

Welcoming Venezuelans: A Scorecard of Responses from Latin American and Caribbean Countries to the Venezuelan Migration Crisis¹

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INTRODUCTION

According to the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform, as of June 2019 over 4 million people had fled from Venezuela representing over 13% of the country's total population (R4V 2019b). A vast majority—over eighty percent—of Venezuelan migrants have settled in Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) nations, many of which have never seen migration of this size (Selee 2019).

In an era of rising nativism, in a world in which security issues are of special focus, in a continent with little experience of massive migrations crisis, and in a context of economic hardship, one would expect the LAC response to the Venezuelan migration crisis to be fairly unwelcoming. The reality, however, is that the response has varied significantly. Some countries have gone out of their way to welcome Venezuelans and contain domestic nativist forces, while others have been less welcoming.

When we speak of whether or not a country has been “welcoming,” we must be careful. It might be tempting to look

¹ This is a working document. The authors invite suggestions for edits. Please provide authoritative and verifiable sources.

simply to the sheer number of migrants entering a certain country and from there infer something about the hospitality of that state. This would be misleading—it’s easy to imagine a country receiving a large number of migrants merely because of its proximity to Venezuela but mistreating those migrants. Thus, to better assess “welcomeness,” we propose to review these categories: Impact Level, Legal Facilities, Survival Services, Popular Response, and Civilian v. Military Involvement. We apply these categories to six countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, and Trinidad and Tobago. While this analysis does not cover every LAC country, the sample chosen—Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, and Trinidad and Tobago—is indicative of the wide range of responses thus far.

The report is divided into three parts. Part I offers a description of the methods and sources used in this analysis. Part II provides the final scorecard, with Colombia leading LAC countries in terms of welcomeness. Part III undertakes this analysis and describes the qualitative evidence used to assign scores. Finally, this report concludes by offering...

PART I: METHODOLOGY

To measure the level of welcomeness, we use data from 2017 to early 2019, taking into account the following criteria:

Impact Level

A country facing a huge influx of migrants faces greater challenges, naturally, than a country facing fewer. Thus,

countries facing a greater impact should perhaps be given credit for this added burden. To assess impact levels, we looked at two indicators: 1) the number of Venezuelan migrants in a given host country relative to the total Venezuelan migrant population; 2) the number of Venezuelan migrants in that host country relative to its total population. Countries receiving a higher proportion of Venezuelans obtain a higher score.

Legal Facilities

Another measure of country's "welcomeness" is the legal facilities it provides for the lawful entry and residence of migrants (OEA 2019). In the case of Venezuela, the most burdensome entry restriction is the requirement of a passport. The Venezuelan government always had major delays in—and unduly high fees for—issuing passports, and starting in 2017, Venezuela suspended passport appointments and renewals indefinitely due to a shortage of necessary materials. Another set of restrictions includes the requirement of entry visas, police reports certifying good conduct, or permits for legal residence, all of which are similarly difficult to acquire in a country short on materials and bureaucratic willpower.

Survival Services

Most migrants are now very poor and low-skilled, and therefore, arrive in need of multiple social services. Thus, another set of criteria by which we can gauge welcomeness is the provision of survival services, such as food, healthcare, shelter, legal counseling, and job placement programs; because

many LAC countries are already strapped for resources, and because social services are enormously costly for governments, an important factor for consideration here is whether governments are facilitating the work of NGOs committed to providing these survival services.

Popular Response

The response from citizens in host countries impacts the type of environment migrants face. While this can be difficult to measure, for our analysis we focused on polls related to immigration and the migrant crisis, if they exist, and events covered by the press that indicate public opinion attitudes toward migrants.

Role of the Military

The role of the military in dealing with refugees is difficult to assess normatively. Under the best circumstances, deploying the military to impacted zones can be a blessing: the military can provide humanitarian aid and security to vulnerable migrant groups. However, military deployment might also be negative. For example, there might be instances in which the military has a non-humanitarian mission, or cases where the military is unprofessional or abusive, thereby posing a threat to the security of the migrants. The presence of the military could also be intimidating to refugees. In addition, the use of the military may suggest a form of desperation and an inability by the state's civilian institutions to cope with service provision. For these reasons, we score higher those countries that do the most to keep their militaries relatively uninvolved in migration

areas. Our scores are based on two factors: military deployment to the borders and military involvement in refugee centers.

PART II: SCORECARD

	<i>How Welcoming?</i>						
	Argentina	Brazil	Chile	Colombia	Ecuador	Mexico	T and T
<i>Impact*</i>	Low	Low	Med-High	High	Med-High	Low	High
<i>Legal Facilities</i>	High	High	Low-Med	Med-High	Med	Med-High	Low
<i>Popular Response</i>	High	High	Low	Med	Low-Med	Med-High	Low
<i>Survival Services</i>	Med-High	Low-Med	Med	High	Med	Low-Med	Low
<i>Civilian (rather than military) command</i>	High	Low	High	Med-Hi	Low-Med	Low	Med
<i>Total**</i>	12.5	9.5	10.0	13	9.5	8.5	8.0
<p><i>* The score for Brazil is based on population data for the country as a whole. However, most of the impact is concentrated in the state of Roraima. The impact score for the state of Roraima would be high.</i></p> <p><i>**High = 3, Med-High = 2.5, Medium = 2, Med-Low = 1.5, Low = 1</i></p> <p><i>Source: Authors.</i></p>							

