

Crashing waves: Policies and Opportunities in the Venezuelan Migration Crisis

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Defended April 8, 2019

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Acknowledgements

I would first like to thank the University of Colorado, Boulder for preparing me in my academic journey to create this thesis. I appreciate the University's encouragement to pursue learning about my passions. I would like to extend a warm thank you to Dr. Adrian Shin, and Dr. Doug Snyder who challenged and supported me academically. I am thankful for the mentorship and guidance they have given me during this process. A special thank you goes to Dr. Carew Boulding, who kindly served as a second reader on my Honors Committee.

Thank you to my friends Christina Johnson, Ellie Pignato, Nicole Rosen, and Kelli Keegan, my family and my partner Lucas Selman, who all offered encouragement and often an ear to bounce ideas off of during this process.

Finally, I would like to thank my high school world history teacher, Sharlyn Scott, who first taught me about Latin American migration and sparked my passion for studying migration and my desire to make a positive change within the field.

Abstract

This research seeks to understand migration, by asking the question, what shapes migration patterns in a crisis? To answer this question, the Venezuelan Migration Crisis, a situation emerging in 2014 and continuing to cause large flows of migration throughout Latin America into 2018, is used as a case study. This research presents unique policies and opportunities in Peru and Colombia, showing that migrants and policymakers have a cyclical relationship, which dictates flows of migration. Finding that policy strongly influences the opportunities available in a country, migrants have preferences to move toward countries that have crafted emergency-specific responses. The level to which the policy restricts or does not restrict migration matters less than how adaptive it is to the situation. Patterns of migration can be influenced by policies in this way, as policymakers respond or do not respond directly to the crisis and change the incentives to migrate there. This research compares the collected information about the choices created by policies that migrants have with the physical patterns that can be observed. When comparing these predictions to statistical information from the Venezuelan Migration Crisis, patterns emerge that show migrants' preference for long-term, crisis specific solutions. The implication of this research is the key understanding that migrants move to where policy opens doors for them.

Introduction: The New Age of Migration

The world is currently experiencing a number of migration crises. A migration crisis is the mass exodus of people out of one locality at fast and increasing rates. Numerous people seek a new life and better opportunities by moving away from where there is political and physical danger. There are many explanations as to why individuals migrate from a country of origin to a host country. They move in search of better economic, social, political, religious and other freedoms. They move away from war, poverty, lack of resources and opportunities (Massey et al., 1993). But they also consider the costs of this movement to obtain these opportunities. The economic costs of moving and migrating legally are one such barrier. For example, passport costs and other legal fees alone can fundamentally deter immigrant populations and tend to be associated with developing countries with less stable governments. A migration crisis is fundamentally different from typical migration flows. As volatile situations around the world have led to an increase in individuals fleeing due to safety, the stability of a government has become an opportunity that is attractive to migrants. Many of these refugees (whether categorized by the state as such or not), are facing a degree of compulsion, that makes their migration less about economic factors and more about other possibilities, compared to typical migration patterns. (Martin, 2013). During a migration crisis, there is a lot of risk in both choosing to leave and considering staying in the area of the disaster. Due to their vulnerability, “crisis migrants” have a greater need for humanitarian assistance and stronger state capacity (Martin, 2013).

But what explains where they go next, and what factors shape the patterns of migration? Migrants tend to favor countries where the costs are lower, and the institutions are stronger (McKenzie, 2007). While mobility itself is another factor, an aspiration to migrate and the

financial and physical ability to do so are also important. However, these factors illustrate barriers to immigration for individuals who are in poverty or other limiting positions (Carling, 2002).

Yet to gain access to these opportunities, the migration policies of countries to which they move are critical. Each host country varies in the level of immigration policy restrictiveness and its preferences for certain types of migration, such as high-skilled or low-skilled. These policy instruments and preferences vary over time and across space with important consequences for migration patterns (Ruhs, 2017). Although there is both public and scholarly concern over the ability of policy to have a consequential effect on immigration flows, policies have important implications (Czaika and de Haas, 2013) and are worth exploring to understand its interaction with migrant opportunities. This conclusion can even be extended to international law, finding that international migration policy is increasingly a conversation on the global stage in Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs) and other diplomatic settings (Pecoud, 2013).

The vast majority of scholarship in immigration policy focuses on flows of migration from developing countries to the developed and wealthier world. At the same time, higher GDP per capita countries are less open to immigration and that although they are desirable for their more stable government and a stronger economy, they have far more barriers to entry (Mayda, 2006). This particular line of research reveals that immigration into developing countries can strengthen the nation and benefit democratic sustainability (Orcés, 2009). It also shows that owing to cultural and political similarities, the transferability of skills makes these interactions stronger (Parrado and Certutti, 2003). However, there is still more research to be done since there are costs and concerns associated with migration between developing countries that remains to be studied. This is especially true for research on migration crises during which decision-making

is far more emergency-based and may lead to more migrants traveling to developing countries from failed states.

Migrants' quest for opportunities also shapes the way policymakers respond to immigration. The impact of these policy decisions can be both negative and positive for the migrants in question, which in turn affects the influx of new migrants, a reaction that inevitably affects the citizens of the host country. This cyclical relationship will be the basis of my study. It is a power structure which both parties must adhere to. The relationship consists of a large group of migrants, who force policymakers to face the crisis. In turn, migrants encounter both restriction and accessibility to opportunities in these countries, due to policy created. This is how a migration crisis grows and my work seeks to understand how countries and migrants find themselves in this relationship.

This research will pose and answer the question, what shapes migration patterns in a crisis? It seeks to understand why some countries pass immigration policy that might help or hurt the migrants that enter their country, and how that might affect those attempting to enter. I aim to better understand the factors that drive migration patterns during a crisis, viewing migrants and policymakers as two actors who work both against and for one another. This is a question about critical choices and how they are made. In order to understand choices, one must understand migration patterns and flows. My research will investigate the good and bad of crisis migration policymaking and how it affects the livelihoods and decisions of migrants. Using a case study of the Venezuelan Migration Crisis, this thesis will explain how waves of migration and specific policies in Colombia and Peru have come to create migration patterns during the crisis. This case study will look at how two very different political structures and climates attempt to fully satisfy this specific group of migrants while weighing the needs and abilities of the countries'

institutions. Colombia and Peru have received an overwhelming number of Venezuelan migrants and have both attempted to create policies that provide the relief migrants desire, while balancing the preferences of their citizens. Thus, they will be the lens through which the crisis is analyzed.

The first two chapters of this thesis will give context and background for the cause of the crisis, understanding why Peru and Colombia are important. An outline of what research methods will be used, and definitions of key terms will be provided. The fourth section of this thesis is the theoretical framework, which explains the cyclical relationship between policymakers and migrants. The framework notes the significance of networks in migration and outlines three hypotheses which explain why migration patterns exist as they do in crises.

Next, the first research chapter will dive into the mechanics of the most relevant policies and the opportunities Colombia and Peru provide, comparing them to one another and with what is lacking in Venezuela. Policies investigated include temporary and long-term solutions, specifically outlining how they interact with the ability to work and enjoy social services in the country. This section will explain how it is not the restrictiveness of the policy, but the crisis specific policy response, its implications, and advantages that most affect migration flow patterns.

The second research chapter is complementary to the first. This section of the research will compare the discussed policy options to a statistical analysis of migration patterns in the region during the crisis. This aspect of the case study will illustrate through patterns of migration how influential crisis-based policy can be. This research examines how policy made to specifically deal with crisis migration can respond and support unusual needs and migration patterns, a concept not extensively discussed in existing scholarly work. Lastly, this research will conclude with a consideration of the greater application of crisis specific policymaking, and how

this relationship between policymakers and migrants can become stronger to aid both parties during crises.

The main findings of this research reflect the importance of crisis specific policy. In investigating the two countries that take in the most migrants, Colombia and Peru, it is found that a reason for their popularity is their policies, that provide the accessible legal avenues for Venezuelans to enter. These policies, in a varying degree of restrictiveness, unlock opportunities that drive migrants into their countries. In the statistics that illustrate the observable flows of migrants from 2014 to 2018, patterns of migration based on policy occur. It is found that while opportunities such as governmental stability and immediate safety from violence is important to migrants, they will eventually seek out a stronger policy that gives them the ability to stay long-term. Typically, this long-term solution is associated with policy created in response to the crisis, as it provides options not addressed in other parts of the migration law of the country.

This work provides a way to study the unique qualities of migration crises and offers predictions of how future patterns of migration will occur. This work, while noting the relationship between policymakers and migrants, argues that policy can have a dramatic effect on the migrants' choices, and thus there is power and responsibility in migration policymaking. It shows the importance of a robust and comprehensive policy response, with special consideration for long-term solutions. Regardless of the interests of the policymakers in reducing or supporting migrants in their country, this research shows that the burden of changing the crisis does not fall on the country of origin alone, but how the region handles the flows of individuals throughout the crisis.

The Venezuelan Migration Crisis

Since 2014, the South American continent has been facing the “fastest-escalating displacement of people across borders in Latin American history” (Freir and Parent, 2019, p.1). The migration stems from political and economic disaster in Venezuela. After economic freefall and hyperinflation too high for practical currency use, opportunities, social services, and employment have all but vanished. In July 2018, the annual inflation rate hit 83,000 percent (BBC, 2018a). Basic items have become very difficult to obtain and cash is even more scarce.

This economic downturn began in 2014 when oil prices dropped. As oil “accounts for 95 [percent] of its export earnings” (BBC, 2018a), inflation rose quickly. Violence has also risen, as many riots and protests against the corrupt and mismanaged government have caused turmoil. Current President Nicolás Maduro, keeping consistent policy from the socialist government of former President Hugo Chávez has been blamed specifically. In response to the chaos, the United States and other world powers have put sanctions on the country, especially after a questioned election in which Maduro won a second term (Davis, 2018). Ultimately, many no longer see a future in Venezuela and have migrated to other parts of Latin America. Approximately 3 million Venezuelans have been recorded by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to have left (UNHCR, 2018a), totaling around seven percent of their population, with 2.5 million of these Venezuelans migrating within Latin America and the Caribbean.

The most popular destination is Colombia, Venezuela’s neighbor to the west, where over 850,000 migrants have sought refuge (Migración Colombia, 2018a). The Simon Bolivar bridge that connects the borders is a main point of entry and has become a symbol of the crisis. This creates not only political unrest but ultimately, a humanitarian crisis as Colombia is struggling to support such a quick uptick of residents, many of whom now rely on the state for social services.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees reported that “Over 4,000 Venezuelans enter Colombia every day looking to stay or continue their journey southwards.” (Martinez, 2018). Colombia is a recent democracy, only solidifying its constitution in 1991, after years of fighting military dictatorships and violent rebel forces. Although recently very stable and “among the largest economies in Latin America” (Statesman’s Yearbook, 2019), it also has large oil exports, making it susceptible to the same economic fate as Venezuela. For many reasons of promise and convenience, it could be a strong choice for migration but still has many drawbacks.

Peru is also taking many migrants and is specifically notable in this crisis for accepting the largest number of refugees- 156,700 as of October 2018 (UNHCR, 2018a). This is almost 100,000 more refugees than the country hosting the second most, the United States. In addition, Peru has allowed 110,000 other migrants to enter under other forms of legal stay, ranking it second in numbers of Venezuelan migrants, behind Colombia.

However, this case is different. Peru is geographically farther away, requiring migrants to cross other boundaries, most commonly through both Colombia and Ecuador to arrive. Prior to August 2018, identity cards allowed migrants to cross into Peru and eventually obtain refugee status, however now, it is requiring passports which makes it much harder to enter. This is especially problematic as passports cost several days of work in Venezuela, where unemployment has skyrocketed and have become difficult to obtain due to institutional failure. Peru has a recent history of military regimes as well, only democratizing ten years before Colombia but rewriting the constitution in 1993. However, Peru has developed much faster and stronger, seen as an “upper-middle income country” (Stateman’s Yearbook, 2018) and with the lowest inflation rate in Latin America. It boasts a growth rate above the rest of the region with

relatively low unemployment. It offers job opportunities and stronger social services, making it an ideal place to migrate if it is possible.

As the crisis continues, it is difficult to predict the fate of Venezuela. Numbers show that while migrants remain the minority, there is not much hope of improvement. In its fifth year in 2019, the crisis has begun to reach an international stage. The UN and other IGOs have escalated support in the region and are present at many popular sites of migration. While developments in Venezuela unfold, it is clear that there will be no quick end to the crisis.

