



# Voluntary Organizations and Refugees

The Effect of Organizational Effort on  
U.S. Refugee Admissions and Policy

By Megan Panning

# The Problem

- ◆ I hypothesize that a higher density of refugee organizations will lead to more Congressional hearings, refugee admissions, and refugees & asylees granted permanent residence.
- ◆ Past scholarship suggests that Refugee organizations are effective, but this research finds no evidence of this.

# History of U.S. Refugee Policy

- ◆ Presidential Directive of 12/22/45
- ◆ Displaced Persons Act of 6/25/48
- ◆ Refugee Relief Act of 8/7/53
- ◆ Refugee-Escapee Act of 9/11/57
- ◆ Fair Share Refugee Act of 7/14/1960
- ◆ **Refugee Act of 1980, 3/17/80**
- ◆ Summary: Chaotic and Disorganized Policy

# Current U.S. Refugee Policy

- ◆ Definitions: refugee, asylee
- ◆ Refugee: someone out of the country trying to get in
- ◆ Asylee: someone in the country trying to stay in
  
- ◆ The process of deciding admissions:
- ◆ State Department → President → Congress → INS



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# The Role of Organizations

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- ◆ Iron triangle
- ◆ Three Views
- ◆ Methods of Influence
- ◆ Effectiveness

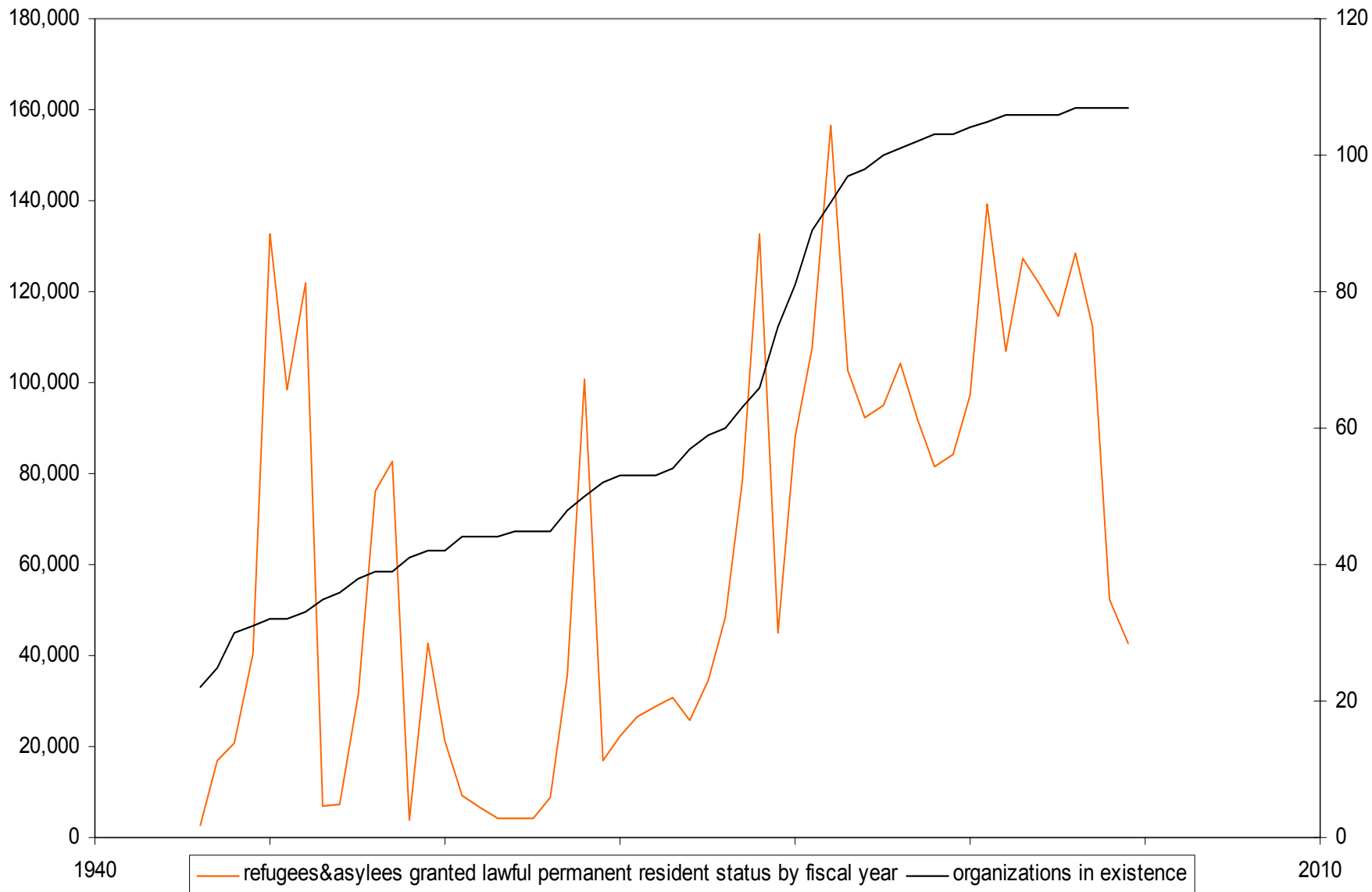
# Data & Methods

- ◆ Organizations
  - ◆ Gale: Associations Unlimited
- ◆ Refugee/Asylee Statistics
  - ◆ *Immigration and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Tucker)
  - ◆ *Statistical Yearbook of the INS* (years 1996 & 2001)
- ◆ Congressional Hearings
  - ◆ “Immigration & Refugee Issues” (Policy Agendas data)



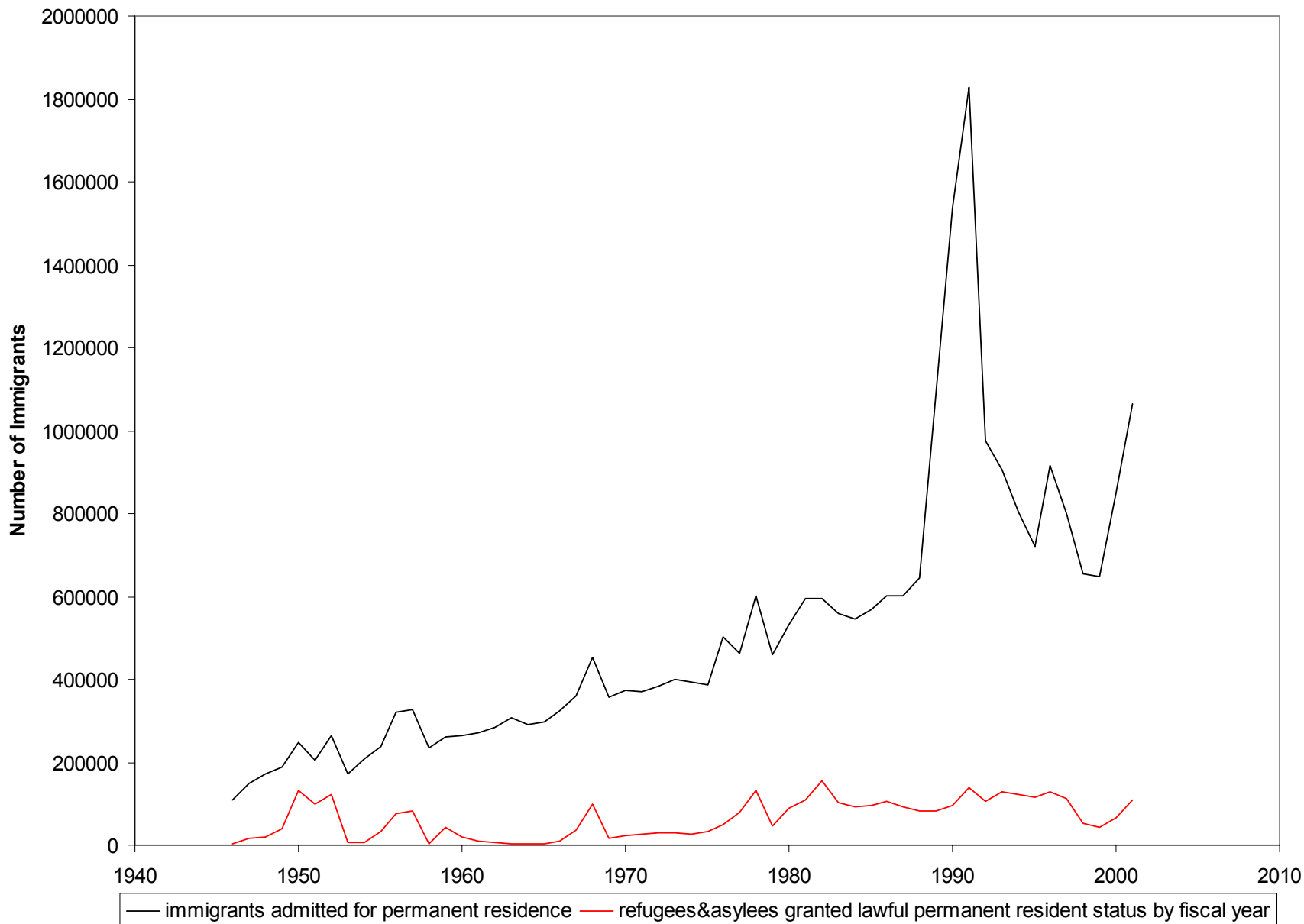
# Findings...

