

THE CROSSROADS BETWEEN ACTORS, NORMS, PRACTICES AND INSTITUTIONS: MASS MIGRATION FROM VENEZUELA IN SOUTH AMERICA¹

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Introduction

The political, economic, and social crisis in Venezuela, which took a turn for the worse in 2015, resulted in the mass migration of Venezuelan citizens to several South American states, including Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. The number of Venezuelan migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers between 2015 and 2022 reached 4,992,215 persons (R4Va 2022). By March 2022, Colombia had received 1.84 million Venezuelan migrants and refugees, followed by Peru (1.28 million), Ecuador (513,903), Chile (448,138) and Brazil (325,763) (Dourado & Bittencourt 2022). Consequently, mass migration from Venezuela was classified a crisis by South American governments, leading some countries to implement restrictive policies. With regards to Venezuelan migration, therefore, it is important to understand the broader discursive trends, the norms created and agreed upon within intergovernmental institutions and organisations, and the practices carried out by national governments.

In this context, this paper discusses the linkages between incentives and norms that emerge from institutions such as the South American Conference on Migration (SCM), the Southern Common Market (Mercosur) and the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) and practices adopted by governments during the Venezuelan migration crisis. Through a qualitative approach, observations of practice and discourse, and the critical analysis thereof, the paper discusses governmental discourses within institutions; the

¹ Research funded by the State of São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP) - Process 2019/23811-0

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emergence of collective norms; and the contradictory practices employed as responses to the migration crisis. The main objectives are: to examine the main questions that were addressed within the three institutions and what norms emerged as a result; to understand whether, and if so how, Brazilian, Colombian, Ecuadorian, and Peruvian governments broke those agreed upon norms and turned to more restrictive measures; and to explore possible explanations for such contradictory behaviour. The data were analysed through the factors: characteristics of the organisations/institutions and the weight of their influence; impact of migrants in each country; domestic public opinion on migrants; political context of each country; and justifications for implementing restriction.

The SCM, Mercosur and CAN were chosen because of their regional scope, range of characteristics, and the fact that they all deal explicitly with migration, be that directly or under specific circumstances only. The four countries were chosen because they are members or associates of these institutions and are among those most affected by the Venezuelan crisis. The paper is mostly descriptive; it does not aim to generalise conclusions, rather, to provide initial findings and explanations regarding the crossroads between actors, norms, practices, and institutions related to the specific case of contemporary Venezuelan migration and to these four South American countries.

The article is divided into four parts. The first section presents the conceptual and theoretical framework used to identify the factors employed in the analysis. The second section presents how migration issues were dealt by the selected intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) and intergovernmental institutions (IIs). The third section presents the variation of norms across the four countries. A final section discusses possible explanations for states' behaviour regarding Venezuelan migration. The last section concludes.

International organisations/institutions, ideas, norms, and behaviours

The term 'international organisations' is used to refer to a wide variety of formal structures which can include "multinational corporations, bilateral organizations, multilateral organizations, and international non-governmental organizations" (Dijkzeul and Beigbeder 2003, 7). Both IGOs and IIs are places where ideas and thoughts are shared, and collective decisions can mediate individual behaviours. They involve "a set of rules that stipulate the ways in which states should cooperate and compete with each other [and]

prescribe acceptable forms of state behaviour while proscribe unacceptable one” (Mearsheimer 1994-5, 9). Thus, they create norms, “a standard of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity” (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, 891) which can alter state preferences and therefore state behaviour (Mearsheimer 1994-5). IGOs can also exercise political authority over their subjects according to their ‘areas of action’. Through the performance of these roles, organisations produce policy programs and implement operational and information activities (Rittberger et al 2012).

