



## **Potential Sponsorship by IRCA-Legalized Immigrants**

**Karen A. Woodrow-Lafield**

THE U.S. COMMISSION ON IMMIGRATION REFORM IS A BIPARTISAN COMMISSION AUTHORIZED BY THE IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1990 AND CHARGED WITH EXAMINING IMMIGRATION POLICY AND ITS IMPACT ON SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS, ON POPULATION SIZE AND CHARACTERISTICS, AND ON THE ENVIRONMENT.

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U.S. COMMISSION ON IMMIGRATION REFORM

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## **CONTENTS**

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>DATA AND METHODS</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>PRESENCE AND FUTURE IMMIGRATION OF SPOUSES AND CHILDREN</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>INTENTION TO NATURALIZE AND FUTURE IMMIGRATION</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>PROJECTING VISA PETITIONS</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>33</b>



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A particular consideration of the Commission for Immigration Reform is the demand to immigrate to the United States by immediate relatives of aliens lawfully admitted for permanent residence and citizens of the United States. In devising the Immigration Act of 1990, policymakers considered current queues for relative categories and sought a balance among high demand, maintaining the family reunification principle, and establishment of a national level or "cap" on immigration. Given that the large backlogs of the 1980s and 1990s had not been anticipated before the 1965 Amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act, an ongoing review of legally resident immigrants' requirements for family reunification is worthwhile. This review is timely because recent legislative reforms created sizable new immigrant subgroups (formerly undocumented residents who have been here for more than a decade, formerly undocumented workers in seasonal agricultural services, and diversity immigrants from countries adversely affected by the 1965

Amendments) and expanded admissions under employment-based preference categories.

This research focuses on demand to immigrate legally by relatives of those aliens who, having resided in an unlawful status since before 1982, legalized under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 [IRCA]. A special survey of these legalized immigrants affords analysis of household composition (including members' legal residence status and relationship to the IRCA-legalized immigrant), distribution of nonresident relatives intending to immigrate to the United States, and intentions to naturalize among IRCA-legalized immigrants. The questions addressed are: What will be the probable numbers and timing of visa petitions under second preference?<sup>1</sup> Assuming that immigrants intending to naturalize do so, what will be the probable numbers and timing of visa petitions under first, third, and fourth preferences, and under exempt immediate relatives categories? Unfortunately, the survey did not include aliens legalized under Special Agricultural Worker [SAW] provisions and the magni-

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<sup>1</sup> Family preference categories under the Immigration Act of 1990 are:  
1st: Unmarried sons and daughters of U.S. citizens and their children;  
2nd: Spouses, children, and unmarried sons and daughters of permanent resident aliens;  
3rd: Married sons and daughters of U.S. citizens and their spouses and children;  
4th: Siblings of U.S. citizens (at least twenty-one years of age) and their spouses and children.

tude of requirements to be joined by their immediate family members cannot be addressed. IRCA-legalized aliens, both from general and agricultural provisions, are already accountable for substantial numbers of visa petitions for spouses and children and, as shown here, these cohorts could eventually sponsor considerable immigration of their immediate relatives. This work contributes insights to the broader question of family reunification requirements for immigrant cohorts under the Immigration Act of 1990. Several recommendations are included for improving social science and policy analyses of progression to naturalization, impacts for legal immigration of family migration, and possible interconnections of family migration with undocumented immigration to the United States.

## INTRODUCTION

For a long time, combined immigration under family preference categories and immigration of immediate relatives of U.S. citizens without numerical limitation has exceeded immigration under occupational preference and other categories. In devising the Immigration Act of 1990, policymakers considered the opinions of immigration experts (U.S. General Accounting Office 1989) that setting an ab-

solute limit on family-based immigration was not feasible. If such a limit had been imposed, the trend of increasing numbers of immediate relative immigration, only partly resulting from the amnesty programs, would have reduced the numbers of family preference visas.

Therefore, the current three-track immigration system has a "piercable cap," a limit of 675,000 that theoretically consists of 480,000 *family-sponsored* immigrant visas, 140,000 *employment-based* visas, and 55,000 *diversity* visas. Refugees and certain other aliens are outside this cap. The "piercability" stems from the artificiality of the 480,000 limit on family immigration. Immigration of immediate relatives, including spouses of citizens, children (under twenty-one years of age) of citizens, parents of citizens twenty-one years of age or older, and orphans adopted by citizens who are at least twenty-one years of age, continues to be exempt from numerical limitation. With a set minimum of 226,000 for family preference visas, the combination of immediate relatives and family preference immigration could exceed the so-called cap. Although the initial piercing had been expected for fiscal 1993 (*Interpreter Releases* 1990), fiscal 1994 marked the initial application of the minimum for family preference visas (U.S. Department of State 1993b).

An important task for the Commission on Immigration Reform is consideration of “the requirements of citizens of the United States and of aliens lawfully admitted for permanent residence to be joined in the United States by immediate family members and the impact which the establishment of a national level of immigration has upon the availability and priority of family preference visas” (Immigration Act of 1990 Section 141, (c), (1), (A)).

In devising the Immigration Act of 1990, policymakers considered current queues for relative categories and sought a balance among: high demand for visas for family members of citizens and aliens; maintaining the family reunification principle; and establishment of a national level or “cap” on immigration. Given that the large backlogs of those waiting for visas in the 1980s and 1990s had not been anticipated before the 1965 Amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act, an ongoing review of the needs for family reunification is worthwhile. Recent legislative reforms created special needs for this assessment by creating sizable new immigrant subgroups (formerly undocumented residents who have been here for more than a decade, formerly undocumented workers in seasonal agricultural services, and diversity immigrants from countries adversely affected by the 1965

Amendments) and expanding admissions under employment-based preference categories.

Significant contributions to the issue of chain migration have drawn broadly from census data sources in *ex post facto* fashion, but relied on naturalization for a single immigrant entry cohort (Jasso & Rosenzweig 1986, 1989, 1990), focused on naturalization and sponsorship for a small sample with linked records (U.S. General Accounting Office 1988; Heinberg, Harris & York 1989), or studied selected origin groups longitudinally subsequent to immigration (Arnold, et al. 1989). (Also see Goering 1989; Arnold 1989; Teitelbaum 1989; and Passel & Woodrow 1987.)

Immigrants to the United States are a highly heterogeneous group by demographic characteristics, origin country, immigration circumstances, and reasons for emigration, so that large-scale data are really needed to capture this heterogeneity. Immigrant statistics and censuses and surveys have cross-sectional analytic value for delineating events and foreign-born populations (Woodrow 1992), but these sources are inadequate for causal or descriptive multistate modelling of initial migration, duration of residence, naturalization, and sponsorship of immediate relatives over time. Change in the

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RESEARCH  
P A P E R

- 4 -

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composition of the kinship network by residence may occur at each stage, and demographic factors of marriage, fertility, and mortality continue to operate. In general, analytic development of models of household and kinship organization is incomplete as there is a complex mosaic of constraints (De Vos & Palloni 1989). Compounding family network change is the additional constraint of legality of immigration to the United States to join the household or kinship organization. International migration dynamics are most appropriately studied with attention to the "families, households, or other culturally defined units of production and consumption" in the new economics of migration (Massey, et al. 1993).

The foreign-born population in the United States was estimated to have at least 17 million parents, children, and siblings living abroad in 1989, with siblings as the most prevalent type (Woodrow-Lafield 1994a; Woodrow & Peregoy 1991). Although this estimate could understate the true number, it is also an overstatement of the potential level of future immigration of immediate family members. First, as the foreign-born universe included at least two million undocumented residents,

some of these residents would be ineligible to sponsor any immediate relatives (Woodrow 1992). Second, the actual number of family members seeking to immigrate to the United States is unknown. Third, some foreign-born persons residing here in 1989 would eventually emigrate, making immigration of their family members less likely or possible.

The demand of immediate family members to immigrate legally to the United States is partially reflected in petitioner backlogs for immigrant visas. These counts are available only on an annual basis rather than more frequently as might be possible if petitions were maintained on automated systems. By this indicator, demand increased markedly between January 1, 1990 and January 1, 1994, from 2.5 million to 3.6 million (40 percent) (U.S. Department of State 1994).<sup>2</sup> Actual demand could be higher as not all persons wishing to come to the United States would have filed petitions, given the waiting time and concern that a nonimmigrant visa might be denied if intention to overstay and reside in the United States were suspected. Most of the increase in the backlog is located in the second preference category.