Equivalencies

- High = 3
- Medium-High = 2.5
- Medium = 2
- Low-Medium = 1.5
- Low = 1

PART III: QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE, BY COUNTRY²

Argentina

Impact

Argentina has taken in an estimated 130,000 Venezuelan migrants, about 0.29% of its population. These 130,000 Venezuelans represent 3.25% of the total Venezuelan migrant and refugee population. Approximately, 1,014 of the 130,000 Venezuelans are seeking asylum in Argentina, and an estimated 127,152 have received some form of regular status or residency (Plataforma De Coordinacion Para Refugiados Y Migrantes De Venezuela [PRMV], n.d.). Most of the Venezuelans in Argentina have taken advantage of Argentina's temporary MERCOSUR visa, which Argentina has offered to migrants despite Venezuela's suspension from the MERCOSUR trade bloc (Selee et al. 2019, 9).

Legal Facilities

Argentina gets a high rank in legal facilities due to the relative lack of legal barriers it imposes on entry and residence into the country. Argentina is one of the few Latin American countries that does not require both a visa and passport to enter the country.

Even though Venezuela has been suspended from MERCOSUR, Argentina has remained open to Venezuelans due to its law favoring entry for foreigners who face "exceptional

² All data here covers the period until November 2018, unless otherwise specified.

reasons of humanitarian nature” (Chambers 2018). Additionally, in 2018, the director of Argentina’s National Migration Directorate (DNM), Horacio García, pushed the Argentine government to loosen its deadlines for legal status applications in order to give Venezuelans more time to collect the necessary documents (Heath and Lobianco 2018). In January 2019, Argentina loosened entry requirements even further by enabling Venezuelan adults to enter with an expired passport or national ID document as well as by allowing Venezuelans to verify their criminal records online rather than through paper documentation (Buenos Aires Times 2019). Overall, since 2017 Argentina has issued 13,936 Venezuelans permanent status and 87,762 Venezuelans temporary status (Migraciones, Ministerio del Interior, n.d.).

Survival Services

When it comes to survival services, Argentina receives a high score. To begin with, every Venezuelan in Argentina has access to free health services and education. Additionally, for the most vulnerable Venezuelans, Argentina been supporting them through direct emergency assistance which includes “nutrition, accommodation, NFIs, transport, psychosocial support, health assistance and medicine” (Kraul 2019). In March 2019, the Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela reported that approximately 69 Venezuelans were receiving this type of assistance in Argentina. Argentina has also welcomed non-governmental organizations—SENNAF (National Secretary of Childhood, Adolescents and families), Manos

Abiertas, and Refugio de Maria—that are providing aid to Venezuelans (R4V 2019d).

Additionally, Argentina has facilitated the relocation of Venezuelans to other parts of the country, especially in the provinces with high job vacancies. As part of this process, an agreement was signed between the Ministry of the Interior and the National Direction of Migrants (DNM) to exchange information on which Argentine provinces needed to fill vacancies in the health services sector. In order to support these relocated Venezuelans, Argentina has provided part-time social workers in areas like Posadas, Misiones to tend to the needs of Venezuelans who are demanding information on access to asylum applications and basic needs like housing, food, and clothing. The DNM has also organized a social integration workshop through its “*Programa de Asistencia a migrantes venezolanos*” in order to provide Venezuelans with information on work, education, and healthcare (R4V 2019d).

Popular Response

The response towards Venezuelans in Argentina has been mostly positive, especially among Argentina’s youth. However, there have been some negative reports as well, with about 38% of those interviewed claiming to have witnessed discriminatory behavior towards Venezuelans. This same report noted that the topic of migration is increasingly polarizing social media and that the mass media primarily focuses on life stories, insecurity, and crimes when it comes to migration (R4V 2019d).

Civilian v. Military Control

So far, the Argentine government has not significantly militarized the immigration issue. However, two decrees passed in July 2018 could potentially impact relations between migrants and the military. Decrees 683 and 703 were passed with the purpose of using the Argentinian Armed Forces against any domestic threat. Decree 683 allows the national army to “respond to any threat originating outside the country but that is present within Argentinian national territory,” while decree 703 allows the national army to “formulate strategies against organized crime and international terrorism” (Milani 2019). These decrees provide Armed Forces the opportunity to have a stronger presence throughout the country, potentially in its interaction with immigrants.

Brazil

Impact

As of January 2019, there are an estimated 168,300 Venezuelan migrants living in Brazil, about 0.08 percent of the Brazilian population (Selee et al. 2019, 2). However, most are concentrated in the state of Roraima, and it could very well be that the size of the refugee population represents about 21 percent of the population there. In relation to the refugee crisis itself Brazil has taken in approximately 4.2% of the Venezuelan migrant population in Latin America as of October 2018 and 3.27% of the Venezuelan migrant population worldwide (OCHA-ROLAC 2018). Of the migrants currently in the country, roughly 65,000 have applied for asylum, with 23,000 migrants having received a specialized two-year residence permit as of the end of 2018 (R4V 2019c).