Research Design

I will be using a case study of the Venezuelan Migration Crisis to understand migration crises and the choices both state and individual actors make during them. In discussing this issue, I will be using the term “migration crisis” to describe the events occurring. I have defined this term as mass migration of many individuals out of one country or region as a result of a humanitarian or natural disaster. This situation is still in an “acute” stage and is thus considered not yet a long-term migration crisis in scope, size, and length. However, the Venezuela case can be used to track patterns, as it is now its fifth year in 2019. To analyze this migration crisis, I will be comparing the countries that have taken in the largest number of Venezuelan migrants, Colombia and Peru. This is an effort to provide an adequate cross section of migration choices. Migrants who move to Colombia show a preference for immediate relief, and those who make the long and costly trip to Peru show a preference for the offerings of a more developed country. This research will ask why, if they differ economically and politically, even potentially in levels of development, are they the top two destinations?

To understand choices, I seek to understand migration flows. In doing so, I have broken down the elements of migration patterns to better isolate variables that affect decisions. My

analysis will have three prongs. First, I will seek to understand specific policy in Venezuela, Colombia, and Peru, asking what makes them unique and similar. This research will be an in-depth policy brief and study, analyzing specifically what kinds of policy have been employed in these countries and what the policymakers are trying to say with their responses to mass migration. This will focus on laws on books, official decisions by relevant ministries of the government, using official communication and information that would be accessible to a potential migrant. These policies consider migrants to be “regular” meaning entering legally, or “irregular” meaning having entered either illegally or having a status that is expired or otherwise no longer valid. Many of these documents were originally written in Spanish, and translation is provided by a combination of online tools, provided English texts and at times, myself. This research will break down what is explicitly allowed and what is implicitly meant by these laws and leads to an understanding of the options Venezuelan migrants have.

The policy research will be accompanied by presentation of potential opportunities in Venezuela, Colombia, and Peru, analyzing what the policy actually allows for migrants to take advantage of. This will include the social services available (and if migrants qualify), the job opportunities and the education systems. These types of opportunities are considered “formal” opportunities, as migrants are explicitly given or denied access to them within the policy. This research will also examine these host countries’ economic growth and governmental stability, identified as “informal” opportunities, as they could be utilized by the migrant just by being in the country, but are not guaranteed or part of the codified migration law. This part of the research will also acknowledge that freedoms and safety from the volatility and corruption of Venezuela is in itself an opportunity and will analyze the development progress and political stability of these countries. It will assess if the policies presented “unlock” attractive

opportunities that become a reason to migrate or if conditions are not much better.

Finally, in the third aspect of migration patterns, I will be analyzing how the findings regarding policy and opportunity compare to the actual patterns of migration. This part of the research will be applying the information about what opportunities and options migrants have to what is actually being done. This will ask if these patterns reflect the migration flows predicted. Ultimately the research hopes to be accurately mapping the choices. I will analyze statistical information like population and migration trends to understand the most popular migration decisions. Statics on migration flows will be pulled from 2014 to 2018 International Office of Migration (IOM) data, which has been created by combing a variety of intergovernmental, individual governmental and nongovernmental data to create the most accurate count. When information is not available, the data collected by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees will be sufficient. Primary sources such as newspapers will also be used for context in both this section and throughout.

Rising Tides: Explaining Migration Patterns

This research asks, what shapes migration patterns in a crisis? To answer this question, I have constructed a theory that analyzes the behavior of actors in migration crises in order to understand the relationship of chosen and perceived policies and opportunities, and how they affect migration flows during a crisis. My theory argues that governments have significant influence over migration flows during a migration crisis, as they can ultimately decide the attractiveness and viability of their country and accessibility to its benefits in the eyes of migrants. I also argue that migrants consider two important factors in making migration decisions- the legal accessibility of a nation and the access to opportunities in migrating there. To

support this argument, I will establish a theoretical framework that outlines the processual and relational nature between migrants and policymakers during a migration crisis.

It is important to discuss first how migration crises generally function. I will use the term “waves” to refer to the larger influxes of migrants throughout an ongoing crisis. Migration crises across regions and cultures have similar attributes that can be analyzed as patterns of behavior. This behavior includes the choices and responses that are reflected by both migrant and state actors. I will use the recurrent processes and their patterns of behavior to answer my research question.

The following theory will first explain the process of migration during a crisis. It will outline who the actors involved are and the main factors of crisis migration. It will also show a cause and effect relationship between the opportunities a country will offer, and the policies it uses to respond to incoming migration flows. Within this step-by-step analysis of migration during a crisis, I will hypothesize how the restrictiveness and specificity of a country’s migration policy influences the opportunities presented. Then, applying this hypothesis to different types of elements of policy solutions, I will show how this relationship will affect the patterns of migration that occur because of them.

The process of a migration crisis occurs sequentially. When a disastrous political or natural event occurs, large numbers of individuals feel the best course of action is to leave the affected country. This is an initial wave and is in direct response to the event. To leave, migrants make choices based on where they will have the most opportunity for the least amount of cost. “Costs” are not always monetary, but can require giving up proximity to family, cultural comfort, or social status in order to obtain a relatively better and safer outcome. “Opportunities” are the ability to make one’s life better based on policies, procedures, institutions or informal

qualities of the country that unlock economic improvement, career advancement, human capital gain, social services or other ways to increase their quality of life. This could, at its most basic level, mean safety from violence or a dangerous climate. This cost-benefit calculation may be less formal, especially in crises that require immediate action for safety. Migrants balance risk when leaving and consider their destination in this way (Martin, 2013). Opportunities are a key aspect of my argument, as they are a motivating factor for migration.

While discussing these choices, the term “networks” must be described. Networks are ways that communication occurs between those that have become migrants already and those that are choosing to migrate. In reality, it is the family, friends, neighbors, co-workers and other people that a potential migrant might know, giving them information about where and how their move has been most successful. Information is passed along them, not always with the direct intent of informing a decision but potentially by way of understanding a loved one’s strategy in surviving a crisis. Migration choices are based on information received through networks, so they are a strong and powerful part of the migration wave process (Goldin et al., 2012).

Migrants operationalize their connections to others who have migrated before them. Because migration occurs in waves, the connections are easy to use- even migrants in initial waves may have connections to communities outside of their country. Personal experience and relational information can be more useful and accessible, thus networks are a primary way that migrants inform their decisions. As migrants understand policies and opportunities through networks, it is not with certainty, but with confidence that they will be able to navigate them. While the specific language of the law or legal expertise may not be accessible or completely intelligible, these individuals move with a belief that they will most likely succeed. Otherwise, this would not be an outcome worth risking.

Next, after this initial wave of migrants has weighed these choices and used these networks, the other actor in this framework responds- the state. These responses are policies and subsequent policy changes, or orders carried out by a government that is receiving migrants due to a crisis based on the patterns of migration they are experiencing. Actors of the state are described as “policymakers”, but they could be the legislators, the ministry heads or whomever the decision-making body may be for migration policy. They do not operate outside of political preferences in the country, but instead likely will reflect them. Thus, national politics, leaders and the framework of the bureaucracy can all play a role in what policies are chosen to respond. Pre-existing policies will be changed in this round of political response, and often this will be to reinforce these previous, pre-crisis decisions. Later responses may deviate from initial policy priorities and plans.

The policy response can be to the benefit or detriment of future migrants, depending on how they are perceived by the host country’s lawmakers and constituents. A response is made because as migrants enter a country, they utilize resources and opportunities available. Migrants will look for jobs, put children in school or may need government assistance- especially in the case of a crisis where many must flee without access to bank accounts or possessions. They also contribute to the country’s economy, by taking less desirable jobs, paying taxes and purchasing items. Another reason a response might occur in a certain form is due to geopolitical motivation or obligation. This means that the country might have strong economic or political ties to the region in crisis and have an interest in supporting its people and stabilizing the crisis. The pressure could also be internal, from citizens feeling insecure by the influx of new individuals.

The political response illustrates a positive feedback loop between these two actors during a migration crisis. Almost like dialogue through policy, state actors craft responses when

migrants enter. Looking deeper into this political conversation, policymaker's responses can be defined as "restrictive" or "nonrestrictive" in nature- they will either attempt to inhibit migration, potentially blocking it completely, or they will attempt to help migrants in some capacity and/or allow for more migration (Ruhs, 2017). Utilizing work done by Martin Ruhs on labor migration patterns, I hypothesize that countries with restrictive immigration policies will have more and stronger opportunities for migrants during a crisis, and therefore, countries with non-restrictive immigration policies will have fewer and weaker opportunities for migrants. This hypothesis invokes the previous concept of opportunities, noting that opportunities are finite- there exists a limited number of jobs, classrooms, funding, public housing, and other government support. Where there is more need for these opportunities, there are less available, and policymakers must balance this need and ability to support it in their responses. This hypothesis suggests an answer as to why migration flows to the specific countries as it does. In limiting the number of individuals allowed in, there is potential for resources to be shared more easily and migrants to still be positive in public opinion. In the inverse of this situation, if many migrants are entering, and countries continue to make the decision to allow for this, there will be fewer resources and a potential strain on the country. While norms and more cultural deterrents are important and do occur, the formal institutional boundaries and rules set matter more significantly.

After policy adjustment has occurred in response to the initial wave of migration, a second wave occurs. Now, this new group of migrants is armed with networked information from the prior wave's experiences, but has a different set of choices to make. According to my first hypothesis, policy in potential destination countries may have changed. Now, a second hypothesis shows the opportunities and costs have as well. This leads to a direct cause and effect

relationship between political choices and migration flows. The subsequent wave of migration will now make slightly different decisions, which will result in changes in migration patterns. I hypothesize that as policies change, opportunities will as well, which will alter migrants' decisions and thus migration patterns will reflect this.

The sequential and relational pattern between migrants and state actors continues, as the new wave elicits another policy adjustment and response from in-taking countries. Because regimes change or crises can get better or worse, this pattern will continue. Some of the host countries will become more or less popular, but the relationship remains. Migration patterns are the amalgamation of the cause and response. They provide a way to understand all of the previous waves of migration versus the wave that is in that moment occurring. It helps to illustrate the sum of choices. Of course, choices and options change based on status and ability—but when considering the majority, patterns can be observed.

Further analyzing the migration and policy response relationship outlined previously, I will build on the work of Martin Ruhs. Ruhs' 2017 work, "Labor Immigration Policies in High-Income Countries: Variations Across Political Regimes and Varieties of Capitalism," argues that the restrictive and nonrestrictive nature of migration policies relating to labor are a key way to understand migration patterns. While I believe Ruhs' idea of level of restrictiveness is important, migration specifically during a crisis adds additional factors that complicate this relationship. In a migration crisis, migrants are not just opportunists but a large variety of people, many of whom would not migrate if the situation was not dire. Thus, a political response is not an indication of the general political sentiment about migrants, but an intentional response to the crisis. Because the initial political response is based on pre-existing policies that were created for status-quo migration, the specific content of policy put in place matters greatly. In crises, migrants are not

just weighing typical costs and benefits but involved in a quickly moving and highly political situation. My previous hypothesis established that policies influence opportunities for migrants. Specifically, state policies that are migration-focused draw lines about where individuals can go, how much they can work or claim social services while there, how long they can stay and how protected from risk both politically and physically they will be. These describe the parameters of the “opportunities” discussed.

Specific types of migration law frame these opportunities differently. Some state actions restrict migration to a select few or allow large masses, applying systematic change if resources required are too high. Some allow migrants to seek asylum, use their current passports or have a selection process. Although information from networks may inform choices, ultimately, both choices that are legal or illegal are framed by the policy that creates them. Each type of policy includes law that is aimed at a particular type of response. When a crisis occurs, countries may respond directly to the migration patterns, by crafting policy that creates new ways for these particular migrants to enter. This may set up new requirements of migration, or perhaps introduce a new way to enter. This is called “crisis specific policy,” and may not be applicable to any other reason for migration. This builds on Ruhs’ work, by asserting that restrictiveness is only a function of crisis specific policy, not the entire response. I hypothesize that ultimately, it is the specific content of the policy response created that will dictate flows of migration the most and is more important than its restrictive nature, as this influences opportunities more directly.

This framework can be applied to both the developed and developing world and the various migration relationships between both themselves and each other. However, regions with large amounts of developing countries face different issues in migration than developed regions. Often, the costs and benefits weighed are different than in the developed world. Migrating

between developing countries is an inherently different experience than migrating from a developing to a developed country. The choices become limited and more specific, with opportunities weighing differently. Some countries will not have the ability to create sufficient policy responses, often leaving room for significant informal migration. This is again why the content of policy is so central to migration flows, as they suggest an interest and ability of the state to enforce laws or deliver support. Moreover, during a crisis, the choice to be less geographically distanced from the inciting event or danger puts an individual at further risk for having to migrate again due to the spread of the disaster. This shows how opportunity and choices must be weighed on a basic level of country stability. Using the framework created, I argue that that policy response and the corresponding opportunities of individual countries in a region create migration flow patterns during a crisis.

