular counties among Mexican immigrants were Los Angeles County in California, Harris County in Texas, Cook County in Illinois and Orange County in California. All together they account for

approximately 23% of the whole population of Mexican immigrants in the USA. Metropolitan areas such as Los Angeles, Chicago and Houston consisted of the greatest number of immigrants from Mexico and accounted for almost 26% of all Mexican immigrants in the USA.

In 2008 in some areas Mexicans made up more than half of all immigrants. These areas include New Mexico (71.8%), Arizona (65.6%), Texas (61.6%), Arkansas (54.2%), Idaho (51.7%) and Colorado (50.1%). On the contrary, only seven states consisted of less than 5% of Mexican immigrants out of all. These states are Maryland (4.9%), Rhode Island (3.1%), Hawaii (3%), Vermont (2.6%), New Hampshire (2.6%), Massachusetts (1.4%), and Maine (0.5%).(Batalova, Zong; 2014)

Table 1: Most popular metropolitan areas for Mexican migrants

Metropolitan Area	Immigrant population from Mexico	% of Metro Area Population
Los Angeles - Long Beach - Santa Ana, CA	1751000	13.6%
Chicago - Joliet - Naperville, IL-IN-WI	677000	7.2%
Houston - Sugar Land - Baytown, TX	599000	10.1%
Dallas - Fort Worth - Arlington, TX	587000	9.2%
Riverside - San Bernardino - Ontario, CA	555000	13.1%
Phoenix - Mesa - Glendale, AZ	353000	8.4%
San Diego - Carlsbad - San Marcos, CA	332000	10.7%
New York - Northern New Jersey - Long Island, NY-NJ-PA	316000	1.7%
San Francisco - Oakland - Fremont, CA	257000	5.9%
McAllen - Edinburgh - Mission, TX	213000	27.5%

Source: www.migrationpolicy.org, edited by author

2.3 Analysis of motives

Huntington (2005) describes Mexican migration as a group of 6 factors

Proximity – The significance of the border between Mexico and the USA depends on the economic level of both countries. In history, there has never been such a big difference in incomes of people between two neighboring countries as it is now between Mexico and the USA. The vision of having a lot better life behind the border is appealing and also crossing the “opened” border seems a lot easier than having to sail on a boat to another coast or continent. Although the increasing population of Hispanics leads to blurring the borders between both countries and to other several impacts on culture, people, society and economy of the USA.

Figures – Currently, Mexicans account of 1/3 of total immigrant population in the USA. In 1960, Italy had the highest number of foreign-born in the USA (1 257 000 immigrants). Then Germany, Canada and Great Britain followed with approximately the same amount of immigrants. 40 years later, in 2000, Mexico outnumbers all of them and with 7 841 000 foreign-born takes the first place. Mexicans accounted to 27.6% of the total foreign-born population. China, Philippines and India had all around million foreign-born in the USA so the ratio is quite unbalanced compared to Mexico.

Illegality – The situation about Mexican illegal immigrants changed after 1965 when immigration law was introduced. Since then, controls and inspections were stricter and illegal immigration got almost impossible. In 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act was implemented and consisted of actions for legalization of status of illegal immigrants already in the USA and for prevention of another possible immigrants by introducing sanctions on their employments and other restrictive actions. 3.1 million illegal immigrants (90% from Mexico) obtained legal right to stay in the USA. Illegal immigration represents a threat for national security as well as society.

Regional concentration – Hispanic immigrants are concentrated in several areas. Mexicans settle usually in southern California (almost half of all Mexican immigrants); Cubans in Miami; Dominicans and Puerto Ricans in New York City. States with the fastest growing Hispanic population between 1990 and 2000 were South and North Carolina, Arkansas, Georgia, Nevada, Alabama, California, etc. Problem arises in education due to high number of children coming from different backgrounds and speaking several different languages. Students attending schools in Los Angeles are more than 70% of Hispanic origin. Most of the Mexicans settle in the southwestern part of the country. Assimilation is slower when geographic concentration is high.