Legal Facilities

In terms of legal restrictions, Brazil has very few legal restrictions for migrants. There is no requirement of a passport to enter the country. Instead the only requirement is a national identity document, such as a *cédula*, allowing migrants access to the country and providing a pathway to permanent residency in the country. Furthermore, once in the country, migrants are able to apply for asylum or for a Temporary Residence Permit, which was introduced in March 2017 to deal with the increasingly large backlog of asylum applications.

The process to apply for a Temporary Residence Permit has almost no restrictions: there is no requirement for legal entry, there is no passport requirement, no certification of a clean criminal record, there is no cost for applying, and with this document, migrants also gain access to a pathway to permanent residency. However, when first introduced it was required that applicants had a pending asylum application, a work permit, and some form of employment in the formal job market. Applying for this status withdraws one's application for asylum.

A major contributing factor in Brazil's approach to Venezuelan migrants has been their adherence to the Cartagena Declaration. However, there has been much debate about the spirit and letter of the declaration. In Brazil, "a Brazilian Supreme Court judge recently ruled that incorporating the expanded definition of the Cartagena Declaration into domestic law generates a 'duty of humanitarian protection'

with regard to Venezuelans seeking refuge in Brazil” (Human Rights Watch 2018).

Survival Services

Brazil has been ranked as low in terms of the social services it has provided to the migrants. Much of the aid in Brazil is provided by the government with support from the UN, NGOs, and civil society organized by the government. For the most part, the government has taken lead on providing aid for migrants, with the UN and associated partners providing support in the establishment and running of documentation services for incoming migrants (R4V 2019c). Venezuelan migrants in Brazil have access to housing in **the** form of ten temporary camps established in the border state of Roraima, eight in the city of Boa Vista, and one in the city of Pacaraima (Human Rights Watch 2018). Two of these shelters, one in each city, cater exclusively to the indigenous Venezuelan population that has migrated to Brazil (Ramsey and Sanchez-Garzoli 2018, 22).

Though all the shelters advertise that they provide housing, food, and access to health care, actual availability of these services is low. Local government officials in the region have stated multiple times that the current infrastructure has been overburdened by the presence of the Venezuelan migrants living within the state. This is somewhat supported by the fact that the demand for housing has been surpassed by the current number of Venezuelan migrants in the state of Roraima, leaving 23% of the migrants in the region living outside of shelters. This has directly impacted migrants’ access

to food and water, as those 37% living outside of shelters lack access to three meals a day, 90% have no access to sanitation facilities and 66% live without access to water (R4V 2019c).

Additionally, Venezuelan migrants lack proper access to health care in the region. Though Brazil employs a system of universal health care, Venezuelan migrants have not been able to fully benefit from this system. In part this is due to the overburdened infrastructure of the region, wherein local health care facilities lack the capacity to deal with the numbers that they are receiving. An additional barrier is that of language: the national language of Brazil is Portuguese while Venezuelans speak Spanish (R4V 2019c). On top of that many of the migrants in the northern part of Brazil are Warao, an indigenous group found throughout South America, who speak their own indigenous language, further hindering their access to services (R4V 2019c).

Moreover, though the camps provide housing for more than 4,000 migrants, this accounts only for a small percentage of migrants in Brazil (Human Rights Watch 2018). Many instead have found housing in less stable locations such as “public spaces, tents, open air, disused public buildings, or abandoned/damaged houses, among others” (R4V 2019c). In order to mitigate both the struggles of the local government and ameliorate the situation of the Venezuelan migrants in the area, the federal government of Brazil has implemented a voluntary relocation program known as “interiorization” (Ramsey and Sanchez-Garzoli 2018, 20). This resettlement program entails the relocation of migrants to cities such as São Paulo and Manaus where there are greater labor needs (Selee

et al. 2019, 12). However, this program has not been fully implemented in part due to resistance from the destination locations. Nonetheless, as of April 2018, 820 Venezuelan migrants had been resettled outside of the state of Roraima (Human Rights Watch 2018).

Key to many of the benefits provided by the government of Brazil is proper documentation of migrant's status. Though the Brazilian government has ensured very few legal restrictions on entering the country and ensuring a pathway to permanent residence, there are still many legal issues that migrants have to tackle that the state has not accurately addressed (UNHCR REACH 2018). One example of this is ensuring that people are informed about the different routes that remain open to them such as asylum or the Temporary Residence Permit. There is also a lack of information regarding rights afforded to people regarding work (R4V 2019c).

Popular Response

Interactions between Venezuelan migrants in the region of Roraima and locals has been fraught with tension and violence. Much of the interactions between migrants and locals have been filled with xenophobia and violence. In March of 2018, there were a series of protests in the region that resulted in the removal from homes and the setting on fire of belongings. This was in part inspired by the accused killing of a Brazilian citizen. Examples of violence in the region have continued, resulting in the forced removal of 1, 200 Venezuelans from Pacaraima by residents of the town in August 2018, some of which may have been asylum seekers. It is important to note that in this attack

and forced removal the local authorities did not intervene or attempt to stop the violence being committed by the Pacaraima residents (Human Rights Watch 2018).

