

De Facto Deportation from the United States to Mexico, 2015–2020



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De facto deportation is emigration to accompany a deported person, typically a nuclear family member. We study the recent de facto deportation of children, spouses, and parents of people deported from the United States to Mexico. We identify, quantify, and describe the characteristics of de facto deported people and compare them to those who migrated for other reasons using 2020 Mexican Census data. We also analyze data from interviews with returned migrants in Mexico City to describe experiences of de facto deportation. We estimate there were more than eleven thousand people de facto deported from the US to Mexico between 2015 and 2020. Our analysis shows the predominance of women among de facto deported adults, suggesting a strong gendering of family migration after deportation. Interviews reveal the importance of in-person caretaking in decisions about de facto deportation.

Keywords: de facto deportation, return migration, family, children, immigration policy, United States, Mexico

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© 2025 Russell Sage Foundation. Hamilton, Erin R., Claudia Masferrer, Angelita Repetto, and Nicole Denier. 2025. "De Facto Deportation from the United States to Mexico, 2015–2020." *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* 11(4): 176–95. <https://doi.org/10.7758/RSF.2025.11.4.08>. This work is supported by a grant from the National Institutes of Health (R03HD107298); the UC MEXUS-CONACYT Collaborative Grants via the University of California and the Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología de México; a Fulbright-García Robles Scholarship; a grant from the UC Davis Academic Senate Committee on Research; the Seminar on Migration, Inequality, and Public Policies; and the Program of Postdoctoral Scholarships at El Colegio de México. The qualitative data were collected, coded, and analyzed by Nicole Denier, Francisco Flores Peña, Erin Hamilton, Claudia Masferrer, Gabriela Pinillos, Anilú Tomas, and Agnieszka Wieczorek. Direct correspondence to: Erin R. Hamilton, at erhamilton@ucdavis.edu, One Shields Avenue, Davis, CA 95616, United States. Claudia Masferrer at cmasferrer@colmex.mx, Carretera Picacho Ajusco 20, Col. Ampliación Fuentes del Pedregal, C.P. 14110, Tlalpan, Ciudad de México, Mexico. Angelita Repetto, at arepetto@msu.edu, 433A Berkey Hall, 509 E. Circle Drive East Lansing, MI 48823, United States. Nicole Denier at nicole.denier@colby.edu, 4710 Mayflower Hill Waterville, Maine 04901, United States.

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Major changes to the United States immigration law and policy since 1986 have led to large numbers of deportations of long-term, settled immigrants from the US (Golash-Boza 2015; Massey et al. 2016; Schultheis and Ruiz Soto 2017). Long-term, settled immigrants often have families in the US; in these cases, deportation causes the international separation of families. According to reports filed with the US Congress by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) every year since 2009, the US government has deported tens of thousands of parents of children who live in the US (Capps et al. 2015; DHS 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2017a, 2017b, 2018, 2019a, 2019b). The number of deportations of people who have spouses or parents in the US is unknown but presumably also large.

While many families who experience the deportation of a family member remain separated, some reunify (Andrews 2023; Dreby 2015; Enriquez 2020; Valdivia 2021; Zayas 2015). When the US government deports a person away from their family in the US, the family has two options for reunification: The deported person can reenter the US, or the family can emigrate to the country of deportation (typically the country of origin, or nationality, of the deported person). These post-deportation outcomes have significant consequences for the deported person and their family. Reentry to the US after deportation can involve significant criminal and immigration penalties if the previously deported migrant is again apprehended by US immigration agents. Even if they are not apprehended, they experience what Carolina Valdivia (2025, this issue) calls “hyper-illegality.” The alternative to reentry is family migration to the country of deportation to accompany or reunite with a deported person, which is called *de facto deportation* (Kanstroom 2007; Zayas 2015). Under current US immigration law, *de facto deportation* presents a family facing separation by deportation with the only opportunity to remain together without the threat of further US legal entanglement.

A small body of research studies the scale and experiences of *de facto deportation*, focusing largely on children *de facto* deported to Mexico (Barros Nock 2019; Boehm 2016;

Caldwell 2019; Hamilton et al. 2023; Masferrer et al. 2024; Zayas 2015). One study estimated that a large share of US-born children living in Mexico in 2018—about one in seven—were there due to a parent’s deportation (Hamilton et al. 2023). Other studies have focused on the outcomes of children who have been *de facto* deported to Mexico. This research finds that children who experienced *de facto* deportation face socioeconomic hardship, schooling delays and challenges, and mental health problems (Boehm 2016; Caldwell 2019; Hamilton et al. 2023; Rodríguez-Cruz 2023; Zayas 2015; Zayas et al. 2024). These outcomes arguably emerge from the forced nature of *de facto* deportation, which requires families to emigrate from the US to preserve family togetherness and avoid legal entanglement (Zayas 2015).

In this article, we build on the emerging body of research on *de facto* deportation with an overview and update. We focus on *de facto* deportation to Mexico: how it emerged, how many people (and who) have been recently *de facto* deported to Mexico, why some families emigrate whereas others remain separated, and what questions remain unanswered. We present new results from the 2020 Mexican Census (hereafter “the Census”), giving a more recent estimate of the number of US-born children in Mexico due to *de facto* deportation from the US, as well as the first estimate of the number of *de facto* deported Mexican-born children, spouses, and parents in Mexico in 2020. We then compare the socioeconomic characteristics of *de facto* deported children and adults to those who migrated from the US to Mexico for other reasons to understand the circumstances that they face in Mexico. We find that more than ten thousand people were *de facto* deported from the US to Mexico between 2015 and 2020, including more than six thousand US citizens, almost 90 percent of them children (INEGI 2020).

We also analyze data from interviews with returned migrants in Mexico City to describe the experiences of *de facto* deportation to Mexico more fully. These interviews allow us to understand and contextualize the experiences of former US migrants who lived in the US in non-citizen status and returned to live in Mexico

City by 2019 (Masferrer et al. 2025). Among them, we discover a common pattern of family separation after parental deportation, as well as instances of de facto deportation. We share the stories of Carla, Lety, and Olivia, people who faced their own or a family member's deportation and were de facto deported or separated from their family as a result of deportation. We do not use these data to represent the population of de facto deported people or deported parents. Rather, our goal is instead to begin to understand a key question that the research has not yet addressed, which is when and why de facto deportation occurs, as opposed to forced family separation or reunification in the US. From the qualitative data, we learn that de facto deportation occurred in cases when deportation threatened the family's ability to provide in-person caregiving for dependent children, but decisions about migration for in-person caregiving for children depended on other family dynamics.