# Refugees & Asylees Granted Status vs. Number of Organizations in Existence, 1946-2001

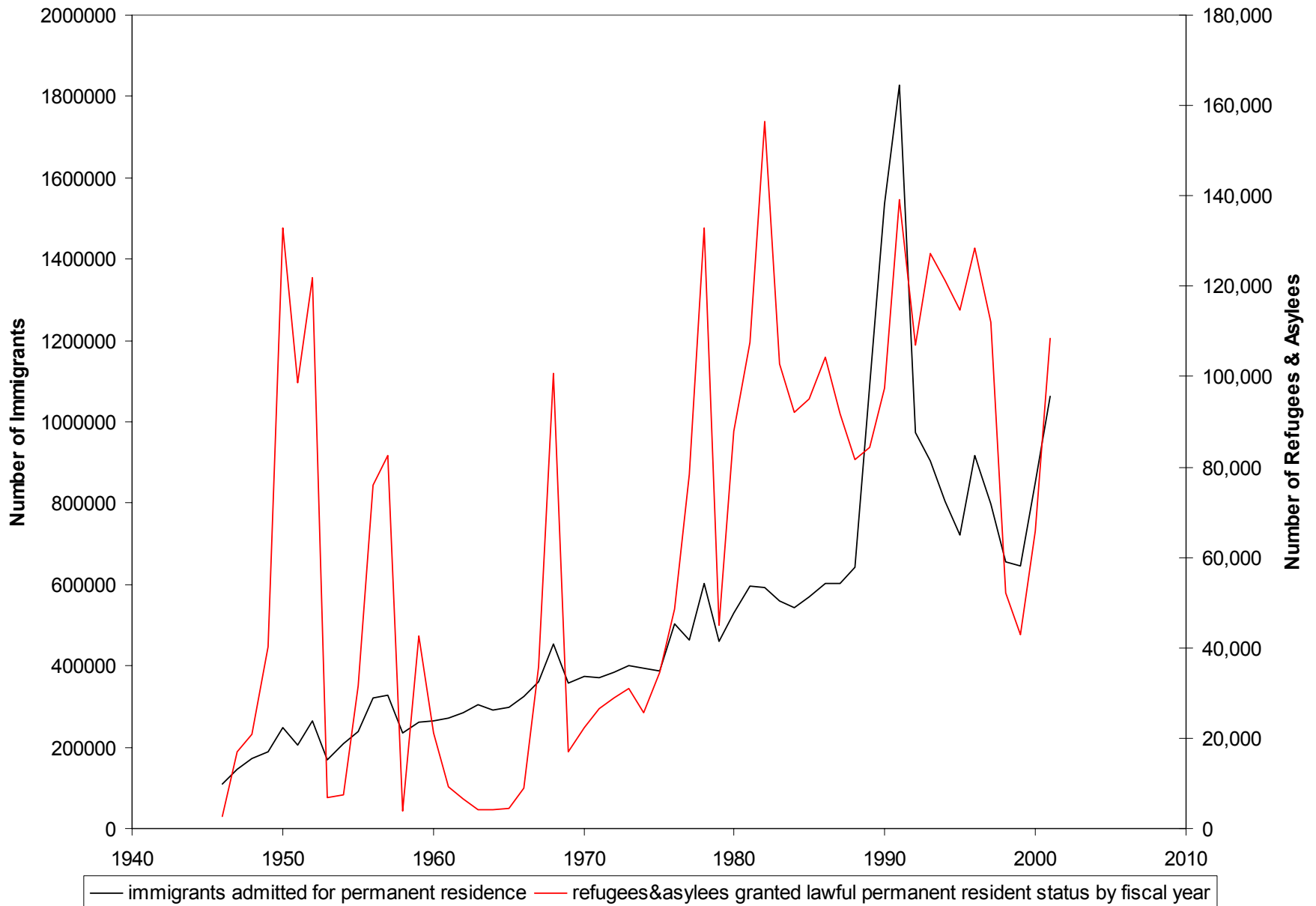