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<sup>2</sup> Petitions are removed from consular listings on receipt of immigrant visa or on failure to respond to visa notification within one year.

The 1990 Act has significantly added to the number of visas for the 2A class (issuances during FY 1994 will be close to 50% more than would have been possible under the former provisions of law), and has now virtually equalized the visa waiting period for applicants from all countries. (Previously, there had been substantially earlier cut-off dates for Mexico, Philippines and Dominican Republic applicants.) It is apparent, however, that even with the greater visa availability, the large and rapidly growing waiting list assures continued oversubscription in the foreseeable future, and the prospect of a lengthening delay between the filing of a petition and the applicant's turn for visa issuance being reached. . . .

As is clear from the section below, the major factor contributing to the greatly increased Family 2A visa demand is the filing of petitions for immediate family members by persons legalized under the terms of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, who began to be admitted to permanent residence in large numbers during 1989. . . .

Over the next few years, as the petitioners in 2A cases become eligible to apply for naturalization, some may become citizens and thus pending 2A petitions for their spouses and children would be converted automatically into the immediate relative visa category, which is not subject to numerical limit and for which, therefore, there is no waiting period. There is potential for a possible, indeed probable, major increase in immediate relative visas in coming years, therefore, with a corresponding drop in the Family 2A waiting list. It is not possible at present to quantify this prospect, however. (U.S. Department of State 1994:A6)

For general and SAW-legalized immigrants under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 [IRCA], there were 853,382 petitions as of January 1994 for admission of spouses and children under second preference, of whom 675,626 were Mexico-born petitioners. Other countries with significant numbers were El Salvador (34,293), Haiti (26,277), Guatemala (15,689), India (13,052), and the Dominican Republic (10,645). Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic were important source countries

RESEARCH  
P A P E R

- 6 -

**Table 1.**

VISA PETITIONS FILED WITH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BY PREFERENCE CATEGORY:

JANUARY 1992, 1993, AND 1994

Category	January 1992		January 1993		January 1994	
	Total	Of Legalization Beneficiaries	Total	Of Legalization Beneficiaries	Total	Of Legalization Beneficiaries
Total	2,923,765	268,818	3,393,193	739,774	3,612,121	853,382
Family Preferences	2,751,152	268,818	3,235,270	739,774	3,462,147	853,382
First	42,646	NE	54,779	NE	63,499	NE
Second	894,620	268,818	1,350,655	739,774	1,498,075	853,382
Spouses & children	589,997	268,818	958,839	739,774	1,047,496	853,382
Adult sons & daughters	304,623	NE	391,816	NE	450,579	NE
Third	199,460	NE	218,121	NE	257,110	NE
Fourth	1,614,426	NE	1,611,715	NE	1,643,463	NE
Employment Preferences	172,613		157,923		149,974	
First	535	NE	6,882	NE	8,315	NE
Second	32,452	NE	18,682	NE	11,159	NE
Third	137,809	NE	128,175	NE	125,083	NE
Skilled	50,003	NE	32,813	NE	30,735	NE
Other	87,806	NE	95,362	NE	94,348	NE
Fourth	1,817	NE	4,045	NE	5,241	NE
Fifth	0	NE	139	NE	176	NE

Note: 'NE' designates ineligibility

Sources: U.S. Department of State (1993a, 1993b, 1994)

for generally legalized immigrants. Mexico, Haiti, and India were important source countries for SAW applicants.

During 1992 and 1993, visas were granted respectively to 52,272 and 55,344 dependents of legalization. In 1994, as only 32,776 visas were anticipated for such dependents, only about 140,000 spouses and children of legalized individuals would have been admitted under this special allocation, despite demand by nearly one million spouses and children.

This research focuses on demand to immigrate legally by immediate family members of those who, having resided in an unlawful status since before January 1, 1982, legalized under IRCA. The research questions addressed are: What will be the probable numbers and timing of visa petitions under second preference and, subsequent to naturalization, under first, third, and fourth preferences, and of immigrants under exempt immediate relatives categories?

This research begins to address the issue of future family immigration empirically with special survey data, for a specific cohort, for immediate relatives residing

abroad, intending to come to the United States, and already living in the United States, whether lawfully resident or in undocumented status.

Ideally, the composition of immediate family networks would be studied with data compiled from individuals' applications for lawful permanent residence, but these items are not transferred for data files. In lieu of such a resource and given the shortcomings of visa petitions data, special surveys alone can yield answers.

## **DATA AND METHODS**

Pursuant to legislative requirements to study the characteristics of aliens legalized after long-term undocumented residence, the Legalized Population Survey [LPS1], under primary sponsorship of the INS, surveyed about 6,000 respondents in 1988 on their background and socioeconomic characteristics (U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service 1992; Borjas & Tienda 1993).<sup>3</sup> The Legalized Population Follow-up Survey [LPS2], primarily sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, recontacted about 4,000 respondents and

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<sup>3</sup>The sampling frame did not include all applicants for legalization, such as late filers or those whose right to apply was unclear.

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RESEARCH  
P A P E R

- 8 -

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is a unique longitudinal data source with detailed questions affording analyses of post-legalization experiences. Woodrow-Lafield (1995a, 1995b) outlined changes in household composition (including legal residence status and relationship to the IRCA-legalized immigrant) and described the distribution of nonresident consanguineal relatives intending to immigrate to the United States. For this research, IRCA-legalized relatives' intentions to naturalize are used to set parameters on the extent to which that intending population may immigrate.

Individual-level characteristics may be analyzed as with any survey, utilizing the base weights to achieve population-level results. Because some households included more than one legalized applicant, alternative weights were necessary for accurately representing household or relatives network characteristics, e.g., the household population and the populations nonresident in the household. Family- or household-level characteristics, including relationships that are consanguineal (by blood) and affineal (by marriage), may be analyzed by utilizing the family weights,

which are the base weights modified for respondents' reporting of the presence of one or more other legalized individuals within the household. Each legalized individual in a household would be eligible to report every other member of the household in the survey but would not necessarily be eligible to report the same individual family members as the respondent. These weights are used here for analyses of household composition with the caveat that all relationships are defined with respect to the primary applicant or respondent for the household.<sup>4</sup>

For analyzing data on nonresident relatives, consanguineal relatives may be specifically analyzed by accounting for the probability of selection into the sample and the chances that any legalized individual is eligible to report the family relative. A series of questions pertained to the legalized respondent's consanguineal relatives (parents, siblings, and children) who were not residing in the household and were outside the United States. Unfortunately, we do not know whether there were any legalized individuals outside the household who would also be eligible to

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<sup>4</sup> As LPS1 did not acquire legalization applicant status for household members, a computer matching algorithm was used with household listings and administrative records of applicants, producing a set of variables for household legal status characteristics, i.e., numbers of legalized applicants, rejected applicants, citizens or lawful permanent residents, and "other," presumably undocumented status (U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service 1992).

report these non-U.S. resident relatives. For parents and siblings, the family weight is assumed to account for that multiplicity. For children, a weight is used based on whether a legalized spouse is residing with the legalized respondent and, presumably, could report the *same children*. It also accounts for whether a legalized co-resident grandchild might be able to report those individuals as *parents*, and a legalized co-resident child could report the legalized respondent's other children as *siblings*. For siblings, these estimates may be overstated as other legalized individuals outside the household might be eligible to report the legalized respondent's *siblings, e.g., as children*. Legalized grandparents, and, possibly, some of the 'other relatives,' also could report the legalized respondent's *parents*. By examining the network of legalized individuals within and outside the household who also are eligible to report immediate relatives of the respondent with the same consanguineal counting rule, the base weight could be appropriately modified to account for multiplicity of reporting and derive more accurate estimates for the respondent's relatives abroad.<sup>5</sup>

To summarize this discussion of weighting and estimation of various relatives,

first, estimates for household members should be very accurate. However, complete information is lacking for the most accurate weighting of nonresident relatives of the reporting respondent. For example, if an individual reported a nonresident parent living abroad, we would need to know how many other consanguineal relatives living in the United States and legalized under IRCA could also have reported that parent, with other children as the most likely. If an individual reported a nonresident sibling abroad, we would ideally know how many other siblings, parents, or children of that nonresident were here as legalized aliens. As a surrogate, the number of legalized respondents in the household is used as the multiplicity in developing these estimates of non-residents.