Yet there are important differences between the two. Intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) are established through joint agreements engendering obligations between governments (UIA 2015) and can be considered a subset of international organisations. Some authors have differentiated between public international organisations, whose members are predominantly states, and private international organisations, whose members are mainly private actors. Moreover, the former can either be intergovernmental or supranational depending on the decision-making system they adopt (Bauer and Knill 2007). IGOs are based on states, and as such are subject to international law, i.e., they possess international rights and duties according to their constitutive treaties and agreements. They consist of bureaucratic branches for performing ongoing tasks and are formally autonomous. Every organisation has its own set of rules for guiding members to achieve its goals. Consequently, IGOs can be seen as “institutional agreements that combine a normative framework, member states and a bureaucracy” (Biermann et al. 2009).

On the other hand, international institution (II) is a term used by sociologists to refer to “systems of norms, rules and decision-making procedures that give rise to social practices, that assign roles to participants in these practices, and that guide interaction among participants” (Biermann et al. 2009, 354). The term institution can be applied to both the formal organisation and/or the behavioural patterns and practices of a given society. Thus, while the term institution usually refers to both immaterial and physical entities, organisation strictly refers to a physical entity. IGOs and IIs diverge in their organisational forms, goals and objectives, activities, number of participants, agendas, and functions; they can also be universal or regional depending on their participants and the scale of their activity. Considering these distinctions, I refer to Mercosur and CAN as IGOs, and to the SCM as an international institution.

Scholars have also recognized different types or categories of norms: while regulative norms order and constrain behaviour, constitutive norms create new actors, interests, or categories of action. As such, there are both intersubjective and evaluative dimensions involved in norms, and what

is appropriate (or not) is defined in conjunction with “the judgments of a community or a society” (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, 891-892). This means that moral assessment is often attached to the observance or non-observance of practices. Norms often limit the range of choices available to members and constrain their actions. In this way, norm conforming behaviour takes place by praising, ignoring, or disapproving of norm-breaking behaviour, and stigmatising certain actions in the process (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998).

While the constructivist approach understands shared ideas, beliefs and discourse surrounding appropriate behaviour to be the driving force behind world structures, order, and stability, the realist approach views ideas and norms and the ways that they shift as a product of power and interests (see Martin and Simmons 2013; Mearsheimer 1994-5). While the former focuses on an international system characterized by concepts of rectitude, rights, obligations, and the sense of state responsibility created by its community, the second assumes that institutions have minimal influence on state behaviour. The realist approach considers that although rules are incorporated into formal IGOs, it is not the organisation itself that compels states to obey the rules, but rather that states choose which rules to obey or not according to their own interests (Mearsheimer 1994-5). By these standards, IGOs need to cultivate legitimacy among those they aspire to govern (members and audiences alike) in order to ensure that relevant actors comply with their rules and decisions (see e.g. Chayes and Chayes 1996; Henkin 1979; Franck 1990; and Hurd 2019).

The term ‘ideas’ has at least two distinct meanings: shared beliefs, or tools/implements. Ideas permit people to construct meaning about themselves and their activities and make certain kinds of action possible. At the same time, by precluding other types of meaning and action, they also constrain behaviour (Laffey and Weldes 1997). Constraints of the system notwithstanding, states still have considerable freedom of action, and make choices to protect national interests (Mearsheimer 1994-5).

Finnemore and Sikkink (1998, 895) highlight a three-stage process: norm emergence, norm acceptance and norm internalization, where each stage “is characterized by different actors, motives, and mechanisms of influence”. Norms take hold when norm entrepreneurs persuade or convince a critical mass of member states as to the appropriateness or desirability of behaviour on certain issues, largely through organisational platforms (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). Norms on migration can therefore be viewed through the prism of a shared perception of humanity, thereby the motivation for compliance (or not) is the recognition that migrants are entitled (or not) to certain rights as human beings (see e.g. Monroe 1996).

