

# Rethinking the U.S.-Mexico Border Immigration Enforcement System

## A Policy Road Map

RETHINKING U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY INITIATIVE

BY DORIS MEISSNER

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Beginning with a travel ban and severe cuts in refugee admissions at the outset of his administration, President Donald Trump has relentlessly pressed his case that immigration is a danger to the country. More than 400 executive actions on immigration later,<sup>1</sup> the administration has achieved many of its most cherished goals. Building the U.S.-Mexico border wall that animated the president's 2016 campaign, shutting down access to asylum at the border, and otherwise seeking to deter arrivals—including with a controversial family separation policy—have ranked high on that list.

Legal immigration, too, has been dramatically reshaped through a combination of executive actions, policy guidance and regulatory changes, and pandemic-response measures that have bypassed the role and prerogatives traditionally exercised by Congress. As a result, humanitarian programs have fallen to historic lows, and visa issuance and adjustment of status for green cards and citizenship, as well as admission of nonimmigrant workers, have begun to plunge.

The pace and scope of the changes at and beyond the U.S. borders as well as in the U.S. interior have transformed the nation's immigration policies and practices, despite extensive litigation that thwarted various initiatives, at least for a time, and fierce resistance from some elected officials, advocates, and others.

The administration's agenda is grounded in a narrative that portrays immigration—legal or otherwise—as a threat to the security of the United States and the jobs and opportunities of American workers. This narrative is rooted in political opportunism, however, not evidence and past U.S. experience.

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*At its core, immigration is an asset that advances the prosperity and success of the United States as a nation going forward.*

The evidence-based story is quite the opposite. Immigration is fundamentally about enduring national interests and values that serve American citizens and society. Cutting off and denigrating immigration harms the well-being of *all* Americans, not just the foreign born. At its core, immigration is an asset that advances the prosperity and success of the United States as a nation going forward.

The immigration-as-asset narrative is more than phrase making. It is a reality, based on an overwhelming consensus from economists, that recognizes immigration as a resource and a value add to the U.S. economy. This strategic asset benefits Americans and U.S. society broadly by sparking innovation, generating jobs, meeting essential needs in fields such as food and health care, strengthening families and communities, renewing democracy, and

deepening global power and influence *if* it is properly managed, fair, and humane.

The “if” is what has proven elusive—at least in recent decades. Leveraging immigration fully as an asset can succeed only with Congress enacting changes to the laws that guide legal immigration—that is, by establishing whom to welcome given the changing social and economic realities facing the country.

To that end, the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) launched a multiyear initiative in 2019 called Rethinking U.S. Immigration Policy.<sup>2</sup> It is providing analysis of the evidence that undergirds immigration-as-asset policies and developing proposals for a modernized, more functional system under rules that are equitable and enforceable.

The Rethinking work addresses two broad challenges: the legal immigration system—especially em-

## Box 1

### About the Rethinking U.S. Immigration Policy Project and Forthcoming Work

This road map is part of a multiyear Migration Policy Institute (MPI) project, Rethinking U.S. Immigration Policy. At a time when U.S. immigration realities are changing rapidly, this initiative is generating a big-picture, evidence-driven vision of the role immigration can and should play in America’s future. It is providing research, analysis, and policy ideas and proposals—both administrative and legislative—that reflect these new realities and needs for immigration to better align with U.S. national interests.

A modernized legal immigration system is paramount to the future of the country and is long overdue given the increasing global hunt for talent. In forthcoming reports, MPI’s Rethinking analyses will point to the need for more categories and numbers of employment-based visas across the skills spectrum and will recommend a new form of visa to meet such needs. Another publication will argue that the immigration system also needs to be flexible—in place of today’s rigid, fixed-in-statute-for-decades quotas—in determining immigration levels, so they can respond to sometimes rapidly changing, unforeseen labor market circumstances. The pandemic and the great recession of 2008 are acute examples of such shifts.

Perhaps the most pressing matter on the legal immigration agenda is legalization, given the fact that more than 60 percent of those lacking legal status have lived in the United States for ten years or more. They have developed deep roots in the country and communities, opening businesses and meeting labor needs in key sectors, raising families, buying homes, and becoming part of the fabric of society—all while facing an impermanence and threat of deportation that keeps many from fulfilling their potential. MPI will provide a new look at the subgroups within this population, including recipients of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) programs, and a menu of options for legislators to consider as an element of revamping legal immigration laws.