In the following section, I will apply this framework to the Venezuelan Migration Crisis. As large numbers of individuals leave, many other countries on the South American continent have responded. Within this framework, this relationship will continue to be observable as the crisis has seen a substantial increase in individuals leaving Venezuela since 2014, paying specific attention to the opportunities and costs of the countries where the most Venezuelans have migrated, Peru and Colombia. In order to test these hypotheses, I will analyze the specific policies and opportunities of each country for migrants. I will discuss how Colombia's specific temporary policy currently in place, is nonrestrictive. But, a new policy response, as opposed to previous nonpriority border enforcement, has made it the number one destination of migrants. This framework suggests that although they have chosen a nonrestrictive policy that has less opportunity for migrants, the specific policy decision tilts the cost and benefit analysis in favor of migration there. This further highlights the difference in circumstance during a migration crisis.

Using this framework, there is also an expectation that Peru's use of a refugee system is the reason for such a strong influx of migrants, as although it is a restrictive policy and a considerable distance from Venezuela, its specific policy response content unlocks the most desirable opportunities. It also has nonrestrictive policy that remains desirable and has experienced changes in restrictiveness that offer new opportunities. This case study will show that policies influence opportunities and choices of migrants, which will shape migration during a crisis.

Surfing the Waves: Policies and Opportunities During the Crisis

This chapter is an analysis of the policies of a specific migration crisis, compared to the opportunities for migrants in the main recipient countries. It will examine how both formal opportunities, such as codified law or social programs, and informal factors such as economic stability or geography, might play a role in the decisions that migrants make. I will now apply the theoretical framework to a case study, the Venezuelan Migration Crisis. Analyzing the crisis from its start in 2014, to 2018, in terms of information accessible to migrants, this case-study is an example of the unique characteristics of migration crisis policymaking.

To begin, I first analyze the policies that are the root of the problem in Venezuela. Venezuela's lack of infrastructure and failure to work with its region shows its shortcomings for its own people. Not only are basic needs, such as food and functional currency, not met, social services, education, and healthcare have become unreliable. If Venezuelans do decide to leave, they are met with serious roadblocks. For instance, bureaucratic blocks to obtaining a passport, or the removal of regional policy that would allow for more migration and dangerous propaganda are influential issues analyzed in this chapter. Further, two very different migrant-receiving countries, Peru and Colombia, each have two key policies that are used most commonly and

have gone through significant policy changes in 2018. These policies lay out what migrants can do while in the country, including formal access to some of the services and opportunities migrants desire, which may add incentive to migrate. They also have less formal and opportunities that migrants can receive access to, such as a viable labor market or stable democracy. Both forms of opportunities are framed by policies that allow migrants to enjoy them.

First, I will seek to understand why Colombia receives the most migrants from Venezuela. Its policies have shifted from nonrestrictive and less formal to a policy response with restrictive components, and then back again to slightly less restrictive as they adjust their policy to the changes in the crisis. The Tarjeta de Movilidad Fronteriza (Border Mobility Card), or TMF, is a policy that allows migrants to travel across the border for a few days at a time to purchase food and essentials. It has gone through several phases of reconsideration that have changed its viability. In comparison, the Permiso Especial de Permanencia (Special Permit of Permanence), or PEP is a temporary permit that allows a migrant to live and work in Venezuela for up to two years. Originally, only migrants who had entered legally with a passport were eligible, making it a restrictive policy. However, in 2018 with the introduction of the Registro Administrativo de Migrantes Venezolanos (RAMV), a database of migrant information, allowed migrants to register for the PEP, opening it up more broadly.

The opportunities in Colombia correspond to what the theoretical framework suggests—that in situations where entry is not very restrictive, such as with the TMF, the access to the best opportunities is limited. Users of the TMF cannot work, study, or enjoy the social benefits that Colombia offers. In contrast, those that stay in the country under the PEP-RAMV have more access to benefits both formal and informal by living in the country. Most importantly,

Colombia's geographic location offers an immediate solution to the violence experienced in Venezuela, an informal but important opportunity for migrants.

Lastly, I will investigate the policies and opportunities of Peru, a country with more restrictive policies. Peru has a temporary policy similar to the PEP called the *Permiso Temporal de Permanencia* (Temporary Residence Permit) or the PTP. The PTP offers fewer benefits than the PEP, but migrants can still live and work in Peru for a total of one year. Like the first iteration of the PEP, this requires legal entry with a passport, a stipulation that was introduced in 2018, showing a shift from less restrictive to more restrictive. Peru's most relevant policy to this crisis, however, is their asylum policy. This is highly restrictive, as a very small proportion of applicants have been granted asylum. However, opportunities unlocked through this policy are very preferable for migrants. This chapter will conclude with an understanding of how these factors may affect migrants' decisions and are specific to a migration crisis. I argue that all opportunities discussed are a specific policy response, and their details affect the patterns of migration.

Venezuelan Policies and Opportunities

First, it is important to have a general understanding of the political limitations of leaving a crisis-affected area. Politically, Venezuela's current president, Nicolas Maduro, has discouraged leaving the country: "Maduro has tried to minimize and even deny the migration tragedy that is affecting Venezuela even exists" (McNamara, 2019). There is a lack of resources and information for individuals wanting to leave, thus migrants may not have a full understanding of their options. Additionally, Venezuela's political corruption and dysfunction make it difficult to obtain paperwork or passports required for entry into many countries. The Washington Office of Latin America (WOLA), an advocacy group for human rights in the Americas, finds that the official website to book appointments for a passport is unreliable, and if

one does obtain an appointment, they often have to wait months (Medina Márquez, 2018). This can be problematic, as the country has seen increasing government instability. The longer one waits, the more concern builds for government offices failing to deliver at all. A national chapter of the anti-corruption organization, Transparency International, called Transparencia Venezuela, has submitted 100 complaints against Venezuela's Administrative Service of Identification, Migration, and Aliens (SAIME) on behalf of citizens. In doing so, they cite Article 50 of Venezuela's Constitution, which declares that "Every person can travel freely and by any means through the national territory, change of address and residence, absent from the Republic and return, transfer their property and belongings from the country, bring their goods to the country or remove them, without further limitations than those established by law" (Transparencia Venezuela, 2017). There is a belief that through the lack of government support in obtaining travel documents, there is a suspension of the right outlined in Article 50, perhaps deliberately. Even if a passport is obtained, the cost is approximately half a month's wages (Medina Márquez, 2018). All of these limitations can be defined as policy responses by the government of Venezuela. Government communication and failure to support the demand for passports and identification shows an interest in lowering emigration numbers.

Additionally, the government's exit from intergovernmental organizations in the region has ultimately limited the choices for their migrants, lacking special circumstances that allow other Latin Americans to move more freely. Venezuela pulled out of the Andean Community group (CAN) in 2006 and was suspended indefinitely in 2016 from the Mercosur Bloc (Felter and Renwick, 2008). Mercosur Decision 37 and CAN Decision 503 both allow for entry into member states under an alien ID card, an opportunity Venezuelans are now denied. The Venezuelan government's decisions to turn away and not support their own region is a specific

policy choice. As a result, individuals fleeing are often not properly equipped and must make decisions based on where they can enter, depending on accessibility. These policies that turn away from the Andean community and establishes the importance of policy even within the country of crisis. Ultimately, it is these failures to implement very specific policy needs, such as visa reciprocity within their geographic community and accessible documentation, that turns mass migration into a true crisis.

Beyond these political limits, there is a distinct lack of opportunities for Venezuelans that causes them to leave. A fundamental problem for Venezuelans is a scarcity in basic necessities, such as food and medicine. Part of this is due to high inflation rates, which reached 1,300,000 percent in November 2018 (BBC, 2019). Paper money has become nearly obsolete and using credit or debit cards and bank accounts are only solutions for those who have access to them. This is partially due to sanctions put on the Venezuelan economy by the United States, the European Union, and other vital trade partners. However, the majority of the problem is from poor economic policy choices.

Not only is there financial disaster, but the BBC also reports “Nine out of 10 people couldn’t afford their daily food” and that Malaria levels rise dramatically, with severe shortages for medication that can prevent and treat the disease (2019). Voice of America reports “Venezuela's Health Ministry disclosed [spring 2017] that the number of women dying from childbirth had jumped by 66 percent since 2014 and that of children dying before their first birthday had climbed by 30 percent” (Mendoza, 2018). Survival has become more difficult and help for those who need it has become less of a state priority. The social services system Venezuelans relied on called the “Bolivar Missions,” which targeted public education, medical coverage, and affordable food have all but failed. While a socialist government, the political

unrest has led to a bureaucratic breakdown. Everything from public transportation to public schools has seen a decline in functionality and accessibility. Even if Venezuelans find access to these necessities, employment opportunities are very slim. The International Monetary Fund recorded 34 percent unemployment in Venezuela for 2018, the highest of any country data was available for (World Economic Outlook, 2018). This means that even if food or medicine was available, the lack of jobs and income inhibits citizens from obtaining them.

Surprisingly, Venezuela's government has attempted to minimize the importance of these problems by trying to entice individuals who have already migrated to come back to Venezuela. Dr. Elena Block, of the University of Queensland, explains this initiative, called *The Vuelta a la Patria*, as "a plan inviting repentant migrants, who have not found jobs or welcoming lands, to return to Venezuela. The government facilitates free flights and monetary support to return." (McNamara, 2019). It appears that as migration increases, the available workforce and taxable revenue may be trickling out of the country. The government cites the reason for the *Vuelta a la Patria* as a response to accounts that "[migrants] were attacked, exploited and criminalized" and claims that more than 7,000 migrants have returned (Gobierno Bolivariano de Venezuela, 2018). This may be another propaganda tactic, as the government has expressed their concern for migrants leaving and has worked to control the image of the situation. The *Vuelta a la Patria* is a policy response, and it attempts to create new opportunity within Venezuela that may outweigh the costs of migrating or staying in a country after migration.

Despite efforts to make returning home preferable, what can be seen from these institutional and economic problems is a lack of opportunities in Venezuela. It means that there is very little incentive to return. Migrants weigh these costs with opportunities they perceive in other countries. Thus, the desperation of migrants stems from the government's lack of support.

It places the burden of creating a robust and effective policy on countries taking in migrants. The policy of Venezuela is highly restrictive to emigrate, but its opportunities so low that it creates a paradoxical problem. When migrants are forced to make choices, they see the costs of living in Venezuela and the opportunities of moving elsewhere. It is from these domestic policy responses that migrant waves occur. The situation in Venezuela and its opportunities and costs are in contrast with the two countries who take in the most migrants- Colombia and Peru.

Colombian Policy and Opportunities

Venezuela's neighbor to the west, Colombia, is the country that has taken in the most migrants. This research will now focus on its unique policy and opportunities that have made it so popular. Colombia is a natural solution for Venezuelan migrants, connected geographically for many miles with much inter-state commerce and migration already occurring. Perhaps most famously, the Simon Bolivar Bridge, connecting San Antonio del Tachira in Venezuela and La Parada in Colombia, is a site of mass migration. The major city of Cúcuta, Colombia is only 10.3 kilometers from this port of entry. Its proximity is an incentive, it's easy and conceivable. It's also quick, and in the situation of crisis, this immediate relief can be important. Colombia is a democracy, and although its polity score has in some eras taken dips, it has remained democratic and relatively stable since 1991, with a polity score of 7 (Marshall, 2014). This means that migrants can expect infrastructure that allows them to utilize these legal means of entry. It also has a human development indicator (HDI) of .747 (UNDP, 2018). The HDI takes into account factors such as life expectancy, literacy rates, health, poverty, and security, to rate how developed a nation is. For comparison, the world's average is .728. Interestingly, Venezuela's is .761, but it has been declining since 2013, while Colombia's has been growing at a steady rate (UNDP, 2018). What this means is that Colombia is becoming a developed nation and can effectively support its citizens and migrants.

Colombia also had an unemployment rate of 9.2 percent in 2018 (World Economic Outlook, 2018). While that may be higher than preferred, there is still work available for migrants. Dany Bahar, of the Brookings Institution, in his policy brief on the crisis, noted “As compared to the Colombian labor force, the Venezuelan population is younger and more educated [...] RAMV Venezuelans thus represent a largely young, educated, able bodied population in Colombia, which, if properly integrated, could yield large gains for economic growth and labor force productivity in the country” (2019, p. 4). This indicates an opportunity for migrants and for Colombia, showing incentives to migrate, and incentives for policymakers to make it possible for migrants to work. Approximately 80 percent of the migrants entering Colombia have only had secondary schooling or less, meaning that they are primarily taking on labor-intensive roles (Freier and Parent, 2018). This may be advantageous to both them and Colombians, as it is easier to find these jobs and remain uncompetitive with the educated and elite portion of the citizen population. Colombia appears to offer a more viable job market, with far better opportunities for personal growth than in Venezuela.