Nonetheless, the process of norm emergence, acceptance and internalization involves competing with other norms and perceptions of interest. Ideas have a constitutive role in generating or constructing interests, in defining the problems to policies need to respond to (Weldes 1996). Ideas are meanings that denote, describe, represent, label, depict, or express a given phenomenon (Geertz 1980). Ideas are put into words, and through language are transmitted to (sometimes also translated for) members, who then extract their own interpretation (Lakoff 1995). Governments care about international and domestic legitimacy and thus construct certain categories and representations to promote particular forms of attachment among populations, assigning value (or not) to their activities (Starr 1992).

Political actors are rational and make means-ends calculations about how to achieve their goals. Keeping in mind the rationalist approach and its distinction between interests and ideas, ideas can be considered merely the tools used by policymakers to manipulate audiences, procure given material interests, and mobilize support (Sikkink 1991). Citizens' perceptions and the judgments they make regarding certain issues are central to the survival of the elite. Some situations lead to a turnover, shifting perceptions around specific situations or issues. In this sense, even if governments generally comply with norms, they tend to break them when a better alternative is available, as this allows them to maintain or acquire the support of their country's citizens. This can lead to contradictions between discourse and practice. While one might expect migration norms to be accepted and internationalized, the impact of large inflows of migrants can result in negative measures targeting this group, which contradicts the discourse and norms the state has agreed upon in the scope of IGOs and/or IIs, i.e. the government's non-compliance.

The particular type of idea that interests me here is that of migration, i.e. the distinct beliefs, principles, and attitudes regarding this issue, and how this can lead governments to enact restrictive measures against norms they agreed to as part of international organisations and/or institutions. I use the cases of SCM, CAN and Mercosur to explore the debates that take place and decisions that are made surrounding migration within international institutions. I then look at how Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru behaved in the face of Venezuelan mass migration. My analysis seeks to explain why states adopt restrictive measures contrary to the shared ideas and agreed upon norms. The chosen IGOs/IIs influence the behaviour of their members in different ways. This influence varies across time according to the given context of particular moments. Accordingly, I sought to establish the proportion of influence emanating from either SCM, Mercosur or CAN at those moments when Venezuelan migratory flows were higher. Both the

number of migrants and the economic situation of the receiving country can impact local perceptions of migrants, as they can be made scapegoats for the impact of economic downturns on local inhabitants.

Following this logic, I sought to establish whether there was any correlation between variations in each country's GDP and increasing migration flows with the adoption of restrictive measures. Relatedly, public opinion in the host countries varied significantly, ranging from humanitarianism to cases of discrimination and xenophobia. To address this, I sought public opinion surveys from each of the four countries. The above factors influence political actors and their decisions, which are rational and concerned with domestic legitimacy. Thus, their political survival leads to internal decisions that sometimes contradict the discourse presented to the outside world. To corroborate this, I looked to the political situation of receiving countries at the time when restrictive measures were adopted (where they occurred). Finally, I set out to understand how governments justified the implementation of restrictive measures and legitimized their decisions for domestic and international audiences. What I found was that restrictive measures were carried out in the name of perceived (as opposed to real) security reasons, where security discourse was used for political gains.

Migration issues in regional IGOs and IIs

Three IGOs/IIs were selected for this study. The South American Conference on Migration (SCM), a regional consultative process which specifically addresses the migratory question, and two regional organisations – the Andean Community of Nations (CAN), and the Southern Common Market (Mercosur) – which, although more broadly concerned with integration, have also established institutions to deal with migratory issues.

The South American Conference on Migration (SCM)

The SCM is a regional consultative process created 20 years ago as an intergovernmental space. Its aim is to recommend initiatives and programs to promote and develop policies on international migration, debate ideas and share good practices through informal and non-binding meetings. Annual conferences are held in the territory of a member country that exercises the Pro-Tempore Presidency in which, beyond government officials, representatives of international organisations, civil society and specific

governments participate as observers. Its Technical Secretariat is carried out by the Regional Office for South America of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) based in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The SCM maintains the South American Observatory on Migration, which collects and exchanges relevant and strategic information for the formulation of public policies on migration in South America. Within this framework, the SCM constitutes a space for dialogue and consensus for the construction of regional migration policy (SCM 2022).