De facto deportation represents one important way that US immigration policy reaches people, families, and communities beyond the deported person. De facto deportation also reveals how US immigration policy extends beyond the borders of the US to shape the lives of people forced to live abroad to preserve family togetherness. As we will explain next, de facto deportation is not an inevitable outcome of immigration law. It emerged from the particular historical circumstances of US immigration policy since 1986.

THE EMERGENCE OF DE FACTO DEPORTATION FROM THE US TO MEXICO

De facto deportation from the US to Mexico is the outcome of US laws and policies created to manage undocumented migration since 1986. It began with the 1986 US Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). As research on US immigration law and Mexico-US migration has shown, IRCA was a response to earlier failures and gaps in US immigration law (Bean et al. 1987, 1990; Massey and Pren 2012; Massey et al. 2016). In 1964, the US terminated the short-term labor migration program between Mexico and the US, the Bracero Program, without a replacement to account for the labor relation-

ships developed during the program. Shortly thereafter, in 1968, the US Congress introduced the first limits to legal immigration from the Western Hemisphere. These policies transformed a circular, legal migration flow between Mexico and the US in the 1950s and early 1960s into a circular, undocumented flow in the 1970s and 1980s (Massey and Pren 2012; Massey et al. 2016). The 1986 IRCA sought to address undocumented migration with a three-pronged approach: amnesty for the resident undocumented population, regulations to prevent the employment of undocumented people, and border control to prevent undocumented entry. None of IRCA's approaches curtailed undocumented migration, and the population of undocumented immigrants in the US grew for two decades after the law's passage (Bean et al. 1990; Donato et al. 1992; Massey et al. 2002, 2016).

At the same time, the US Congress steadily increased the amount of money spent controlling the US-Mexico border, the primary way the US government sought to manage undocumented migration in the 1990s (Massey et al. 2016). While border control's effectiveness at deterring undocumented migration is not straightforward or obvious, studies demonstrate that border control reduced the return migration of undocumented immigrants from the US to Mexico (Angelucci 2012; Cornelius 2001; Cornelius and Salehyan 2007; Espenshade 1994; Massey et al. 2015, 2016; Massey and Espinosa 1997). In limiting return migration to Mexico, border control transformed Mexico-US transnational family life (Hamilton and Hale 2016). Circular migration, or migration back and forth across the border, was a cornerstone of Mexico-US transnational family life through the second half of the twentieth century, as Mexican migrants worked in the US during part of the year and returned home to visit family in Mexico with some frequency (Massey 1986; Massey et al. 1987; Reichert 1981). Under an increasingly enforced border, undocumented migrant stays in the US increased in duration, as immigrants worked for longer periods to cover the cost of border crossing and avoided trips home that would incur additional costs and risks on reentry to the US (Massey et al. 2002, 2016). Instead of enduring long separa-

rations from families left behind in Mexico, many undocumented migrants in the US reunited with spouses and children or formed families in the US (Garip 2016; Hamilton and Hale 2016; Massey et al. 2002).

Two US laws passed in 1996 vastly increased the ability of immigration officials to deport immigrants who were settled in the US: the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act (AEDPA) and the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRAIRA). AEDPA and IIRAIRA expanded the category of deportable offenses, mandated the detention of immigrants convicted of deportable offenses, and curtailed judicial review of the deportation of immigrants convicted of deportable offenses (Macías-Rojas 2018). In the aftermath of 9/11, US immigration policy shifted to incorporate more enforcement in the interior of the US. In the 2000s, the newly formed US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) drew on the legal framework in IIRAIRA to create formal collaborations between federal immigration agencies and local law enforcement (Pedroza 2013). The Secure Communities program, Section 287(g) agreement, the Criminal Alien Program, and the National Fugitive Operations Program authorized local law enforcement agencies to detect deportable immigrants, hold them, and transfer them into custody of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Between 2004 and 2011, US congressional appropriations for these four programs increased from \$23 million to \$690 million, and the number of people arrested through the programs increased from 11,000 to 289,000 (Golash-Boza 2015). In addition to federal efforts, some states, including Arizona and Georgia, passed laws to further enable local law enforcement agencies to identify and detain immigrants.

Scholars have called the deportation of hundreds of thousands of Mexican migrants from the US in the first two decades of the twenty-first century the “Great Expulsion” (Escobar et al. 2022; Waldinger 2023; Zúñiga and Giorguli-Saucedo 2020). As a result of AEDPA, IIRAIRA, and the federal-local immigration enforcement agreements, large shares of deportations were of settled immigrants, people who had lived in the US for many years and had formed and raised families there. In 2015, almost one in six

people deported from the US to Mexico had lived in the US for six or more years, and among these deported long-term residents, almost half (47 percent) were separated from at least one minor child in the US (Schultheis and Ruiz Soto 2017).

As the Great Expulsion unfolded, a new generation of children born in the US immigrated to Mexico (Masferrer et al. 2019; Zúñiga and Giorguli-Saucedo 2020). These US citizen children accompanied their parents, who returned to Mexico for a variety of reasons, including the 2008 Great Recession and economic opportunity in Mexico, and as a result of deportation (Chort and de la Rupelle 2016; Masferrer et al. 2025; Masferrer and Roberts 2012). Between 2005 and 2015, the population of US-born children living in Mexico doubled to more than half a million (Masferrer et al. 2019). Some of these children were de facto deported.

THE DE FACTO DEPORTATION OF CHILDREN FROM THE US TO MEXICO

A small body of research has studied the de facto deportation of children to Mexico. Two studies have estimated the degree of de facto deportation to Mexico, one focused on children and another on de facto deportation as one of several causes of migration (Hamilton et al. 2023; Masferrer et al. 2024). One study found that approximately 15 percent of recent migrant US-born children of recent migrant household heads living in Mexico in 2014 and 2018 were de facto deported (Hamilton et al. 2023). Applying this rate to the population of all US-born children living in Mexico during those years, the study estimated that as many as 100,000 US-born children living in Mexico in 2014 and 80,000 in 2018 were de facto deported to Mexico. However, the survey used in the study did not identify parent-child relationships in complex households, specifically households where the parent was not the household head or the spouse of the household head. As a result, it was impossible to link some children to their parents, and the sample sizes were too small to analyze the de facto deportation of Mexican-born children or other family members, such as spouses and parents. A more recent study of the Census showed that among returnees and recent US-born migrants, de facto deportation

is most common among children and women (Masferrer et al. 2024).