Estimating the demand of immediate family members to immigrate legally involves both nonresident immediate family members, reported as intending to come to the United States, and resident ones without permission to reside permanently, each with specificity for respondent's intentions to naturalize. These results are presented in direct relationship to family preference categories and eligibility under exempt immediate relatives provisions and with

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<sup>5</sup>See Woodrow-Lafield (1995c) for more rigorous questions and multiplicity weighting scheme in estimating the emigrant population.

specificity for the legalized respondent's country.<sup>6</sup> The approach is static rather than dynamically incorporating the range of possible demographic changes between the survey and occurrence of immigration.

Behavioral intentions data are admittedly subject to response error; respondents may have not considered fully their future behavior or a present decision may be changed in the course of future events. For example, fertility expectations may not accurately depict eventual fertility levels (O'Connell 1991). These levels of intended immigration and intended naturalization merit serious consideration for five singular reasons.

First, this cohort has demonstrated major commitment in their most extra-ordinary experience of living here in undocumented status for an extended period. This may portend truly high rates of naturalization and certainly implies higher rates than past measurements that confounded emigration and naturalization. There has already been extensive information exchange with relatives in the home country about the United States. Second, the survey occurred only one to two years before legalized individuals began to reach

their dates of eligibility for applying for citizenship so that there may be high correspondence of intentions and behavior. Third, many legalized persons fulfilled their English and civics requirements at application for lawful permanent residence in 1988-1989, perhaps corroborating their intention to naturalize and portending expeditious processing of their applications. Fourth, legalized persons were highly concentrated geographically by state and metropolitan area, and, fifth, their familial ties to their origin countries are substantial.

Regarding the role of geographic concentration, Yang (1994) found that living in sizeable immigrant ethnic communities facilitates naturalization. His analysis also led him to support the hypothesis that unfavorable country-of-origin conditions might provide impetus for citizenship acquisition to help other relatives to immigrate to the United States. The legalized population is strongly representative of such countries as Mexico, El Salvador, and Guatemala, among others, that are unfavorable relative to the United States, i.e., with less developed economic infrastructures for adequate labor force incorporation of their working age populations.

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<sup>6</sup> As country of birth was categorized in the LPS2 survey only as "born in Mexico" or "born in a country other than Mexico," country of citizenship is used for analyzing the experiences of legalized persons from countries other than Mexico.

## **PRESENCE AND FUTURE IMMIGRATION OF SPOUSES AND CHILDREN**

The demographic profile of undocumented residents of the United States in 1980 diverged from that of the border-apprehended population as primarily young, male, and Mexican. Rather, the undocumented population included large numbers of women, children, and non-Mexicans (Passel & Woodrow 1984), reflecting family migration and settlement rather than merely circular migration patterns. Analysis of the initial survey of the legalized population by Woodrow-Lafield (1995a, 1995b) described the scope of family migration for the legalized population at amnesty application. These long-term residents not only had 1.8 million relatives living with them, but they also had 4.0 million relatives living elsewhere in the United States. Also remarkable is that there were an estimated 9.6 million relatives living outside the United States (Woodrow-Lafield 1995a, 1995b). Interpreting these numbers in terms of potential demand to immigrate is difficult,

because, as noted earlier, these two questions were broadly stated to include all family members, that is, "spouse or partner, parents, children, brothers, sisters, grandparents, grand-children, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law." That is, these figures pertain to *consanguineal and affinal* relatives rather than specifically *consanguineal* relatives. Nevertheless, these statistics discount notions of transience about the population.

In 1992, four to five years after amnesty application, legalized households included more spouses and children and fewer other relatives and nonrelatives than at application (Woodrow-Lafield 1995a, 1995b). The reference group of legalized residents included 1,577,000 based on the survey. Composition by residence status is mixed, but members are predominantly entitled to reside permanently in the United States. Among the 2,519,000 persons living in households of legalized persons in 1992,<sup>7</sup> a very high number, 1,432,000 were described as citizens of the United States. Another 248,000 are lawful permanent residents. Another 78,000 were described as having Special Agricultural Worker status and, consequently, en-

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<sup>7</sup>These figures are based on family weights that use information on number of legalized persons in the household.

titled to lawful permanent residence<sup>8</sup> and eligible for citizenship beginning in 1994. Many (129,000) are described as under “family fairness,”<sup>9</sup> principally spouses (41,000) and children (66,000). About 95,000 are described as having temporary visas and 385,000 fall within the “other” category. In the earlier survey, there were an estimated 686,000 individuals in this “other” category, presumably including undocumented status.

Although nearly 1.9 million resident family members have, or will have, permanent residence status, many household members may not be so entitled and might have filed visa petitions. Specifically, 136,000 spouses, 223,000 children, 30,000 parents, 130,000 siblings, and 102,000 other relatives (including grandparents and grandchildren) are estimated with status of family fairness, temporary visa, other, or missing.

With questions on nonresident children, parents, and siblings, specific for consanguineal, and weighting to compensate for multiple reporting of the same persons, a set of estimates is derived for these nonresident relatives. In 1992, the

legalized population is linked to approximately 60,000 nonresident spouses, 424,000 nonresident children, 901,000 nonresident parents, and 2,843,000 nonresident siblings, totalling 4,229,000. High proportions of spouses (59.4 percent) and children (64.4 percent) are stated as intending to immigrate to the United States, but the total number is only about 309,000. Legalized respondents indicated that lower proportions of parents (25.7 percent) and siblings (25.1 percent) were intending to come to the United States, but the numbers are larger—232,000 parents and 714,000 siblings. The total number of individuals estimated as intending to immigrate is 1,254,000.

With Mexico so strongly represented in the legalization population, that country is likely to be dominant in every country-specific analysis. With these survey data, sampling variability and small numbers preclude a complete country-by-country examination of patterns. In **Table 3**, showing estimates for Mexican-born and other origin legalized respondents, the numbers of consanguineal family members living outside the United States and intending to come dwarf those figures for relatives of legalized persons from other countries.

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<sup>8</sup>Technically, these individuals misreported SAW status as nondenied SAW applicants were automatically converted to lawful permanent residence as of December 1, 1990.

<sup>9</sup>For a discussion of “family fairness,” see Baker (1990) and for international guidelines on “family unity,” see, Sohn and Buergenthal (1992).

**Table 2.**

FAMILY MEMBERS BY RELATIONSHIP TO RESPONDENT, CURRENT RESIDENCE, STATUS (FOR HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS), AND INTENTIONS TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES: LEGALIZED POPULATION FOLLOW-UP SURVEY, 1992

Category	All Household Members	Immediate Family				Other Relatives					Other Non-relatives	
		Total	Respondent	Spouses/Partners	Children	Total	Parents	Siblings	Grand-parents	Grand-children		Other Relatives
CONSANGUINEAL & AFFINEAL Living in Household	4,096,000	3,016,000	905,000	565,000	1,546,000	772,000	108,000	315,000	7,000	71,000	273,000	307,000
Current Status	1,577,000	1,357,000	905,000	253,000	198,000	166,000	38,000	84,000	1,000	3,000	40,000	54,000
Amnesty	78,000	32,000	(X)	23,000	9,000	30,000	4,000	17,000	0	1,000	8,000	16,000
SAW	129,000	107,000	(X)	41,000	66,000	19,000	4,000	8,000	0	0	6,000	4,000
Family Fairness	248,000	135,000	(X)	89,000	46,000	97,000	28,000	44,000	1,000	2,000	21,000	16,000
Permanent Resident	95,000	42,000	(X)	17,000	25,000	38,000	7,000	20,000	0	2,000	9,000	15,000
Temporary Visa	1,432,000	1,133,000	(X)	63,000	1,070,000	217,000	8,000	40,000	1,000	57,000	112,000	81,000
Citizen	385,000	181,000	(X)	67,000	114,000	152,000	16,000	89,000	0	3,000	44,000	52,000
Other	153,000	29,000	(X)	10,000	18,000	54,000	4,000	13,000	4,000	3,000	31,000	70,000
Refused, don't know or not applicable												
CONSANGUINEAL ONLY			(X)	17,000	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Living Elsewhere in US	4,229,000	484,000	(X)	60,000	424,000	3,745,000	901,000	2,843,000	--	--	--	--
Living Outside US	1,254,000	309,000	(X)	36,000	273,000	945,000	232,000	714,000	--	--	--	--
Intends to Come												