The need notwithstanding, legislation to revamp legal immigration along the lines identified above is not in sight politically, and the politics of immigration revolve almost exclusively around securing borders. Given that reality, the Rethinking initiative is also focusing on immigration enforcement questions.

Today’s enforcement regime at the U.S.-Mexico border has not adjusted to the change in flows from young Mexican males seeking work in the United States to largely families and children from Central America seeking safety. Other elements of immigration enforcement—especially the detention and removal system and immigration courts—handle staggering workloads, resulting in severe performance shortcomings. Forthcoming Rethinking reports alongside earlier MPI policy proposals envision interlocking, dramatic changes in these aspects of immigration policy and governance.

ployment-based flows—and immigration enforcement that is effective and humane. In each case, MPI will continue publishing in-depth examinations and proposals, as well as summary road maps of key takeaways for policymaking. (See Box 1.)

While most of the challenges for getting immigration policy right have to do with fixing the legal immigration system, it is impossible to imagine an administration having the political space to do this without addressing enforcement at the U.S.-Mexico border. Today's enforcement regime at the Southwest border offers a vivid example of how current policies, laws, and resource investments are markedly out of step with new realities and future needs. The border enforcement road map that follows, which previews recommendations that will be more richly detailed in forthcoming reports from the Rethinking initiative and revisits earlier MPI policy proposals, envisions a set of interlocking, dramatic changes in this critical arena of immigration policy and governance.

## 1 *Managing Borders*

Migration pressures at the U.S.-Mexico border are inevitable, given geography and decades-long close economic and social ties with countries to the immediate south of the United States that are struggling with poverty, wars, or weak governance. Thus, border security should be treated as a continuing management challenge and responsibility, rather than a once-and-for-all crusade to seal the border. It is unrealistic, indeed disingenuous, to contend that the measure of effective border enforcement is zero illegal crossings, as has been enshrined in U.S. law since 2006<sup>3</sup> and occupies center stage in the immigration-as-threat narrative.

Indeed, in the criminal justice context, standards for assessing the effectiveness of policing are built

around ensuring public safety and bringing wrongdoers to account—not that zero crimes are committed. Such standards could never be met. Similar expectations should apply at the border, with the goal of enforcement being to effectively *manage* the border.

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Border management embraces mobility by enabling safe, legal, and orderly flows of people and goods. It also entails combating criminal activity; deterring illegal crossings; ensuring that pertinent U.S. laws—such as asylum—are properly administered; coordinating with intra-agency, interagency, intergovernmental, and international partners; and upholding high standards of professionalism and accountability.

Border management cannot be achieved solely at the border or by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the principal Department of Homeland Security (DHS) border enforcement agency, alone. Instead, because of the complexity of the mission and the characteristics of today's migrant flows, border management relies on the performance of other critical functions of the government that extend beyond CBP's efforts and jurisdiction at the border.

Those functions include political asylum adjudications, immigration court proceedings, migrant custody, and cooperation with Mexico and neighboring countries that are the principal sources of today's illegal migration flows. Unless these functions work together as a *system*, border management in today's reality cannot succeed.

## A. *Changed, Mixed Flows*

Border enforcement strategies, resources, and policy responses being deployed today were designed for fundamentally different flows than those that have become dominant in recent years. Excepting 2015 and since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, flows from Central America have outpaced those from Mexico every year since 2014. The Central American flows are comprised largely of young families or unaccompanied children seeking protection by applying for asylum in the United States, rather than young, male adults in search of work—as had been the pattern dating back to the early 1970s.

In fiscal year (FY) 2008, more than 90 percent of those apprehended at the border were Mexican. In FY 2019, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Salvadorans represented 74 percent of apprehensions, with 66 percent composed of families traveling together or children making the journey alone. With the pandemic, these percentages plummeted, and single adults represented 79 percent of Border Patrol encounters during FY 2020.<sup>4</sup> However, given the reasons and conditions people are fleeing—both from Central America and potentially from other parts of the hemisphere—combined with pull factors in the United States, the family and child flows can be expected to resume later this year and continue for the foreseeable future. MPI has examined these changes and their policy implications in earlier Rethinking work.<sup>5</sup>

Known as mixed flows because they involve both economic and humanitarian migrants, this migration stream is more complex than that of single, adult Mexican males from a contiguous country. CBP and other DHS entities, as well as other government agencies whose missions support border enforcement, have not adjusted to the implications of the changing flows for their roles, capabilities, and infra-

structure, although the changing trends began to appear as far back as 2012.