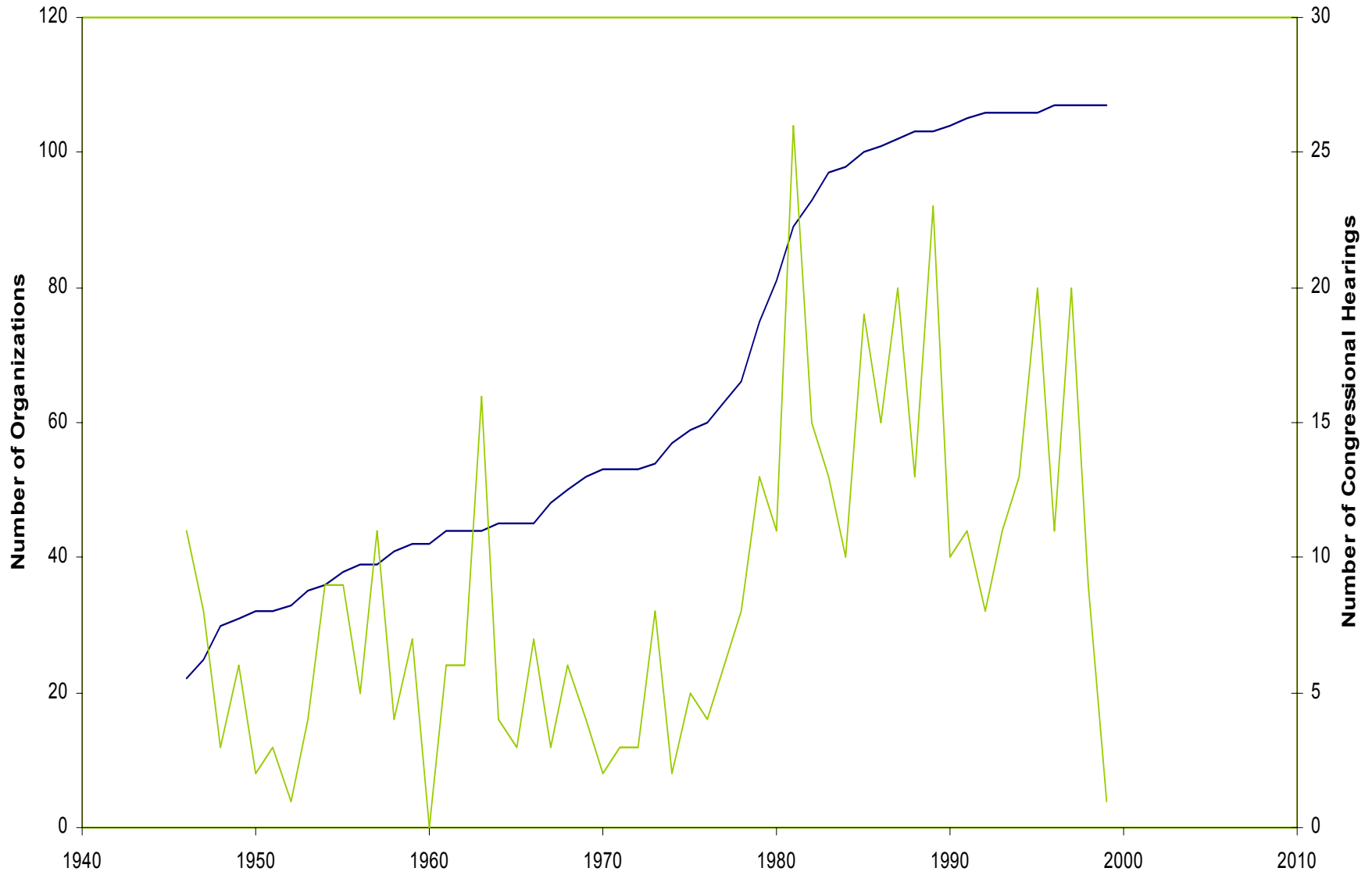
Refugees & Asylees Granted Residence vs. Immigrants Granted Residence, 1946-2001