Within Colombia, several institutions matter in relation to migration. Policies are facilitated through the Intersectional Migration National Commission or the CNIM (Decree 1239, 2003). The CNIM is a cabinet made up of other ministry leaders throughout the government in an effort to remain consistent. While the Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs often leads the organization itself, another body was created in 2018 to specifically create policy related to “irregular migration,” which has since dealt largely with the crisis. From early 2017 until the end of 2018, two major policies have had the most dramatic impact on migration flows. I will analyze them specifically to create a full picture of the political response to the crisis from policymakers.

The first policy to investigate, that was originally the most commonly used form of legal entry is the Tarjeta de Movilidad Fronteriza (Border Mobility Card) or the TMF card. The use of this card was often an abuse of it- the initial crossing of the border under this provision was legal, but remaining in the country and traveling to the interior of it was not. The cards were introduced in February of 2017 for pre-registration. The intent was for “Venezuelans who live near the Venezuela-Colombia border to make brief trips into the border regions of Colombia.” (Selee et al., 2019, p.5). Essentially, Venezuelans could visit Colombia for short amounts of time to purchase food and necessities that had become scarce in Venezuela. The hope was to reduce some of the illegal activity under it and to phase out the “Immigration Border Transit Card” that was being used to migrate between the countries for work, a pre-existing policy from before the crisis began. There are two key aspects of this policy that make it important. First, it was a nonrestrictive policy that opened the door to much migration. Crossing the border did not even require the showing of a passport and the forms, which could be filled out online, only required proof of Venezuelan citizenship. This is nonrestrictive, and very accessible, meaning that there was no policy preference for a certain kind of migrant. The second key aspect is what lead to the misuse and eventual reconsideration of this policy. The TMF was never intended to be used to live in Colombia. Explicitly on the “Frequently Asked Questions” page of Colombia’s migration website, the listed restrictions include they could not work, study or live in Colombia if using the TMF (Migración Colombia, 2017). However, enforcement was shown to be weak. In February 2018, just one year later, the government stopped issuing the TMF. In the roll-back of the program, the official government communication cited “that enough time had been given for the Venezuelan citizens to carry out this process and be evidenced, on the part of Migration Colombia, a misuse of this document by some foreigners” (Migración Colombia, 2018b). While

no quantitative evidence of overstaying the allotted seven continuous days of the TMF has been officially reported, the quick rollback of the program suggests that Colombia was overwhelmed by this migration response. Later, in November 2018, there was some continuation of the program and pre-registration is still available on the website. It claims that “over 550,00 Venezuelans have benefited from this” (Migración Colombia, 2018a). However, announcements at the end of 2018 indicate large changes to the TMF in the future, specifically adding more time allowed to stay (Migración Colombia, 2018c). While it has been reinstated in some form, it remains a temporary and crisis specific response. It shows a nonrestrictive solution being transformed as the crisis continues. In reality, what is occurring is waves of migrants arriving using the TMF and then corresponding responses to these waves. It attempts to meet a specific need and offers an opportunity for migrants who may not be ready or able to relocate completely.

The next policy most commonly used is the Permiso Especial de Permanencia (Special Permit of Permanence) or the PEP, issued by Resolutions 5797 in 2017, 1272 in 2017, and 0740 in 2018 and. The PEP functions as a temporary entry policy. In order to qualify, Venezuelan citizens must have a stamped passport that shows entry into Colombia before December 17, 2018 (later extended to February 2, 2018). This means their entry was legal and through a Migration Control Post. They must also not have any “judicial records at the national and international level” (Migration Colombia, 2017), and cannot have been previously deported. Already, elements of increased restriction can be observed. As the TMF, a nonrestrictive policy was being changed, the PEP was brought in as a longer-term, but a more restrictive alternative. The PEP is a valid form of stay in the country for 90 days and can be renewed for up to two years. However, at the end of the two years, Venezuelans are required to leave the country completely. This is a much more restrictive measure, showing a shift in the policy responses and a change in the

directive as the TMF can be used multiple times throughout a two-year period. In 2017, policy goals were to allow access and aid to necessities, but as the crisis continues, the policy response became more specific and limiting. Considering that many Venezuelans crossed illegally, or even simply overstayed their TMF, it cuts the potential users down substantially. It also restricts anyone who could not obtain a passport or has committed a crime. Estimates by the Migration Policy Institute say that only “In total, more than 453,000 Venezuelans had been issued PEP as of December 2018- about 40 percent of the total Venezuelan population in the country” (Selee et al., 2018, p. 7). This data shows how it is restrictive, and potentially not supporting enough migrants in their needs to enter the country.

However, a new iteration of this policy was introduced as the PEP-RAMV. Previously, there was a shift from the nonrestrictive TMF to the restrictive PEP policy, but the next policy put forth by the Colombian government changes this. The PEP-RAMV adds new provisions to the PEP with the registration in a census called the Registro Administrativo de Migrantes Venezolanos (Administrative Registry of Venezuelan Migrants) or the RAMV. This final piece now requires migrants to register within this census to become “regularized,” a term that means known by the government and legal. Once done so, even if they entered the country illegally or without a passport, they can now apply for the PEP. This policy response shows a shift away from the restrictive policy. Of the policy, Director General of Migration Colombia, Christian Krüger Sarmiento, said

The idea of relaxing the regulations is not only a matter of facilitating mobility but mitigate the irregularity and increase security. [We] hope that by December 21, the date on which the process of issuing the PEP-RAMV, more than 70percentof Venezuelans who are in Colombia are regularly closed, as this is an issue that helps us shield the

country's security, but also helps us to protect the rights of these migrants, often, by their irregular status, are exploited at work. (Migration Colombia, 2018a).

This new addition displays the pattern of migrant choices and policy response. As the PEP was not creating a path for enough migrants, the government responded as choices were still being made to cross. Informal migration was a powerful force, but even more powerful were the details of these policy types. What appears is that restrictive or nonrestrictive, it is the details that matter, and it changed the policy content. Because the PEP-RAMV grants legal entry in waves by assigning each applicant a number, it controls some of the waves of migration in a more organized fashion. This is a specific need of this country and the policy designed helps to relieve this. While the PEP and the PEP-RAMV are both temporary solutions, the change from highly selective to a way of entrance for many radically alters the policy. It changes the policy type from a restrictive and temporary permit into a large data-storing nonrestrictive policy. It becomes a greater solution for the need at the Colombian-Venezuelan border. In later sections, I will compare the quantitative data available for migration to the country before and after this change, showing how it impacts decisions

These policies both allow access to some of the opportunities presented. However, just getting into Colombia does not guarantee benefits from its stability. Both the TMF and the PEP offer limited access to the opportunities that Colombia can offer. First, Under the TMF, a Venezuelan migrant cannot legally work, go to school or live more than a few days in Colombia. The TMF may not provide legal access to Colombia's social services, but it does offer a chance to do informal work and access to aid on the other side of the border. Additionally, as of September 2018, the International Organization for Migration has recorded aid from "15 UN agencies, 9 NGOs, 5 donors and with the participation of the ICRC and IFRC" (IOM, 2018a).

The aid available varies from water purification tablets, baby supplies, food vouchers, and migration assistance including registration into the RAMV. While TMF users may not be able to utilize benefits directly from the state, these organizations are set up at the border and allow migrants to receive help- a strong incentive to over. Additionally, while scarcity exists in Venezuela, sanctions have not been put on Colombia, meaning that necessities are still in stores and available for purchase. Allowing Venezuelans to come in and engage in commerce helps the Colombian economy and is an opportunity for policymakers to boost their economy. It is an incentive for both parties to become less restrictive.

Second, the PEP, especially with its RAMV additions, offers more opportunity for migrants. The PEP explicitly allows migrants to work in Colombia- an opportunity for income not available as readily in Venezuela. This may be why so many migrants are choosing to apply for the PEP instead of asylum, as refugees cannot work (Selee et al., 2019, p. 11). Use of the PEP also allows access to “Colombia’s health system beyond emergency treatment, which is the only health benefit available to unauthorized immigrants” (Selee et al., 2019, p. 6), per Resolution 3015. Migrants under the PEP also have access to education, with the extension of the RAMV, at least 31,674 students reported as Venezuelans are now in the education system, according to the information that the Certified Education Secretariats have updated with respect to the variable ‘country of origin’” (El Tiempo, 2018). What this means is that applying and being granted the PEP, if able, is a viable solution to some the issues faced at home.

Here, quick benefits to making this move become evident, even though some difficulties are involved. However, this does not mean there are disincentives. There is much perceived risk of applying for the RAMV (Seelee et al., 2018). Migrants who did not chart a legal path to entry have a difficult time trusting the RAMV, with fears that if they self-identify as illegal aliens,

there is a chance they will be caught and prosecuted. While the PEP can open the door to legal work, registering as irregular could later have adverse effects if the government decides to not no longer grant the PEP to anyone registered with this status. Others face problems with finding a job. As the market becomes more and more saturated with migrants who have little ability to self-advocate, there is a risk of being taken advantage of or not being able to find opportunities as promised. What's more, as individuals migrate informally, many stay in large-scale camps along the border where Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) have set up a base. While its proximity to help is ideal, some migrants are worried they can become stuck in this place without the PEP, with little ability to move inward where the majority of these benefits lie.

When comparing the policies with the opportunities, there is a clear weighing of pros and cons. There is a potential for strong opportunities with very little cost of travel, walking or buses are possible in this situation. However, the real cost lies in the policies. There are patterns of restrictive access, and as these opportunities have opened up, especially through the reinstatement of the TMF and including irregular migration in the RAMV, higher levels of migrant response can be expected in this region. As policy allows for more individuals in need to enter, access to opportunities in Colombia becomes more competitive. Because special consideration for the needs of migrants has been made, policies like the TMF can limit this consumption, by only allowing migrants to be in the country for a short amount of time. Additionally, provisions in the PEP-RAMV balance access to social services with the opportunity for upward mobility and economic stability through work permissions and education. Thus, individuals on the PEP can eventually not need government benefits to survive. The possibility of these opportunities is a driving force of migration to this country, but its accessibility is a deliberate policy response made by the government. It sees a great amount of

demand and potential benefit for allowing their workforce and tax collection to expand. Support by aid has also eliminated some of this strain and thus allowed governments to make these decisions. Colombian policy allows for international aid within their borders, which is also an intentional policy choice. Colombia's policymakers have chosen to be open to the global community in contrast with Venezuela's closed off policies.

Peruvian Policy and Opportunities

Next, I will compare Peru to Colombia in its policy response and opportunities in the Venezuelan Migration Crisis. First, it is important to acknowledge the significant difference in stability in Peru from Colombia and Venezuela. Peru has a polity score of 9, making it considered a far stronger democracy (Marshall, 2014). Its institutional strength is reflected in its strong economy. It had a 6.7 percent unemployment rate for 2017, 3.2 percent inflation (Index Mundi, 2018), and an average GDP growth rate of 3.1, slowing down from previous years, but still relatively strong growth for the region (World Bank, 2018). The World Bank credits much of this success to the central banking system and their overall strong government. Its HDI score is .750, showing a slightly higher quality of life for its citizens as Colombia (UN Development Program, 2018). While it does have some forms of public health benefits, social systems, and education, this wealthier country does limit its social spending, as opposed to the socialist government of Venezuela. However, its stability overall tends to outweigh this concern for migrants. One of the biggest simultaneous drawbacks and benefits to Peru is its physical location. While its distance may discourage poorer migrants, who cannot afford a bus or plane ticket, it also makes them safer. The distance from the violence and corruption occurring in Venezuela keeps migrants from the risk of spillover, an advantage that Colombia does not offer. However, socio-economic status is a factor of this. The ability to travel approximately 2,000

kilometers is a privilege, and it must be considered that those that do make the trek often use significant portions of their resources to do so.

In terms of policy that can be used to enter Peru, there are two key policy responses. Peru, like Colombia, has a Ministry of Foreign Affairs that handles the majority of the migration policy. But it does not currently have a special commission for irregular migration. At the beginning of the crisis, Peru allowed entry with a national identity card, until August 2018 when it began to require a valid passport under a new presidential administration. Although it has some similarities in policy response to Colombia, what makes Peru unique in this crisis is that it has taken in roughly 40 percent of the 392,323 global Venezuelan refugees as of December 2018 (UNHCR, 2018a). This is the most Venezuelan refugees of any nation. This shows a migrant preference for their policy response to the crisis, and the two key policies- the Permiso Temporal de Permanencia (PTP) and the asylum system that illustrate why.