Consistent with its immigration-as-threat narrative, the Trump administration has responded to the change in flows by characterizing arriving asylum seekers and other migrants as an invasion and implementing a succession of extreme measures that have ultimately shut down—in violation of U.S. law and international agreements and principles—any meaningful access to humanitarian protection and asylum in the United States. These are among numerous other unprecedented and harsh policies that undermine deeply held American values and integrity. In recent months, due to the pandemic, the administration has declared a public-health emergency at the border, invoking Centers for Disease Control (CDC) powers that authorize expulsion—an unknown procedure not provided for in immigration law—of border crossers, including asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors. Nearly 205,000 expulsions occurred between March-September at the Southwest border.<sup>6</sup>

## B. *The Case for a Network of Multiagency Reception Centers*

Until the shift in flows, the CBP enforcement model had demonstrated significant successes in thwarting illegal migration of Mexican migrants. In reaching that point, the Border Patrol made fundamental changes to its strategies in the 1990s, with deterrence through prevention, and in the 2000s, with what has been termed consequence enforcement, aided by historic, sustained levels of funding.<sup>7</sup> In parallel, significant changes took place in the economies of both Mexico and the United States that lessened the drivers for illegal migration of Mexicans. This new decade, with its more diverse flows, calls for re-engineering once again.

Traditional, robust border enforcement to confront illegal activity of many types must continue. Thus, building an infrastructure and cross-agency processes suited to managing current flows properly would free up Border Patrol agents to again focus on their core mission. For example, agents should not be tasked, as some recently were in a norm-changing decision, with asylum eligibility screening, a function for which asylum officer skills are uniquely designed and more appropriate.

To that end, a network of reception centers and facilities at or near the border, staffed by multiple agencies, should be established to provide initial screening and referral of migrants who are apprehended or turn themselves in to immigration enforcement officials.

The purpose of such centers would be to insure one-stop screening for nationality, criminality, unaccompanied minor status, asylum seeking, expedited removal, and other characteristics. Such screening would then enable referral and handover to the appropriate federal agency. These include U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for custody in expedited removal cases and scheduling immigration proceedings, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for care and placement of unaccompanied minors, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) asylum officers for credible-fear screening, nongovernmental organizations to provide legal-rights counseling and representation services, foreign consulates when needed, and medical services when required.

The centers should have built-in surge capacity so that unexpected spikes in arrivals do not become humanitarian emergencies, as happened in 2014 with the child migration crisis and again in 2019. They would also provide appropriate settings for a varied migrant population. The need for facilities suited to the changed flows was starkly illustrated by the specter of kids in cages, because Border Pa-

trol stations have only temporary lock-up facilities that were designed for turnaround enforcement of primarily Mexican males, instead of families and children.

The idea of facilities at the border for co-locating staff from the responsible federal agencies is not new. MPI sketched a possible design and its merits in earlier research.<sup>8</sup> But it has not been developed. Moreover, some agencies have argued that separation of enforcement and services personnel and missions should be maintained.

Such reservations illustrate the conceptual changes required in rethinking border enforcement in an era of diverse flows. Rather than the current unrealistic preoccupation on thwarting *all* illegal crossings, these flows should be managed within the framework of a multidimensional system that encompasses deterring illegal crossings of all kinds and upholding laws that may result in asylum and other forms of relief, as well as deportations.

### C. *Political Asylum and the Immigration Courts*

A functional asylum system is today's first-order unmet border management need. MPI's first Rethinking report addressed and made recommendations on this challenge.<sup>9</sup> With mixed flows and many Central American arrivals attempting to apply for asylum, the answer is not to shut down asylum processing, as the current administration has done.

Instead, asylum should be treated as intrinsic to effective border management because asylum is part of administering U.S. and international law and human-rights principles that must apply at the border. At the same time, even well-functioning asylum systems are not suited for large-scale, protracted flows. Other policies must also be implemented, as outlined below.



