



GENDERED PERSPECTIVES ON VENEZUELAN MIGRATION IN SOUTH AMERICA

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Migration 2030:

Challenges and Opportunities for Canada and the World

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OVERVIEW PRESENTATION

- Engendering migration
- The Venezuelan exodus in South America: From migration flows to “migration crises” and the challenge of South-South migrations.
- Gendered labor trajectories
- Engendering public spaces, xenophobia and exclusion
- Conclusions



ENGENDERING MIGRATION

- Complex and contradictory gendered dynamics in migration.
- Disputing and negotiating gender orders (Connell)
- Connecting labor market and social reproduction
- Gendered consequences of irregularization.



VENEZUELA

FROM SOUTH AMERICAN SUPERPOWER TO MIGRATION EXODUS

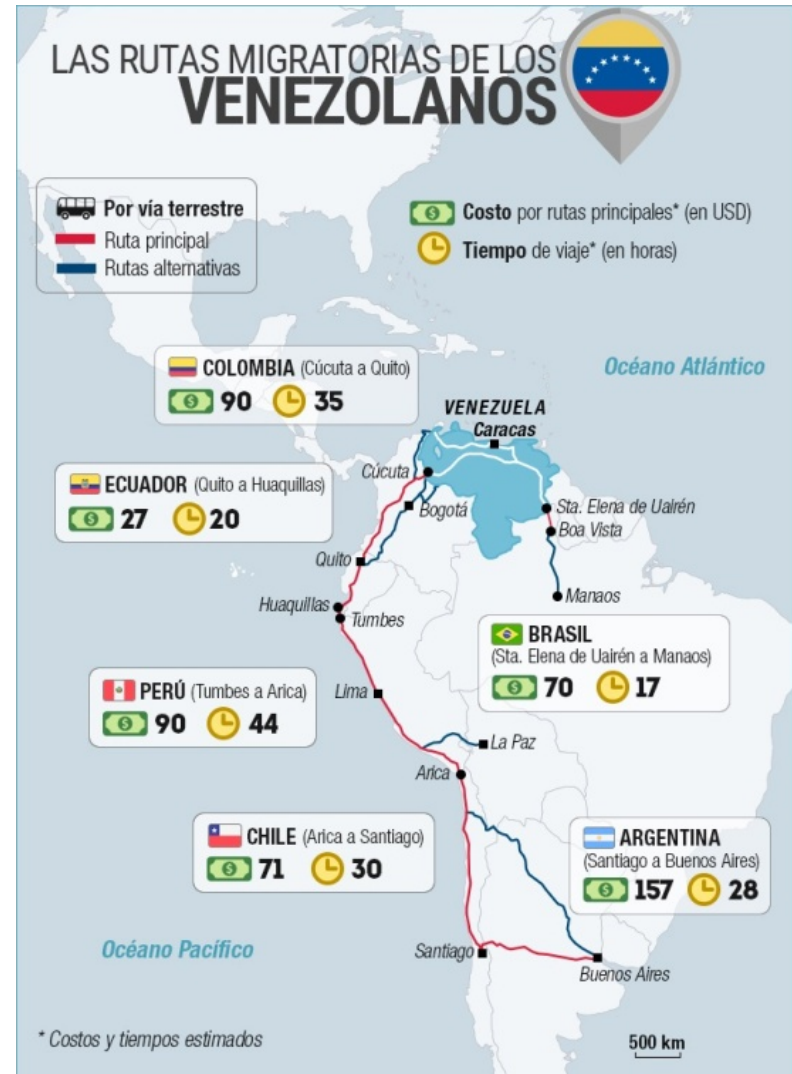


FROM MIGRATION FLOWS TO “MIGRATION CRISES”: THE CHALLENGE OF SOUTH SOUTH MIGRATIONS

- Increased informalization of labor markets and segregation of race and gender resulting from economic instability (different from dual segmentation of labor market).
- Tightening of immigration policies in the North has expanded their border to the South creating a domino effect on South American countries which are also tightening their migration policies.
- Lack of visibility of immigrant population in local policies contribute to difficult inclusion.
- Dynamic way of negotiating cultural representations of “the Other”.



VENEZUELANOS IN LATIN AMERICA:





Thousands of Venezuelan refugees walk across Simón Bolívar bridge into Cúcuta, Colombia (Source: National Geographic, 2018)