A small number of studies have examined the experiences of de facto deported children in Mexico (Boehm 2016; Caldwell 2019; Hamilton et al. 2023; Rodríguez-Cruz 2023; Zayas 2015; Zayas et al. 2024). These are, for the most part, small-scale, qualitative studies of migrant families. They find that de facto deportation is a disorienting and difficult process for children. US-born children in Mexico face administrative barriers to school enrollment, which may be aggravated for families who migrate under stressful and urgent circumstances, such as deportation (Jacobo-Suárez 2017; Zúñiga and Carrillo Cantú 2020; Zúñiga and Giorguli-Saucedo 2020). Children and adolescents who are de facto deported experience mental health problems that emerge from the trauma of parental deportation and the “code of silence” around deportation, which refers to the inability to speak openly about deportation due to stigma and experiences of discrimination toward deported people and their families (Rodríguez-Cruz 2023). Two studies have compared de facto deported children to those who migrated to Mexico for other reasons (Hamilton et al. 2023; Zayas et al. 2024). They found that de facto deported children experience greater material disadvantages, including lower levels of health insurance coverage and school enrollment, as well as higher rates of behavioral problems, unhappiness, and parent-child conflict.

Several scholars have argued that de facto deportation undermines child well-being because of the forced nature of family migration in response to familial deportation (Boehm 2016; Caldwell 2019; Zayas 2015). They argue that deportation forces families to prioritize family unity over other considerations related to child and family well-being, such as housing, employment, safety, and social support—not to mention the family’s personal and social attachments to places and communities. However, deportation and de facto deportation do not occur randomly. To identify a causal effect, researchers must, at a minimum, identify the population targeted (or at risk) of deportation, the group among them who decides to de facto deport, and changes in their circumstances before and after de facto deportation, in compar-

ison to families who are not targeted or who make different family migration decisions under the same circumstances. Because no data identify these populations, the research still lacks causal evidence that de facto deportation is harmful to children and families.

We are not able to provide causal estimates of the impacts of de facto deportation. Instead, we build on prior work by providing new estimates of the population size and characteristics of de facto deported people in Mexico in 2020, including US-born and Mexican-born children of deported parents, spouses of deported partners, and parents of deported children. We then describe the experiences of three families affected by deportation to better understand when and why de facto deportation occurs.

DATA AND METHODS TO QUANTIFY DE FACTO DEPORTATION TO MEXICO

We identify, quantify, and describe the characteristics of de facto deported people in Mexico using the Census. We compare people who were de facto deported, as defined in more detail later in this article, between 2015 and 2020 to US- and Mexican-born people who migrated to Mexico for other reasons between 2015 and 2020, as well as to nonmigrant US- and Mexican-born people who were in Mexico in 2015. We exclude people born outside of Mexico and the US from the analysis.

We use publicly available microdata from the Census’s extended questionnaire, which was administered to a probability sample of four million private households selected to represent the state and national populations. Unlike the basic questionnaire, which is administered to all Mexican households living in both private and collective dwellings for a complete population enumeration, the extended questionnaire identifies the parents and spouse of every household member. The Mexican National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI, by its Spanish acronym) administered the Census in March 2020. INEGI was nearly finished with data collection when the federal government issued a nationwide, nonmandatory lockdown in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. While a decline in the response rate was noted in the last week of March, the survey

continued and ultimately achieved a 96 percent response rate (INEGI 2020).

We identify deported and de facto deported people among recent migrants, which the Census survey defines as people who were living in the US five years before the survey and therefore migrated to Mexico between 2015 and 2020. The survey asked all recent migrants the reason for their migration (to Mexico); deported migrants are recent migrants who responded that deportation was the reason for their migration. We identify de facto deported migrants as recent migrants who did not report deportation as the cause of their migration but co-reside (in the same household) with a close family member—parent, spouse, or child—who was deported over the same period. To be clear, de facto deportation is not listed as a possible reason for migration. In defining de facto deportation as such, we assume that a recent migrant who was not deported but co-resides with a close family member who was deported over the same period migrated to accompany that family member. Most people (97 percent) who we define as de facto deported listed “family” as the reason for their migration. The remaining 3 percent listed a variety of causes, including, most commonly, “other work-related reasons” (1 percent) and “other personal motives” (0.73 percent) (INEGI 2020). Because US-born citizens cannot be deported to Mexico, we identify US-born recent migrants who stated that deportation was the reason for their migration as de facto deported, assuming that they referred to the deportation of someone else.

It is important to note a few limitations of this definition of de facto deportation. First, because we do not directly observe de facto deportation, we limit the definition to close family members—children, spouses, and parents—who migrated over the same period and co-reside with a deported family member. It seems more likely that de facto deportation occurs among nuclear family members than among people connected by extended family or nonfamily relationships. We suspect the error introduced by excluding some de facto deported people who co-reside with an unrelated or extended relative who was deported is smaller than it would be if we had included all recent migrants co-residing with a deported

person, regardless of relation. This decision means that our estimate will be conservative. On the other hand, it is possible that some recent migrants who co-reside with a deported parent, child, or spouse migrated for reasons other than accompanying the deported family member. Given that 97 percent of migrants we identify as de facto deported state that their reason for migration was family, we suspect this is a small portion.

The second limitation is that we only observe the de facto deportation of coresident household members. People who migrated to accompany a deported person but no longer live with that person cannot be identified as de facto deported in this data. There is no way to overcome this limitation, nor confidently estimate the size of the error. Again, this error means our estimates of de facto deportation will be conservative.

Third, we do not observe de facto deportation among people who migrated to Mexico more than five years before the Census, that is, before 2015. Thus, our estimates of de facto deportation of Mexican-born people refer to the period between 2015 and 2020. This means that our estimate excludes an unknown but possibly large portion of people who were de facto deported before 2015 and remained there in 2020. We compare our estimates to earlier estimates and conclude that our estimate likely represents a minority of all de facto deportees living in Mexico in 2020 because of the short-term window in which we observe migration in the Census.

Fourth, even with a focus on the period between 2015 and 2020, we do not observe de facto deported people who remigrate or return to the US in the same period. Our estimate refers only to the stock, not the flow, of de facto deported people. US-born children, who have the right to a US passport and can lawfully return to the US, may be particularly mobile. Studies suggest that return to the US among the children of deported parents as well as among all US-born minors in Mexico is common (Caldwell 2019; Cuecuecha-Mendoza et al. 2017). Given some return migration to the US, the stock is smaller than the flow.

Finally, it is important to note the special circumstance of children under age five. This

group was not asked about their place of residence in 2015 because most had not yet been born in that year. Additionally, the question about reasons for migrating to Mexico between 2015 and 2020 was asked only of people who lived outside of Mexico in 2015. US-born children under age five are, by definition, recent migrants. We consider whether they were deported based on their parents' reasons for migration if one parent was in the US at least five years prior to the survey. However, as we show, most US-born children under age five do not co-reside with parents who report that they were in the US in 2015. Among Mexican-born children under age five, recent migration cannot be identified. We therefore analyze this age group separately.

