



*This seminar was funded and supported by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Science and Technology Directorate Office of University Programs through the Center for Borders, Trade, and Immigration Research under Grant Award Number DHS-14-ST-061-COE-00. The views and conclusions contained in this document are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as necessarily as representing the official policies, either expressed or implied, of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, or any office of the United States Government.*

The U. S. Department of Homeland Security Center of Excellence, Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate Center of Excellence through the Borders, Trade, and Immigration Institute, held a Homeland Security Symposium titled: **“The Human Smuggling Industry: Nuances and Complexities.”**

The aim of this symposium was provide additional clarity to the human smuggling industry. Despite the popular depiction as immoral and deceitful villain who do not hesitate to toss human beings in the sea or abandon them under the scorching desert sun, human smugglers’ services continue to be in high demand. Little is known about how human smugglers operate and the reasons why millions of people on rely on their services. Scholarly and mainstream understanding of human smuggling is often plagued with fragmented perspectives on the socio-cultural dynamics of the migratory journey, the facilitator-traveler relationship and their community dimensions. A truly effective answer to human smuggling requires a better understanding of the phenomenon. Based on data collected during extensive ethnographic research conducted in the Eastern Mediterranean route and the Central American corridor, this lecture aims to provide a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of human smuggling and the actors involved.

## **Instructor’s Biography**

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**Luigi Achilli, Ph.D.** – Dr. Luigi Achilli is currently research associate at the Migration Policy Centre at the European University Institute. He holds an M.A. and a Ph.D. in political anthropology from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS). He taught at Cambridge, SOAS, and various universities in the Middle East and Europe. His research and writing focus on irregular migration and smuggling networks, refugee studies, political engagement and nationalism in the Middle East, and the Palestinian issue. Ethnographic in approach, his work is based on extensive field research in the in the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean countries. His previous research on refugees and refugees camps in the Middle East has culminated with the publication of a monograph about the significance of the “ordinary” in the process of political self-fashioning in Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan – *Palestinian Refugees and Identity: Nationalism, Politics and the Everyday* (I.B. Tauris, 2015). Luigi is now working on a comparative study of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Central American smuggling corridors. In 2017, he has been awarded with a Marie Curie Global Fellowship for his project “MAPS – Migrants and People Smugglers”. His most recent publications on the topic include a special issue for the ANNALS – “Human Smugglers as an Insurance Policy: Views from the Margins” (ANNALS, forthcoming 2018), co-edited with S. Zhang and G. Sanchez. Another recent publications is “Smuggling and trafficking in human beings at the time of the Syrian conflict”, in Gebrewold et al. (eds) *Human Trafficking and Exploitation: Lessons from Europe*, (Routledge, forthcoming 2017).

## **Topics Covered**

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1. Understanding the Smuggling of Migrants in Europe and the United States
2. Dominant Policy Responses to smuggling of migrants and its unintended consequences