Permanent character – Migration is an ongoing problem. Unless it comes to economic crisis or war conflict, it will be difficult to drastically lower the number of immigrants. If Mexico achieves the same economic level as the USA, then it might possibly come to the lowest level of immigration. In 2010 GDP of the USA was 10-times bigger than GDP of Mexico and in 2012 it was surprisingly 15-times bigger so we can see the growing differences between these two countries. Long lasting high-level immigration comes with three main consequences. Firstly, immigration leads to more immigration due to immigrants helping their families back home, assisting them when crossing the border and providing information, accommodation or employment. This leads to chain migration. Secondly, the longer immigration wave lasts, the more difficult it is to stop it. Immigrants tend to group in elites and fight for spreading rights and benefits. With growing number of immigrant groups it is harder for political figures to ignore their requests. Lastly, heavy flow of immigrants slows down assimilation of immigrants. As it was mentioned before, immigrants tend to settle in the same regions so the concentration of these people in one area is increasing. They do not have any motives to learn a new language since most of their neighbors are Mexicans and it leads to expansion of Spanish language and culture.

Historical presence – Mexicans claim that they are entitled to some regions in the USA. States such as Texas, California, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada and Utah used to part of Mexico until they were invaded by the USA and these territories were taken from

them. Mexicans nowadays purposely settle in these areas there were taken from them during the American-Mexican war.

2.3.1 Push-Pull model

Table 2: Push-Pull model

Indicator	Push factors (situation in Mexico)	Pull factors (situation in USA)
GDP per capita (2014)	18 000	54 400
Health care (physicians density in 2011)	2.1 physicians/1 000 population	2.45 physicians/1 000 population
Literacy rate (2012)	95%	99%
Life expectancy at birth (2015)	76 years	80 years
Population below poverty line (2012)	52%	15%

Source: The World Factbook, 2015, edited by author

In order to analyze the motives for Mexican migration it is essential to use the push and pull model. Current status of indicators in Mexico represents the push factors that force people leave their country behind. Pull factors are represented by the indicators in the USA. GDP per capita, quality of health care, literacy rate, average age and population below poverty line are push factors that encourage Mexicans to emigrate. Life in the USA seems better in all of these aspects than in Mexico. Other push factors that drive people out of the country are low development rate, lack of job opportunities or monetary crisis. Pull factors that lure Mexicans to come in the USA are for example the reunification of families, plenty of low-skilled job opportunities available, shared history, etc.

More people attempt to migrate to the USA due to high crime rates in Mexico, especially in its capital Mexico City. Homicides and drug related crimes represent a

major concern for its inhabitants. Many people try to escape and hope for better life in the USA that offers a lot more stable and safer place to live. Majority of the Mexican population is employed in farming and live in rural areas where they struggle due to poor quality land and extreme temperatures. Mexico suffers from natural disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis; and also from water shortages even in more developed regions. People affected by the damage of natural disasters or even those living in danger zones are sometimes forced to migrate if their homes become dangerous to live in.

In states such as Texas or California we can find immigrant communities which attract more and more Mexicans and encourage them to come. These communities try to help new immigrants to settle. They are often their family members or friends and usually decide to live together in order to be reunited with their families. Better academic opportunities also entice Mexicans to migrate to the USA in order to get better education or more likely, for their future children to get a higher paying job. (Migrationpolicy.org, 2011)

The creation of NAFTA can be considered as another push factor for Mexicans to leave their country. This agreement caused lowering barriers in trade and investment between Canada, Mexico and the USA. It was expected to create additional jobs in Mexico and to reduce unauthorized migration. However, it did not turn out that well as they expected. The number of illegal Mexicans rose from 2.5 million in 1995 to 4.5 million in 2000. Only few new job opportunities were created due to the arrival of foreign investors. Yet Mexico strengthened their relations with other countries such as Nicaragua, Chile, Bolivia, Uruguay or the European Union. Many manufacturers decided to relocate their manufacturing activities to Mexico in order to employ cheap Mexican labor and lower their overhead costs. It caused a decline in economic development in Mexico and their inhabitants were unable to escape the vicious circle of poverty. (Hufbauer, 2005)