ESTIMATES OF DE FACTO DEPORTED PEOPLE IN MEXICO IN 2020

Table 1 shows that an estimated 11,427 people were de facto deported from the US to Mexico between 2015 and 2020 and lived in Mexico in 2020. The majority (52.8 percent) of this population, totaling 6,038, were the children of a deported parent. The second-largest group was spouses of deported people ($N = 4,407$), who made up 38.6 percent of the population. Smaller numbers of people were the parents ($N = 346$, 3 percent) or the parents and spouses ($N = 275$, 2.4 percent) of a deported person. This latter group refers to recent migrants who lived

in a household with both a child (of any age) and a spouse who was deported. An additional 361 people, representing 3.2 percent of the de facto deported population, were US citizens who stated that their reason for migrating to Mexico was deportation, but they did not co-reside with a deported spouse, child, or parent (INEGI 2020).

Table 2 disaggregates the population by place of birth and age among children and by place of birth and gender among adults (see panels A and B). Comparing population estimates (shown at the bottom of each panel) across groups, it is apparent that US-born children were the largest population of people de facto deported to Mexico between 2015 and 2020: There were an estimated 1,296 de facto deported US-born children under age five and 3,987 aged five to seventeen. The population of US-born de facto deported children aged five to seventeen is 9.5 times larger than the population of Mexican-born de facto deported children of the same age ($N = 420$). Among adults, de facto deportation is more common for migrants born in Mexico, with 2,766 Mexican-born adult women and 1,554 adult men, compared to 1,044 US-born women and 360 men.

Table 2, panel A focuses on children and compares US-born children under age five to US-born and Mexican-born children aged five to seventeen. As a reminder, recent migration and the cause of migration to Mexico are only

Table 1. Relationship to the Deported Person

	Population	Percent of Population	Sample Size
Child	6,038	52.8	785
Spouse	4,407	38.6	439
Parent	346	3.0	52
Spouse and parent	275	2.4	34
US-born deported	361	3.2	44
Total	11,427	100	1,354

Source: 2020 Mexican Census (INEGI 2020).

Note: De facto deported migrants are recent migrants from the US who live with a family member (parent, spouse, or child) who is a recent migrant from the US and report deportation as the reason for migration. Alternatively, they are US-born and report that their own cause for migration was deportation, regardless of the relationship with other household members.

Table 2. Rate of De Facto Deportation and Relationship to Deported Person Across Key Groups of De Facto Deported People

	US-Born De Facto Deported (0–4 Years)	US-Born De Facto Deported (5–17 Years)	Mexican-Born De Facto Deported (5–17 Years)	
Panel A. Children				
Rate of de facto deportation	1.3%	10.1%	4.6%	
Who was deported ^a				
Father	62.4	51.2	49.1	
Mother	21.2	27.9	21.0	
Both parents	16.4	21.0	30.0	
Sample	150	546	59	
Population	1,296	3,987	420	
	US-Born De Facto Deported (Women)	US-Born De Facto Deported (Men)	Mexican-Born De Facto Deported (Women)	Mexican-Born De Facto Deported (Men)
Panel B. Adults				
Rate of de facto deportation	5.3%	1.6%	3.9%	0.7%
Who was deported ^a				
Parent	13.1	34.7	1.2	18.8
Spouse	82.4	65.3	78.1	81.2
Child	4.0	0	11.0	0
Spouse & child	0.5	0	9.8	0
Sample	57	28	358	156
Population	1,044	360	2,766	1,554

Source: 2020 Mexican Census (INEGI 2020).

^a in percentages.

reported for people who were in the US in 2015 in the Census; therefore, we cannot identify recent migration among Mexican-born children under age five. It is also the case that we do not observe de facto deportation for the large majority (80 percent) of US-born children under age five whose parents were not in the US in 2015 and did not report a reason for returning to Mexico after the birth of their child (deportation or otherwise). As a result, the rate of de facto deportation among this population of young recent migrants (US-born children under age five in Mexico in 2020) was 1.3 percent, significantly lower than the rate among US-born children aged five to seventeen (10.1 percent).

Among US-born and Mexican-born children who migrated to Mexico between 2015 and 2020, 10.1 percent of US-born children were de

facto deported, and 4.6 percent of Mexican-born children were de facto deported. In other words, the rate of de facto deportation was twice as high among US-born recent migrant children than among Mexican-born recent migrant children living in Mexico in 2020 was de facto deported.

The modal de facto deported child migrated with a deported father. Among US-born de facto deported children under age five, 62.4 percent returned with a deported father. The share is about 50 percent among US-born and Mexican-born de facto deported children aged five to seventeen. Fewer de facto deported children (21–28 percent) migrated with a deported mother. A full 30 percent of Mexican-born de facto deported children aged five to seventeen

migrated with two deported parents, higher than the share among US-born de facto deported children under age five (16.4 percent) and aged five to seventeen (21 percent).

Ninety percent of deported people to Mexico in this period were men (not shown), but between 49.1 and 62.4 percent of de facto deported children returned with a father. This means that men (fathers) were underrepresented among the parents of de facto deported children in this period, as compared to their share among the population of all deported people, suggesting that deported mothers may be more likely to bring children with them than deported fathers.¹ The overrepresentation of mothers among deported parents whose children accompany them is evidence that de facto deportation is gendered, meaning that the patterns and processes of de facto deportation vary for men and women.

In panel B, we present similar information for de facto deported adults. Among adults, the rate is highest among US-born recent migrant women, 5.3 percent of whom were de facto deported. Smaller shares were de facto deported among US-born men (1.6 percent), Mexican-born women (3.9 percent), and Mexican-born men (0.7 percent). The most common category of de facto deported adult was the spouse, who made up between 65.3 and 82.4 percent of the four adult groups.

Some de facto deported adults migrated to accompany deported parents, but this share ranges widely—from 1.2 percent to 34.7 percent—with men more likely than women to have done so. The share of de facto deported adult women who accompanied parents is smaller in part because a greater share of them accompanied deported children. In fact, there were no de facto deported men who accompanied deported children between 2015 and 2020 and were still living together in Mexico (and counted in the Census) in 2020.

