Bioethical aspects of immigration policy
The case of Mexico – U.S.

Manuel H Ruiz de Chavez

Pluralism, Bioethics, Intercultural Exchange

Ethical and political crisis:

• Dissimilar views and values among cultures
• Negative views on immigrants
• Tension between nations and individuals
Pluralism, Bioethics, Intercultural Exchange

• Bioethics is an invaluable framework to foster development of civil society in conditions of prosperity, justice and respect for human rights

• Pluralism: construction of the relationship with the other as a carrier of complementary values
Alejandro Santiago

Renowned painter and Sculptor from Oaxaca, his work reflects the iniquities, violence and deprivations experienced by migrant communities
Alejandro Santiago
Defender of migrants

2501 migrants
U.S. - Mexico - Central America/Caribbean

- Causes of emigration: social vulnerabilities, economic inequities, the process of globalization, ideological influences
- Current immigration laws are based on principles of control, not in human rights and family unity
90 percent of Mexicans living abroad are concentrated in a single country, the US.

Yrs. 2000 – 2010, Increase in Mexican population by 54% (20.6 – 31.8 million).

10.3% of the population in the US are of Mexican descent.

California, Texas, Illinois, New York - 66% of Mexicans residing in the US.

Main cities in the US with presence of immigrant Mexicans, CONAPO, 2012.
1.4 million families in Mexico depend on remittances that are sent.


Approximately 400,000 undocumented migrants pass through Mexico each year.

Origin States of migration in Mexico, CONAPO, 2012
Sociodemographic profile of migrants:

- 82.7% men and 17.3% women
- Average age: 29.9 years, and well over half have had children (64.7%)
- The majority (43%) come from Honduras, then El Salvador (20.8%), and Guatemala (16.1%)
- Almost all of them (93.6%) lack documents

SOURCE: MISSING MIGRANTS PROJECT, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION
The flow of Central American/Caribbean migrants into the U.S. is one of the main problems of human rights in Mexico.

In order to take action on international migration, policies must incorporate a multicultural focus and human rights.
Migration and Health

• Migration has important effects on mental and physical health

• Factors that determine the health of immigrants: working conditions, legal status, social security, racial or ethnic violence, and nutrition

• Among the most significant conditions we find: obesity and mental disorders
Addressing migration

- The problem of international immigration policy: no clear obligation of governments towards citizens of other states. In this context, bioethics proves invaluable as a framework to ensure respect for human rights and build consensus among parties.

- The Mexican government fosters collaboration with stakeholders from origin, transit and destination countries in North and Central America to develop strategies to ensure protection of fundamental rights of migrants.
Ministerial Declaration on Health and Migration in Mesoamerica

• Address the health needs of migrants through alliances, networks and multilateral frameworks

• Strengthen migration policies to ensure comprehensive migrant care with strategies to minimize the impact in countries involved

• Identify the areas of opportunity to improve the health of migrants by generating evidence that strengthens public health policy
Activities on migration: National Commission

- 2014: Special issue of the Gazette, *Bioethics, migration and health*, including the collaboration of Dr. Xochitl Castañeda, *Health Initiative of the Americas*
- 2015: X Regional Meeting of SBCs, with the topic *Health for migrant populations*.
- 2016: National Meeting of State Bioethics Commissions (SBCs) and marketplace sessions at the 11th Global Summit of National Bioethics Committees, Berlin
- 2017: Technical meeting of Mesoamerica on Migration and Health
México 2014:
Sede Mundial de la Bioética

Bioética, migración y salud

- La bioética como medio para diseñar una vida
- Bioética y migración: un camino esencial en la agenda de la salud
- La UNESCO, la CONBioética y los derechos de la población migrante

Encuentro Bioético
Conversación con la doctora Xochitl Castañeda
Past, Present and Future of Mexico´s National Bioethics Commission

- Assessment and formulation of public health policies
- Protection of human rights in healthcare and research with focus on groups in vulnerable conditions
- Strengthening the legal framework in bioethics at the national and international levels
- Raising awareness of bioethical issues with an inclusive, plural and secular approach, consistent with social development

NATIONAL BIOETHICS COMMISSION

MEXICO

http://www.conbioetica-mexico.salud.gob.mx/