The PTP is the Peruvian version of Colombia's PEP, established by Decree 002-2017-IN. Beginning in 2017, it allows one year (as opposed to Colombia's two years), of legal stay for those that arrived legally before October 2018, later extended to December 31, 2018, under Decree 001-2018-IN. Roughly "three-quarters of the estimated Venezuelan population in Peru" (Selee et al., 2019, p. 7) has been granted a legal stay under the PTP. It is a relatively easy process, although it does require an INTERPOL certification that the migrant has no criminal record. This could be considered a more accessible feature of this policy, as an INTERPOL certification is more easily obtained than certification from the Venezuelan government, as required in other countries. It is not required to have a passport to apply, however, since 2018, Peru has required passports to enter the country (BBC, 2018b). To apply for the PTP, migrants must have entered the country legally, making the passport a de facto requirement for any

migrants that arrived after the change. This creates a change in restriction, moving from a nonrestrictive policy to a more restrictive one. There is also a fee of 41.90 soles (\$12.67 USD) to apply, meaning that there are some limitations for migrants with little economic ability. This fee can also be deferred for one year, if necessary.

While the PEP was originally nonrestrictive policy and has become more restrictive, the legal stay given was initially meant to be short term. This addresses the crisis aspect of this policy- its goal is to provide temporary support but not a permanent solution. However, an important recent change to the PEP is that although it does only explicitly allow for a brief period of legal stay, Resolution 043 introduced at the beginning of 2018 creates a path to longer-term stay, through the Calidad Migratoria Especial Residente (Quality Special Resident Immigration Status). If they're within 30 days of their PTP expiration, migrants may apply for this special status. They must report their activity during their time under the PTP, such as work history and if they left the country (leaving for more than 183 days makes them ineligible) and have paid off the cost of the PTP application. This application costs approximately \$36 USD and must be done at an in-person appointment. While this is not automatic citizenship, having "special status" is legal grounds to live, work and conduct life in the country for one year in addition to the time spent under the PTP, and it is renewable. It has not yet been guaranteed by the Peruvian Government if they can apply for citizenship, but nationalization does require two years of legal stay in the country and an Alien Registration Card, which can be applied for with special status, pointing to potential to legal citizenship (Ortega, 2018). This a stark difference from the PEP in Colombia. The PEP requires many of the same items for entry, and offers similar benefits, but forces migrants to leave or remain irregularly on expiration. A potential path to citizenship or at least more protected status completely changes the motives behind migrant

choices made. Here, the government is offering more long-term plans within an emergency and temporary measure. While both the PEP and the PTP have similar levels restrictiveness, it is in a single resolution that one becomes a stronger political response. It is the content and impact of the policy response in this case, more than how restrictive it is, that matters most.

While a path to citizenship is important and useful, many Venezuelans who migrate to Peru are hoping to become refugees. According to UNHCR November 2018 data, over 156,000 of the 560,000 Venezuelans in Peru have applied for asylum (UNHCR, 2018b). The process of seeking asylum in Peru is relatively accessible. While you must be in Peru to apply, status can be applied for at The Executive Secretariat of the Special Commission for Refugees, the Decentralized Offices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, any office of the National Superintendence of Migrations and at all borders and airports. The process is free and both legal support and translation services are available. A passport is not required- an identity card is sufficient, although there is a personal interview (UNHCR, 2018c). Again, although migrants may not enter the country without a passport after 2018's change in requirement, those that have previously entered without one may apply. This is useful to migrants already in Peru without passports, whose PTPs are reaching expiration and are seeking a longer-term solution. Additionally, while applicants await a decision, they may remain in the country, travel within it, and even legally work.

This policy's initial constraints appear to be nonrestrictive, but it is the acceptance rate of the applications that gives insight into its restrictive nature: while many have applied, only 500 Venezuelans have actually been granted asylum as of November 2018 (Selee et al., 2019, p.10). Those remaining are either awaiting decision or have been denied. Statistics show a 19.8 percent acceptance rate of Venezuelan asylum applications, as opposed to a 46.4 percent acceptance rate

for Colombians and 31.6 percent rate for Cubans for the year 2017 (WorldData, 2017). This could be due to sheer large numbers of applications from Venezuela, as 33,149 applied in 2017, as opposed to 130 from Colombia and 762 from Cuba. The average acceptance rate is 23.4 percent, across all national origins (WorldData, 2017). This gives this policy its restrictive characteristics. While there is an obvious burden on the government in processing these many applications which may explain some lower acceptance rates, many are not being granted. This may be due to the definition of a refugee in Peru. Being a refugee, according to the UNHCR's Peru-specific help page (2018c) is defined as:

a person who due to well-founded fears of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, belonging to a certain social group or political opinions (reasons provided for in the 1951 Convention), generalized violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violation of human rights or other circumstances that have seriously disrupted public order (causes provided for in the Cartagena Declaration of 1984).

While the 1951 Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees referenced has been applied to many modern asylum systems, the Cartagena Declaration of 1984 was specifically created by the Organization of American States for use in Latin America. It has been used and agreed upon specifically in this region and thus may be definitionally more applicable. Many of the unrest and government corruption in Venezuela has been described in rhetoric as “violations of human rights” and “seriously disrupted public order” by other state actors, intergovernmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations. Still, defining Venezuelan migrants under these terms in Peru is on a case-by-case basis.

While the options for legal stay in Peru have been discussed, it is important to understand the incentives that exist to go through this process. Exploring specifically the opportunities

created when entering under these policies, I will examine the PTP first. Those entering under the PTP are not eligible for the public healthcare benefits in Peru. However, just as in Colombia, there is a humanitarian aid presence, especially the UNHCR, which with IOM, and other regional groups have occupied the major port of Tumbes to help migrants. This means that although they may not be able to go to certain medical centers, there is still possibility for medical access or at least, less scarce medication than in Venezuela. With greater infrastructure and development comes more places like drug stores that can have general medication for public purchase.

Under the PTP migrants do have access to primary and secondary education. While parents must show proof of former schooling or have their children test into school, it is available and opens opportunities for younger Venezuelans, as school was far less funded and reliable at home (Ministerio de Educación Perú, 2018).

Lastly, under the PTP migrants have the ability to work. Peru does have a larger informal sector, where many migrants find work. There is also a large formal labor market for migrants to become involved in. The World Bank's 2013 estimates predicted steady job creation, which did occur, especially in low-paying opportunities (World Bank, 2018). However, about 20 percent of Venezuelan migrants entering Peru have had technical training and 40 percent have had University schooling (Freier and Parent, 2018). This means that over half of the migrants entering are highly skilled and will be searching for work that utilizes these skills. This need might be more difficult to satisfy than unskilled laboring work and could result in some political unrest from citizens due to competition.

These opportunities provided under the PTP further characterize it as a nonrestrictive policy that offers solutions to some of the migrants' most pressing problems- necessities for

survival, income, and support for their families. However, in the spirit of its short-term intentions, little is offered for personal growth and advancement. Support such as college attendance, welfare, or housing assistance are not granted. While the opportunities discussed are often worth the cost of travel to Peru, its potential to unlock a new life for migrants is dependent on that individual's ability to find work and necessities for themselves. This is also because as a policy becomes less restrictive, it becomes unable to offer as many formal opportunities and allowances, as government spending reaches a cap or jobs begin to be taken.

However, the opportunities for those that are classified as refugees in Peru are different. For some desired opportunities, there is still a lack of support. Refugees do not have access to healthcare, just as those staying under the PTP. According to the UNHCR,

Asylum-seekers are excluded from the Universal Health Insurance System (Sistema de Aseguramiento Universal en Salud) because the temporary documents they receive are not considered valid for enrolment. Although the regulations allow for the enrolment of refugees who present residence identity cards, in practice, refugee families face significant difficulties in accessing the system due to additional requirements and the fact that refugees are not eligible for the free health insurance programme called “Seguro Integral de Salud” (SIS)” (UNHCR, 2017, p.4).

Again, this still is more beneficial than a lack of medicine for purchase or little access to medical help in the country as in Venezuela. Another limitation of this policy is the ability to work. Refugees are permitted to do so, but the “UNHCR notes that many employers do not accept these work permits, suggesting this approach may have a more limited impact on Venezuelans’ integration than intended” (Selee et al., 2019, p. 10). Thus, even while the job market might be strong, there still might be a difficulty making income.

While this may be discouraging, being granted asylum does have many benefits that make it a popular solution in this region. Refugees are eligible for primary, secondary and even tertiary school- many of which for free. Additionally, a unique attribute of the asylum policy is its explicit granting of rights: “The refugee, as recognized by the Peruvian State, has the same rights and obligations as the Constitution and the laws grant to the resident alien, without prejudice to the provisions of the Convention on the Status of Refugees and this Law” (UNHCR, 2018c). This includes the right to travel freely, to not from where they are escaping, no penalty for irregular entry, access to education, work, and, health, to not to be discriminated against, freedom from sexual and gender violence, to freely practice their religion, access to administrative help, family reunification, documentation, and naturalization (UNHCR, 2018c). While some of these freedoms, such as health, do not necessarily guarantee easy access or government support, they do give refugees legal grounds to protect themselves. The final right listed could be the most important. As explained with the PTP, Peru does allow application for citizenship after a certain amount of time in the country. While the UNHCR page outlining these rights only states that naturalization is granted “in accordance with national legislation on the matter” (2018c), there are potential avenues for seeking citizenship as a refugee. Being a migrant of a crisis is a very uncertain identity, and here, this codifies some protections for these migrants. The refugee policy is restrictive, so it is logical that the opportunities provided would be strong and plentiful. As fewer migrants can claim them, more support can be distributed.

Granting asylum remains a restrictive process that leaves many in limbo. Asylum seekers can apply for the PTP while awaiting the decision, and as their asylum status is still in flux, they can be granted the one-year temporary stay. This large number of migrants applying for asylum might also be explained by Peru’s original acceptance of ID cards rather than passports. The PEP

was originally an open-door policy and now for many who entered under it, they must get into the refugee system to maintain their legal status- an example of a direct response to migrant choices. Ultimately, in Peru's case there is a similar pattern of nonrestrictive to more restrictive policy. Given the opportunities discussed, the access can seem even more restrictive, as many laws shut out migrants from formal opportunities. However, Peru's government stability and wealthier economy may provide enough incentive to find ways through the restrictions of the policies.

Patterns in Policy and Opportunities

When comparing Peru to Colombia, similar policy solutions occur. The PEP and the PTP are similar in that they allow a temporary solution. These policies show a preference for short-term solutions during a crisis, which still are useful and impactful. Yet, they are responses that give the policymakers the ability to dispel incoming migrants, and reveal their hope that eventually, the crisis will cease, and masses will no longer be flooding their systems. Peru and Colombia both also have a policy response that deals with specific problems of the country. Colombia, facing a large number of people who saw the nearby border as an immediate refuge, enacted the TMF, and later recalled and revised it after being overwhelmed. Thus, the PEP was introduced and was put in place for emergency response reasons. Similarly, Peru has introduced eligibility for special status for PTP holders, which could change the nature of the policy. It may provide a long-term solution, granting citizenship. This change illustrates a specific response as need grows with more migrants entering. Alternatively, Peru's refugee system appeared to be a more open policy as it does not require a passport, and originally provided an emergency avenue. As it became overwhelmed, it was shown to be less of a viable option. These types of policy responses show how during a crisis, windows of opportunity can be very limited. They also are

examples of the relationship between policymakers and migrants. The situations presented show an overwhelming need for policy from migrants, and a necessary response from policymakers.

Within the span of a year, both these countries changed their policies in many ways. While Colombia reconsiders the TMF in a new policy, Peru continues to be more restrictive in its asylum granting, as more applicants apply but few are granted. In both Colombia and Peru, a rapid-fire change in restrictiveness is occurring. This speaks to the reality of migration crisis policy- that changes made are quickly reflected in the flow of migrants. There is also evidence that restrictiveness is not a black and white issue, but a sliding scale. As the crisis shifts, the restrictiveness may shift in increments through additions and changes to the policy.

In these additions and changes to the specific rules of the policy, such as passport required, length of stay, requirements of asylum, cost, etc. important factors of migration emerge. These policies have all changed in restrictiveness, but they remain a choice migrants are willing to make. Policy that has been able to make a substantial impact in favor of migrants' needs, such as the PEP-RAMV, which is targeting 70 percent of Colombia's migrants, has been very popular. This is because it acknowledges the concerns and difficulties of the migrants in the crisis. In the case of the PEP-RAMV, this was the concern that if they entered illegally, they would not have access to the opportunities in Colombia. By allowing migrants who entered irregularly to register, the policy eliminates a barrier to the opportunities they desire. In comparison, policy that has put its own government at a standstill, such as the refugee system in Peru, has not adapted to the crisis and tries to hold on to its restrictive pre-crisis levels.