RESEARCH  
PAPER

- 14 -

**Table 3.**

CONSANGUINEAL FAMILY MEMBERS BY RELATIONSHIP TO RESPONDENT  
AND INTENTIONS TO COME TO THE UNTIED STATES:  
SELECTED COUNTRIES OF CITIZENSHIP, LEGALIZED POPULATION FOLLOW-UP SURVEY, 1992

Country and Category	Family Members	Immediate Family			Other Relatives		
		Total	Spouses/ Partners	Children	Total	Parents	Siblings
All Countries (N=1,294,562; H=905,386)							
Living Outside U.S.	4,229,000	484,000	60,000	424,000	3,745,000	901,000	2,843,000
Intends to Come	1,350,000	309,000	36,000	273,000	1,041,000	232,000	809,000
Selected Countries (N=1,097,932; H=744,861)							
Living Outside U.S.	3,445,000	377,000	48,000	329,000	3,068,000	745,000	2,323,000
Intends to Come	1,007,000	228,000	27,000	200,000	779,000	200,000	579,000
Mexico (N=893,449; H=596,131)							
Living Outside U.S.	2,813,000	285,000	37,000	247,000	2,528,000	612,000	1,916,000
Intends to Come	781,000	164,000	21,000	143,000	617,000	163,000	454,000
El Salvador (N=113,386; H=78,268)							
Living Outside U.S.	335,000	45,000	3,000	42,000	290,000	76,000	214,000
Intends to Come	126,000	31,000	1,000	29,000	95,000	21,000	74,000
Guatemala (N=44,077; H=30,695)							
Living Outside U.S.	139,000	19,000	2,000	16,000	121,000	30,000	90,000
Intends to Come	45,000	14,000	1,000	13,000	31,000	9,000	22,000
Colombia (N=19,851; H=16,741)							
Living Outside U.S.	78,000	8,000	1,000	7,000	70,000	14,000	56,000
Intends to Come	22,000	5,000	1,000	4,000	18,000	4,000	14,000
Philippines (N=14,627; H=12,217)							
Living Outside U.S.	53,000	10,000	1,000	9,000	43,000	8,000	35,000
Intends to Come	25,000	8,000	1,000	8,000	17,000	3,000	13,000
Poland (N=12,542; H=10,809)							
Living Outside U.S.	27,000	10,000	2,000	8,000	17,000	5,000	12,000
Intends to Come	8,000	6,000	2,000	4,000	2,000	0	2,000
Unspecified Countries (N=196,630; H=160,525)							
Living Outside U.S.	784,000	107,000	13,000	95,000	677,000	157,000	520,000
Intends to Come	343,000	81,000	9,000	72,000	262,000	32,000	230,000

Six countries (Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Colombia, Philippines, and Poland) account for 81.5 percent of spouses, children, parents, and siblings living abroad and 74.6 percent of those whom respondents state as intending to come to the United States. Relatives of Mexicans living outside the United States number 2,813,000, and 781,000 (about 28 percent) intend to come here to live. Siblings represent the majority of each of these categories, with an astounding estimate of 1,916,000 nonresident siblings and 454,000 siblings intending to immigrate. El Salvadorian legalized persons have about 335,000 spouses and consanguineal family members abroad, of whom 126,000 would like to immigrate. Guatemalan legalized persons have about 139,000 family members abroad, of whom 45,000 are expected to immigrate to the United States.

Lesser levels of demand for family immigration are evident for legalized persons of Colombian, Polish, and Filipino citizenship, as commensurate with their lesser representation in the amnestied population. Altogether, remaining countries of citizenship account for 784,000 nonresident family members with 343,000 stated as intending to immigrate.

This perspective on numbers intending to immigrate relative to the numbers of non-

resident immediate family members brings realism to temper any debate about explosive chain migration for legalized immigrants. By any measure, the numbers of family members expected or desired by their legalized relative to immigrate to the United States have demographic and policy significance. Nevertheless, the magnitude of this intended immigration is much less than the magnitude if all immediate family members living abroad desired to join their relatives in the United States. With the "illusory" character of sibling immigration (Arnold, et al. 1989), the absolute numbers of immediate family members that may immigrate to the United States within the next few years would be significantly lower.

## **INTENTION TO NATURALIZE AND FUTURE IMMIGRATION**

Already into their second decade of U.S. residence, these persons appear as a solidly settled population with many having married and begun childrearing in their first five years of legal residence. Transition to naturalized citizenship is the next legal option in the route to full American status. Eligibility for greater sponsorship of family members for immigrant visas is

generally considered to be a major benefit of acquisition of citizenship. Citizens are able to sponsor unmarried sons and daughters (first preference), married sons and daughters with spouses and children (third preference), siblings with spouses and children (fourth preference), as well as parents, spouses, and children under twenty-one years (immediate relatives provisions).

Very few legalized individuals indicated that they would “probably not” (28,000) or “definitely not” (22,000) apply for U.S. citizenship. The overwhelming majority indicated that they would apply for citizenship, with most responding “yes, definitely” (621,000) or “yes, probably” (355,000). A substantial number (225,000) indicated some uncertainty about whether they would apply for citizenship. If these intentions or expectations become fulfilled, they presage a remarkable shift toward naturalization.

Presumably, those indicating they “definitely” will apply for citizenship will do so early upon eligibility and may be among those having partially fulfilled naturalization requirements. The extent of revision of intentions to apply for citizenship among those stating “probably,” “uncertain,” “definitely not,” or “don’t know” may depend on success levels of early applicants for naturalization, primarily the “definitely” category. The roles

of individuals as “social actors” in negotiating INS procedures have been highlighted by Hagan and Baker’s (1993) evaluation of the legalization program at eight sites nationally. During the legalization application period for both amnesty programs, response levels were moderate initially. As the legalization program proceeded without negative consequences for applicants and as knowledge about the application process, the immediate benefit of work authorization, and advocacy groups’ role diffused through social networks in communities, applications increased dramatically (Hagan & Baker 1993). April and May of 1988 were the peak months of applications under general legislation and SAW legislation. After the close of the general legislation application period, SAW applications flowed in during June-November 1988 at gradually increasing levels until dramatically increasing in the final month (Baker 1990).

At the close of 1993, a year with a resurgence of anti-immigration debate (Perotti 1994), the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service inaugurated a new policy of actively encouraging legal immigrants to become United States citizens. In the past, the naturalization process has been complex, unfriendly, and lengthy (North 1987; Alvarez 1987), perhaps deterring any immigrants already feeling ambivalent

<b>Table 4.</b>		
INTENTIONS TO NATURALIZE: LEGALIZED POPULATION FOLLOW-UP SURVEY, 1992		
INTENTION	NUMBER	PERCENT
TOTAL	1, 295,000	100.0
Yes, Definitely	621,000	48.0
Yes, Probably	355,000	27.4
Uncertain, Not Sure	225,000	17.4
Probably Not	28,000	2.2
Definitely Not	22,000	1.7
Refused	1,000	0.1
Don't Know	40,000	3.1
Not Ascertained	2,000	0.2

about severing the home country tie. INS Commissioner Doris Meissner's new policy is to involve "work with private groups to publicize the advantages of citizenship and to expedite the handling of applications. . . . without lowering standards for citizenship . . . she intends to simplify naturalization procedures . . ." (Pear 1993).