In general, the SCM emphasised that human rights should be placed at the centre of migratory policies, regulations, and programmes of member countries, and that the relationship migration-development goes beyond the economic aspect and “must be addressed comprehensively, including its human, social, cultural and environmental perspective” (SCM 2013, 4). The Conference has consistently condemned acts of xenophobia, discrimination, racism, and the criminalisation of irregular migration. Its members have agreed that facilitating migratory procedure is fundamental to the human development of society as a whole, and that there is a need to strengthen existing mechanisms to protect the rights of migrant workers and their families (SCM 2013).

In practical terms, the SCM has approved the ‘Regional Guidelines on Protection and Assistance to Persons Displaced Across Borders and Migrants in Countries Affected by Natural Disasters’ as a framework to facilitate the admission and stay of foreigners from countries affected by disasters of natural origin and the adverse effects of climate change (SCM 2018). SCM’s members have also officially declared: the recognition of the right to migrate in a secure manner, without criminalisation; the need for a multidisciplinary and multilateral treatment of the issue; the relevance of the agreements on migration regularisation; the commitment to prevent, prosecute and sanction migrant smuggling and trafficking; the importance of maintaining regional coherence in the definition and application of migration policies; the rejection of the abuse of authority, especially arbitrary detentions and deportations applied in certain extra-regional countries, as well as unilateral administrative laws and measures that sanction and discriminate against migrants; a commitment to coexistence, social inclusion, citizens’ participation and the insertion of migrant persons, as well as articulating joint actions and common stances towards the protection of migrants, among others (SCM 2010).

Best practices were also shared among members. They included: the Brazilian National Conference on Migration and Refuge, which made it possible for migrants and refugees to participate at all stages (SCM n/d a); the Colombian Migrant Assistance Office, which included an Inter-Institutional

Network of national and local entities to assist and advise migrants returning from abroad (SCM n/d b); Ecuadorian initiatives to promote cross-cutting public policies on human mobility (National Development Plan - *Plan para el Buen Vivir* and the Human Mobility Equality Agenda) (SCM n/d c); and the Peruvian Migration Management Multisectoral Commission, created in 2011 as a multisectoral space for coordinating, evaluating, proposing, prioritizing, and supervising policies and actions related to comprehensive migration management (SCM n/d d).

The Southern Common Market (Mercosur)

Mercosur is an integration process of an intergovernmental nature, whereby decisions must be made by consensus. The bloc is formed of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Venezuela (which is presently suspended) and Bolivia (currently in the process of joining), and includes associated countries (Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guiana, Peru, and Suriname). Once approved, its norms are mandatory and, where necessary, incorporated into national legal systems through the procedures provided by the legislation of each country. Over time and for the purposes of implementing its regional policies, Mercosur has created several permanent bodies, including the Meeting of Ministers of Interior and its Specialized Migration Forum (FEM in its acronym in Portuguese) (Mercosur 2022). The FEM is a space in which the most advanced agreements on migration in the bloc have been negotiated. FEM resolutions are adopted by consensus and sent to the Ministers of the Interior for their consideration and approval and have the potential to become binding instruments.

Some of the main things the FEM has discussed and decided upon are related to: the exchange of information on migration legislation of member States and harmonisation of such legislation; facilitating the movement of people, including preferential channels for citizens and residents of member countries (Mercosur 2002, 2010, 2012, 2017) and the transit with personal identity (Mercosur 2008); cross-border transit; migrant trafficking (Mercosur 2001, 2005); the declaration of principles on migration policy (Mercosur 2004); vulnerable children and adolescents (Mercosur 2006); refugees and stateless persons (Mercosur 2012); among others.