While there have been triggering events such as the alleged attack against a Brazilian merchant by a Venezuelan migrant, much of the tension in the Roraima region has been caused by the perceived burden that the Venezuelan migrants have placed on a region already lacking in resources. Additional tensions stem from the fact that the Roraima region is isolated, lacking a coherent public service network, and one of the poorest states in Brazil.

Civilian v. Military Response

The military has played a significant role in the Venezuelan migration crisis in both expected and unexpected ways. For instance, there have been clashes along the Venezuelan-Brazilian border with the Venezuelan military, especially following the failed attempt to deliver humanitarian aid (Tsvakko Garcia 2019). However, the military has taken on a less expected role as distributors of aid to the migrants, specifically in the state of Roraima. The 190 million Brazilian reais (\$54 million) that the government earmarked to deal with the Venezuelan refugee crisis was funded to the Defense Ministry budget. This has resulted in a heavy military presence at the camps, providing both security and working alongside international organizations in the distribution of aid.

The military has set up checkpoints along the border and in places where a great number of migrants are entering the country, such as Pacaraima. Both the Brazilian Air Force and the

Army have become involved in the Venezuelan refugee crisis. The Air Force has assisted in the transportation of migrants and humanitarian aid, specifically in the “interiorization” process. The Army has played a more typical role in providing law enforcement and security at the border (Franchi 2019). More than 3,200 hundred troops have been mobilized to the border and the camps, with the possibility of more to come (Muggah and Abdenur 2019).

Colombia

Impact

As of early May 2019, more than 1.3 million Venezuelan migrants are reported to be residing in Colombia (Wyss 2019). The two nations share a border, and Colombia has received the most migrants out of all the Latin American nations. This is equal to about 2.65% of Colombia’s total population, and is about 32.48% of the total estimated Venezuelan migrant population (R4V 2019c). The Colombian Director of Migration predicts that this number will rise to over 2 million by the end of 2019 if Maduro continues to hold on to his role as the Venezuelan president (Wyss 2019).

Legal Restrictions

Colombia has received praise from NGOs and from humanitarian organizations about their “open-arms” approach to receiving Venezuelan migrants (Baddour 2019). Venezuela partially closed the border with Colombia in February of 2019, but crossings persist (Al Jazeera 2019b). This closure was

partially lifted by Maduro in March of 2019 when a portion of the border was opened for students to cross in order to access schools, and for Venezuelans in need of medical attention (Telesur 2019). Venezuelans are required to show a passport when entering Colombia, but that passport can be expired up to two years. The government also offers a Tarjeta de Movilidad Fronteriza (TMF), which is a document offered to Venezuelans who live near the Colombian border and allows card-holders to make short trips into Colombia in order to purchase necessities (Selee et al. 2019, 5). This option was suspended, and then subsequently reintroduced in 2018. There is also a 15-day transit permit option, which does not require a passport, that gives Venezuelans a legal pathway to migrating through Colombia en-route to their destination.

According to Colombia's official migration database, Venezuelans can enter Colombia for tourism (which has a 90-day approved length) with a passport, a documented destination address, and proof of access to at least 40 dollars for each day of their stay (Migración, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2019). Venezuelans who legally entered Colombia before the 17th of December, 2018 and have overstayed their initial permission are eligible for the PEP, which provides regularized status, including permission to work and access to comprehensive health services, for 2 years (Migración, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2019). Migrants who have entered Colombia with TMF are not eligible for PEP. The creation of PEP regularized the status of over 440,000 Venezuelan migrants (Bahar, Dooley, and Huang 2018, 3). Over 500,000 Venezuelans in Colombia have legal status, either

being PEP, TMF, or are in the country under tourist permissions (Reuters 2018).

Survival Services

The Colombian government's "open-arms" approach is being funded with millions of dollars of aid from the UN, the European Union and the United States. NGO's are actively involved, often collaborating with the state (Grupo Interagenical Sobre Flujos Migratorios Mixtos 2018). Health services, for instance, are being tackled collaboratively by both NGOs and the government. Various shelters are managed by NGOs, and the UNHCR operates a solidarity network program in some border-regions, which provides utility expenses to families who open their homes to migrants (Martinez 2018). With PEP status, migrants have access to Colombia's full public health care system. Migrant homelessness remains an issue despite these efforts. Venezuelan migrants who do not have PEP status are restricted to emergency medical services, reportedly under stress due to high usage (Baddour 2019). NGOs have established clinics to supplement migrant access to health services, with special attention placed on access to women's health (Dueck 2019). Like in Ecuador, infectious disease outbreaks among migrant groups at border crossing sites have been documented (e.g., dengue fever) (Forero 2018).

Food access is also being addressed by a variety of governmental and humanitarian agencies. Many migrants enter Colombia malnourished (Dueck 2019). The many migrant shelters in Colombia provide foodstuffs. In addition, soup

kitchens have been established around the country. Food delivery, livestock donations, and food vouchers systems are also in use. Despite the breadth of food services being offered, reports of migrant food insecurity within Colombia persist (Worley 2018). Furthermore, collaboration between the government and outside organizations regarding legal services. The introduction of PEP status was aided by international humanitarian organizations, who provided assistance with applications (Dueck 2019).