Assuming that intentions to naturalize will be realized and that intentions for rela-

tives to immigrate to the United States will reflect visa petitions, an assessment of future immigration of family members of the legalized population is possible. Shown in **Tables 5, 6, and 7** are crosstabulations of nonresident and immigration-intending relatives by intention to naturalize for all legalized respondents, Mexican legalized respondents, and El Salvadorean legalized respondents. There are approximately 1,965,000 nonresident spouses, children, parents, and siblings for

**Table 5.**

FAMILY MEMBERS LIVING OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES AND INTENDING TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES  
BY RESPONDENT'S INTENTION TO NATURALIZE:  
LEGALIZED POPULATION FOLLOW-UP SURVEY, 1992

GROUP AND RESPONDENT'S INTENTION TO NATURALIZE	TOTAL	IMMEDIATE FAMILY			OTHER RELATIVES		
		TOTAL	SPOUSES/ PARTNERS	CHILDREN	TOTAL	PARENTS	SIBLINGS
Living Outside U.S.	4,229,000	484,000	60,000	424,000	3,745,000	901,000	2,843,000
Yes, Definitely	1,965,000	233,000	25,000	207,000	1,733,000	416,000	1,317,000
Yes, Probably	1,189,000	119,000	17,000	102,000	1,071,000	261,000	809,000
Uncertain, Not Sure	757,000	78,000	12,000	66,000	679,000	164,000	516,000
Probably Not	97,000	13,000	1,000	11,000	85,000	20,000	65,000
Definitely Not	76,000	20,000	2,000	19,000	56,000	13,000	43,000
Refused	1,000	0	0	0	1,000	0	0
Don't Know	138,000	20,000	4,000	16,000	118,000	28,000	90,000
Not Ascertained	6,000	2,000	0	2,000	4,000	1,000	3,000
Intends to Come	1,254,000	309,000	36,000	273,000	945,000	232,000	714,000
Yes, Definitely	685,000	164,000	17,000	147,000	521,000	126,000	395,000
Yes, Probably	333,000	74,000	9,000	65,000	259,000	66,000	193,000
Uncertain, Not Sure	172,000	44,000	7,000	37,000	128,000	33,000	95,000
Probably Not	24,000	11,000	1,000	10,000	13,000	2,000	11,000
Definitely Not	11,000	5,000	0	4,000	6,000	1,000	6,000
Refused	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't Know	28,000	9,000	2,000	8,000	19,000	5,000	14,000
Not Ascertained	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	0	0	0

legalized persons “definitely” intending to naturalize and another 1,189,000 nonresident relatives for those “probably” intending to naturalize. Of these figures, 685,000 are relatives of “definitely” naturalizing persons intending to come to the United States. Another 333,000 relatives of “probably” naturalizing persons are reportedly intending to come.

Of family members of Mexico-born legalized persons living outside the United States in 1992, more than one million (1,115,000) were related to a respondent “definitely” intending to naturalize and another 893,000 were related to someone “probably” intending to naturalize. Slightly more than one-half million (582,000) were related to a respondent

**Table 6.**

FAMILY MEMBERS LIVING OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES AND INTENDING TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES  
BY RESPONDENT'S INTENTION TO NATURALIZE:  
MEXICO-BORN, LEGALIZED POPULATION FOLLOW-UP SURVEY, 1992

GROUP AND RESPONDENT'S INTENTION TO NATURALIZE	TOTAL	IMMEDIATE FAMILY			OTHER RELATIVES		
		TOTAL	SPOUSES/ PARTNERS	CHILDREN	TOTAL	PARENTS	SIBLINGS
Living Outside U.S.	2,813,000	285,000	37,000	247,000	2,528,000	612,000	1,916,000
Yes, Definitely	1,115,000	110,000	12,000	98,000	1,005,000	245,000	760,000
Yes, Probably	893,000	82,000	12,000	70,000	811,000	198,000	613,000
Uncertain, Not Sure	582,000	55,000	9,000	46,000	526,000	125,000	402,000
Probably Not	65,000	9,000	1,000	8,000	56,000	13,000	43,000
Definitely Not	53,000	15,000	1,000	14,000	37,000	8,000	29,000
Refused	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't Know	105,000	14,000	3,000	11,000	91,000	23,000	68,000
Not Ascertained	1,000	0	0	0	1,000	0	1,000
Intends to Come	782,000	165,000	22,000	143,000	617,000	163,000	454,000
Yes, Definitely	373,000	72,000	8,000	64,000	302,000	79,000	223,000
Yes, Probably	235,000	47,000	6,000	41,000	188,000	52,000	136,000
Uncertain, Not Sure	127,000	30,000	5,000	25,000	98,000	26,000	72,000
Probably Not	15,000	8,000	1,000	7,000	8,000	1,000	7,000
Definitely Not	9,000	3,000	0	2,000	6,000	1,000	5,000
Refused	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't Know	23,000	6,000	2,000	4,000	16,000	5,000	12,000
Not Ascertained	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

uncertain about applying for citizenship. Of those family members of Mexican legalized persons reportedly intending to immigrate, more than one-half million were related to someone either "definitely" (373,000) or "probably" (235,000) applying for citizenship.

Among legalized individuals of El Salvadorian citizenship, the estimated numbers

of nonresident relatives of those "definitely" and "probably" applying for U.S. citizenship were 162,000 and 95,000, respectively, and the implied numbers intending to come to the United States were 67,000 and 37,000.

Estimated numbers of children living outside the United States and intending to come to the United States by respon-

**Table 7.**

FAMILY MEMBERS LIVING OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES AND INTENDING TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES  
BY RESPONDENT'S INTENTION TO NATURALIZE:  
EL SALVADOR-ORIGIN, LEGALIZED POPULATION FOLLOW-UP SURVEY, 1992

GROUP AND RESPONDENT'S INTENTION TO NATURALIZE	TOTAL	IMMEDIATE FAMILY			OTHER RELATIVES		
		TOTAL	SPOUSES/ PARTNERS	CHILDREN	TOTAL	PARENTS	SIBLINGS
Living Outside U.S.	335,000	46,000	4,000	42,000	290,000	76,000	214,000
Yes, Definitely	162,000	22,000	2,000	20,000	140,000	37,000	103,000
Yes, Probably	95,000	9,000	1,000	8,000	87,000	22,000	65,000
Uncertain, Not Sure	53,000	8,000	1,000	7,000	44,000	12,000	32,000
Probably Not	9,000	2,000	0	2,000	7,000	2,000	5,000
Definitely Not	9,000	4,000	0	3,000	6,000	1,000	4,000
Refused	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't Know	7,000	1,000	0	1,000	6,000	1,000	5,000
Not Ascertained	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Intends to Come	125,000	31,000	2,000	29,000	95,000	21,000	73,000
Yes, Definitely	67,000	16,000	1,000	15,000	51,000	13,000	38,000
Yes, Probably	37,000	7,000	0	7,000	30,000	6,000	24,000
Uncertain, Not Sure	13,000	5,000	0	4,000	9,000	2,000	7,000
Probably Not	3,000	1,000	0	1,000	2,000	0	1,000
Definitely Not	1,000	1,000	0	1,000	0	0	0
Refused	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't Know	3,000	1,000	0	1,000	2,000	1,000	1,000
Not Ascertained	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

dent parent's intentions to naturalize are shown in **Table 7** with detail on marital status and age group (under twenty-one years or twenty-one years or older). The largest number of children living outside the United States are unmarried and younger than twenty-one years despite the legalized respondent's U.S. residence for at least ten years—238,000 (56.1 percent). Of the 177,000 adult children living

abroad, a slightly higher number were married (92,000) than unmarried (85,000). A large proportion (65.9 percent) of children intending to come here to live are unmarried and under age twenty-one.

Results for children of Mexico-born and El Salvadorean-citizen legalization respondents have similar patterns to those overall results. Not all of those children living

**Table 8.**

CHILDREN LIVING OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES AND INTENDING TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES  
BY AGE, MARITAL STATUS, AND RESPONDENT'S INTENTION TO NATURALIZE:  
LEGALIZED POPULATION FOLLOW-UP SURVEY, 1992

GROUP AND RESPONDENT'S INTENTION TO NATURALIZE	TOTAL	UNDER 21			21 OR OLDER		
		TOTAL	MARRIED	UNMARRIED	TOTAL	MARRIED	UNMARRIED
Living Outside U.S.	424,000	247,000	9,000	238,000	177,000	92,000	85,000
Yes, Definitely	207,000	114,000	4,000	110,000	93,000	44,000	49,000
Yes, Probably	102,000	64,000	2,000	61,000	39,000	24,000	15,000
Uncertain, Not Sure	66,000	39,000	2,000	37,000	26,000	15,000	11,000
Probably Not	11,000	8,000	1,000	7,000	4,000	2,000	2,000
Definitely Not	19,000	11,000	0	11,000	8,000	4,000	4,000
Refused	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't Know	16,000	11,000	0	11,000	5,000	4,000	2,000
Not Ascertained	2,000	1,000	0	1,000	1,000	0	1,000
Intends to Come	273,000	185,000	5,000	180,000	88,000	34,000	54,000
Yes, Definitely	147,000	92,000	3,000	89,000	55,000	22,000	33,000
Yes, Probably	65,000	49,000	2,000	47,000	17,000	7,000	10,000
Uncertain, Not Sure	37,000	28,000	0	28,000	9,000	4,000	6,000
Probably Not	10,000	7,000	0	7,000	3,000	1,000	2,000
Definitely Not	4,000	3,000	0	3,000	1,000	0	1,000
Refused	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't Know	8,000	6,000	0	6,000	2,000	1,000	1,000
Not Ascertained	2,000	1,000	0	1,000	1,000	0	1,000

outside the United States are stated as intending to come to live here. This is the case even for the largest single category, unmarried younger children, that might be expected to be most dependent.