When analyzing the specific content of the policy, coupled with opportunities it unlocks, a pattern emerges. When a policy is less restrictive, it provides fewer opportunities for migrants, such as the TMF or PTP which both are limited in eligibility for social services or long-term

advancement. Likewise, when a policy is restrictive, those opportunities are stronger, such as the PEP after the passport was required and special status introduced, or Peru's asylum policies, which offer more institutional protection. Additionally, a more important pattern to reflect on is that as these policies become specialized and try to remedy a particular situation, their opportunities are greater. For example, Peru's PTP is not very restrictive and does not offer many government benefits, but has potential opportunities for applying for citizenship, which would unlock these benefits. Here, Peru's policymakers are targeting their most pressing problem- an influx of migrants at a rapid pace. However, they have implemented a way to eventually solve this problem, whether the crisis persists, and migrants must stay long-term or if it ends and some migrants want to become permanent citizens. Ultimately, they recognize that if a migrant cannot stay in the country legally, enter the workforce or find any life advancement opportunities, they are not able to enjoy the full benefits and quality of life may not improve as much. Thus, they will not migrate there. This shows that when migrants make choices, the policy is the gatekeeper of the potential opportunities.

Chasing the Horizon: Patterns of Migration During the Crisis

Now, having established the influential policies at work, this research will focus on the physical patterns of migration as anticipated in the theoretical framework based on the policies and opportunities discussed in the previous section. This section will move past analyzing isolated countries and view the crisis as a larger, regional, situation. To do so, it will compare the collected information about hypothetical choices and options that migrants have with the physical patterns that can be observed. This will provide statistical information, giving further context to the patterns of migration in Latin America and looking to find any connections to the information about policy and opportunity presented. Investigating some of the factors of

migration discussed, this research will be putting the theory to action, to see how the patterns expected from the presented countries, their policies, the opportunities they unlock, and the networks of migrants moving interact. This section will consider two questions- what patterns are observed and why are others *not* observed? The findings of this section present patterns of migrants moving initially to find emergency solutions, but later seek out the strongest policy that offers the best opportunities. This creates flows of migrants through the continent. The findings continue to illustrate a preference for crisis specific policies, that offer a custom solution for Venezuelan migrants.

First, establishing that the onset of the crisis has changed the flows of people in the region, I will compare migration in years prior to the crisis, to the patterns that emerged as the crisis began and up to 2018. This establishes the significance a crisis has on migration flow patterns, noting its change in not only numbers of individuals but destinations. Next, just as the previous section analyzed Peru and Colombia's government responses during the crisis, this section will offer an analysis of migrants' responses to the crisis in those countries. Migrant responses occur in the form of migration patterns, where it possible to see common choices being made. Thus, to understand migrant response, I will present statistical information regarding Peru and Colombia's Venezuelan migrant flows.

Both Peru and Colombia have unique elements of migration response that can be identified through the statistics of migration during the crisis. Colombia takes in the most migrants, but when recalling their policy options, there are few possibilities for these migrants to be staying for an extended period of time within the country. Thus, the statistical information gives a clearer picture of the way migrants are moving through the region- first into Colombia and later other parts of Latin America. This shows how the temporary policy options in response

to migrants eventually push them into other countries. In comparison, Peru has created more long-term policy responses, and the related migration response shows this. It has seen a dramatic rise in migrants staying in the country, rather than moving on to other parts of the region as many do from Colombia. Peru's policies have created very specific waves, as more migrants entered and stayed in the country after changing their policies to require passports. Understanding how the policy implicates the flows, the statistical analysis of the case study countries provides context to how migrants have moved in this crisis.

After discussing the statistics of these individual countries, this case study will zoom out to describe the larger patterns of migration across the region as a whole. In understanding these flows, how and where the largest patterns are occurring will become more clear. Considering the higher expenses and larger difficulties in certain routes than others and noticing the patterns that have emerged in popular routes, observations of the Peruvian and Colombian statistics are indicative of greater flows in the region. Here, it is evident that policy matters and pushes these flows, creating patterns of migration.

Lastly, in considering the region as a whole, two other countries are presented to further support the theory that crisis specific policy is the main driving force in the patterns observed. Guyana shares a border with Venezuela, just as Colombia does. They have similar political stability and the geographic proximity offers similar opportunities. However, Guyana's policy choices have led to a border dispute with Venezuela and less impactful policy solutions specific to the crisis. Thus, Guyana sees extremely low numbers of Venezuelan migrants and has done little to respond to the crisis. Likewise, Ecuador possesses similar opportunities to Peru and is geographically closer to Venezuela, while still staying far from the violence and other push factors. Most migrants pass through Ecuador to arrive in Peru, but many migrants do not stay.

Ecuador does not have strong migration-specific policies, so migrants respond by using it as a springboard into other countries. The examples of Guyana and Ecuador reduce alternate explanations for migration patterns observed, and findings show that policy is the most important factor in determining migration flows.

Migration Patterns of the Venezuelan Crisis

Migration patterns have changed drastically since the crisis began. 2012 UN International Organization for Migration (IOM) statistics show that Argentina and Chile took in the most migrants, with many moving from Paraguay, Bolivia, and Peru (IOM, 2012). Migration patterns were driven more by economic opportunity, as recent reforms in Chile led to “more job opportunities and more money per household” (Borgen Project, 2015). The major migration pattern moved from developing to more developed countries, driven by economic policy. Even in non-crisis migration, there is a relationship between policy and opportunity, as policy shifts the opportunities in these countries. Influential incentives of migration in this situation are job opportunities in thriving economies, with individuals seeking better life trajectories. Both of these incentives are unlocked with policy. However, this pattern shows a difference from a crisis situation, where immediate aid is needed. Migrants also came in far fewer numbers before the crisis. For example, Peru only saw about 140,000 new migrants spanning four countries of origin (IOM, 2012). This indicates that a lack of desperation in which migrants were able to wait for paperwork to be filed and preferred the ability to stay longer than temporarily. Only individuals ready and able to move will do so, as the opportunity cost analysis is different when there is not an element of urgency. The migration patterns have shifted in the wake of the crisis, as needs are more immediate and based on emergency.

In the present, Colombia and Peru have taken in the largest numbers of migrants during the Venezuelan migration crisis. While I have already discussed policies and opportunities that

drive migration, I will compare these observations to statistical analysis, to see if they match with the policy and opportunity preferences established. Two major patterns during crisis migration emerge: staying close to Venezuela or moving far away from it. While that is the general patterns of migration, in this crisis very specific countries are taking in the most migrants and that specificity indicates a greater motivator than geographic location. It shows the importance of the policies themselves and not just the location of the country and opportunities that may create.

First, Venezuela's own emigration population can be examined in scale over time. In 2010, just four years before the crisis began, only 437,280 Venezuelans lived abroad, but in 2018 the number escalated to 2,389,949 (IOM, 2018b). This number spiked as general corruption and economic downturn transitioned into civil distress and total bankruptcy. As the situation became more dire, increasing numbers of people decided to leave. International media such as the Washington Post tell stories of individuals who felt they had no option, often holding out as long as possible (Falola, 2018). Eventually, the lack of essentials and security drove many individuals to reassess the opportunity costs associated with leaving or staying. Many found it better to seek other opportunities.

The 2017 census information documented Venezuela's population at 31.98 million, meaning that about 7.4 percent of the population has left, and the numbers are growing in a trend of increasing migration out of the country (World Bank, 2017). While this is still the minority, the trend shows that surrounding countries can expect to continue to see migrants move. This is especially true as migrants' networks become more widely spread. Having friends or family that have already migrated gives Venezuelans the potential stronger understanding of the opportunities and may increase their interest in moving. It can lower their opportunity cost, as

they may have food or shelter immediately if they are able to reach their network. As the issues that have caused the crisis have not yet been resolved, countries may consider this trend in their policymaking, anticipating patterns will continue. This could work in favor of migrants, or it could be an effort to slow movement into the country, depending on policymaker preferences.

Looking at the IOM's most recent counts of Venezuelan migrants, patterns of migration show a strong preference for Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. Only 310,999 migrants have gone to North America (excluding Mexico) in 2017-2018, with even less going elsewhere (IOM, 2018b). There is a reason migration preferences tend to be localized. Factors of why a migrant may move include less money spent to get to the destination, more familiar culture or language and the location of their network. Considering that wealth and access is highly unequal in Venezuela, many who migrate do not have many resources to do so. If there are policies that are sufficient nearby, it could be expected for migrants to choose to move towards them.

Colombia may be the strongest example of this pattern. It has taken in the most migrants since the beginning of the crisis. In 2018, IOM reported 870,093 cases of migration into Colombia. IOM estimates 45,896 are in irregular status, another 442,462 are in the process of regularization, and 381,735 legally staying there under regular status (IOM, 2018b). The statistics also show that the TMF, is used frequently so the influx of Venezuelans inside the country might be higher: "In the first semester of 2018 was reported around 7,300,000 entries and 6,600,000 exits using this [the TMF] permission (IOM, 2018b). These numbers lead to a claim that migrants will move where they have the best opportunity emergency-based opportunity. In this case, Colombia offers opportunities for immediate freedom from the problems of life in Venezuela. It has relatively higher levels of food, medicine, and jobs

available. Colombia's policy focuses on fulfilling an urgent need, which serves as its most enticing opportunity.

However, convenience may be an oversimplification of the reasons migrants may choose to leave. Migrating in Colombia is only a temporary solution, and eventually, whether they enter under the TMF or the PEP, they will be forced to leave again. Thinking about the effects of policy in this way, consider the nearly 600,000 migrants who move past Colombia or use it as a springboard to go on to Bolivia, Peru, Chile, Ecuador, and Argentina. Ultimately, while opportunities may be a strong indicator of immediate choices, more long-term choices are more dependent on policy and its openness. Colombia experiences large amounts of migrants passing through it, back to Venezuela or on to other countries in the region. In this case, policy can be considered both a reason to come into the country, because it offers such immediate support, but also a deterrent to stay because there are few legal opportunities to do so.

Still, Colombia provides much needed emergency support. Aid at the border and the PEP are two very different ways to get access to some of the services the country provides, and this functions as enticing opportunities. Initially, the needs of the thousands who enter are being met. However, there are not many strong opportunities for the future. Even while there is a need for labor, a migrant may not be the chosen candidate for a job when there is evidence of only being able to stay in the job for a short time. Here, the type of policy matters greatly, and it impacts the flow of migration. It creates outpours of migrants looking for immediate relief, but it also creates flows of migrants into the rest of the continent. Colombia's policy fails to fully satisfy the needs of the individuals who migrate there, contributing to patterns of migration that ripple into other countries.

Due to the lack of long-term needs being met, Peru's migration statistics instead show evidence of a pattern of migration that pulls migrants in another direction. Peru has received approximately 354,421 migrants in 2018. This number alone puts them as the second highest intaking country, about 500,000 less than Colombia, which takes in the highest number. This is a dramatic shift since 2015 where they received only 2,351 (IOM, 2018b). Peru's retention of migrants is an important statistic, as the UN International Office of Migration offers a look at entries, exists and migratory balance in years 2015, 2016 and 2017, tracking the flow of migrants into the country throughout the crisis thus far. Originally Peru's migratory balance was about 3,000 in 2015, meaning that about 10 percent of the migrants entering Peru stayed, seeing a similar pattern as in Colombia, where migrants flow through the country after temporary stay and move on to other destinations. This was indicative of pre-crisis patterns, where migrants tended to move towards the more developed countries in the South of the continent. However, this number escalated to 106,771 in 2017 as the crisis went on and different patterns formed, meaning that approximately 52 percent of the entries that year remained in the country (IOM, 2018b).

This rise in the migratory balance numbers shows frequent and sequential waves of migration. The higher retention rates occurred as Peru ended the policy allowing migrants to use ID cards instead of passports to enter the country. This could mean that as migrant waves enter, using networked information they learn of the access to opportunities without a passport. Thus, it can be tracked by year, how this was important. Additionally, this shows how policy response matters. Not only did August 2018 bring a new requirement for passports but just prior, the was PTP announced in 2017. The PTP offered a new temporary solution, potentially available after other temporary solutions were exhausted in Colombia, and with far better opportunities. While

these changes may have been intended to slow down the flow of migrants, a sharp spike in those staying occurred after. Since this change, many migrants without a passport still come to Peru, but now they primarily apply for asylum at the border, providing a potential explanation to the popularity of that policy.

Additionally, the numbers of asylum seekers have risen internationally. In 2015, the UNHCR reported only 10,208 asylum seeking Venezuelans globally. However, in September of 2018, just one month after the announcement of passport requirements to enter Peru, that number was up to 248,669 asylum-seeking Venezuelans globally (UNHCR, 2018a). Peru holds the largest number of asylum-seekers and thus could be an influential aspect of this global pattern, with Brazil having the next highest number of refugees, at approximately 80,000 fewer asylum-seekers than Peru. This indicates that Peru is taking in almost half of all the world's Venezuelan asylum seekers. Migrants who move to Peru are finding a new reason to stay, perhaps because seeking asylum appears to be a good deal. Yet recall that this process is slow, with only 500 cases of asylum for Venezuelans being granted as of November 2018 (Selee et al 2019, p.10). Most of the “refugee” population is awaiting a decision. This puts them in temporary status until they either receive asylum or are denied. After denial, they may apply for the PTP if they have not yet done so or move on to another country. This may account for the population of migrants who are still choosing to exit.