Popular Response

Levels of societal xenophobia seem low, and there are many documented cases of Colombians providing hospitality to incoming Venezuelans. In collaboration with the UN, some Colombians who live near the border have opened their homes as shelters for migrants. However, as the influx grows, the attitude of Colombians will be under more strain (Daniels 2018). There have been reports of mob violence, protests, crimes, and even murder of Venezuelan migrants which are suspected to be fueled by rising xenophobia (Murphy and Acosta 2018). Anti-migrant rhetoric in the media is also surfacing, with stories of how immigrants find it hard (or avoid) to enter labor markets.

Civilian v. Military Control

Troops have been mobilized and involved in the migration crisis in Colombia. In 2018, President Santos announced that an additional 2,000 troops would be sent to patrol areas of high illegal migration traffic, and that a new patrol would be created

specifically to police public spaces and to assist with the orientation of migrants. A total number of mobilized troops isn't available, but it is clear through reports and photos that the military are present at the border and at migrant camps.

Chile

Impact

Chile has taken in an estimated 288,200 Venezuelan migrants into its country which represents about 1.60% of Chile's population (Labrador and Merrow 2019). These 288,000 Venezuelans in Chile also represent 7.2% of the total Venezuelan migrant and refugee population, which is estimated to be at 3,706,624. Approximately 3,273 of Venezuelans in Chile are seeking asylum, and an estimated 208,167 Venezuelans have regular status or have been issued residency (PRMV, n.d.). Most of the Venezuelans in Chile have received legal status as political refugees under the Chilean government's "Visa De Responsabilidad Democrática" (Democratic Responsibility Visa), a visa only available to Venezuelans.

Legal Facilities

Chile has received a low rank in legal restrictions due to the number of barriers it has placed upon its legal pathway caused by the growing anti-immigrant sentiment in the country. On April 2018, the Chilean government took away immigrants' option of applying for a visa after entering as tourists (The Economist 2018a). The Chilean government also added a new

visa option for Venezuelans known as the “Visa de Responsabilidad Democrática” which would provide Venezuelans with a legal path to permanent residency. The visa allows Venezuelans to reside in Chile for a year, and can be renewed. In the first 7 months of its availability, Chile received approximately 90,000 applications and approved about 16,000 of them (Selee et al. 2019, 7). Acquiring this visa does have its problems though. First, the visa needs to be requested in Venezuela, and none are granted in Chile nor in exterior consulates. Second, the visa application requires passport for adults, and a birth certificate for minors. Lastly, the visa costs USD 30, and requires the Venezuelan government to confirm an applicant’s criminal history (Chile Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2019). These requirements thus explain why most of the Venezuelans in Chile come from a middle-class and educated background, for they have the best chances of meeting the requirements. However, this doesn’t stop the influx of immigrants, for it only pushes some Venezuelans to enter Chile through irregular means.

Even though Chile has made its legal pathway difficult for incoming Venezuelans, it also started a program to provide legal status to all the Venezuelans who entered before April 9, 2018, and were still living unauthorized in the country. The program provides these unauthorized Venezuelans with a one-year temporary visa, and the opportunity to regularize their status with or without legal documentation all for a cost of USD 0.13. Just like the Democratic Responsibility Visa, this program also requires a criminal history check, but the Chilean

government has tried to be flexible by setting the deadline for this to July 2019 (Selee et al. 2019, 9).

Survival Services

There is a mixture of reports. There are reports that immigrant ghettos are on a rise in Chile where they're mainly made up of shacks and tents with a space of 2x2 meters (Arostegui 2018). Other reports, however, have shown that immigrants in Chile have both an average income and employment rate higher than those of Chileans. The average monthly income for immigrants in Chile is about 587,174 Chilean pesos while the average monthly income of Chileans is about 512,936 Chilean Pesos. For employment rates, the one for immigrants in Chile sits at about 75.3 percent while the national one sits at about 54.8% (Van Der Spek 2018). Additionally, once Venezuelans achieve legal status, they are provided with access to many social services. With legal status, Venezuelans are provided with an identity number which allows them to have access opportunities such as bank accounts and housing contracts; additionally, they receive access to both public health care and education (The Economist 2018a).

Also, the UN Migration Agency has also been working with the Chilean government to promote employability for Venezuelans in Chile. The UN Migration Agency, Chilean government, and IOM have held seminars that inform Venezuelans about Chile's process of labor certification, access to government training, and financial literacy. The seminars are part of IOM Regional Action Plan meant to support the Latin

American countries hosting Venezuelans (International Organization for Migration 2018).

Popular Response

Over the span of two years, Chile's immigrant population increased from 462,000 in 2015 to approximately 2 million in 2017 (Arostegui 2018). This has thus led to an increase in anti-immigrant sentiment among the Chilean people. According to a survey conducted by the National Institute of Human Rights, 68% of Chileans want to restrict immigration (The Economist 2018a). The increased backlash against immigrants made immigration a key issue in Chile's 2017 presidential elections. The anti-immigrant politician Jose Antonio Kast secured almost 10% of the presidential votes in the first-round election (Reveco 2019).