## PROJECTING VISA PETITIONS

To project visa petitions for immediate family members, the essential components

are projected numbers of family members (and spouses and children) requiring or desiring to immigrate and aspects of resident relative's eligibility as sponsor, i.e., whether resident alien or naturalized citizen. Known is that a substantial number of legalized immigrants have already filed visa petitions for substantial numbers of spouses and children, many of whom are already living in the United States under "family fairness" protection or with other temporary status. Further, the cohort has

**Table 9.**

CHILDREN LIVING OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES AND INTENDING TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES  
BY AGE, MARITAL STATUS, RESPONDENT'S INTENTION TO NATURALIZE:  
MEXICO-BORN, LEGALIZED POPULATION FOLLOW-UP SURVEY, 1992

GROUP AND RESPONDENT'S INTENTION TO NATURALIZE	TOTAL	UNDER 21			21 OR OLDER		
		TOTAL	MARRIED	UNMARRIED	TOTAL	MARRIED	UNMARRIED
Living Outside U.S.	247,000	143,000	7,000	136,000	104,000	69,000	35,000
Yes, Definitely	98,000	50,000	2,000	48,000	48,000	30,000	18,000
Yes, Probably	70,000	43,000	2,000	41,000	27,000	19,000	8,000
Uncertain, Not Sure	46,000	28,000	2,000	26,000	18,000	12,000	6,000
Probably Not	8,000	5,000	0	5,000	3,000	2,000	1,000
Definitely Not	14,000	8,000	0	8,000	6,000	4,000	2,000
Refused	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't Know	11,000	9,000	0	9,000	3,000	3,000	0
Not Ascertained	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Intends to Come	143,000	99,000	4,000	95,000	44,000	26,000	18,000
Yes, Definitely	64,000	38,000	2,000	36,000	26,000	16,000	10,000
Yes, Probably	41,000	31,000	2,000	29,000	10,000	6,000	4,000
Uncertain, Not Sure	25,000	19,000	0	19,000	5,000	3,000	2,000
Probably Not	7,000	5,000	0	5,000	2,000	1,000	1,000
Definitely Not	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	0	0	0
Refused	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't Know	4,000	4,000	0	4,000	0	0	0
Not Ascertained	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

exhibited strong levels of desire to naturalize in stated intentions and partial completion of requirements. These are the more certain contributions of the present research. To move beyond this level and project visa petitions to be filed for immediate family members, various assumptions are necessary concerning:

1. The relationship between the legalized immigrant's stated commitment to apply for citizenship and the time

lag between naturalization and visa petition;

2. Unmarried sons' and daughters' transition to married status prior to immigration;
3. Transition from child to adult;
4. Spouses and children per married son or daughter;

**Table 10.**

CHILDREN LIVING OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES AND INTENDING TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES  
BY AGE, MARITAL STATUS, RESPONDENT'S INTENTION TO NATURALIZE:  
EL SALVADOR-BORN, LEGALIZED POPULATION FOLLOW-UP SURVEY, 1992

GROUP AND RESPONDENT'S INTENTION TO NATURALIZE	UNDER 21				21 OR OLDER		
	TOTAL	TOTAL	MARRIED	UNMARRIED	TOTAL	MARRIED	UNMARRIED
Living Outside U.S.	42,000	28,000	1,000	27,000	14,000	6,000	8,000
Yes, Definitely	20,000	13,000	1,000	12,000	7,000	3,000	4,000
Yes, Probably	8,000	5,000	0	5,000	3,000	1,000	2,000
Uncertain, Not Sure	7,000	5,000	0	5,000	3,000	1,000	1,000
Probably Not	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	0	0	0
Definitely Not	3,000	2,000	0	2,000	1,000	0	1,000
Refused	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't Know	1,000	1,000	0	1,000	0	0	0
Not Ascertained	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Intends to Come	29,000	22,000	1,000	22,000	7,000	2,000	5,000
Yes, Definitely	15,000	11,000	1,000	11,000	3,000	1,000	3,000
Yes, Probably	7,000	5,000	0	5,000	2,000	1,000	2,000
Uncertain, Not Sure	4,000	3,000	0	3,000	1,000	0	1,000
Probably Not	1,000	1,000	0	1,000	0	0	0
Definitely Not	1,000	1,000	0	1,000	0	0	0
Refused	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't Know	1,000	1,000	0	1,000	0	0	0
Not Ascertained	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

5. Proportion married of siblings and average number of children per sibling.

Each of these assumptions will be discussed before compiling a schedule of possible visa petitions by family preference category to be filed during fiscal years 1994 through 1998.

The assumption is made that those indicating they will "definitely" apply for citi-

zenship will complete naturalization and will do so relatively quickly, perhaps within three years. Accordingly, this timing is assumed such that one-quarter will become naturalized in 1994, one-half in 1995, and one-quarter in 1996. Anecdotal accounts suggest that the pace of naturalizations already has accelerated in such places as Miami and southern California where there were large numbers of legalizations (Cleveland 1994; McDonnell & Simon 1994). Of those indicating that they

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RESEARCH  
PAPER

- 24 -

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will “probably” apply for citizenship, an overall completion rate of .75 is assumed with completion of naturalization equally in 1995 and 1996. Among those who were “uncertain,” the assumption is that one-half will decide to so, split equally between 1996 and 1997. Finally, the assumption is made that one-quarter of those saying they would “probably not” apply for citizenship would do so and become naturalized by 1997. These assumptions are obviously tentative and unsupported, but helpful in devising illustrative projections.

The timing of entry into marriage varies across cultures and marriage timing for sons and daughters living in origin countries and separated from parents already immigrated to the United States might be highly unpredictable. For the purposes here, the assumption is that sons’ and daughters’ marital statuses at petition will not differ from marital status based on the 1992 response. Also, for children already living in legalized households for whom a petition may be filed, it is not possible to differentiate married from unmarried or even sons and daughters from sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, so all are assumed as unmarried. For purposes of estimation of second preference and immediate relatives’ petitions, the assumption is made that children do not age into adulthood prior to immigration.

For married sons and daughters, the assumptions are that a visa petition also will be filed for one spouse and that 50 percent of these couples will have one child for whom a petition is filed. For siblings, the assumptions are that 60 percent will be married at time of filing petition and that 50 percent of these will have one child. Even if the survey had acquired information on children of unmarried and married sons and daughters, that number might have changed by the prospective date of immigration as couples had more children or children aged to adulthood.

Finally, the assumption is made that visa petitions already have been filed under second preference for spouses and children estimated as residing in legalized households in 1992. As discussed above, figures for co-resident children are too high, including sons-in-law and daughters-in-law. Although these petitions were competing with those from dependents of SAW legalization, the assumption is made here that these individuals already received a visa during 1992-1994 or that their status will be less likely to be affected by naturalization of their immigrant sponsor. The point is moot as a new petition need not be filed because the petition is automatically shifted upon naturalization.

Despite the necessity of these various assumptions, at this point, serious doubts may have arisen about the value of the ensuing illustrations. In discussing visa petitions possibly to be filed under family preference and immediate relatives categories under sponsorship of immigrants legalized under general provisions, general patterns are noteworthy and minor differences may not be. The foundation for these projections may appear to be simplistic relative to the complex operations of the immigration system, but these have a major advantage over any others in that there are empirical estimates for immediate family members intending to immigrate and there is an empirical gauge for naturalization.

With an accounting for possible numbers of spouses and children of siblings and married sons and daughters, the overall implied number of nonresident immediate family members would be increased to 1,894,000. Siblings, with their spouses and children, could account for 1,356,000 of these. Most of the petitions ensuing from citizenship attainment are shown to be filed in fiscal years 1996 and 1997 according to assumed timing.