2.4 Analysis of impacts

2.4.1 Impacts on labor market in the USA

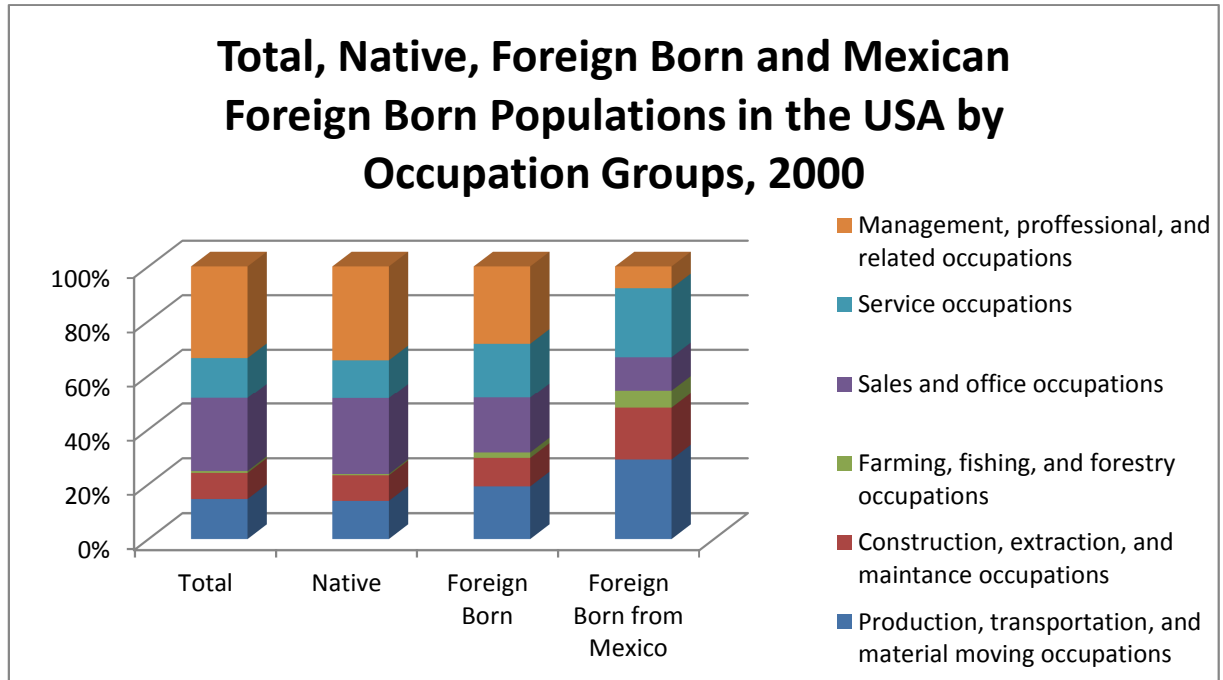
Immigration of Mexicans has an influence on economy of the USA. Mexican workers have an immediate impact on labor supply and goods and services that are ready for consumption in the USA or for exporting to other countries.

Big amount of Mexicans have not obtained high school diploma and only a small group of them achieved college or graduate education. Due to plenty of Mexican migrants without adequate education, the supply of workers with no high school diploma is increasing while supply with sufficient education is not dramatically changing. (Cis.org, 2001)

Mexican immigrants benefit US economy by taking low-paying jobs (although wage is still higher than in Mexico). At first, this seemed to bring many advantages to the USA. Americans were refusing to take these low-paying jobs but companies were in need of work force in order to fill these positions so they employed illegal immigrants. As the rate of unemployment in the USA began to rise, American workers started to look for these jobs but most of them were already taken by immigrants which refused to let them go. So nowadays, people in the USA accuse Mexican workers of stealing their jobs and increase social tension between the two groups.

Illegal immigrants from Mexico are known for working for incredibly low wages. As unemployed Americans are looking for new jobs, they are quite often expected to work for low wages as well which leads to increasing poverty in the USA. Nowadays many companies try to get rid of American work force and employ cheap labor offered by immigrants which causes the unemployment rate to increase. Legal Mexicans, who work and pay taxes, often send money to their families in Mexico. It can affect the economy of the USA because they have less money to spend on goods and services which is taxed in the USA. (Jackson, 2011)

Graph 3: Total, Native, Foreign-born and Mexican Foreign-born populations by major occupation groups in the USA in 2000



Source: data from www.migrationpolicy.org, edited by author

The work force of Mexican immigrants accounted to 3.4% of the total employed labor force in the USA. 60% of Mexicans aged 16 and older were already a part of the labor force in the USA. American workers are more focused on management and professional occupations compared to foreign-born and Mexican workers. Majority of Mexican migrants (29%) have occupations related to production, transportation, material moving occupations or they are search for employment in services (25.3%). Only 6.5% of Mexican migrants are employed in farming, fishing or forestry. However, of all workers employed in these areas, 30% come from Mexico. (Grieco, Ray; 2014)

In terms of job competition, most Americans do not compete with Mexican immigrants. It seems very probable that most of the jobs performed by Mexicans are usually paid very low wages and Americans do not show any interest in these low paying jobs.