The 20+ years of operation of both the Meeting of Ministers of Interior and FEM can be divided into two phases: the first focused on ensuring circulation within the bloc's territory, relating to border control and tourism; while the second focused on placing migrants as human beings at the centre

of migration policy. In general, discussions and actions have been much more focused on citizens of member states (and associates) than on nationals of third states. Between 2017 and 2021, communiqués about migration were directed at countries outside Mercosur. Moreover, although the approval of new agreements has constituted a valuable driver of change, difficulties in their implementation were quickly identified, as was the absence of follow-up and evaluation actions to monitor compliance (IPPDH 2012).

The Andean Community of Nations (CAN)

The CAN was founded in 1969 and is currently formed of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and associated countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay)³. Its decisions are mandatory and part of the legal system of the Community. In 1999, the Andean Committee of Migration Authorities was created to analyse and recommend decisions regarding migration (CAN 1999).

Several matters of social security (CAN 1978) and labour migration were thus decided upon equally within the block (CAN 2003a; CAN 2004a, b; CAN 2005), including procedures for hiring and protecting workers and their families, equality between the labour rights of immigrant and national workers, and non-discrimination in the workplace. Chronologically, the main achievements on migration issues included: the creation of the Andean Migration Card (TAM) (CAN 1996; CAN 2001e, f); the opportunity for members (and if deemed appropriate, third countries) to establish Border Integration Zones through bilateral mechanisms, aimed at promoting the free movement of people simplifying migration procedures, among other things (CAN 2001a); the creation of Binational Border Attention Centres with harmonized administrative and operational procedures for the efficient and integrated control and management of the entry and exit of people (CAN 2001b); authorization for traveling through the sub-region with national identification documents, without passports or visas, as well as the creation of the Andean Passport (CAN 2001c); and, airport entry windows for nationals and foreigners residing in CAN countries (CAN 2002). Moreover, the organisation established a mechanism for cooperation across consular assistance and protection services for the benefit of any CAN nationals outside their country of origin (CAN 2003b; CAN 2013).

In 2021, the Andean Migratory Statue was approved. The Statue regulated the movement and residence of Andean citizens and their families

³ Venezuela was a member and withdrew in 2011, as was Chile, which withdrew in 1976.

as well as non-community permanent residents within the CAN countries. It incorporated the aforementioned achievements and reinforced others, including: the non-discrimination for reasons of nationality, race, sex, creed, social status or any other reason; the prohibition of criminalisation of migration; national support for those who have obtained temporary or permanent residence; procedures for temporary residence and family reunification; and several other rights (education, suffrage, transfer of remittances). However, the Statue recognised that the rights prescribed therein could be limited by the members due to the need to preserve the life and health of people, public order, and essential interests of national security. Moreover, rights relating to mobility are subject to the internal regulations of each Member (CAN 2021).

Migration issues and the flow from solidarity to restrictions: four cases

To explore the debates at the centre of this study, I chose Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, since they are part of the three aforementioned IGOs/IIIs (as members or associates), in addition to the fact that this study forms part of a broader research project relating to Venezuelan migration in these countries.

Brazil

Venezuelan migration to Brazil began increasing in 2015 and reached its peak in 2018. It particularly impacted the northern state of Roraima, especially the border town of Pacaraima. In response, the Brazilian government deployed the military-led operations Welcome (*Operação Acolhida*) and Control (*Operação Controle*) and, to a certain extent, militarised the border with Venezuela.

In March 2017, the Normative Resolution n. 126 established a temporary residence visa for a period of up to two years, aiming to promote the migratory regularisation of Venezuelans. In addition, in 2017, Brazil published a new migration law, which presented an advance in normative standards and proved to be more protective of migrants than its predecessor. The law included the decriminalisation of migrants, the abolishment of prisons for deportation and expulsion purposes, and the guarantee of temporary humanitarian welcome visas (Brazil 2017).

In 2018, nearly 128,000 Venezuelans entered the country. Brazilian

authorities proudly reported several initiatives to deal with the crisis including vaccination, medical care, shelters, reception centres and measures to transfer those migrants who wished to go on to other regions of the country (Brazil 2018e). However, after a visit by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to Brazil, the precarious reality of the reception in Roraima at the time was exposed. The Commission raised cases of rights violations, hate speech, episodes of xenophobia, and found several risk factors involving migrant homelessness, in particular (OEA 2018).

