

The Governance of Venezuelan Mobility in Chile: From calculated solidarity to migrant criminalisation

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Abstract

The paper explores the changes in the governance of Venezuelan mobility in Chile from 2018 until early 2023. By reviewing the country's response to the Venezuelan displacement across two different governments, the paper sheds light on how the approach shifted from calculated solidarity to increasing migrant criminalisation. The paper argues that the response to the Venezuelan displacement in Chile doesn't only respond to party politics, but it is shaped by the wide political salience and framing of the Venezuelan migration, influencing the interest and concern of a wide range of actors. What is relevant in the Chilean case, is the framing of the Venezuelan displacement as a 'crisis' that justifies the shift from discourses of calculated solidarity to outright migrant criminalisation. The paper explores key aspects of the response to this mobility, by reviewing the 2018 wide migration law and the creation of a consular visa for Venezuelans, the practice of mass deportations, the government media statements associating COVID-19 with irregular migration, and the continued criminalisation of migration in the new government with other bordering practices emerging within the territory, creating new forms of immobility. The reactive governance of Venezuelan migration in Chile did not only frame the crisis, it also created it.

Biography

Marcia Vera Espinoza is a Reader and Acting Deputy Director at the Institute for Global Health and Development (IGHD) at Queen Margaret University, in Edinburgh. She leads the Psychosocial Wellbeing, Integration and Protection Research Cluster at IGHD. Marcia is a co-founding member of the research group Comparative Analysis in International Migration and Displacement in the Americas (CAMINAR). She is PI of the EU-AMIF project 'New Scots Integration: A Pathway to Social and Economic Inclusion', and Co-I of a RSE Research Grant to explore long-term refugee integration in Scotland. She has recently published in *International Migration Review*, *Comparative Migration Studies*, *Migration Letters*, *Forced Migration Review*, *Frontiers in Human Dynamics*, *Migration and Society*, *Geopolitics*, and *Global Policy*, among others. Her co-edited books include 'The Dynamics of Regional Migration Governance' (Edward

Elgar, 2019), 'Latin America and Refugee Protection: regimes, logics and challenges' (Berghahn Books, 2021), and 'Movilidades y covid-19 en América Latina: inclusiones y exclusiones en tiempos de "crisis"' (UNAM, 2022).