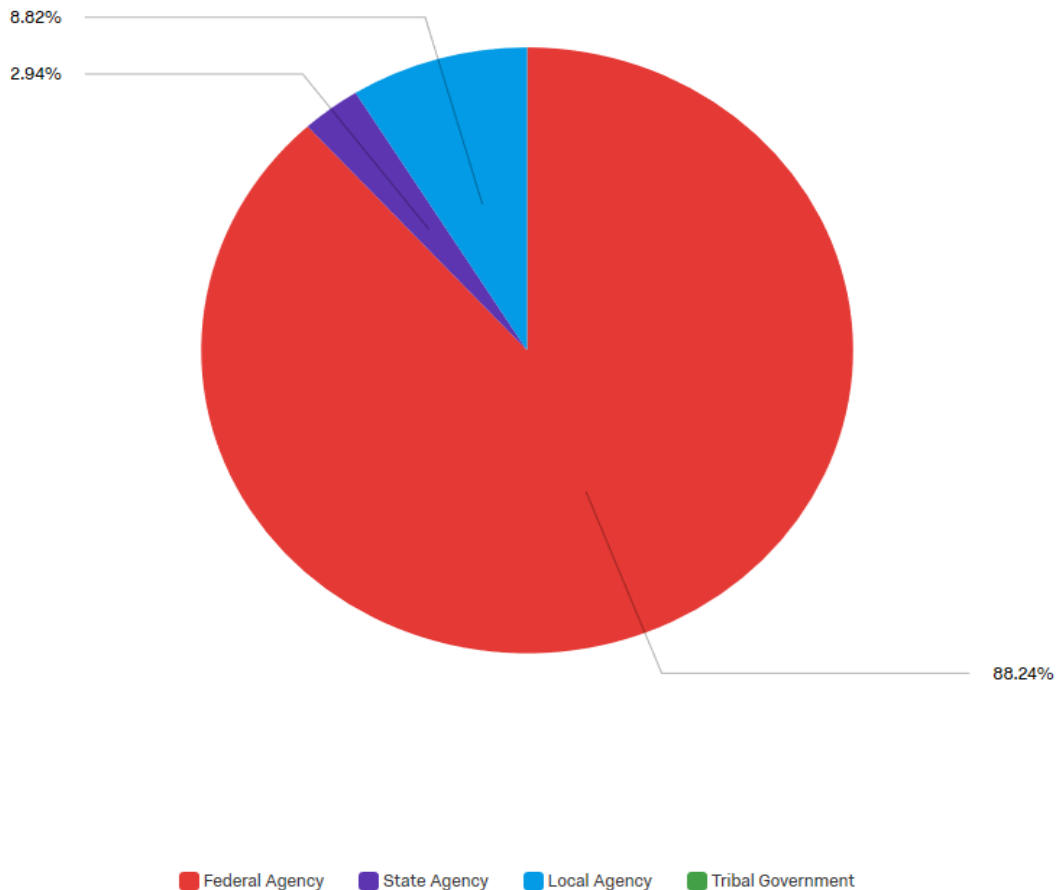
## Analysis of Symposium Feedback

The symposium was well-attended with a total of:

- 73 Confirmed RSVPs
- 45 Attendees (Approximately 62% of RSVP total)

A total of **10** government agencies were represented by the symposium attendees. The following table displays each of the agencies/organizations with the total number of representatives in attendance.

Federal Agencies		State and Local Agencies	
DHS, ICE, Enforcement & Removal Operations	7	El Paso Police Department	3
DHS, CBP Border Patrol	9	El Paso County Sheriff's Office	5
DHS, CBP Office of Field Operations	8	Horizon City Police	1
DHS, ICE, Homeland Security Investigations	4	Office of Congressman Beto O'Rourke	2
Department of Homeland Security	5		
Drug Enforcement Agency	1		
	<b>Total 34</b>		<b>Total 11</b>



Every attendee was asked to fill out a symposium evaluation. A total of 38 surveys (**84.4% of total attendees**) were submitted. Overall, the assessment feedback was overwhelmingly positive (listed percentages are the sum of both the “agree” and “strongly agree” percentages):

The seminar met my expectations	<b>97.1%</b>
The overall topics covered in this seminar were relevant and useful to my current assignment	<b>88.5%</b>
The seminar description accurately described the seminar content	<b>94.2%</b>
The seminar increased my <b>knowledge</b> of the subject matter	<b>91.4%</b>
The seminar increased my <b>interest</b> of the subject matter	<b>94.2%</b>
The overall quality of this seminar was excellent	<b>94.2%</b>
The instructors’ presentation style was effective	<b>94.2%</b>

The exit survey also contained the following question (Q3): Would you attend a second more in-depth symposium on this topic? The survey revealed that **97%** of the symposium participants would attend a second more in-depth symposium.

Open-ended responses indicated a common satisfaction with the course with particularly positive comments regarding the competence of the instructor and the content’s utility and pertinence to their field of work. The following questions were asked in the exit survey and no edits have been made to the comments with the exception of spelling.

***Q5. What other topic/subject matter would you like to see presented in similar seminars, tabletop exercises or practicums?***

- *How drug trafficking organizations operate trans-nationally in Mexico and United States*
- *Mexican drug cartels*
- *Current drug crisis, cartels/criminals of interest, business structure of a DTO/TCO*
- *I would be interested in a similar presentation, but focusing on drug trafficking*
- *Opioids, drug smuggling tactics & trends*
- *DTO’s in Mexico, human smuggling and drug trafficking in our area*
- *Bitcoin and counterfeit money*
- *More on narcotic/human smuggling trends*
- *More human smuggling and current trends affecting the US/Mexico border*
- *US contacts aiding in the smuggling of contraband, people and cargo. How to recognize the signs of internal corruption*

***Q6. If there are any additional comments you have about the seminar topics covered please provide them below.***

- *I really enjoyed the training and expertise of Dr. Achilli*
- *Very interesting information*
- *Great presentation*
- *Great class*
- *It was very informative*
- *Excellent topic.*
- *Good course. Interested in learning more about this and other similar topics*
- *Everything was great*
- *Very interesting, wish it was longer*

## Webcast Analytics

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This symposium was the thirteenth effort to add a webcast feature as part of the value added deliverable of this program. All fourteen symposiums have been filmed and can be viewed by the public on our website and YouTube account to enhance future viewings of the symposium series.

**Total views:** 107

## Symposium Series Visibility

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In an effort to promote the symposium series and the work of the Borders and Trade Institute (BTI) we have actively engaged on Twitter and local news media outlets.

- There were twenty-five (25) tweets that were sent prior, during, and just after the symposium event. The tweets received a total of 3,198 impressions.

## Learning

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Every attendee was asked to take a Pretest Questionnaire in order to gauge the level of understanding of the topic. In addition, the participants were asked to take the same Posttest Questionnaire at the conclusion of the symposium. A total of 35 pretests/posttests (**85.3% of total attendees**) were returned by the participants.

*Analysis:* The average Pretest Questionnaire score was 69% and the average Posttest Questionnaire score was 89%. The results of the Pretest and Posttest Questionnaires revealed a **21% increase** in learning.

## Acknowledgements

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*Victor M. Manjarrez, Jr.*

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*July 5, 2018*

Date