In February 2018, the Provisional Measure No. 820 provided emergency measures to address people in situations of vulnerability as the result of humanitarian crisis and detailed priority areas of action such as social protection, health care, and human rights, among others (Brazil 2018d, converted into the Law 13.684 of 21 June 2018). The measures included public security and the strengthening of border control as well as support for the internalisation of the mentioned people. The Interministerial Ordinance n. 9 of March 2018 provided grantees for a residence permit which benefited Venezuelan immigrants (Brazil 2019).

Federal decrees recognized the situation of vulnerability resulting from the migratory flow to the State of Roraima and structured a joint management body for the crisis. As a result of the decrees, the Ministry of Defence established parameters and responsibilities for the execution of Operations Welcome and Control (Brazil 2018a, b). Presidential Decree n. 9,483 gave police power to the Armed Forces and legitimised the use of force, if necessary, initially limited to the border town of Pacaraima because of the violent onslaught perpetrated by Brazilians against the encampment of Venezuelans, and later was expanded to the state capital Boa Vista (Brazil 2018f).

In June 2019, Brazil formally recognised the severity of human rights violations in Venezuela through a Refugee Law incorporating the Cartagena Declaration (Brazil 1997). This provided a more efficient means for granting refugee status and asylum to nationals from Venezuela through a simplified procedure (UNHCR 2019). In 2021, the simplified procedure was extended until the end of 2022, and between June 2019 and June 2021 more than 50,000 asylum applications were recognized as a result (Correio Braziliense 2021).

In March 2020, the federal government restricted the entry of Venezuelan immigrants into Brazil because of the advance of coronavirus, and the border was closed on the grounds of preventing and reducing risks in emergencies that could affect people's lives (based on the National Policy on Public Security and Social Defence) (Brazil 2018c), the potential impacts on

the national health system, and the potential spread of the coronavirus (Brazil 2020).

Colombia

Colombia experienced a turning point in the nature of mobility. From its traditional concern with the departure of its own nationals due to internal conflict ongoing for several decades, the country had to deal with the reverse, such as the flow of migrants incoming from Venezuela.

Decree 1239 (2003) created the Intersectoral National Commission on Migration which was aimed at coordinating and guiding the implementation of migratory policy (Colombia 2003). Law 1465 of 2011 created the National Migration System for accompanying the government in the preparation, execution, development, and evaluation of the Integral Migration Policy (Colombia 2011b). A Special Administrative Unit (*Migración Colombia*) was created to perform the functions of surveillance and control of migration (Colombia 2011a).

Although Venezuela departed from the Andean Community in 2011, the free movement of nationals residing in border cities was maintained between Colombian and Venezuelan. Terms and procedures for the authorization of entry and stay, as well as temporary residence permits, were laid out in 2012 (Colombia 2012, 2021b). On August 19, 2015, Venezuela ordered the closure of its borders with Colombia because of political disagreements between governments and deported 2,200 Colombians. A year later, Colombia created the Border Transit Immigration Card (*Tarjeta Migratoria de Tránsito Fronterizo*) to allow the entry and transit of these people within the border areas between the two countries, while Venezuela reopened the border entirely. Law 1873 of 2017 established that, given the social emergency on the border with Venezuela, it would design a humanitarian care policy and allocate resources to implement it (Colombia 2017a). In 2019, Law 1997 issued a special and exceptional regime for Venezuelans to acquire Colombian nationality (Colombia 2019).

