

The politicization of migration in South America: Solving innovations and the weakness of legal frameworks regulating mobility

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Abstract

Since the colonial period, South America has been an important destination for human mobility. With the independence of most countries during the 19th century, the newly created states began to produce policies and norms to attract certain nationalities to occupy territories and contribute to economic development. This gave the impression that the region had a welcoming and integrating logic in its migration policies, in a discourse that was widely used when these countries began to demand a "historical counterpart" for their nationals when they also configured themselves as countries of origin. Part of the institutional framework on migration reflects much of this vision, but it is difficult to apply it to more complex scenarios, such as the Venezuelan exodus. This presentation addresses how the South American context is characterized by institutional xenophobia, an enormous difficulty for migrants in gaining access to rights, the profusion of "ad hoc" instruments, as well as the absence of regional responses – all which weaken the discourse of a welcoming locality committed to human rights for migrants. The politicization of the mobility of certain nationalities is evident in a dynamic in which, a priori, the State uses mobility as a factor in the construction of political narratives, welcoming or excluding migrants to gain advantages.

Biography

João Carlos Jarochinski Silva is professor at the Federal University of Roraima (UFRR) in the departments of International Relations and the Master's in Society and Borders, where he is also director of the Human Sciences Center and coordinator of the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Chair. João spent part of his childhood in a multi-ethnic colonial nucleus, Barão de Antonina, where he became connected to the theme of mobility. A lawyer and historian, he began his studies on migration and refugees in 2007 while completing a master's degree in International Law, a theme on which he continued to focus his doctorate in Social Sciences and post-doctorate in Demography. Since 2013, he resides and works in the region of Brazil which borders Guyana and Venezuela and is part of the Amazon biome.