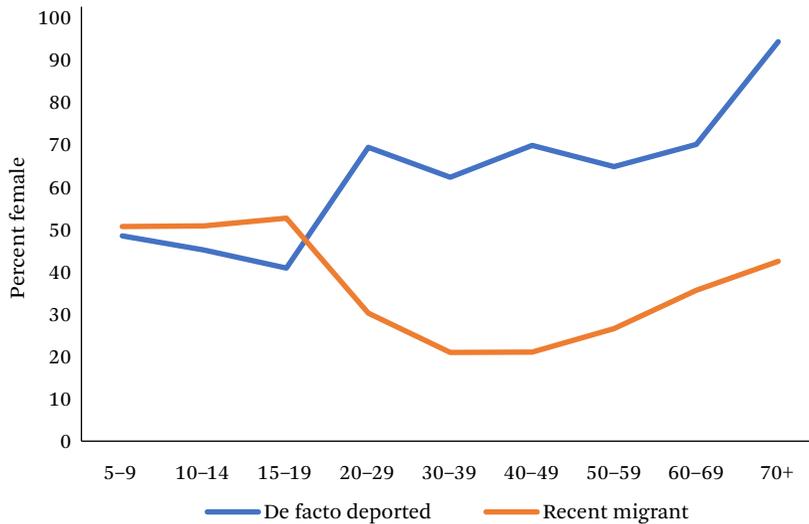
Adult men and women who were de facto deported between 2015 and 2020 had different

relationships to the deported person. Recent migrant men were more likely than women to have accompanied deported parents, while women were far more likely to accompany deported children. This is the second way that de facto deportation is gendered. Figure 1 adds further insight into these gendered patterns. It shows the percent female among recent migrants, comparing those who were and were not de facto deported by age group. Among adults, return migration to Mexico for reasons other than de facto deportation is dominated by men, whereas de facto deportation to Mexico is dominated by women. Among children and adolescents, the gender distribution is nearly equal across both groups. For those in their twenties, the patterns diverge: 30 percent of recent migrants were women, compared to 70 percent of the de facto deported. The female proportion declines to 20 percent among recent migrants in their thirties and forties but remains at 60–70 percent for de facto deported migrants in those age groups. Among older adults, the percent female rises in both groups, but more dramatically for those de facto deported: More than 90 percent of de facto deported migrants over seventy were women.

In table 3, we focus on children and compare de facto deported children to US- and Mexican-born recent migrants who moved for reasons other than de facto deportation, as well as to nonmigrant children.² The table includes key demographic indicators, including age, gender, ethnicity (both Indigenous and Afro-descendent, which is the terminology for Black race in Mexico), whether enrolled in school, region in Mexico, and size of locality of residence. De facto deported children were less likely to be Afro-descendent than the other children, but Indigenous ethnicity does not vary similarly. There are no clear patterns differentiating de facto deported children from the other groups on the other measures. US-born children under age five and Mexican-born de facto deported children were concentrated in the

1. We do not observe the population at risk of de facto deportation in the United States, that is, the population of mothers and fathers facing deportation. To directly assess gendered selectivity into deportation with children, one would need to compare the rates of deportation with children to the population at risk by gender.

2. All US-born children migrated to Mexico at some point in their lives, but we refer to those who are not recent migrants as nonmigrants for simplicity.

Figure 1. Percent Female by Age Among De Facto Deported and Recent Migrants in Mexico, 2020

Source: 2020 Mexican Census (INEGI 2020).

Border region, but we do not see the same pattern for US-born children deported between the ages of five and twelve.

US-born children who recently migrated to Mexico had lower rates of school enrollment than other groups, consistent with the literature on the administrative and other barriers they face to schooling in Mexico (Zúñiga and Giorguli-Saucedo 2020). This disadvantage is not apparent among US-born nonmigrants, who were enrolled at higher rates than Mexican-born nonmigrants, suggesting that the barriers are overcome with time. Although US-born de facto deported children had the lowest enrollment rate (at 82.8 percent), this is not entirely due to de facto deportation, as Mexican-born children in this group had the highest rate (at 94.3 percent; see table 3).

Table 4, which presents similar information for adults, also reveals few patterns differentiating de facto deported adults from recent migrant and nonmigrant adults. Here, we disaggregate by gender rather than place of birth and report that 27.4 percent of de facto deported women and 18.8 percent of de facto deported men were US-born. There are interesting educational differences between groups, with de facto deported men having the lowest levels of schooling (greater shares with zero to nine and ten to twelve completed years), and

recent migrant women having the highest levels (largest shares with thirteen to fifteen and sixteen or more years).

Economic activity patterns were structured more by gender than by migration status. Women in all categories were less likely to be employed or unemployed than men and more likely to be inactive. Among both men and women, nonmigrants had the highest rates of employment. De facto deported adults were concentrated in the Border region, a pattern in contrast to recent migrants and nonmigrants.

EXPERIENCES OF DEPORTATION AND FAMILY REORGANIZATION

Table 4 shows that a large share of de facto deported adults—about half—resided in cities of more than 100,000 people, similar to the share among nonmigrants in Mexico. In 2019, we interviewed thirty-four return migrants in Mexico City as part of a study on return migration among people who had been in the US in non-citizen (mostly undocumented) status (Masferrer et al. 2025). Half of the people we interviewed had been deported, and the other half had returned to Mexico for a variety of reasons, including economic, family, and health-related reasons. The people we interviewed were not representative of return migrants to Mexico living in Mexico City (or elsewhere), but the

Table 3. Characteristics of De Facto Deported Children in Comparison to Recent Migrants and Nonmigrants in Mexico, by Place of Birth and Age, 2020

	US-Born De Facto Deported (0-4 Years)	US-Born De Facto Deported (5-17 Years)	Mexican-Born De Facto Deported (5-17 Years)	US-Born Recent Migrant (5-17 Years)	Mexican-Born Recent Migrant (5-17 Years)	US-Born Nonmigrant (5-17 Years)	Mexican-Born Nonmigrant (5-17 Years)
Mean age	2.6	10.7	11.1	10.5	11.9	12.0	11
Gender^a							
Female	51.1	45.5	44.5	51.9	52.7	49.1	49.2
Male	48.9	54.5	55.5	48.1	47.3	50.9	50.8
Indigenous ^a	13.8	6.3	5.5	9.6	14.7	10.4	20.1
Afro-descendant ^a	0.2	0.2	0.2	1.3	1.9	1.5	1.6
Enrolled in school ^a	—	82.8	94.3	86.1	89.3	90.5	87.6
Region in Mexico^a							
Border	56.9	24.2	51.4	40.0	35.7	44.5	20.3
Center-West	26.1	46.9	42.4	30.4	35.0	28.5	23.7
Center	5.9	16.4	1.9	17.8	18.2	15.7	31.5
South-Southeast	11.1	12.6	4.3	11.9	11.2	11.2	24.6
Size of locality^a							
<2,500	23.2	27.3	17.9	25.6	18.3	22.8	23.8
2,500-14,999	14.7	14.9	36.2	15.5	14.4	15.0	16.3
15,000-99,999	14.6	16.3	11.7	14.6	17.0	14.5	16.3
>100,000	47.5	41.6	34.3	44.2	50.3	47.7	43.6
Sample	150	546	59	5,454	965	46,667	3,686,265
Population	1,296	3,987	420	35,345	8,803	363,307	27,891,809

Source: 2020 Mexican Census (INEGI 2020).