The Asylum Division of USCIS and the Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR), better known as the immigration courts, in the Justice Department are responsible for handling asylum claims. Asylum applicants now face asylum and removal hearings with court dates that are often years away because of historic backlogs.

Extended stays in the United States while asylum claims are pending and the resulting infrequent return of migrants whose cases are denied invite continued large-scale flows. Thus, a failing asylum system both sidelines humanitarian obligations of immigration law and policy and undermines the border security mission.

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The way forward is to rebuild the asylum system based on principles of timeliness and fairness in deciding asylum claims.<sup>10</sup> Timely, fair determinations would grant asylum to those who are eligible, enabling them to establish new lives and, in turn, deter unfounded claims and opportunistic flows by returning those whose claims are denied.

The goal for timeliness should be deciding a case within months, not years. To guarantee fairness, all applicants should have access to legal services, initially through legal advice when formal representation is not possible, but ultimately through universal representation.

In addition to continuing to carry out the initial credible-fear screening of asylum applicants at the border, the USCIS Asylum Division should be authorized to complete the full merits adjudication of those with positive findings, instead of referring these

cases to immigration courts, where they must begin anew, often after waiting in years-long backlogs. USCIS asylum offices around the country would take on this caseload, with immigration courts then serving as an asylum review body, hearing only those cases where an asylum denial is appealed. This change would also help reduce the clogged dockets of immigration courts.

There is more to do, however, with the immigration courts, which are in a state of deep crisis and face a record-breaking workload of more than 1 million cases that turn not only on asylum but also on other critical issues of relief under immigration law. The courts' problems cannot be solved by reconfiguring the asylum caseload or adding judges alone. The court system needs major technology and modernization investments, along with unwinding rigid procedural dictates and narrowed asylum law interpretations handed down by the current administration through its oversight of EOIR and the exercise of the Attorney General's referral and review power. Forthcoming Rethinking reports on the court system and on the Attorney General's referral and review authority will provide fuller recommendations on these topics.

Establishing the timely, fair asylum regime outlined here, in coordination with USCIS and other DHS components, could serve as a vanguard for reform that launches the broader rescue the immigration court system needs.

Such changes would represent a major reset that requires longer-term commitments to fully achieve. But unless asylum case processing is elevated, management of Southwest border flows effectively will continue to flounder and flout humanitarian principles and U.S. law, as well as basic decency that has historically been a hallmark of U.S. treatment toward those fleeing violence and persecution.

## D. *Alternatives to Detention*

Detention that resembles incarceration in the criminal justice system represents an unduly harsh feature of current border enforcement that can subject asylum seekers and other migrants to conditions including solitary confinement, substandard health-care and living conditions, and reported instances of use of pepper spray and tear gas. ICE oversees detention in more than 200 federal prisons, local jails, and for-profit prison facilities across the country. Today's debates about over-policing and incarceration have immigration counterparts. Detention as the priority for those subject to removal proceedings in the immigration system has become the norm.

In a forthcoming Rethinking report, MPI examines immigration detention issues in light of changes in immigration flows and public-health and safety threats. The goal of noncitizen detention is not to punish but to ensure compliance with civil proceedings, i.e. cooperation with immigration monitoring requirements, appearance for asylum interview and court dates, and departure from the United States, if ordered removed.

Noncitizens can be in detention for a number of reasons. These include statutorily required mandatory detention and processing for removal of criminal aliens who have completed prison sentences and are then subject to deportation.

Others, however, are awaiting asylum and removal hearings. They have not been convicted of a crime but are routinely held in conditions otherwise assigned to convicted criminals. Approximately 90 percent of those in immigration detention do not present public-safety dangers for violent or other serious crimes.<sup>11</sup> Yet they can be subject to severe deprivations that can result in lasting psychological harm and health risks, as documented with separation of families, family detention, and the exposure

to grave health dangers with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

This profile calls for a more flexible system and for more humane treatment while still advancing border-management goals. ICE has established some greater flexibility through its Alternatives to Detention (ATD) programs. Were ICE to adopt and more fully develop such methods for the predominant share of its cases, it could significantly reduce reliance on often neglectful prisons that are privately owned or operated. ATDs also cost a fraction of detention, which is consuming increasingly large shares of ICE's budget and staffing. In most forms that have been studied, they result in 90 percent or higher appearance rates at immigration court hearings, which is the aim of immigration custody.