However, there are millions of American workers who do not hold high school diploma and have to do this kind of jobs and work full-time. It has been proven that these American workers directly compete with immigrant workers from Mexico. (Cis.org, 2001)

The unemployment rate remains around 4.5% throughout the last years in the USA. If the 12 million undocumented workers in the USA were deported, where would the USA find workers to fill these jobs? Unless a full-fledged depression occurs, there would not be enough US citizens to do the work of the nation. (Rivera, 2008)

2.4.2 Impacts on labor market in Mexico

When Mexicans decide to migrate to the USA, pressure on social services, jobs and land is being relieved. The rate of unemployment declines and health services are not so overloaded due to reduced population. Mexico's people are very dependent on their own food. Since most of the migrants come from rural areas, it results in a shortage of farmers and obviously food shortage as well. (Jackson, 2011)

Illegal immigration is an issue of many facets. Economy of Mexico seems a lot stronger than it actually is in reality in short term. Since millions of migrants, who are economically active or inactive, are leaving the country, the unemployment rate yet remains at lower level. In the long term, however, Mexico and its labor market suffer due to its big loss of work force. If the USA happened to implement unlikely full deportation, it would increase the unemployment in Mexico to 13%. (Newsmax.com, 2014)

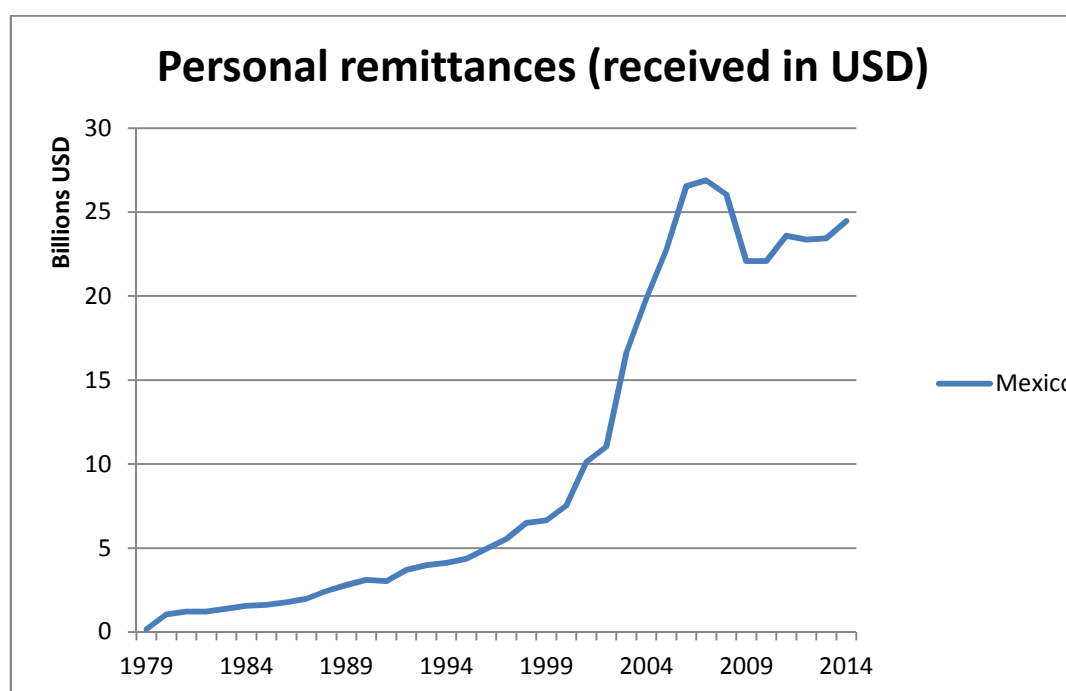
Remittances

The situation of Mexican labor market is greatly influenced by remittances sent by immigrants living in the USA. Remittances represent some kind of financial relief for the households in Mexico. However, they negatively affect the balance of payments of

the USA (sending country) but Mexico's (receiving country) foreign exchange earnings are increasing.