Note: The migration status of children under age five is only known for US-born children.

^a in percentages.

Table 4. Characteristics of De Facto Deported Adults in Comparison to Recent Migrants and Nonmigrants in Mexico, by Gender, 2020

	Women			Men		
	De Facto Deported	Recent Migrant	Nonmigrant	De Facto Deported	Recent Migrant	Nonmigrant
US-born ^a	27.4	21.7	0.2	18.8	9.3	0.2
Mean age	39.3	44.2	42.6	38.3	42.3	41.9
Indigenous ^a	10.3	12.6	19.4	10.3	20.6	19.3
Afro-descendent ^a	3.2	2	2.1	2.3	2.7	2.2
Education^a						
0–9 years	51	43.4	55.4	60.5	64.7	53.3
10–12 years	36.8	28.5	22.4	34.3	23	23.7
13–15 years	3.6	8.2	7.4	4.4	3.9	7.1
16+ years	8.6	16.9	14.8	0.8	8.5	16
Marital status^a						
Inaunion	91.7	61.2	59	77.7	65.7	64.1
Ex-union	3.5	21.2	19.3	5.8	13.2	8.9
Single	4.8	17.6	21.7	16.5	21.2	27
Economic activity^a						
Employed	37.8	36	42.6	73.6	73.2	76.4
Unemployed	0.5	1.1	1	4.1	4.2	3.1
Inactive	61.7	62.9	56.4	22.4	22.6	20.5
Region in Mexico^a						
Border	46.1	37.2	20.8	44.6	27.4	22
Center-West	30	32.9	22.5	28.9	35.5	22.4
Center	14	17.4	34.3	19.1	19.7	33.6
South-Southeast	10	12.5	22.4	7.4	17.4	22
Size of locality^a						
<2,500	21.6	22	19	25.2	31	19.5
2,500–14,999	11.7	15.4	14.5	14.1	17.2	14.4
15,000–99,999	15.7	14.5	15.7	14.5	14.6	15.5
>100,000	51.1	48.2	50.8	46.3	37.2	50.6
Sample	415	10,940	5,165,413	184	38,302	4,689,828
Population	3,810	86,580	45,348,680	1,914	240,605	41,412,774

Source: 2020 Mexican Census (INEGI 2020).

^a in percentages.

interviews contain information not commonly recorded in survey data, including about non-coresident partners and children, as well as personal accounts of the process of family migration and separation. We use illustrative interview data from three returned migrants to glean additional description and insights regarding the process of de facto deportation.

We begin with Carla's story of her own de facto deportation. We then tell Lety's story. Like Carla, Lety also fled the US to accompany a family member threatened by deportation, but they left before the order was issued, raising a conceptual question about the process. We then tell Olivia's story. Olivia was deported and separated from young children in the US;

her children could have been de facto deported, but they remained in the US with their father. The three stories reveal the kinds of considerations that families make regarding family reorganization in response to deportation or the threat of deportation, which may inform future studies of de facto deportation.

Carla's Story: De facto Deportation of a Mother

Carla's children were teenagers and young adults, and she was divorced from their father, when she was de facto deported. Carla's youngest son Luis, who, like her, was living in the US without legal documents, was apprehended by immigration agents on a high school bus trip from Houston to Los Angeles. When US Border Patrol agents boarded the bus, Luis showed them his *matrícula consular*, an identification document issued to migrants by the Mexican Consulate in the US. The agents apprehended Luis, and he signed voluntary departure orders, not understanding what it meant to relinquish his right to a legal process of deportation.

Luis called his mother from Mexico. "Mom, I'm in Mexico!" she recalls him saying. It was a tremendous shock. Carla quickly left for Mexico to accompany Luis, although doing so meant that she left her other children in Texas. Although it was a heart-wrenching decision, Carla felt Luis had greater need for his mother than her other children did because he was alone in Mexico. Luis knew only halting Spanish. US Border Patrol agents surrendered him to a border town where he had never been before, a site for transit migrants and criminal activity. He was terrified of being attacked by people assuming that migrants coming from the US have money. He did not know what to do or where to go. In contrast, Carla's other children were older and had the support of their father and one of her sisters, who were also in the US.

When we interviewed Carla in 2019, she had been back in Mexico for ten years. Luis had a difficult time at first in Mexico, experiencing severe depression and difficulty adjusting to life there. But by 2019 he had adapted. Luis worked in a call center, where he could make use of his English language skills, and he lived independently. Although he no longer

depended on Carla as he had at first, she remained in Mexico. She felt it was not possible for her, at her age, to reenter the US unlawfully because of the difficulty crossing the border without documents. She earned a living selling crocheted crafts in markets around the city.

Although Carla's de facto deportation separated her from her older children in the US, they were left in the care of trusted and settled adults. In migrating to accompany Luis, Carla made the difficult decision to prioritize the needs of her youngest son, who was alone and vulnerable in Mexico. As we will see in the next story, the dependency of children also influenced family migration decisions in Lety's case.

Lety's Story: De Facto Deportation of a Nuclear Family

Lety and Carla were de facto deported under different circumstances, but in both cases, their de facto deportation involved the need to provide in-person caregiving to their children. Lety met her husband, Alonso, at her sister's store when he was in Mexico on a trip home from the US. Alonso migrated to the US in the early 1980s and qualified for the IRCA amnesty in 1986. Alonso's green card, or lawful permanent residency, enabled him to travel back and forth between the US and Mexico. On one of those trips, Alonso asked Lety to marry him and join him in California. Although Alonso's permanent resident status meant he could have sponsored Lety for legal status in the US, she did not apply for a visa when she migrated. Instead, Lety entered the US without inspection. Lety and Alonso had two children born in the US. Their family was a mixed-status family: Alonso was a lawful permanent resident, the children were US citizens, and Lety was undocumented.

Several years after Lety migrated to join Alonso, they sought legal assistance for Lety to regularize her status. In a meeting with a lawyer, they received surprising and devastating information: Alonso was subject to deportation. Alonso had been convicted of a crime and served time in a California state prison before he married Lety. The 1996 IIRAIRA retroactively transformed Alonso's prior conviction into a deportable offense. In attempting to sponsor

Lety for a visa, the immigration consequences of Alonso's prior record became paramount. Lawyers advised Alonso to leave the US to avoid arrest, detention, and deportation.