Refugees & Asylees Granted Residence vs. Immigrants Granted Residence, 1946-2001

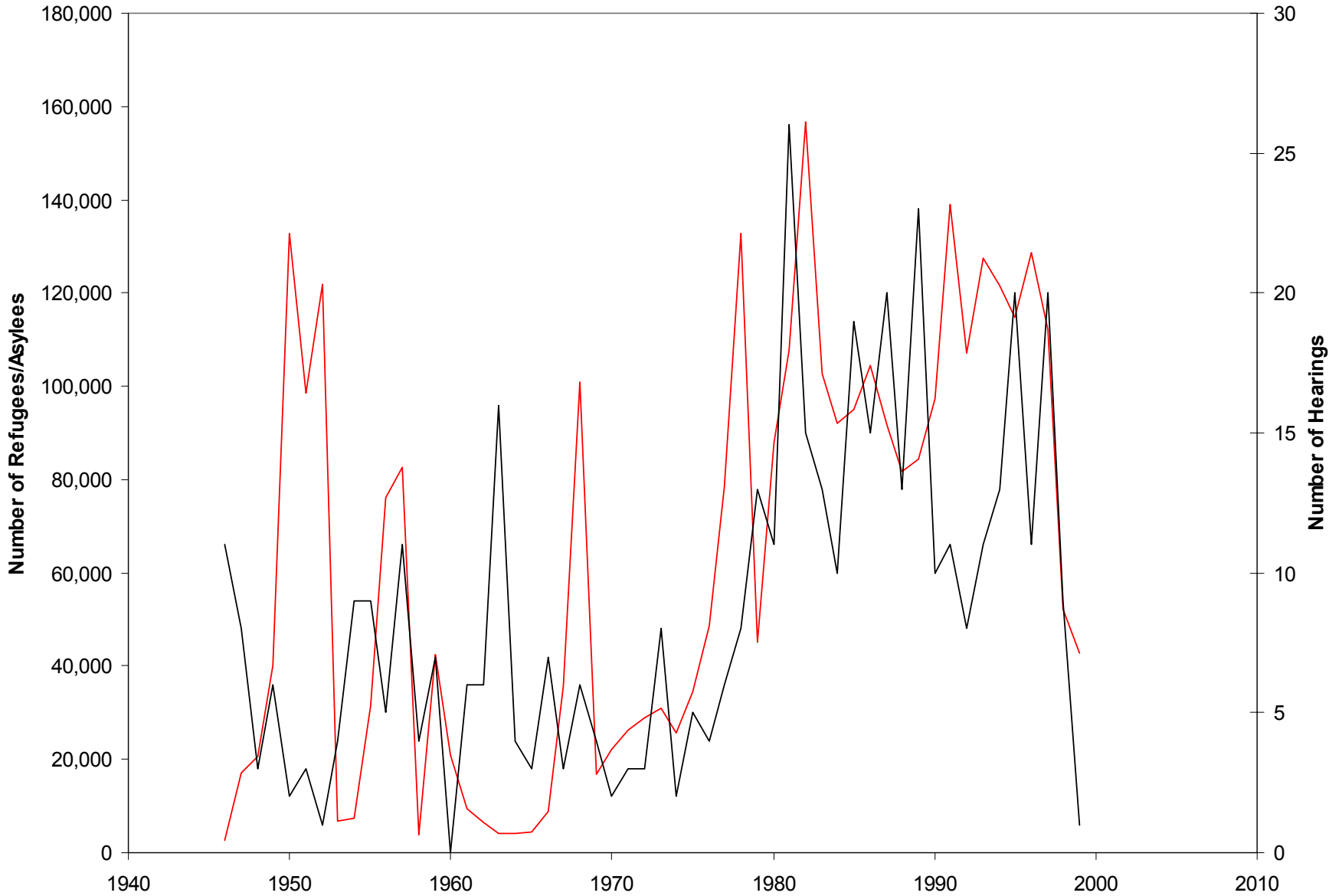


# Organizations in Existence and Congressional Hearings, 1946-1999



— organizations in existence      — Immigration & Refugee Issues (congressional hearings data)

Refugees & Asylees Granted Residency vs. Congressional Hearings (1946-1999)



— refugees&asylees granted lawful permanent resident status by fiscal year — Immigration & Refugee Issues (congressional hearings data)

# Conclusion

- ◆ No evidence that organizations make a difference in determining total number of refugee admissions.
- ◆ Possible reasons:
  - Chaotic nature of deciding U.S. Refugee Policy
  - Organizations as competitors rather than allies
  - Divided focus of many organizations

# Potential Problems

- ◆ Congressional Hearings measure combines Immigration and Refugee Issues.
- ◆ Organization data based only on those that are in existence today.
- ◆ Changing definition of “Refugee” over the time period examined.

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