While the statistics presented show an argument for the importance of policy, there is still opportunity cost calculations occurring for these migrants that dictates just how preferable a policy might be. The patterns observed also tell a story about how one can move and what it means in terms of opportunity. Although policies appear to be a significant cause of migration, an additional factor in the migration patterns involves the importance of how one arrives. This is

valid, as access to various types of transportation varies among wealth and status. Figure 1 below illustrates how physical and political boundaries play a role in migration. It is common to simply walk or drive into Colombia through the main points of entry which were often very close to large cities. This proximity provides opportunity, especially if the entry is temporary and nonrestrictive, such as under the TMF. It is also relatively inexpensive. However, depending on a migrant's location in Venezuela, there could be limited transportation options available. Those fleeing during a crisis must consider the cost of movement. This is especially true if there will be concern that income will be difficult to obtain, or they do not have savings, as many in Venezuela do not.

Figure 1 shows a diagram of how migration is possible in this region. What it specifically establishes is that the informal and relatively quick movement into Colombia from Venezuela is not possible into Peru. Peru's land migration path is popular, and it shows how migrants must travel very far and through other countries and entry points to arrive in Peru. This path cannot be shortened by entering directly southwest from Venezuela into the north of Peru as there are several physical geological barriers such as large rivers and mountains. Thus, travel must be farther and more expensive. While it does not show an air route, this is also possible although a fairly expensive alternative with little opportunity to bring belongings. This method would also require more official documentation and the ability to book a flight, two opportunities not evenly distributed among migrants.

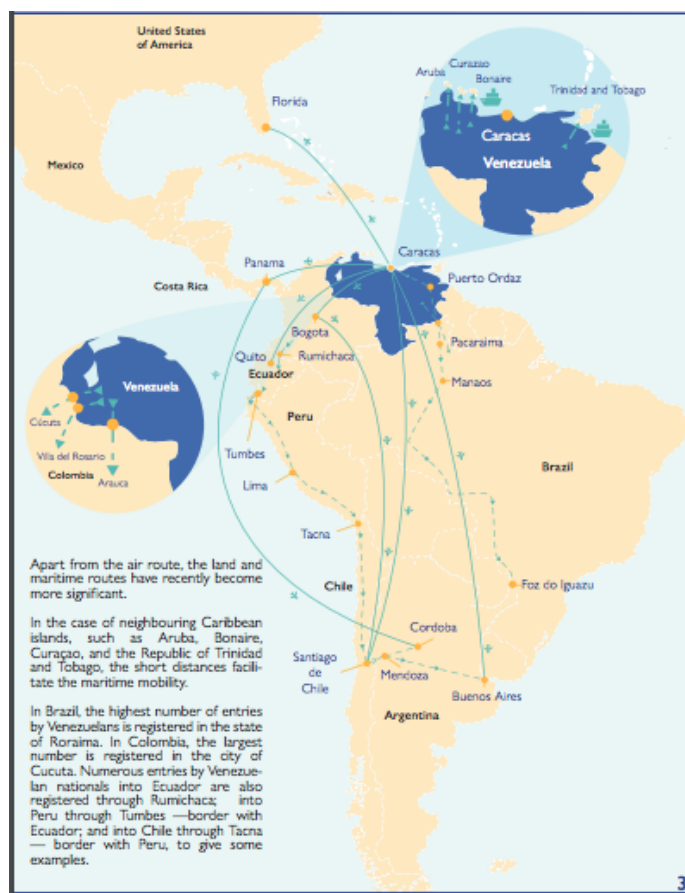


Figure 1(IOM, 2018b)

Notice also that flows tend to connect between large cities, even when they are far apart. This shows a preference to stay in urban centers, where there is more infrastructure, job opportunities and perhaps networked relationships to support migrants. Flows of migrants also tend to occur more on the Western side of the continent, especially on the coastlines of the South Pacific. This may be due to the more rural communities within the heart of the continent and Brazil taking up the majority of the Eastern side. Lack of opportunity in these regions may be a deterrent, and thus migrants stay clustered near Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia.

To add an additional layer to this information, the migrants who are traveling to Peru are more likely to have a university or technical degree than those going to Colombia (Freier and Parent, 2018). This means that migrants moving along these flows not only are more likely to have the means to do so but also when they consider the opportunity versus costs of the journey,

assume that when they arrive, they will have the ability to generate income. This choice is indicated by sacrificing some of their savings for a costly move. Additionally, to apply for asylum in Peru migrants must undergo interviews. Migrants with more professional backgrounds could appear more preferable to asylum officers. Considering who is traveling along the routes shown by Figure 1 and what other aspects of their identity might enable their travels, it is important to note that flows are influenced by privilege.

Figure 1 illustrates how policy unlocks opportunity to create migration flow patterns. Obviously, all migrants want to receive access to a policy that supports their needs. In the case of Peru, asylum offering so much legal protection, work, and permanent stay makes it the most preferable. The large numbers of individuals applying for it suggest this. If migrants without passports do not receive asylum, they can apply for the PTP. However, this is only a short-term solution. As the PTP now offers special status to holders, there is potential for citizenship but that is not guaranteed. This may explain the large push to Peru, as there are policies that could allow for solutions that last the foreseeable future and unlocks more freedom than many other policies in the region.

What the migration patterns discussed above show is that policy is a driving force, even though an opportunity cost analysis must occur based on the policy options of the countries and what is required to arrive there. While opportunity may be very important to migrants and can be why specific demographics can be recognized in these patterns, the policy in place is what unlocks it. The patterns charted in Figure 1 are a physical illustration of the statistics presented. Observed is a tendency to move away from Venezuela, with many immediately fleeing to Colombia and then moving onward into the rest of the continent, especially to Peru.

Guyana and Ecuador: A Lesson in Policy Importance

While the two most important countries in this crisis, Peru and Colombia, have been examined and compared, there are other countries that fit similar profiles yet do not take in as many migrants. While patterns of migration moving into these countries may be expected, policy choices can explain how seemingly similar countries that do not see the same levels of migration. Their crisis specific policy does not create great enough opportunity as their policy response has been weaker and thus less enticing. These countries' policies do not reflect the needs and concerns of migrants and do not offer ways for them to enter quickly or efficiently.

Peru and Colombia have specific policy advantages that make them more preferable, even when their opportunity cost of travel is high, or their policies are restrictive. Guyana and Ecuador might appear to offer opportunities comparable to the top two intaking countries, but ultimately their policy efforts fall short of meeting preferences and patterns of migration reflect this failure. Guyana, in addition to pre-crisis issues with Venezuela, has yet to create a way for migrants to enter without a visa, applied for ahead of time. As they are a neighbor of Venezuela, their greatest opportunities lie in quick, emergency-based migration. In this way, their policy limits access to these opportunities. Ecuador sees many migrants pass through, but because their policies are very difficult to access for migrants, such as requiring proof of economic solvency or association with another Andean Bloc country. Migrants are thus better off moving on to Peru to gain access to their opportunities instead. These countries' unique policies do not create large enough incentives to take in high numbers of migrants.

First, I will examine Guyana as an example similar to Colombia. Guyana shares Venezuela's eastern border and could without close examination, be considered just as convenient for an immediate response as Colombia. However, the patterns that appear show this is not the case. First, it is not considered a member of the Latin American community due to its

cultural and language distinctions. It is the only English-speaking country in South America, formerly a British colony. It is also “one of the poorest countries in South America” and was not independent of Great Britain until the 1960s (Richardson and Menke, 2019). With a primarily rural population that is made of large groups of Indians and Africans, brought there during colonization, it does not have a similar cultural make-up as Venezuela or Colombia. It is also a parliamentary republic, with both a president and prime minister. While it has some level of stability, its poverty and ethnic division do not provide many opportunities for migrants. Its differences in culture, language, and ethnic makeup are deterrents for Venezuelans, who speak primarily Spanish and are more likely to be from European and indigenous descent.

Regardless of the lack of informal opportunities, it remains that if the goal is to escape the violence and corruption in Venezuela, those living on the eastern side of the country could find potentially find relief in Guyana. Yet, its geographic location poses other problems. The area of land between the eastern cities of Venezuela and the closest western cities of Guyana has several physical barriers. There are rivers and difficult terrain that make this region less densely populated with far less infrastructure than on Venezuela’s western side, creating dangerous conditions for crossing into the country.

While these informal opportunities disincentivize migration, there is also policy that further complicates it. Since the 1840s, the Venezuelan Government has believed that approximately 30,000 square miles of Guyana should belong to them (United States Office of the Historian). The ongoing dispute was contested so highly that the United States even became involved, unsuccessfully, as the land stayed in possession of the British government, which at this time had control of Guyana. This has left poor relations between the two countries, with retaliation as recent as 2013. This may explain the policy-based problems for Venezuelans who

want to migrate to Guyana. The government of Guyana has historically condemned actions of the Venezuelan government and their lack of friendly relations means that they have done little to provide refuge for the migrants. Most of the few that have arrived stay in border towns, unable to migrate further into the country. There is very little policy that allows them to legally enter, thus many migrate irregularly and remain undocumented. Migrants who do not hold a “diplomatic/official/service passport” require a visa to enter legally (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Guyana, 2017). This forces the vast majority of migrants to apply for a visa. Applying for a visa must be done prior to arrival and are only available for work, student or 30-day visiting purposes which are not viable options for emergency migration. Guyana has also adopted the 2016 UN Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, meaning that some Venezuelans may be able to seek asylum. However, very little migrants have entered using this policy, indicating a preference for the government to deny access.

Despite sharing a border with Venezuela, Guyana has only taken in 3,900 migrants (King, 2019). This is very low, considering the large numbers of migrants moving to Colombia. My theory argues that this is because Guyana does not currently have any crisis specific policy that allows these migrants to enter. The choice of the policymakers to remain restrictive may be due to voter preferences or perhaps their ongoing conflict with the Government of Venezuela. Their policy response has been instead to increase security along their border, with two new bases added to their military presence in 2018 (Marks, 2018). While there is evidence that the opportunities are also poor, which may inhibit migration to Guyana significantly, the lack of policy that would provide any further opportunity and the political distrust results in Guyana not being a viable option to enter without concern for legal repercussion. Ultimately, the potential benefits of migration are not worth the risks.

In 2018, the IOM was allowed to provide support and worked with the government to offer some resource for Venezuelan migrants already in the country. This led to a potential for new policies to be enacted, which could change this situation, directly impacting migrants. A new policy response could eventually offer enough incentive to face some of the physical and cultural difficulties of Guyana. In that case, an influx consistent with the patterns theorized and observed in Colombia could be observed in Guyana. Little information about this new relationship has been published, thus until then, despite its equal proximity to Venezuela as Colombia, migration patterns reflect that policy is not strong enough to attract migrations to Guyana.

While Guyana is a case similar to Colombia, Ecuador could be seen as another option that has similarities to both Peru and Colombia. Situated between the two countries, it has been a country that has been primarily passed through by migrants from Venezuela on their way to Peru and other southern countries, rather than experiencing many migrants staying. Ecuador is a presidential republic, and it has had its independence since 1822, making it a long-standing democracy. It is primarily Spanish-speaking, with comparable cultural make-up to Venezuela. It also has a growing GDP and recent government reforms to strengthen the government and economy. Overall, its opportunities and stability are evident and appears to be a strong option for migrants. Rather than making the lengthy and expensive journey to Peru, why would migrants not stay in Ecuador? In 2018, it retained only 39,519 migrants, not including irregular migration (IOM, 2018b). However, there is evidence that many are entering and leaving quickly, with great fluctuations in numbers: “Ecuador estimates that some 600,000 Venezuelan citizens have entered the country in 2018 via the Colombian border, most of whom continue on toward Peru.” (Llangari, 2018). Again, policy and its specific stipulations during a crisis is the answer. Ecuador

has migration policies that are not long-term solutions for Venezuelans. The IOM notes that “Through the Migration Statute (2011), Ecuador grants temporary residence if economic solvency is proven. Through the UNASUR Visa (2017), the nationals of the block can have access to a two-year temporary residence” (IOM, 2018b).

The first policy option mentioned by the IOM, the Migration Statute, requires proven economic solvency. As seen in Peru, definitions of those in need can be difficult to prove and with mass amounts of people, easier to deny on the basis of. While the IOM presents the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) Visa as an alternative, this may not be viable. Although Venezuela was an original signatory, events in late 2018 indicate that Venezuela will be excluded in the future and the listing of eligible countries on Ecuador’s public migration information about the visa does not include Venezuela. While there may be some cases where this is granted, this policy does not appear to be the best course of action. Thus, again policy is the main driver for migrants to move elsewhere.