A strict definition of *de facto* deportation may not classify Lety and her children as *de facto* deported, as Alonso was not, in fact, deported. Alonso (and his wife and children) fled the threat of deportation under the advice of a lawyer, who convinced him that he would be detained and deported if he remained in the US. While they chose to leave, the extent to which Lety and her children count as *de facto* deported is less important than the fact that their departure was compelled by forced circumstances, with little choice in the matter: They chose to leave to avoid Alonso's incarceration, forced removal, and immigration record.

When Alonso decided to flee the risk of detention and deportation, there was no doubt in Lety's mind that she and the children would accompany Alonso. As she told us, "It was never my idea to go to the US." She and Alonso were the parents of two children under five years old, and they intended to stay together as a family. Yet, she also told us that she believes staying in California might have been better for her children. She told us that she admired the bilingual education at her son's school, and benefited from food supplements provided by the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Her son has a learning disability, and she believes he would have benefited from more supportive educational programs and services in California. Their choice to return to Mexico was not about where their children would receive the best education and social services; it was about remaining together as a family under the threat of forced removal and separation.

Olivia: A Mother's Separation from Family

Olivia's story is not about *de facto* deportation but about the more common outcome of parental deportation: family separation (Hamilton et al. 2023). Olivia's experience gives us additional insight into the decisions families

make when they face the deportation of a key member, and in comparing it to Lety and Carla's stories, it helps us understand the forces weighing on those decisions.

Olivia was deported without much warning in 2017. Four years earlier, she was caught driving without a license, apprehended, and detained for four months in an immigrant detention center in Colorado. Olivia had not been convicted of an aggravated felony; the grounds for her deportation were undocumented residence in the US. In 2011, President Barack Obama had instructed ICE to use greater prosecutorial discretion in granting deferred action—suspension of removal—to low priority cases, like Olivia's (DHS 2011). Because her teenage, US-born daughter was disabled, a humanitarian concern, and because she had a long record of good moral conduct in the US, Olivia successfully argued for and received deferred action, which allowed her to remain in the US conditionally with work authorization but gave her no route to lawful status. Olivia was required to check in with immigration officials each year to renew her work authorization. Shortly after his inauguration, President Donald J. Trump changed the federal immigration enforcement priorities.³ On her annual check-in in March 2017, Olivia was arrested, detained, and deported six days later. She was never able to say goodbye to her children or husband.

There was very little discussion about whether her children would remain in the US after she was deported to Mexico. Her children were teenagers and had grown up in the US. They were settled in US schools, lived in a comfortable home with their father, and had a large community of friends, neighbors, and family in Colorado. Her oldest daughter, who was born in Mexico and migrated to the US as a young child, was protected from deportation by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.

Returning to Mexico was full of hardship and uncertainty for Olivia. Foremost was the emotional shock. She told us, "When I arrived here in Mexico, it dawns on you that your chil-

3. "Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States." Exec. Order No. 13768 (January 25, 2017). Accessed August 25, 2025. <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-enhancing-public-safety-interior-united-states/>.

dren are there [in the US], that you don't know when you will go back. I felt very strange with my siblings, who start talking to you and asking you things, and all you want to do is shut yourself in a room and cry." It had been over fifteen years since she left Mexico City for the US. She did not know where to live. Her mother was no longer alive, and she was not close to her brothers. She did not know how or where to find work in Mexico City. She had owned her own housecleaning business in Colorado, but the market was different in Mexico City. She knew it was not a safe or easy place to navigate.

Troubles in her marriage also complicated the situation. Shortly after her deportation, Olivia's husband began a new relationship. They formally separated. There was no question, at that point, that her husband would not return to Mexico to be with her. But she also knew that bringing her children with her was not the right choice. The separation of children and mother was a heartbreaking consequence of Olivia's deportation. Olivia told us that her daughters call her crying. Her oldest daughter started to suffer from depression and anxiety. Olivia told us, "Now, if you ask my children what they want for Christmas, they are not thinking, 'Ay, I hope Santa Claus brings me this.' No, they are thinking, I want to see my mother. And that is the hardest part. Because they [ICE] snatch the dreams from our children. Not just us. Our children too."

DISCUSSION

Families who face forced international separation as a result of deportation can only reunify without the threat of further legal entanglement by migrating to the country of deportation, which is the *de facto* deportation of the family. Our analysis reveals that the scale of recent *de facto* deportation is substantial, affecting more than 11,000 people who migrated to Mexico between 2015 and 2020 and remained there in 2020. *De facto* deported migrants in Mexico are mostly the children and spouses of deported men, such as Lety and her children. Still, our analysis shows that there are significant numbers of men who are *de facto* deported when they accompany a spouse. There are also some parents—all mothers in the Census—who accompany deported children to

Mexico, as Carla did. Our study shows that the post-deportation consequences of the current US immigration policy regime and its enforcement extend well beyond the individual deported and the borders of the US.

While our qualitative data with former US migrants living in Mexico City in 2019 are not representative of the population of deported parents or their children in Mexico, they give us greater understanding of the types of considerations that families make when facing parental deportation. They reveal that when deportation forces the international separation of family, deliberation about whether and how to stay together can rest on the needs of family members, the presence of other caretakers or guardians, and, in the case of parental deportation, the relationship between parents. Lety decided to accompany Alonso along with her children considering their union was strong and their children were very young. Carla accompanied her son, Luis, because he needed her support after deportation to Mexico following a childhood lived in the US. We learned from Olivia's story that parents whose union is fragile, and parents of older children who are settled in the US, may not be accompanied by their partner and children. Other considerations in whether children accompany deported parents involve the ability to provide housing and schooling in Mexico, as Olivia's story also showed us. However, Lety's story suggests that staying together as a family, when it is deemed desirable and possible, can outweigh considerations related to institutional supports such as schooling.

In the Census data, we find that women make up a far greater share of adult *de facto* deported people than they do of recent migrants. We also find that more women accompany deported spouses than men do. Of course, part of the gendering of *de facto* deportation reflects the gendering of deportation itself: Men are the overwhelming majority of deported people, so female partners are at higher risk of spousal *de facto* deportation (Golash-Boza 2016; Golash-Boza and Hondagneu-Sotelo 2013). However, women are also more likely than men to accompany deported children; in fact, no men in the Census accompanied a deported child as a *de facto* deported parent. Fur-

thermore, when children were de facto deported with deported parents, a greater share accompanied mothers than would be expected based on the share of all deported people who are women.