As the forthcoming MPI report will demonstrate, evaluations of successful programs show that compliance by participants stems from solid risk-assessment screening, sound legal advice, close monitoring—electronically, where warranted—and timely resolution of cases. Access to information and services are key. The programs inform migrants about the steps required in the removal process, counsel them about what would happen if they were ordered deported, link them with legal representation, and sometimes provide support services to help ensure residential and economic stability. Through such measures, they gain the trust of immigrants in the fairness of the removal process and their compliance with it. Supervision programs could also incorporate predeparture planning and support from foreign government consuls to link those ordered removed with reintegration services in their home countries.

Although a 2015 federal court ruling held that the government may not detain families and children as a deterrent,<sup>12</sup> there is a deeply held view in immigration enforcement agencies that without detention

migrants will abscond and fail to comply with appearance requirements. Thus, more broadly utilizing various forms of detention alternatives as the prevailing policy and practice in immigration enforcement represents another sweeping, longer-term endeavor that would require significant changes in operations, as well as in the culture of enforcement agencies.

Such an overhaul should proceed through pilot efforts in concert with the other key reforms outlined above: reception centers and revamped asylum and court procedures. It is only when border management, custody, supervision, and asylum adjudication work together effectively that true deterrence—in the form of fair, timely decisions and deportation of individuals without valid claims—can be assured.

## E. *Addressing the Drivers of Central American Flows*

Ultimately, the answers to the arrival of sizeable numbers of those seeking safety or work and opportunity reside in changing the conditions that drive people to flee their home countries. Thus, improved citizen security, job creation, and good governance, as well as protection and opportunities closer to home, are critical ingredients for a systemic approach to border security, which will be detailed in a forthcoming publication.<sup>13</sup>

In this regard, Mexico is a key partner. Now both a migrant transit and destination country, Mexico has a shared interest with the United States in reducing migration pressures within the region and managing mobility so it is safe, legal, and orderly. Areas of policy that continue to be ripe for heightened cooperation include enforcement of Mexico's southern border and combating smuggling and criminal activity that enable unlawful flows. But they also extend to newer opportunities for building capacity in the asylum, temporary visa, and work programs that the

current government supports. In the case of asylum, this is opportune for asylum seekers because Mexico follows a broader eligibility definition than does the United States.

For its part, as MPI's forthcoming Rethinking work on legal immigration will outline, the United States should establish a broader array of work visa opportunities for which migrants from within the region could qualify, so that perilous journeys to seek asylum—for which the majority of applicants from the region are not likely to qualify, even with a return to earlier standards and revitalized decision-making—are not the sole, often inappropriate, pathway for admission.

Further, the United States should work with Mexico, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and countries such as Canada and Costa Rica to establish regional processing programs that adjudicate protection claims from within the region, closer to the places migrants are fleeing. This could begin by allocating larger numbers to Latin America in a U.S. refugee resettlement program that is revived from the historic lows it currently admits. Both measures could be put into place relatively quickly where there are urgent needs for safety.

Finally, reducing migration pressures calls for support and collaboration with Central American countries themselves to more successfully reintegrate returned migrants as part of broader efforts that strengthen the rule of law, combat violence, reduce corruption, improve living standards, and mitigate the impacts of drought and climate change for their populations going forward. For example, research has now pinpointed areas where violence and economic stresses led to migration in search of safety. Anti-violence measures could be concentrated there.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, more robust reintegration programs should reduce administrative barriers—such as the need for identification documents and cre-



dentials—that returned migrants face in restarting their lives and contributing to the labor market.

In 1993, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was adopted, generating economic change and growth in Mexico. Fifteen years later, Mexico's economy had changed dramatically, contributing in important ways to lasting reductions in persistent illegal immigration that had been ingrained for decades. Similar longer-term initiatives must be designed and embraced with the governments and societies in the region as an indispensable scaffolding toward building a viable regional migration system.

## 2 Rethinking Immigration Governance at DHS

In establishing DHS, the functions of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) that had been combined under one head who reported to the Attorney General were divided among three new, autonomous immigration agencies.<sup>15</sup> Housed within DHS, the youngest of the government's national security arms, immigration has become defined almost entirely by its national security dimensions.