The examples of Guyana and Ecuador show that even when other opportunities, such as geography or stability may exist, the policy itself matters and is influential in migration flows. Even when these opportunities are not very strong, if the risks could be outweighed by the benefits, migration could be a choice many make. Ultimately, it is the specific nature of the policy and how well it can combat the needs of the crisis that have the largest effects on the patterns of migration.

Concluding Thoughts on the Patterns Observed

This section provides a realistic approach to the theory proposed and supports claims made by the policy and opportunity analysis. The statistics serve as evidence that Colombia and Peru are not simply anomalies, but there are measurable and predictable reasons as to why migrants prefer them. While policies may function as a draw for migrants, they are also the

gatekeepers the country has installed. Colombia has chosen migration policy that ultimately forces migrants to keep moving and Peru has chosen migration policy that incentives staying.

However, as it is seen, not all solutions are equally preferable for migrants. Considering the cost of the travel, where it is available, and the demographics of the migrants, preferences may differ. Networked information is especially important here, and we can think about all of the statistics presented in terms of waves. Statistics presented show the importance of 2018's patterns of migration, when there was a strong increase in migration in both Peru and Colombia. In Colombia, waves occurred as migrants moved through the country, rippling into others. Alternatively, Peru saw a sharp rise in its migrant retention when policy shifted in restrictiveness. While the requirement change was widely covered by the news, perhaps there was added incentive to migrate to Peru before the requirement of passports because of networks. Individuals were receiving the news and acted quickly to prevent being excluded, especially from their loved ones. Additionally, the statistics presented show that policy that is specific to the crisis is not just being discussed, but also implemented, and where it is implemented it is the most popular choice. Networks again can prove this, as migrants learn where others have successfully settled, and patterns continue as success continues.

The statistics show that the theoretical framework is correct. Migration is a series of policy responses, and migration responses indicate patterns of migrants moving to where policy allows them the most opportunity specific to their needs in the crisis. Most of all, it's the type of policy- temporary or more permanent that change the flow patterns.

Navigating Forward: Conclusion Discussion

This research established that policy matters during a migration crisis. It investigated through a case study, two different countries with various policy responses, yet they take in the

most migrants during the crisis. However, it is really the specificity that “unlocks” opportunity and drives decision making for both migrants and policymakers. This research also argues that while restrictiveness is important and dictates the unlocking of opportunity, the specific content and ability to respond to the emergency nature of the crisis remains the most influential.

Recalling the original research question, what drives migration flows, the research indicates that actors make short-term choices with the intention of a long-term impact. For policymakers, this is to best use the resources in their country by limiting or not limiting the flows of migration in specific response to the crisis. For migrants, this is to best spend their resources moving where policies unlock the most opportunities. In practice, this tends to be allowing for short-term or long-term stay, and the patterns of migration flow in response. Ultimately, what drives migration is policy during the crisis and its specific rules.

I originally presented three hypotheses to answer the research question. The first posited that countries with restrictive immigration policies will have more and stronger opportunities for migrants during a crisis, and therefore, countries with non-restrictive immigration policies will have fewer and weaker opportunities for migrants. The research presented shows evidence of this pattern occurring. In Peru, seeking asylum is a highly restrictive policy because it is only being granted to a small portion of the applicants. However, the benefits of asylum are strong, with explicit rights, access to some social services, and the knowledge that they will be allowed to stay long-term. Additionally, Peru itself offers informal opportunities for migrants, such as a stronger economy, employment opportunities, and governmental stability.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, Colombia has a less restrictive policy, TMF, that does not provide much opportunity for migrants. The TMF is only a temporary solution, with only short trips allowed into Colombia, thus migrants cannot use any of the social services or

governmental support nor can they work. This also keeps migrants close to the problems in Venezuela and is more of a short-term emergency solution than a long-term one. This association even occurs within countries and can force migrants to make decisions upon arrival. While Peru's asylum policy is restrictive, its PTP policy is less so. The PTP accepts far more migrants but is only a solution for one year and does not give migrant access to much of the support refugees have. While there may be a way to gain citizenship, this is still not a main benefit of this policy. The association also occurs in Colombia, where the PEP is in some ways more restrictive but grants a two-year stay and access to governmental services. However, Colombia's PEP-RAMV does break with this hypothesis in some ways, as the RAMV component does make it less restrictive by allowing irregular migrants to apply. Still, this is a new development and only open to migrants who entered the country at a specific time. It also offers relatively less opportunity than non-crisis migration policy, as it remains a temporary solution in a country with less informal opportunities.

Next, I hypothesized that as policies change, opportunities will as well, which will alter migrants' decisions and the migration flows will reflect this. This hypothesis is substantiated when the policies are compared to the patterns. The Peru case exemplifies this- the patterns that are illustrated by the statistical evidence show that when changes were made to the policies, migrants responded. When Peru announced that passports were required to enter and apply for the PTP policy, the access to opportunities there changed. This is added a level of restriction resulting in their migration retention levels changing. Migrants that once flowed through the country, then chose to stay in increasing numbers. Many also rushed into the country before the law changed. Since then, migration patterns have shifted dramatically, allowing Peru to rise to the country receiving the second highest levels of migration in this crisis.

Lastly, my final hypothesis predicted that the “content” of the policy response is more important than its restrictive nature, as this influences opportunities more directly in a crisis situation. I argued that ultimately, it is the specific content of the policy response created that will dictate flows of migration the most. This was shown in both the political and statistical analyses. Colombia and Peru both have policies in place to deal with the specific needs of the Venezuelan migrants and the unique problems the crisis creates for their country. These policies create the opportunities available and thus influence the largest flows of people. Although both countries have restrictive and nonrestrictive policy options, the nature of these policies is to allow for immediate and emergency responses. Regardless of how many individuals they allow into the country, they affect the patterns of people seeking entrance by offering types of policy that are most relevant to the crisis.

This relationship and the importance of policy is a quality distinctly relevant to migration as a result of a crisis. In a crisis situation, everything is faster, and in a political pressure cooker. The crisis itself changes rapidly, leading to dramatic fluctuations in the number of migrants moving in and out of the region. This means that policies must be more specific in their content as they are responding to many waves of migrants over a short period of time. The type and intention matters, meaning that temporary or long-term solutions can make impactful changes to these patterns. The research presented has illustrated this, as is the case with the PEP as opposed to the PTP. Small differences are influential, and the difference that the PTP may lead to citizenship could be considered the most important. Although very similar policies, the patterns observed showed many moving out of Colombia and into Peru, where policy is better for long-term concerns. Migrants pass through other countries, such as Ecuador as well. But the lack of accommodating policy pushes them onward. In other migration settings, migrants may be more

willing to jump through hoops or deal with more bureaucracy to migrate. They may have more time or resources to plan for their movement more carefully. However, in a migration crisis, when situations can change without notice and intaking governments make large-scale changes in an elapsed amount of time, migrants seek optimal policy.

Keeping in mind these supported claims, this research shows that policy response and the created opportunities of individual countries in a region create migration flow patterns during a crisis. The patterns are results of migrant choices, which are informed by the opportunities they have in the region, that are created by policies crafted by policymakers. This is the cyclical relationship discussed in the theoretical framework. It is not just hypothetical but is illustrated in the patterned way migrants have moved during this crisis.

Other Questions and Future Research

While this research has answered the question presented, other questions still linger. There are other factors not discussed in this research that are influential in the flows of migration. They are functions of both policy and opportunity but were not discussed as individual factors. First, political rhetoric and tension in receiving countries may alter migrants' choices to immigrate. General concerns of safety and acceptance might be produced if rhetoric is against migration. An example of this may be Brazil and its xenophobia. President Bolsonaro became famous during the 2016 election for his inflammatory statements related to minority populations and has expressed opposition to Venezuelan migrants entering. Describing them as poor and suggesting they threaten Brazil; the rhetoric is often prejudice and would be a cause of concern of migrants. The political landscape of the intaking country is important, but it is not just because of the feelings of the population towards migrants. The anti-immigrant sentiment is reflected in the policy, as in Brazil where Bolsonaro pulled out of the UN's Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and has preferred policies that are restrictive. Even though

the political rhetoric is important, the policies will reflect it and further inhibit migration where it is less desired by the citizens. This shows that policymakers as actors may have influential forces upon them, such as bureaucratic constraints or politics. However, their choices reflect the country they create policy for.

Another factor not yet discussed but still influential is the nature of the crisis itself. Some migration crises occur due to events outside of human control. Many migrate in the wake of natural disaster or when resources are no longer viable. Others migrate due to violence and political unrest that is a direct result of human behavior. Patterns of migration in situations such as war or genocide look different than those of earthquakes or draught. The region's safety can affect the size and scope of the migration patterns. Additionally, political instability can spread, as in the case of war, where migrants may not be safer in neighboring countries. Policies will ultimately affect this as well, especially in situations where other countries may choose not to protect the migrants. In the context of this case study, if war eventually breaks out in Venezuela, countries, depending on alliances, may respond with policies that further restrict or open their migration. Policies will unlock the opportunity of safety in this scenario, just as in the current crisis. Future research could address these specific elements of policymaking and consider how they may affect crisis migration.

Lessons Learned and Greater Implications

Applying what has been found in this research to policy-making, there are key lessons to be learned. First, it's important for policymakers to be responsive to changes in the crisis. The political tension in Venezuela is ongoing, and there have been moments where conflict was stronger than others. As time has gone on, sharp rises in migration have occurred, indicating an expectation that things will not improve. As these changes occur and the conflict deepens, Peru and Colombia have been making necessary amendments to handle the increased levels of

migrants. This also means that improvements to the situation, like new leadership, could also drastically affect migrants. I have emphasized policy response as an important part of the relationship, but it is possible for the response to be silence, keeping consistency with pre-migration policy.

This choice suggests another important finding, that policymakers must assess how their country intends to play a role in the crisis. If they want to be supportive of the migrants, policy responses to migration must cater to individual needs of the crisis. If they prefer to not be involved, their pre-existing policy may suffice, or responses might be elicited that restrict immigration further. This may depend on the demographics of migrants being received or the inciting events of the crisis and how the country falls politically.

An additional conclusion of this research is that policymakers must acknowledge the difference in flows between long-term and temporary policy. Again, this may change depending on the length of the crisis and if it is a situation that may be remedied quickly. However, patterns from the Venezuelan Crisis show that migrants often eventually choose countries with strong long-term solutions but will initially migrate most commonly to countries that provide immediate relief, even if their stay must be short term. Assessing the goals of their response, this aspect must be evaluated. There is also a potential application of this research for predicting and understanding the future patterns of migration in this region. As the crisis continues, policymakers can expect an increase in migrants, and armed with an understanding of how their policy directly relates to the patterns, could purposely influence the flows of migration. Specific solutions that help the migrants in their unique situations are preferred. If the goal of the policymakers is to help, then this works in their favor as well. Likewise, if the goal is to block

the migrants from the country, it still works in their favor as they can adjust policy to specifically limit migration from that group.

Lastly, this research shows that receiving countries cannot expect IGOs and nonprofits to handle all the support required for migrants. Many countries in the Andean region affected by the crisis have allowed aid to be present at their borders, especially in the form of medical attention and food. Some countries have considered this a large part of their policy response to the influx of migrants, by employing the help of IGOs such as the UN to control the flows of migrants. While this may be a solution in the short-term, the mass amounts of migrants that come to countries like Peru and Colombia may need more direct governmental support. One way to create policies that elevate and extend this outside help is international coordination and collaboration. In September 2018, Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Colombia, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay met in Ecuador for a summit to better coordinate the necessary aid for migrants. This allows countries to consider aid requested and agreed upon as a policy response, and it can bolster what they have done already. However, the nature of the rules and laws that allow individuals to enter and stay in the countries remain important and driving factors in patterns of migration.

The implications expressed show why this work matters. Policy can radically affect migrant livelihood. This is especially true during a crisis when granting the ability to leave an area of disaster throws a lifeline to the population affected. While policymakers must act to protect their own interests, by creating policies that are preferable for voters, there is a level of responsibility during a crisis that exists. Policy can shut migrants out and keep them in desperate situations. It can also provide an opportunity for a new life within chaos. A policy that works

with migrants and their needs could potentially help end a crisis, especially if an entire region is willing to work together.

This work shows that migration is difficult and is one of the biggest decisions of migrants' lives. It drains their resources, takes a mental and physical toll and in some cases, is a gamble for safety. Understanding flows of migrants helps to find the best ways to help reach compromises for both parties. Ultimately, the patterns tell a story of human choices and how they affect one another.

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