The majority of de facto deported children were born in the US. As Luis H. Zayas (2015) has argued, these young American citizens have been forced into exile, relinquishing their citizenship rights in childhood to retain their right to parental companionship. We find that they were less likely to be enrolled in school than others who migrated for different reasons, although this may reflect generally lower enrollment rates among recent US-born migrants compared to nonmigrants and Mexican-born children. This pattern aligns with other findings and owes to administrative and language barriers to the educational system in Mexico, or difficulty navigating bureaucracy (Jacobó-Suárez 2017; Zúñiga and Giorguli-Saucedo 2020; Medina and Menjívar 2015). Nevertheless, there appears to be an additional schooling penalty for being de facto deported and US-born, suggesting further complications with paperwork for families who migrate under forced circumstances. In other words, these challenges add to the other challenges already studied in the literature and have implications for students, parents, and educators (Gandara and Jensen 2021; Giorguli Saucedo et al. 2022).

Our findings highlight a neglected population in research on de facto deportation, which has focused on children: the partners and parents of deported people. For Mexican-born individuals who lived in the US without legal documents, de facto deportation to Mexico implies significant barriers to reentry to the US. For Carla, this is a significant loss, as most of her family remains there. She believes she cannot obtain a visa to travel legally to the US, and she is unwilling to attempt a border crossing. US-born children, like Lety's, on the other hand, have the right to travel to, live in, and work in the US, as well as to eventually sponsor their parents and other family members for immigration. Lety's children have mixed feelings about returning to the US; her son is eager to return, while her daughter is not. Neither one retains any English, nor any real memories of the place of their birth. What their future holds

is yet to be seen. To our knowledge, no studies following de facto deported children over time exist, but one study of the US-born in Mexico found a very high rate of return migration to the US, of more than 10 percent in a two-year period among eighteen-to-twenty-four-year-olds (Cuecuecha-Mendoza et al. 2017). As future studies analyze what happens to de facto deported people over time, it is important to note age at arrival to Mexico to consider how life-stage processes shape the experiences of de facto deportation for children, adolescents, and adults alike.

How does the experience of de facto deportation vary by place? Our results show that there is a concentration of de facto deported people in the northern border region and in metropolitan areas, but questions remain about how challenges and integration patterns differ by state or size of locality. Metropolitan areas such as Tijuana, Guadalajara, Puebla, and Mexico City, which have significant populations of deported people, have developed migrant organizations supporting the needs of returnees and US-born family members. It is unclear how challenges differ in places where de facto deported people and their families are more visible and have tighter social networks and support compared to places with a low density of returnees.

One implication of our multiple-methods analysis is that identifying de facto deportation in existing data sources is not straightforward. No existing data sources identify the precise timing of deported people and their family members or list de facto deportation (or the accompaniment of a deported person) as the reason for migration. As we explained, we assumed that nuclear family members who migrated during the same five-year period as a deported person were de facto deported. This presents several complications that need to be considered when using our estimates and in future work to improve upon them. First, we did not observe the reasons for return migration of most parents of US-born children under five, the majority of whom did not report being in the US in 2015. This suggests a short-term or circular family migration pattern that the Census does not capture (Vargas-Valle et al. 2022). Nor can we observe de facto deportation for

Mexican-born children under five if their families had short-term migrations between 2015 and 2020.

Our window of observation of migration was limited to 2015–2020, but the Census provides data on migrant stock, not flow—that is, people who migrated in that window and remained in Mexico in 2020. Some portion of migrants to Mexico between 2015 and 2020 likely returned to the US by 2020, especially among the US-born, who have US passports with which to travel (Cuecuecha-Mendoza et al. 2017). Moreover, the vast majority of US-born children in Mexico in 2020 (a population estimated to be just over 500,000) migrated to Mexico before 2015. If we apply the rate of *de facto* deportation observed among five- to seventeen-year-old US-born recent migrants (10 percent) to the population of all US-born children living in Mexico in 2020, we estimate a total of about 50,000 *de facto* deported US-born children. This is smaller than the population estimate from the 2014 and 2018 Mexican Surveys of Demographic Dynamics (known as the ENADID in Spanish; Hamilton et al. 2023). This difference could reflect changes to the risk of parental deportation in the US or the choice of children to accompany parents after a parental deportation.

Another problem with measuring *de facto* deportation is that census and household survey data like the ENADID exclude people who do not live in the same household as the person they accompanied. This would exclude both Lety and her son, who no longer live with her (now ex-) husband, as well as Carla, who no longer lives with her son. Definitional issues may also affect the reporting of deportation. For example, it is unclear how Carla's son and Lety's husband would have reported their migration experience. Carla's son signed a voluntary departure order and was removed instantly, while Lety's husband was not officially deported, yet he and his family still fled the threat (and likely inevitability) of deportation. On the whole, problems with measuring *de facto* deportation in existing data suggest our estimates are conservative, or smaller than the true number.

Two important improvements over existing Mexican survey data on deportation would be to collect migration information from people

who have ever lived outside of Mexico. This could include asking for detailed information about the last migration to Mexico, regardless of period. Another improvement would be to allow respondents to report multiple reasons for migration, including, ideally, to accompany a deported person. Incorporating information on the last migration, rather than migration in the last five years, would provide comprehensive migrant inflow information, allowing changes over time in the rate of entry to Mexico to be observed among the current stock of immigrants and return migrants in the country. It would also allow for more precise identification of migration accompaniment among co-resident family members. By allowing multiple causes of return to be listed, survey data would better reflect the multiple considerations that migrants and their family members make when moving.

Although they may not have been represented in survey data, Lety, with her children, and Carla were *de facto* deported to Mexico, along with thousands of Mexican and US-born migrants. Their migration to Mexico was not the outcome of unhindered choice but was forced by the family circumstances they faced under the particular set of US immigration laws and policies created since 1986. It is likely that a far greater number of families, like Olivia's, are separated across international borders by deportation. Olivia returned alone, just as many returnees have done (Masferrer 2021). Adding questions about nonresident children to surveys would improve the ability to identify family separation among migrants and deported people.

An additional way to consider the needs of children involves something we did not do: talking and listening to children about their own difficulties. As a vulnerable population deserving of added protection in the research process, children are usually excluded from conversations regarding parental deportation (Muruthi et al. 2024). Yet, deportation impacts *de facto* deported children and children who remain behind, as this journal issue makes abundantly clear. To identify the causal impacts of *de facto* deportation, data that allow for the comparison of parents who are deported and accompanied by children, parents

who are deported and separated from their children, and parents who are at risk of but do not experience deportation are needed. Such data would allow scholars to answer several important questions, including which parents experience deportation, who among them are accompanied by their children, and the impacts de facto deportation has on children.

It is uncertain what the future holds in relation to policies that may reduce or amplify the risk of deportation, de facto deportation, family separation, and family reunification. Families will continue to face difficult decisions to remain together or be separated as long as the US government continues to fail to accommodate them or prioritize the needs of children. This special issue showcases research on the deportation system and its aftermath. We hope our work and that of others in this issue spur future research and data on de facto deportation—not only from the US to Mexico but globally.

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