VENEZUELAN IN SOUTH AMERICA

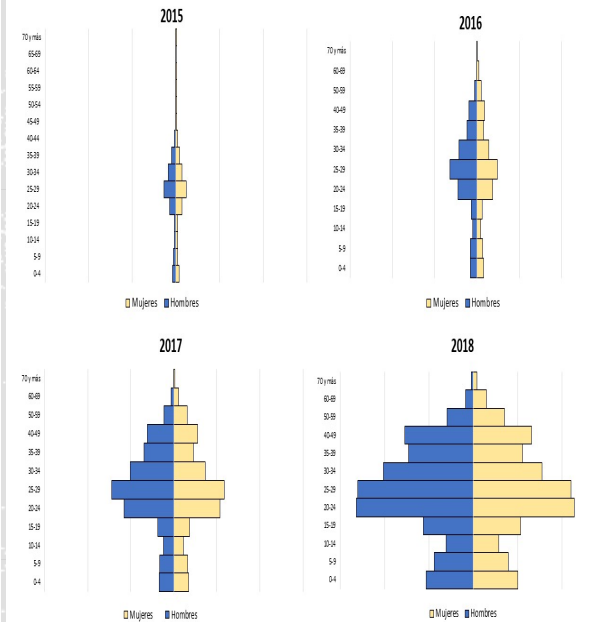
- 4.5 millions have left Venezuela. 1,1 millions are children.
- Colombia :1.500.000
- Perú: 860.000
- Ecuador: 330.414
- Brasil 178.575 personas (R4V, 2019)

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YOUNG FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN / GENDER PARITY



VENEZUELANAS IN SOUTH AMERICA...

- Step by step migration
- Several members located in different destinations. Some remain separated for months, and there is frequent mobility from one city to another both within the country and between countries (Herrera and Cabezas, 2019).
- Children and teenagers traveling without their parents. Rapid family reunification. (Selee, Bolter, Muñoz-Pogossian and Hazán, 2019).
- Survival migration (Betts).



“IRREGULARIZATION” OF VENEZUELAN MIGRANTS AND LABOR MARKET DIFFICULT INCLUSION

- Social and economic conditions of Venezuelans have worsened in 2018. Acute economic crisis in destination countries, increasing xenophobia and more and more problems for regularization.
- State’s restrictions produce irregularity (high penalties deter migrant to apply for work permits) while asking for passports arguing against trafficking and smuggling. 2019: visa requirements
- Mismatch between cultural capital and labor market insertion. Labor exploitation and irregularity may produce labor and sexual trafficking.
- Increased border control stimulates human smuggling activities
Migration from Venezuela will continue.
- The challenge of a mobile population for policies of social inclusion. From humanitarian responses to development.



ECUADOR: GENDERED LABOR TRAJECTORIES

- Economic context strongly influences the labor insertion of Venezuelan men and women.
- Men: informalization/occupation of public spaces: Food street vending/Uber/construction.
- Women: informalization within “formal” job services



LABOR TRAJECTORIES

Yadira, 29
Studied accounting in Valencia, Venezuela.
Worked in Beauty Salon before coming to Ecuador
Married , 2 children

Her husband came before her

She obtains work permit and visa

She and her husband file a complaint in Ministry of Labor

She got paid

Informality within formality.

February 2017 –
Arrive in Quito

March 2017 –
Starts a job as domestic worker by hours.

June 2017 –
Quit the job and go to a restaurant

September 2017. She was **dismissed and they did not pay her**

October 2017 –
Starts a job in a beauty salon. works 10 hours a day,

She earns minimum wage but with no benefits, extra time.

By August 2019 she is still working there but now she is on her own and rent a space in a nail salon per hours.



LABOR TRAJECTORIES

Javier 37

Studied Law in Venezuela. Did not finish

Worked in a bank

Married , 3 children

November 2016 –
Arrive to Quito

December 2016 –
Starts a job in restaurant (Mediterranean food/migrant owner)

February 2017 –
Start small business with his brother selling orange juice in streets. Then food.

April 2017 –
Change to car wash service

August 2017 –
Went back to street selling (food)

October 2017 –
Work in a restaurant by night

January 2018 –
Again in street selling

Abril 2018 –
Start driving UBER

His brother arrives

Cross the border to Colombia to avoid irregular status

His brother went back to Venezuela

His wife and 3 children arrive

Misses his appointment at Migration Office and became irregular.

Informality, short and very instable jobs



MIGRATION LABOR EXPERIENCE

- **Short and unstable labor trajectories in informal sector**
- **Women: Informality within formality** (service sector: mall, hotels, restaurant, beauty salon)
- **Papers do not make any difference. Women are less paid than men but tend to stay longer in their jobs.**
- **Downward social mobility. Deskilled .**
- **Discrimination and labor exploitation is stronger in women but they know their rights.**
- **Problems to access institutions to file a complaint.**



GENDER REPRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC SPACES

- Men tend to be in the streets /selling food is a female activity in Andean countries.
- Women are usually working indoors

More criminalization on men (xenophobia) but risky indoor situations for women in indoor situations. Invisibility versus hipervisibility of men.

Cultural capital transformed in symbolic capital and resistance. Negotiation of gender orders.



CONCLUSIONS

- Venezuelans social and migratory conditions have worsened dramatically in the last year (2019).
- Labor exploitation combined with irregularity are scenarios increasing vulnerability and labor exploitation for both men and women.
- More difficult labor insertion for men but more risky for women
- Challenges for social integration come from specificities of south south migration. From one crisis to another.
- Changing notions of selectivity, who is the “good migrant” or “bad migrant” and changing gender orders.