In Mexico's economy, remittances represent a significant source of income. A survey in 2003 discovered that remittances in rural Mexico contributed to per capita household income by 15%. Nevertheless, Mexico's development and economic viability harmfully affected by vast migration. Approximately 70% of Mexican remittances are spent on living expenses such as rent, food, mortgage; and only 1% is being invested in business. Remittances support the dependency of Mexico on the USA and fail to determine the long-term future of Mexican economy and other Latin American countries. (Fair, 2015)

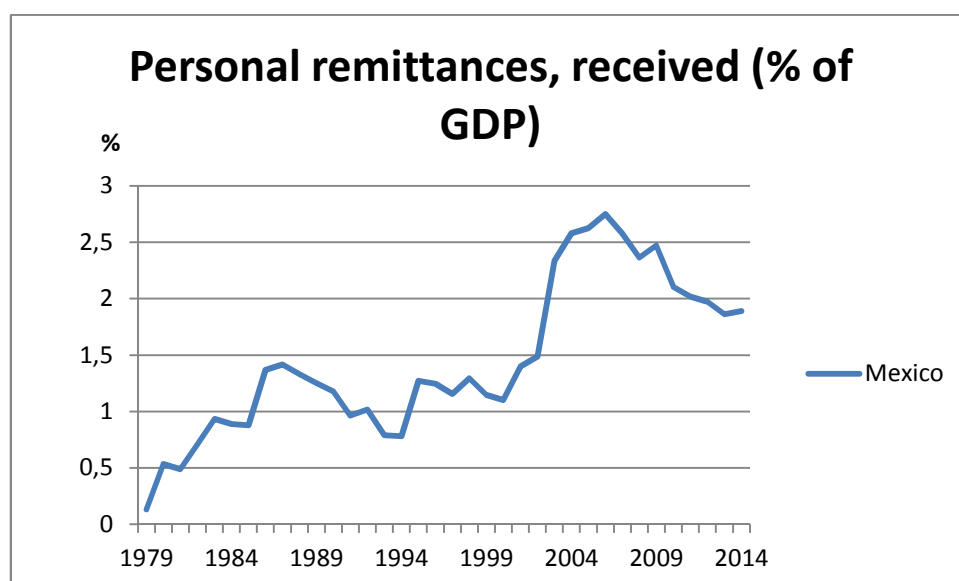
Graph 4: Personal remittances, received in USD



Source: databank.worldbank.org, edited by author

As we can see in the graph 4, the record amount of remittances sent to Mexico was in 2007 (almost 27 billion USD). Throughout the following years, it began to decline due to economic crisis when Mexicans lost jobs and were unable to support their families back home. In graph 5 we can see how much the remittances contributed to the total of GDP in the receiving country. In 2006, their share was approximately 2.75% to the total of GDP of Mexico.

Graph 5: Personal remittances received (% of GDP)



Source: databank.worldbank.org, edited by author

According to the Bank of Mexico, remittances reached 12.08 billion USD in the first half of 2015 sent by migrants to their families in Mexico. For comparison, in the same period of 2014 the remittances reached 11.62 billion USD. In 2014, Mexican migrants sent total of 23.64 billion USD of remittances to Mexico and 21.89 billion USD in 2013. The average remittance sent to Mexico in period from January to June this year remained the same (294 USD) compared to 2014. Electronic funds transfers have become the most common way to transfer money to Mexico. Remittances, largely from the USA, became the second largest source of foreign exchange in the country (oil is the 1st) and help lots of people with their living expenses. (Fox News, 2015)

2.4.3 Other impacts

Mexicans trying to assimilate into communities in the USA can result in several problems. Since most of them do not speak English fluently and they live in closed communities with their families and friends, they sometimes might feel that they have no need to assimilate. Unfortunately, it can create an unnecessary tension between Americans and Mexican immigrants due to disrespect or simply misunderstanding. This tension must be taken seriously in order to prevent extreme cases such as violence, crime and segregation.