Civilian v. Military Control

Not much information has been found regarding Chile using its military as response tool to the Venezuelan crisis.

Ecuador

Impact

Ecuador has taken in an estimate of 263,000 Venezuelan migrants, which is about 1.58 percent of the total population (Selee et al. 2019, 10). Migrants represent about 6.57% of the total Venezuelan migrant and refugee population, which is estimated to be at 3,706,624 (R4V 2019c). The Ecuadorian government has reported awarding 101,404 visas to

Venezuelans and that they are processing thousands of additional applications (OAS Inter-American Commission for Human Rights 2019a).

Legal Restrictions

Assessing the conditions for entry and legalization for Venezuelan migrants in Ecuador is complicated, largely due to the marked change in the government's attitude after the murder of an Ecuadorean woman by a Venezuelan migrant in early 2019 (Brown 2019). The good news is that Ecuador is one of the Latin American nations that abides by the Cartagena Declaration, which is an official but non-binding declaration that affirms "the right to asylum and the principle of non-refoulement, the importance of searching actively for durable solutions, and the necessity of co-ordination and harmonization of universal and regional systems and national efforts" (UNHCR Expert Roundtable 2013). Yet, there are legal barriers. Ecuador has been criticized by the international humanitarian and governance communities for policies that do not fall in line with the Cartagena Declaration (OAS Inter-American Commission for Human Rights 2019b).

Currently, Venezuelans are required to present a passport or official ID card, along with a criminal record certificate, in order to enter Ecuador. Exceptions to this rule are provided to those with at least a second degree of family connection to an Ecuadorean citizen, those with Ecuadorean residency visas, and to those who are in transit to another nation and have visas or permits from their destination. Venezuelans can apply for a UNASUR visa, whose application can be free of charge if the

applicant is in high need, but can cost up to 250 U.S. dollars, with other non-governmental sources reporting the visa costs 450 dollars (Magdaleno 2019). The parameters for being characterized as “high need” are unclear. The application for this visa requires a passport and documentation of criminal history. In March of 2019, Ecuador announced that it will be officially withdrawing from UNASUR and joining the newly formed PROSUR (Al Jazeera 2019a). Reports from April of 2019 states that UNASUR applications were still being processed, and according to the constitution of UNASUR, 6 months must pass before a former member state can suspend engagement (Telesur 2019). There are steep fines for Venezuelans who are caught working without visas, which reportedly are going unpaid (Magdaleno 2019).

Survival Services

Survival services are being provided by both NGOs and the Ecuadorean state. The International Red Cross has a strong presence in the borderlands of Ecuador and Colombia (Avril 2018). The Red Cross reports that it is focusing on helping migrants reestablish contact with loved ones and family members, repatriating remains of deceased Venezuelans back home for burial, installing sanitation systems in areas of high migrant traffic along the border with Colombia, and providing hygiene kits as well as information to migrants in Ecuador (International Committee of the Red Cross 2019). Additionally, the Red Cross responded to increasing xenophobia in Ecuador against Venezuelans with public campaigns and a theater project. Smaller NGO’s and humanitarian groups are also

involved with migrants, such as the Quito Mennonite Church, which partners with the Mennonite Central Committee to provide short-term aid and advising to recent Venezuelan migrants (Dueck 2019). The greater organization of Anabaptist churches in Latin America have publicly declared their support for Venezuelan migrants. Jesuit Refugee Service also provides aid in Ecuador, including the provision of shelters that focus on providing “basic needs” (Jesuit Refugee Service 2018). Little information is available about *where* Venezuelan migrants are living within Ecuador, but accommodations are generally reported as unstable. There is a similar lack of detailed information about migrant access to food in Ecuador, but based on the reports of NGOs, it seems that there is a need for food-based aid. Survey data from 2018 reports that 15% of Venezuelan migrants do not have regular access to food (USAID 2018, 3). In just July of 2018, the UN World Food Program reported providing over \$440,000 in emergency food vouchers to Venezuelans in Ecuador.

Ecuadorean health services are provided to all, free of charge, but these services are reported to be stretched thin by the influx of migrants (Llangari 2018). The ICRC is providing medical services, but based on their reports this is focused on border areas, rather than within the country. The Center for Disease Control reported in 2018 that there has been a marked increase in the rate of malaria cases at the Ecuador-Peru border, and that each both Peruvian and Ecuadorean Ministry of Health responded to the issue quickly (Jaramillo-Ochoa et al. 2019). The malaria cases have been primarily identified at border crossing zones, and there haven’t been reports about if

these cases have had an impact or spread to more urban or residential zones within Ecuador. The Ecuadorean government uses a system called the Daily Automated Registry of Outpatient Consultations and Care (RDACAA) to track usage of public health services within migrant populations. This system records data about country of origin and type of service received from a medical provider, but there has not been published reports using these numbers in regards to Venezuelan migrants (World Health Organization 2018).

