

Regional regulatory governance and migration in South America: Achievements and challenges in the context of the Venezuelan exodus

Abstract

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Since the 2000s, the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) has established different mechanisms supporting the mobility and protection of intraregional migrants, as in the case of the MERCOSUR Residence Agreement. However, the socio-political collapse of the post-Hugo Chávez regime in Venezuela represented a major challenge to this approach as millions of Venezuelans emigrated to neighbouring countries in the region. In this context, MERCOSUR has faced important pressures to steer regional regulatory governance arrangements that respond to the migration of Venezuelans based on a human rights approach. Additionally, MERCOSUR arrangements coexisted with old and new regional initiatives, i.e., the South American Conference of Migration (CSM) and the Quito Process, respectively. Against this backdrop, our paper empirically and comparatively assesses these various regulatory governance arrangements. More specifically, it will examine the various constellations of states and non-state actors and networks, their strategies through the mechanisms established to cooperate in the response to common regional challenges resulting from human mobility. By looking into these different regulatory governance arrangements within the area of migration, the paper makes a twofold contribution. First, it will unravel the range of formal and informal mechanisms and the processes through which constellations of actors interact, relate, and negotiate ideas, interests, and resources, and which underlay different regional regulatory governance arrangements; thus, strengthening comparative regionalism research. Second, it will highlight the relevance of the regional arena vis-à-vis the international as concerted and multilateral responses to challenges derived from migration based on a human rights approach have been, until the recent approval of the 2018 Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees, elusive at a global scale.

Authors' Bio

Andrea C. Bianculli is Assistant Professor at the Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals (IBEI). Her research, which lies at the intersection of comparative and international political economy, examines the relationship between trade, regulation, and development, with a regional focus on Latin America. She has published in *Administration & Society*, *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, *Global Public Health*, *Global Social Policy*, *Journal of European Social Policy*, *Politics and Governance*, and *Regulation & Governance*. She is the author of 'Negotiating Trade Liberalization in Argentina and Chile: When Policy Creates Politics' (2017, Routledge), and co-editor of the book *Regional Organizations and Social Policy in Europe and Latin America. A Space for Social Citizenship?* (with Andrea Ribeiro Hoffmann, Palgrave 2016). She leads the research project 'Rethinking the fundamentals of regions and interregionalism: The European Union and Latin America through the lenses of regional regulatory governance (Reg-EULAC)' and is part of the Jean Monnet Network on Crisis-Equity-Democracy for Europe and Latin America (CRISEUL).

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