Immigrants are sometimes accused of increasing the crime rates in areas where they migrate to. Factors leading to crime might be poor education or low income. American citizens are concerned that Mexicans might be capable of smuggling drugs into the USA which leads to a huge problem of crimes related to drugs.

Immigrating Mexicans bring their cultural traditions along with them and they help to shape the states with high immigration numbers with their cultural aspects. Mexican food and music has made a significant impact on the American culture. Spanish language is being taught in American schools which benefit the younger population and their future careers.

It is believed by experts that Hispanics are demographically taking over the USA and if the trend continues, the Anglo, white American majority will swap places with Hispanics currently, now the nation's largest minority in less than a century.(Riviera)

Most Mexican migrants are of young age which creates a dependent population of older people in Mexico who are unable to work. Also, the birth rate is on decline due to a shortage of fertile couples in Mexico who would rather stay in Mexico than migrate to the USA. Since majority of migrants are men, high number of females left in Mexico are not able to find partners with whom they could start a family. It results in increasing the dependency ratio and decline in birth rate. (Jackson, 2011)

Latino groups in the USA share cultural characteristics, racial histories, Spanish language, religion, making them more integrated over the course of decades.

It is expected in the upcoming years Latinos will gain greater electoral and policy influence and states across the country as well as national politics. (Barreto, Segura; 2014)

2.5 SWOT analysis

Table 3: SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
cheap and large supply of labor remittances decline in unemployment rate in Mexico reunification with families transfer of goods, people and investment filling gaps in labor market stimulation of GDP	"brain drain" poor education high unemployment in the USA mixing cultures, values and traditions increasing costs related to migration issues overloaded public institutions in USA corruption lack of workers in Mexico
Opportunities	Threats
development of market spreading know-how widening knowledge improvements in communities diverse culture	racism, high crime rates, discrimination xenophobia outflow of people drug cartels demographic changes illegal immigration new illnesses

Source: author

To conclude, both countries must face many challenges when it comes to migration from Mexico to the USA. One of the main strengths is the huge labor supply that

Mexico has to offer or remittances whose main purpose is to help families financially. On the other side, it might result also in “brain drain” of qualified workers and it can lead to still increasing costs related to migration issues in both countries. However, this issue offers several opportunities and Mexico can take advantage of it. They contribute to diversification of culture in the USA which leads to assimilation and less crime related to race, ethnicity and others. Mexico also benefits from remittances when people receiving the money invest in local communities and increases the living conditions.

2.6 Structured interview

At the end of this thesis, I would like to include an interview with 31-year old illegal immigrant from Mexico, currently living in the USA. The interviewee prefers to stay anonymous.

The interviewee was asked 5 simple questions. I picked these specific questions as I think they are beneficial for this thesis and deepening my knowledge of problems related to Mexican immigration.

1. What were your circumstances that made you choose to migrate to the USA?

“I was about 14-15 when I started thinking about migrating to the USA. I begged my parents for approval but they wanted me to stay home and finish school. One day, they finally changed their minds and I was able to go. The main reason was money because at home I had to work hard for little money.”

2. How did you manage to cross the border?

“I borrowed some money from my brother that was already living in the USA. I found a coyote that could help me cross the border. I paid him and we made arrangements. I had to get on a plane to get closer to the border (still on Mexican side), then we had to run for about 40 minutes and then on the other side a big van was waiting on us. I and group of other people drove a day and a half until we got to Los Angeles. This was about 16 years ago. The crossing was a lot easier than nowadays.”

3. Do you send home remittances and if so, what percentage of your income do you send?

“Since I have been in the USA for a long time now, I can say I am financially stable. I am able to send home to my parents about 800 USD every month.”

4. Do you have dreams of returning to your home country some day?

“Of course, I want to go back one day. But on the other side, I already have a new family in the USA, so I do not really know how to make things work.”

5. What have been the consequences, both positive and negative, of migrating to the USA?

“I have a lot better life here than in Mexico; I make enough money to support my family back home and to raise my family here in the USA. However, I have been living here for about 16 years now and I got used to this life so it would be hard to return to Mexico and to continue my old life.”