Petitions under exempt immediate relatives categories would increase under this scenario, especially during fiscal years 1996 and 1997. Subject to the accuracy of

assumptions about coresident spouses' and children's achievement of immigrant visas, there might only be moderate increases for spousal petitions. For children and parents, annually petitions easily could be twice as high as the numbers of immigrant visas granted during fiscal year 1992.

By stipulation, there would be no further impacts for petitioner backlogs under second preference. These illustrative flows for first preference would not create any major delays, as this category is fairly up-to-date. These types of petition flows would probably mean that there would be increases to backlogs under third and, *especially, fourth*, preferences.

For fourth preference, this is particularly a concern as the *most recent cut-off date among countries of chargeability is March 22, 1985* (U.S. Department of State 1995)! Even if all of the 65,000 visas annually were dedicated only to siblings of these legalization beneficiaries, it would take approximately seventeen years to allocate visas to this many siblings with spouses and children as estimated. During that waiting period, some might decide not to migrate, but that source of attrition might be offset by others changing to decide to immigrate or by higher numbers of children.

**Table 11.**  
VISA PETITIONS POSSIBLY TO BE FILED UNDER FAMILY PREFERENCE AND IMMEDIATE RELATIVES CATEGORIES  
UNDER SPONSORSHIP OF GENERALLY LEGALIZED IMMIGRANTS

Category for Petitioning	Relevant Demand Level			Possible Petitions in Fiscal Year				
	Combined	In U.S.	Intending	Total 1994-1998	1994-1995	1995-1996	1996-1997	1997-1998
Total Family Members	2,472,000	578,000	1,894,000	1,965,000	282,000	849,000	742,000	92,000
Family Preferences	2,267,000	551,000	1,716,000	1,207,000	210,000	501,000	442,000	54,000
First								
Unmarried adult sons and daughters of citizens (and children)	54,000	(A)	54,000	13,000	8,000	2,000	1,000	1,000
Second								
Spouses	551,000	330,000	221,000	---	---	---	---	---
children,	161,000	125,000	36,000	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)
unmarried sons and daughters of permanent resident aliens	389,000	205,000	185,000	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)
	(A)	(A)	(A)	(A)	(A)	(A)	(A)	(A)
Third								
Married sons and daughters of citizens (and spouses and children)	85,000	(---)	85,000	73,000	14,000	32,000	25,000	3,000
	34,000	(A)	34,000	29,000	6,000	13,000	10,000	1,000
	34,000	(A)	34,000	29,000	6,000	13,000	10,000	1,000
	17,000	(A)	17,000	15,000	3,000	6,000	5,000	1,000
Fourth								
Siblings of citizens (and their spouses and children)	1,577,000	222,000	1,356,000	1,121,000	188,000	467,000	416,000	50,000
	830,000	117,000	714,000	590,000	99,000	246,000	219,000	27,000
	498,000	70,000	428,000	354,000	59,000	147,000	131,000	16,000
	249,000	35,000	214,000	177,000	30,000	74,000	66,000	8,000
Immediate Relatives	---	---	---	417,000	72,000	175,000	151,000	19,000
Parents	259,000	27,000	232,000	192,000	31,000	79,000	72,000	9,000
Children	(C)	(C)	(C)	144,000	23,000	58,000	54,000	9,000
Spouses	(C)	(C)	(C)	81,000	18,000	38,000	24,000	2,000

Note: These estimates are illustrative. See text for explanation.  
 (A) Given high demand under second preference, assumption is that all unmarried sons and daughters will be transferred to petition under first preference for which demand is much lower.  
 (B) The assumptions are that visa petitions have already been filed under second preference, will have been largely satisfied in 1992-1994, and that legalized immigrants may be slower to naturalize and sponsor co-residing relatives.  
 (C) These groups are included above.

The Mexico case shows similar patterns with an implied estimate of 1,210,000 immediate family members nonresident and intending to immigrate to the United States, of whom the majority (862,000) are siblings with spouses and children. This high level of demand would mean that waiting times under this category, now nearly *twelve years*, never would be likely to improve.

These projections are of lesser magnitude for El Salvadorean legalized immigrants, with about 189,000 immediate relatives, mostly siblings with their spouses and children, implied as intending to immigrate.

Demographic population projections grounded in measurement of recent patterns of fertility, mortality, and net immigration seldom achieve high accuracy due to the likelihood of measurement error, erroneous assumptions, or even demographic behavioral shifts by time periods. These projections are unlikely to be error-free for levels and timing of family member visa petitions from legalization beneficiaries under general provisions. Similar projections have rarely been devised. [See Roney (1988) and Harper (1988) for projections of future immigration prepared for background discussion of an earlier version of the Immigration Act of 1990.] With very little empirical

information, Warren (1988) estimated that there would be about 300,000 dependents of legalization beneficiaries, relying on an assumption that prior low rates of naturalization for Mexican immigrants would pertain to this special cohort. Teitelbaum (1989) rightly cautioned against assuming that past patterns of naturalization and petitioning would hold. The recent work of Yang (1994) indicates the pitfalls of merely using demographic characteristics to explain naturalization with its influence for social and economic outcomes. Entry cohorts of the past three decades also may differ from historical cohorts in that they may be lifetime migrants. Although the foreign-born population has nearly doubled in 1970-1990, emigration research has not detected any increases (Woodrow-Lafield 1995c).

Now that the appropriate caveats have been cited, the major findings can be freely noted. With these empirical portraits of immediate relatives networks, intentions to immigrate, and naturalization intentions, naturalization may be broadly sought and facilitate family migration from Mexico as well as other countries. These projections have great value for illustrating that there will be *extremely heavy demand for visas under fourth preference* from the legalization cohort. The actual level of demand may be lower if these legalized individuals had one or more siblings

RESEARCH  
PAPER

- 28 -

**Table 12.**

VISA PETITIONS POSSIBLY TO BE FILED UNDER FAMILY PREFERENCE AND IMMEDIATE RELATIVES CATEGORIES  
UNDER SPONSORSHIP OF GENERALLY LEGALIZED IMMIGRANTS:  
MEXICO-BORN

Category for Petitioning	Relevant Demand Level			Possible Petitions in Fiscal Year				
	Combined	In U.S.	Intending	Total 1994-1998	1994-1995	1995-1996	1996-1997	1997-1998
Total Family Members	1,629,000	419,000	1,210,000	1,391,000	149,000	526,000	661,000	54,000
Family Preferences	1,466,000	401,000	1,065,000	1,174,000	118,000	442,000	573,000	40,000
First								
Unmarried adult sons and daughters of citizens (and children)	18,000	(A)	18,000	4,000	2,000	1,000	1,000	0
Second								
Spouses	349,000	228,000	120,000	---	---	---	---	---
children,	105,000	84,000	21,000	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)
unmarried sons and daughters of permanent resident aliens	244,000	144,000	99,000	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)
	(A)	(A)	(A)	(A)	(A)	(A)	(A)	(A)
Third								
Married sons and daughters of citizens (and spouses and children)	64,000	(---)	64,000	54,000	10,000	23,000	19,000	2,000
	26,000	(A)	26,000	22,000	4,000	9,000	8,000	1,000
	26,000	(A)	26,000	22,000	4,000	9,000	8,000	1,000
	13,000	(A)	13,000	11,000	2,000	5,000	4,000	0
Fourth								
Siblings of citizens (and their spouses and children)	1,035,000	173,000	862,000	1,115,000	106,000	418,000	554,000	37,000
	545,000	91,000	454,000	587,000	56,000	220,000	291,000	20,000
	327,000	55,000	272,000	352,000	33,000	132,000	175,000	12,000
	163,000	27,000	136,000	176,000	17,000	66,000	87,000	6,000
Immediate Relatives	---	---	---	219,000	31,000	85,000	89,000	14,000
Parents	181,000	18,000	163,000	131,000	20,000	53,000	52,000	7,000
Children	(C)	(C)	(C)	72,000	10,000	27,000	30,000	6,000
Spouses	(C)	(C)	(C)	15,000	1,000	5,000	6,000	1,000

Note: These estimates are illustrative. See text for explanation.

