January th, 2024

Hertie School

Friedrichstraße 180

10117 Berlin, Germany

[222836@students.hertie-school.org](mailto:222836@students.hertie-school.org)

Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse

Syracuse University

215 University Place

Syracuse, NY 13244

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to apply for the TRAC Fellows Program with the aim of obtaining access to your data regarding Immigration Enforcement. Acquiring these datasets is essential for advancing my work and knowledge of how climate change and increasing temperatures will impact illegal immigration in the Mexico–U.S. border region.

I am a second-year Master of Data Science for Public Policy candidate at the Hertie School in Berlin. My focus at the Hertie School has mainly been on climate change with a concentration on immigration, specifically on how climate change is increasingly impacting and steadily becoming a major factor in mass migration flows around the globe. Particularly, in the Mexican context, and being a Mexican citizen myself, I have become progressively more concerned with illegal immigration across the Mexico–U.S. border and its intersection with climate change, leading to the emergence of climate refugees. Going further on this, I would like to investigate if the illegal crossings’ area is going to become more inhospitable to the point where immigrants are going to choose to stay in Mexico rather than risking their life with an increasingly dangerous border.

To do so, I will be examining the current immigration policies of both governments and Mexico's capacity to handle increased migration through the country. Additionally, I want to analyze current immigration flows and investigate how climate change might be a contributing factor to the fluctuations in the flow, whether it be decreasing or increasing. As a result, I aim to analyze these trends in the upcoming years and provide a well-rounded analysis on how the governments need to act to better tackle the situation.

**Research Plan**

The aim of this thesis research is to provide an overview of climate change scenarios following major international climate change laws, including the Paris Agreement and the Kyoto Protocol, along with an assessment of the current illegal immigration into the US from its southern border. To achieve this, the analysis will use the Representative Concentration Pathways (RCP), which are scenarios employed in climate science to project future concentrations of greenhouse gases in the Earth’s atmosphere. While there are different scenarios of greenhouse gas concentrations, such as 2.6, 4.5, 6.0, and 8.5, the analysis will focus on the 8.5 scenario, representing high greenhouse gas emissions. This scenario mirrors the current emissions scenario, disregarding the suggestions outlined in the Paris Agreement and Kyoto Protocol.

By using TRAC immigration data, I will be able to understand and to propose clear policy recommendations on how climate change as it currently is, with a high upward trend in greenhouse gas emissions, and how it will impact the illegal immigration crossing into the U.S.

Concisely, I would like to answer the next questions using TRAC’s data:

1. To what extent do climate change scenarios, as outlined in the Representative Concentration Pathway (RCP) 8.5, correlate with patterns of illegal immigration into the U.S. from its southern border? Are there observable trends in immigration rates during periods of heightened climate-related events or changes in greenhouse gas concentrations?
2. How will climate change under the RCP 8.5 scenario impact migration patterns and policy responses in the US-Mexico border region, leading to potential bottleneck scenarios in Mexico?
3. Are there discernible shifts in policy implementation and compliance with these agreements (Paris Agreement and the Kyoto Protocol), and do they align with efforts to mitigate climate change?
4. What is the relationship between climate change-induced migration patterns and the effectiveness of local and national policies in addressing the challenges posed by illegal immigration?
5. How do variations in climate scenarios influence the success of policy measures aimed at curbing illegal immigration, and are there instances where policies are adapted or reinforced in response to changing climate conditions?
6. Which mechanisms need to be put in place to decrease the fatalities of immigrants?

**Data Request**

I am seeking permission to access the dataset related to Immigration Enforcement: CBP and ICE, which serves as the basis for the reports Border Patrol Arrests (<https://trac.syr.edu/phptools/immigration/cbparrest/>) and Stopping “Inadmissibles” at U.S. Ports of Entry (<https://trac.syr.edu/phptools/immigration/cbpinadmiss/>). The optimal data would allow me to examine the datasets broken down for each category as showed in the dropdown menu above each of the three panels. In case this is not possible, the most essential data I would request for my research is:

Border Patrol Arrests: Fiscal Year, Month and Year, Border Patrol Sector, Number of Previous Encounters, Most Recent Prior Encounter, Citizenship, Gender, Age Group, Age (Ungrouped), and Entry Status.

Stopping “Inadmissibles” at U.S. Ports of Entry: Fiscal Year, Month and Year, Port of Entry, Inadmissible Entry Category, Citizenship, Gender, Age Group, and Age (Ungrouped).

By using the disaggregated data, I will be able to analyze the fluctuations of illegal immigration across time yearly and monthly, knowing precisely which areas of the border present heightened risks as they are, and finally being able to use machine learning methods to predict the rise of temperatures across the different sectors of the border patrol. Ultimately, this research can serve as a policy contribution that can help assist immigration policy in both Mexico and U.S.

As this is my master’s thesis, I am enthusiastic about initiating the project swiftly. The project is expected to start in February with a submission date in mid-June. Please rest assured that I will handle your data with the greatest care and follow the TRAC data use policies.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Fernando Corral Lozada