In conclusion, one of the main reasons migrate decide to leave Mexico are better job opportunities on the US labor market and remittances that migrants can send home to support their families. Even though, they have to pay lots of money to cover the expenses of the service of coyotes and it is extremely dangerous, they still wish to do it. Sometimes they desire to come to the USA only for a specific period of time and plan to return back home one day, but it might not be possible due to new family already in the USA just like in my interviewee’s case. In many cases, they get used to their new lifestyle in the USA and never plan to go back to Mexico.

3. Proposal part

The issue of illegal immigration to the USA can be seen from different points of view. Mexico as a country with high unemployment rate should aim its efforts at labor market. If people earn enough money, have their background and are satisfied, then the crime rate decline and number of Mexican immigrants is decreasing. The country has the task of ensuring the safety for its citizens, respecting their rights and responsibilities and regulating the economy. It should focus on creation of jobs that could be performed by less educated people as well. The government should earmark a certain share of funds for projects that would help people from rural areas to become more active economically. The support of social policies and effective public institutions are important. Government should not forget to invest in education at all levels, attempt to reduce the number of people living in poverty and try to improve the standards of health care. If the social and economic conditions are improving, then people are less motivated to emigrate and will try to succeed at home in Mexico.

The USA can also contribute to improvement of the current immigration problem. They should strengthen their political cooperation, increase security in the region close to the border and improve communication and information resources in order to detect illegal paths that are being used by Mexicans to cross the border. They can also provide assistance to Mexico for establishing new companies that would create new jobs for Mexicans, low- and high-paying jobs as well.

Mexico is popular for its drug cartels. They represent a major issue and thanks to migration they can possibly infiltrate to US territory along with other immigrants. This, of course, results in increasing crime rates throughout the country. If migration was reduced to its minimum, then the drug trade would be weakened and the number of crime cases on decline.

Migrants who attempt to cross the border are captured by US border patrols and are usually deported from the country. However, this happens quite often and even after this experience, migrants keep trying to cross the border illegally until they succeed.

In 2014, US President Obama introduced an effective immigration system, which continues to protect their borders and crack down on employers who employ unauthorized immigrants. This system requires immigrants, before they become eligible for citizenship, to behave by the law, pay taxes, learn English and pass "background check". (Whitehouse.gov, 2014)

While dealing with problems such as lack of job positions, lack of work force or while creating new job opportunities, it might be beneficial and essential to turn to international organizations (such as ILO). ILO helps governments of different countries to implement programs and actions which are focused on creation of more job opportunities in the country. Mexico can also get the help from the United Nations which can provide assistance in international agreements.

4. Conclusion

The aim of bachelor thesis was to analyze the Mexican immigration issue and to describe its main impacts on both countries. Poor economic and social conditions in Mexico force people to migrate to other countries. High rate of poverty, unemployment, lower literacy rates than in the USA and lack of job opportunities are the main drivers that make them want to change their lives. To analyze the motives for migration, I used the push-pull model in which USA beats Mexico in many aspects. Majority of Mexicans migrating to the USA are mostly men of working age with poor education and low skills who usually work in services, construction and others. They leave behind a large number of old people and women in Mexico which results in demographic changes. I also used SWOT analysis for better understanding the issue of Mexican migration.

The US economy is increasingly burdened mainly due to increasing costs related to immigration actions and protection of the American-Mexican border. But Mexicans can also positively affect the US economy. They work mainly for very low wages and fill gaps in the labor market. Migration has an impact on labor market in Mexico as well. Due to reduction of economically active people, the unemployment rate declines due to decline in labor supply. Mexico has to face a major problem of “brain drain” when big portion of migrants is highly skilled people and they decide to pursue a career outside of Mexico rather than at home.

Remittances play a major role in the Mexican economy. They highly contribute to the growth of the Mexican economy and improve living conditions of less prosperous people in Mexico. They also result in development of the local communities. On the contrary, Mexicans get demotivated by remittances and in many cases they stop looking for a job or developing themselves due to satisfactory financial support from other family members living outside of Mexico. They become dependent on money coming from other source and become economically inactive.

It is quite difficult to determine whether Mexican immigration to the USA has more negative or positive impacts. On one side, it stimulates the country's GDP, gives hope to many people who dream for reunification with their lost families, contributes to spread the knowledge and brings new culture. On the other side, it can threaten the security of the country. This issue is soluble whether by governments of both countries or by international organizations that can provide assistance with creation of various agreements.

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