- (A) Given high demand under second preference, assumption is that all unmarried sons and daughters will be transferred to petition under first preference for which demand is much lower.
- (B) The assumptions are that visa petitions have already been filed under second preference, will have been largely satisfied in 1992-1994, and that legalized immigrants may be slower to naturalize and sponsor co-residing relatives.
- (C) These groups are included above.

**Table 13.**

VISA PETITIONS POSSIBLY TO BE FILED UNDER FAMILY PREFERENCE AND IMMEDIATE RELATIVES CATEGORIES  
UNDER SPONSORSHIP OF GENERALLY LEGALIZED IMMIGRANTS:  
EL SALVADOREAN ORIGIN

Category for Petitioning	Relevant Demand Level			Possible Petitions in Fiscal Year				
	Combined	In U.S.	Intending	Total 1994-1998	1994-1995	1995-1996	1996-1997	1997-1998
Total Family Members	254,000	65,000	189,000	135,000	18,000	59,000	53,000	6,000
Family Preferences	235,000	61,000	173,000	107,000	18,000	45,000	41,000	4,000
First								
Unmarried adult sons and daughters of citizens (and children)	5,000	(A)	5,000	1,000	1,000	0	0	0
Second								
Spouses	62,000	38,000	24,000	---	---	---	---	---
children,	15,000	14,000	1,000	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)
unmarried sons and daughters of permanent resident aliens	46,000	24,000	22,000	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)
	(A)	(A)	(A)	(A)	(A)	(A)	(A)	(A)
Third								
Married sons and daughters of citizens (and spouses and children)	4,000	(--)	4,000	3,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0
	2,000	(A)	2,000	1,000	0	1,000	1,000	0
	2,000	(A)	2,000	1,000	0	1,000	1,000	0
	1,000	(A)	1,000	1,000	0	0	0	0
Fourth								
Siblings of citizens (and their spouses and children)	164,000	24,000	140,000	102,000	16,000	43,000	40,000	4,000
	86,000	12,000	74,000	54,000	9,000	23,000	21,000	2,000
	52,000	7,000	44,000	32,000	5,000	14,000	12,000	1,000
	26,000	4,000	22,000	16,000	3,000	7,000	6,000	1,000
Immediate Relatives	---	---	---	35,000	6,000	15,000	12,000	2,000
Parents	25,000	4,000	21,000	17,000	3,000	7,000	6,000	0
Children	(C)	(C)	(C)	17,000	3,000	7,000	6,000	1,000
Spouses	(C)	(C)	(C)	1,000	0	0	0	0

Note: These estimates are illustrative. See text for explanation.

- (A) Given high demand under second preference, assumption is that all unmarried sons and daughters will be transferred to petition under first preference for which demand is much lower.
- (B) The assumptions are that visa petitions have already been filed under second preference, will have been largely satisfied in 1992-1994, and that legalized immigrants may be slower to naturalize and sponsor co-residing relatives.
- (C) These groups are included above.

living outside their household who, having resided here since before 1982, also received legalization.

Beyond this immediate scenario, introduction of parents as immediate relatives could lead to appearance of petitions shown here under fourth preference, under second preference, and, eventually, under first or third preferences. A pathway for sibling immigration may involve bringing in the parent, who later may sponsor remaining children (Arnold, et al. 1989). This effort is conservative about making explicit projections of that wave of petitioning as it is contingent on so many assumptions about the occurrence and timing of legalized immigrants' and parents' naturalization, among others. The accuracy of any projection diminishes as effects of erroneous assumptions compound over time. A few tentative statements are possible. Depending on family characteristics of siblings, there could be tremendous increases under second preference, possibly even before the year 2000, with many of these petitions spooling into third preference. Petitions filed under the third preference category could increase several-fold in the early part of 2000-2009.

## **SUMMARY**

The ideal source for depicting socioeconomic changes, acculturation, fertility, and

family reunification, would be longitudinal data for a full array of immigrant entry cohorts (White 1992) with linkages to original immigrants. However, the processes of sponsorship, naturalization, and family reunification are lengthy. Such a survey or administrative tracking system would be quite costly, would need to be in place for two to four decades, and would always be subject to the bias of incomplete observation of more recent entry cohorts' experiences.

This research draws on an existing dataset with detailed information about numbers, residence, and intended residence for parents, siblings, and children of an immigrant cohort. Although the study population is unique in its long-term residence in undocumented status and the effect that transition to legal status may have on the timing of bringing other family members to the United States, these data offer extraordinary insights to family migration for immigration during the 1990s. It appears that the family preference visa backlog could increase by as much as 100 percent merely as a result of the legalization of 1.7 million aliens under IRCA.

Of what value will this study be in the contemporary discussions about immigration and immigrants? May we assume enough accuracy about these predictions for policy purposes? Keyfitz (1987:237) has stated "Yet standing against this as-

sertion of the absolute impossibility of knowing the future is the absolute necessity of a picture of the future if behavior is to have any sense." For this population subgroup previously destined for an underclass life-style, the picture features massive embracing of American citizenship. Among the benefits of citizenship are greater range of eligibility for sponsorship of family members as immigrants, but political participation will be a more universally received benefit. Patterns of geographic concentration of immigrants in certain states and cities are long-standing and empowerment of these immigrants from undocumented origins in the 1970s may bode well for future urban health.

Several recommendations for federal agencies and policymakers are warranted. The recommendation with the most immediacy is that the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service should make an organized field effort to guarantee prompt and complete statistical records for naturalizations for 1994 and subsequent years. If the sea change suggested herein takes place, these data will be extremely relevant for social science studies of assimilation and political behavior. Concurrently with these administrative efforts, initiation of evaluation research, including naturalistic research, on advocacy groups' role in promoting naturalization and political edu-

cation is merited (e.g., Hagan & Baker 1993). To sharpen the precision of these projections and the relationship between needs for family reunification and decision to naturalize, the Legalized Population Follow-up Survey and the Legalized Applicants Public-Use File should be updated regularly during 1995-2000 to include administrative data from linked naturalization records.

A recommendation for a third wave survey of the legalized population is an obvious necessity at this critical juncture in the cohort's experience, not merely for traditional assimilation analysis, but also for informing immigration policy more fully. Only with longitudinal data on socioeconomic assimilation would the push-pull aspects of the relationship between settlement success and family reunification be discernible. Only by recontacting these individuals will there be measures of the degree to which parents, children, or siblings may have chosen to settle here as undocumented residents while awaiting an immigrant visa.

One of IRCA's main purposes, curbing undocumented immigration, apparently has not been fulfilled, based on analyses of apprehensions statistics (Bean, et al. 1990), surveys of Mexican sending communities (Donato, Durand & Massey

1992), and assessment of net undocumented immigration in the 1980s (Woodrow-Lafield 1994b; Woodrow 1992). A portion of this failure is due to continuing migration of undocumented farm workers (Martin 1994). Unrealized by policymakers and researchers may be the full extent to which undocumented migration is an integral part of legal immigration to the United States as individuals enter illegally or overstay for the fundamental reason of living with their families. With the exception of sending communities surveys, research on undocumented migration ignores its family character.

Yet family ties may be the critical link in analyzing undocumented migration patterns for the 1990s and into the twenty-first century. Failure of the legal immigration system to afford legal opportunity for family migration may lead to substantial undocumented immigration of family members of this cohort of legalized immigrants who have been settled for a decade. Another survey with similar and expanded questions on residence of family members would be valuable for studying the linkages of legal and undocumented immigration and informing policymakers concerned with enforcement of employer sanctions provisions and border control.

Finally, a similar survey of Special Agricultural Workers is long overdue. The controversy aroused by the unexpected numbers of SAW applicants probably would be relatively diminutive if the scope of undocumented and legal immigration stemming from SAWs were measurable. This population is truly elusive from the demographer's measurement view as SAWs are fully entitled to reside permanently in the United States and yet the extent to which they are resident is unknown.

Characterized as primarily Mexican and young, this population has tremendous potential for introducing wives and children into the United States initially as undocumented migrants, eventually as legal immigrants. In the present, these families may contribute to rural poverty problems (Martin 1994). These families and, to a lesser extent, families of generally IRCA-legalized immigrants, are mixed by legal status with complex implications for access to public benefits programs. Both another follow-up survey of the generally IRCA-legalized immigrants and a SAW survey are most relevant for California and the Los Angeles area with their concentrations of these individuals.

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RESEARCH  
P A P E R

- 36 -

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