Immigration functions play a meaningful role in advancing the nation's efforts and successes in combating terrorism and protecting against potential threats. As an earlier Rethinking publication detailed,<sup>16</sup> this has been especially true in the development of data systems and use of biometrics for clearing U.S.-bound travelers, as well as through cooperation with the travel industry and information sharing with like-minded governments.

Nonetheless, the vast majority of day-to-day activities carried out by the principal DHS immigration agencies—CBP, ICE, and USCIS—are not matters of national security. They involve a multitude of rou-

tine tasks administering the nation's immigration and customs laws and requirements. Infusing them with a national security purpose above all else has distorted and sidelined many other attributes and values immigration embodies.

An immigration-as-asset vision calls for broadening the enforcement-only, national security-driven agenda that has characterized the post-9/11 years and is the subject of another forthcoming MPI analysis. The need for such re-examination broke into open view in mid-2020, as immigration law enforcement units were dispatched to several cities to quell racial justice protests over the objections or without the knowledge of state and local officials.<sup>17</sup> An earlier, grievous example of breakdowns in managing immigration responsibilities occurred as part of the family separation crisis: to this day there are more than 500 children who were taken from their parents for whom no records exist that make it possible to track or reunite them, as courts have repeatedly ordered.<sup>18</sup>

Such failings make a compelling case for reassessing the department's mission and its track record overseeing immigration portfolios. The DHS immigration agencies operate quite independently. Issues of coordination and tradeoffs among them reside with the Homeland Security secretary and deputy secretary. However, those officials have broad mandates and duties that do not permit the sustained attention and leadership that are essential for active oversight and implementation of integrated, systemic immigration policy changes.

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Bolstering DHS' ability to implement a broad, proactive immigration agenda would be needed to move ambitious change-management efforts or new policies, such as MPI's work will propose. The department's recent threat assessment of the rising dangers of domestic terrorism, with its white supremacist dimensions, raises the stakes even higher. A well-functioning immigration system that can win public trust would help mitigate antagonism to immigration.

To those ends, DHS leadership and coordination mechanisms, both intra-DHS and interagency, must be strengthened to pursue policies that reconfigure a broad array of individual programs, as well as insure that they work in concert and function as elements of immigration as a *system*.

### 3 Conclusion

Public opinion research has traced a clear, growing consensus that immigration strengthens the country. Support among voters now stands at about 60 percent, a sizeable increase among members of

both parties from four years ago.<sup>19</sup> Immigration policymaking by Congress and the governance of the immigration system by executive-branch agencies are increasingly out of step with new immigration realities, including changing public attitudes.

Rethinking legal immigration is today's first-order need for an immigration-as-asset vision to better serve the country. However, Congress has failed to do its job of enacting legislation that articulates the goals immigration should meet and a selection system for doing so. Until that changes, important progress can still be made on the pressing needs Southwest border enforcement presents.

MPI's policy road map for managing border enforcement as a cross-agency and cross-governmental system would put changes into place that marry effective border security with fair, humane enforcement. This will be especially important if a new administration comes into office with the inevitable appetite for unwinding today's shutdown of border and asylum processes in ways that could ignite new flows absent better responses from those used in the past.

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*MPI's policy road map for managing border enforcement as a cross-agency and cross-governmental system would put changes into place that marry effective border security with fair, humane enforcement.*

# Endnotes

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## About the Author



### **DORIS MEISSNER**

Doris Meissner, former Commissioner of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), is a Senior Fellow at the Migration Policy Institute (MPI), where she directs the Institute's U.S. immigration policy work. Her responsibilities focus on the role of immigration in America's future and on administering the nation's immigration laws, systems, and government agencies. Her work and expertise also include immigration and politics, immigration enforcement, border control, cooperation with other countries, and immigration and national security.

From 1993 to 2000, she served in the Clinton administration as Commissioner of the INS. Her accomplishments included reforming the nation's asylum system; creating new strategies for managing U.S. borders; improving naturalization and other services for immigrants; shaping responses to migration and humanitarian emergencies; strengthening cooperation with Mexico, Canada, and other countries; and managing growth that doubled the agency's personnel and tripled its budget.

In 1986, Ms. Meissner joined the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace as a Senior Associate. There, she created the Endowment's Immigration Policy Project, which evolved into MPI in 2001.

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