Access to legal services is another area where the nation of Ecuador is struggling to meet the needs of its Venezuelan population. According to the United Nations, the pathways to legal assistance, which are provided by the National Ombudsman and Public Defender, in Ecuador are stressed by the influx of migrants (UNCHR Operations 2018). As referred to in the Legal Restrictions section, many barriers stand between Venezuelan migrants and accessing modes of legality in Ecuador, based on fees, application requirements, and the legal system being in a state of stress because of high demand. NGO's are actively engaged in helping migrants to complete legal paperwork and navigate the legal system (Jesuit Refugee Service 2018). As aforementioned, many migrants are working without documentation, meaning that oversight of working conditions and of wages is evaded (Magdaleno 2019). According to survey data from 2018, more than 70% of Venezuelan migrants living in Quito earn less than minimum wage (USAID 2018, 3).

Popular Opinion

Before the murder of Diana Carolina Ramirez, there was little reporting about the attitudes of the populace towards Venezuelan migrants. Since January 2019, there have been many acts of xenophobia in Ecuador, with some reports of migrants trying to return to Venezuela out of fear (Uco 2019). President Moreno played into this reaction, as seen in his engagement with the Twitter hashtag #todossomosDiana in the days following the murder of Diana Carolina Ramirez. Beyond the xenophobia related to the response to this murder, there is little information about the attitudes of Ecuadorians towards Venezuelan migrants.

Civilian v. Military Control

Before the Venezuelan migration crisis began, Ecuador's borders, entry, and exit points were controlled by the National Guard. In 2018, the government created a new border police force which took over all of these sites. The number of border police present at these location was increased by the President in early 2019, after the murder of Ramirez. There are no reports about the actual number of police that have been mobilized, nor is there data about the number of troops present at the border or at migrant camps.

Mexico

Impact

Mexico so far has taken in an estimated 39,500 Venezuelan migrants, about 0.03% of Mexico's population (Labrador and Merrow 2019). These 40,000 Venezuelans represent less than

1% of the total Venezuelan migrant and refugee population. Approximately 7,000 of the Venezuelans in Mexico are seeking asylum, and an estimated 48,000 Venezuelans have regular status or have been issued residency (PRMV, n.d.).

Legal Restrictions

Mexico has received a medium rank in terms of its legal restrictions due to some of the barriers and complications it has in its legal pathway. To start, Mexico has granted asylum to a high number of Venezuelans which is due partly to their application of the Cartagena refugee definition (Selee et al. 2019, 10). Mexico's asylum process for Venezuelans has been pretty simple due to the country's stable asylum system, and has also made it easy for Venezuelans to attain visas by exempting them from displaying a document that accredits their legal stay. Under the 1984 Cartagena Declaration, right to protection are extended to victims of generalized violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, mass violations of human rights, and other situations that have seriously disrupted public order. Mexico was the first country to ratify the declaration and enact it as domestic law, which explains why most Venezuelans have found open arms in Mexico (Ramon 2019).

Even though Mexico has done well in accepting numerous Venezuelans through their asylum process, there have been reports of some complications. Most Venezuelans have entered Mexico through the Cancun International Airport in Mexico City instead of the southern border, and attempt to submit their

refugee applications there. Reports have shown that this method has caused some complications for entry points like airports because migrant officials don't have the proper international protection screening process (United Nations 2018). Additionally, other reports have shown the treatment of Venezuelans who are refused entry, with one case even being after requesting refugee status. Reports show that after being detained, Venezuelans are denied the opportunity to make a phone call or contact the Venezuelan embassy. When people are detained at the airports, they fall under the custody of the INM (Mexican Migration Institute) and are sent to migration stations where they await removal. Sometimes, some asylum seekers are allowed to file an asylum application once sent to these stations. The numbers of these removal cases have been small, however, with only 80 out of the 80,353 removals being Venezuelans (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2018). Additionally, due to the earthquake of 2017, COMAR (Mexican Refugee Commission) has had to deal with a lack of resources to attend to the increasing number of asylum applications. As of March 2018, almost 70 percent of the Venezuelan applications are still pending (United Nations 2018). Before the earthquake, COMAR would typically take no more than 45 working days to provide a decision on an application; however, due to the earthquake COMAR has suspended this time limit. Some reports have shown that new time window is longer than 90 days (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2018).

To continue, Venezuelans are also able to acquire legal status in Mexico through permanent or temporary employment visas as well. However, a passport is required to attain such

visas (Embajada de Mexico En Venezuela 2019). Once they achieve legal status, some Venezuelans also have the opportunity to apply for permanent residency.

Survival Services

Currently, many of the Venezuelans in Mexico are spread across the country living in urban areas. This brings about the challenge of locating the Venezuelan migrants to provide them with the needed legal aid however being in urban areas also helps Venezuelans have better access to services, jobs and basic needs. Another challenge presented is the lack of support in the Mexican state of Quintana Roo since most Venezuelans are using the Cancun Airport as a major entry point. Additionally, assistance is being provided to the vulnerable Venezuelans through cash grants, food vouchers, and support on housing, transportation and medical expenses (R4V 2019a).

Popular Response

Not much has been reported on how Mexicans have reacted to the influx of Venezuelan migrants. When searching for popular response on immigrants, most reports show a Mexican response to the Central American migrant crisis. However, there were some reports of clashes between Mexicans and Venezuelans at the Venezuelan embassy in Mexico City. In this clash, the Venezuelans protesting Maduro came into conflict with Mexicans who supported Maduro's regime. The conflicts even led to the police needing to occupy the entrance of the Venezuelan embassy (Phillips 2019).

Civilian v. Military Control

Due to pressure from the United States, Mexico has increased its military presence throughout the country in order to tackle the issue of irregular migration. The US-Mexico Joint Declaration made on June 7th, 2019, states that Mexico will deploy its National Guard throughout the country, with priority on its southern border (Kimball 2019). As part of this agreement, 6,000 troops of Mexico's National Guard have already been deployed to Mexico-Guatemala border (DW 2019). This could present some challenges for Venezuelans who attempt to enter the country through land instead of by air through airports.

Mexico received a low rank because not much is reported of Mexico using its troops to respond to the Venezuela migrant crisis. However, for those Venezuelans who do enter through the southern border of Mexico, they do have to encounter military personnel, for most of the entry points are handled by the Mexican military.

Trinidad and Tobago

Impact

Trinidad and Tobago has taken in a relatively high number of refugees. The island has taken in approximately 40,000 migrants, nearly 10% of which are children (UNICEF 2018). However, an NPR report from December 2018 has listed the number of Venezuelan migrants to be closer to 60,000 (Otis 2018). This number is considered high due to the small geographic and population size of Trinidad and Tobago: 40,000

migrants in a country with a population of 1,400,000 constitutes 2.86% of the population. Trinidad and Tobago has taken in about 1% of the total Venezuelan refugee population in Latin America and 1.08% of the total Venezuelan refugee population in the world (OCHA-ROLAC 2018). Venezuelan migrants have entered Trinidad and Tobago illegally on boats (Ebus 2018).

Legal Facilities

Trinidad and Tobago has received a low score on legal facilities in part because of their lack of legal framework available for asylum seekers (Human Rights Watch 2018). In order to enter the country and obtain legal status, migrants are required to have both a passport and a visa. No special consideration is offered to Venezuelan migrants. As such the costs for these types of visas range from TT\$100 to TT\$400. While there is no criminal history certification required, neither is there an established pathway to citizenship. Though there was a policy regarding refugees and asylum produced by the Trinidadian government in 2014, it is still in the process of being implemented. Much of the current process for asylum and refugee status seeking is provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, mostly through a local nongovernmental agency: The Living Water Community. Through this organization, migrants are able to receive UNHCR certificates allowing them to remain in the country but are not legally able to work (Human Rights Watch 2018). Additionally, even this small legal status has been called into question as there have been reports that the certificates are being ignored

and that some people have been arrested as being illegal migrants (Teff 2019). This culminated in a seemingly isolated event in April 2018, when 82 Venezuelan migrants who had applied or were in the process of applying for asylum were deported back to Venezuela (UNHCR 2018). An amnesty law was offered recently, but the window to apply was very brief (two weeks) and the benefit was permission to work for only one year, after which, the migrant must return to Venezuela (OEA 2019).

Survival Services

As a result of the lack of structure that exists for refugees and asylum seekers in Trinidad and Tobago, there are no specific systems for housing established for those seeking asylum. Some migrants find access to shelter via the LWC; however, this resource has found itself to be extremely overburdened by the refugee crisis (Teff 2019). Additionally, many migrants live in a constant state of fear of arrest and deportation, making it difficult for them to leave their places of residence to access this resource. Some migrant families have managed to find housing with friends or family members, with sometimes eleven people sharing two-bedroom homes (Otis 2018). In the same way that migrants are forced to find their own shelter, they are also forced to access food based on personal resources. This is made even more difficult by migrants' inability to legal work in Trinidad and Tobago, limiting the resources they have available to them (Teff 2019).

Venezuelan migrants in Trinidad and Tobago have almost no access to legal or health services. Without an asylum or

refugee policy in place, migrants have no information regarding their rights and are in some cases too afraid to even attempt to find information for fear of being arrested and deported. The only place that migrants can turn to for legal services is the LWC, which can provide support and asylum certificates that may or may not be recognized by the Trinidadian government. Additionally, access to health services is not something that is provided to asylum seekers, leaving the refugee population with little to no access to health care.

Popular Response

Anti-Venezuelan xenophobia seems to be widespread in Trinidad and Tobago, due to both language and a lack of understanding regarding the refugee crisis. The official language of Trinidad and Tobago is English, while most Venezuelans speak Spanish, making them easily distinguishable from Trinidadians (Otis 2018). Consequently, this has made it easier to discriminate against them and has led to some violence. Additionally, there is a lack of understanding regarding the refugee crisis and the situation in Venezuela generally. There seems to be a view of Venezuelans and Latinos as violent and engaging in illegal behavior, in part due to a specific television show. These conditions have recently led to Venezuelan protests in Trinidad and Tobago (Refugees International 2019).

Civilian v. Military Control

Most of the work in regard to this crisis has been handled by the Immigration Division of the Ministry of National Security

and by local law enforcement. Migrants who are arrested for being in the country illegally are placed in prisons on the island, unless they are able to pay for a “security bond” of TT\$2,100 to cover the potential cost of deportation.

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