Notwithstanding, the country put into place certain measures that restricted Venezuelans' entry. The government created the *Permiso Especial de Permanencia* (PEP) for Venezuelans who entered the country through migratory control, qualified with a passport and without judicial records, as well as regulating expulsion or deportation measures (Colombia 2017b), and established the *Permiso de Ingreso y Permanencia de Tránsito Temporal* (PIP-TT) for migrants in transit (Colombia 2018b). In 2018, President Santos

announced that the Border Transit Immigration Card would no longer be issued, as the reality had changed, and only those who had a passport or already had an immigration card would be able to enter Colombia. Moreover, all those who had entered national territory and did not have this document would be considered illegal, running the risk of being deported when identified. In the same year, Decree 542 determined measures for an Administrative Registry of Venezuelan Migrants (RAMV) aimed at designing a policy of humanitarian attention and obtaining more information about the migratory phenomenon of Venezuelans in the country (Colombia 2018a).

In March 2020, the government determined the closure of the Colombian border with Venezuela as a measure to contain the spread of the new coronavirus (Colombia 2020). In 2021, the Temporal Statute of Protection for Migrants was established. It was composed of the Single Registry of Venezuelan Migrants and the Temporary Protection Permit intended for the regularization of Venezuelan migrants (Colombia 2021a).

Ecuador

Ecuador was a pioneer in defending universal citizenship. Its Constitution of 2008 (modified in 2021) states that no human being will be considered illegal because of their migratory status (Ecuador 2008). Ecuadorian legislation and documents include: the “Framework Agreement for Inter-institutional Cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion”; the “Integral Plan for the Care and Protection of Rights in the context of the increase in the Venezuelan migratory flow in Ecuador”; and, most importantly, the Organic Law of Mobility (2017), which defined procedures for the reception and regularization of immigrants in the country. The Law’s guiding principles are: the prohibition of criminalisation, equality before the law and non-discrimination, granting the most favourable interpretation to the person in mobility, guarantees for children and adolescents, and *non-refoulement* (Ecuador 2017). In addition, the country was prominent regarding the Quito Declaration on Human Mobility of Venezuelan Citizens in the Region and the Plan of Action of the Quito Process on Human Mobility of Venezuelan Nationals in the Region, which both aimed to ensure the proper management of migratory flows with a focus on the human rights of foreigners in contexts of human mobility.

However, after the intensification of the flows of Venezuelans and the election of President Lenín Moreno, the country adopted more restrictive

measures for the reception of migrants, mainly from Venezuela. In March 2018, the National Committee for Integral Border Security was created on the grounds of increased insecurity on the northern border and risks associated with drug and arms trafficking, among others, followed by the militarization of the border with Colombia (Ecuador 2018a). A series of ministerial resolutions were published from August 2018 onwards, establishing stricter requirements for this group to enter the territory. As an example, Resolution 152 declared an emergency in the border areas of Carchi, El Oro and Pichincha, where a high number of Venezuelan migrants circulated, allowing immediate actions to mitigate the migratory flow in the region (Ecuador 2018c). Lenín Moreno argued that it was based on the security of the migrants themselves (UOL 2018).

Resolution No. 242 determined the need for Venezuelans to present a passport to enter the country. The resolution was changed in the same month to allow Venezuelans to enter with just their identity card, however, they were then required to present a certificate validating it, issued by a regional or international organisation recognized by Ecuador or Venezuela (Ecuador 2018b). Furthermore, due to crimes committed by Venezuelans, especially a femicide in the city of Ibarra in 2019, the country registered several protests and cases of xenophobia (Escaracas 2019), with a disproportionate response being unleashed by the country's institutions. The passage of pedestrians on the Rumichaca International Bridge was restricted, and the President claimed that "we have opened the doors, but we will not sacrifice the security of anyone" (Moreno.... 2019), announcing the requirement of a criminal record certificate for Venezuelans (Ecuador 2019a). The government used the case to justify the requirement for a visa for Venezuelans at the cost of 50 dollars (an almost impossible amount for the migrants), contrary to the Urban Mobility Law enacted in 2017 (Ecuador 2017). The following month, the Interministerial Agreement n. 002 repealed this requirement for some migrants (Ecuador 2019b) and Resolution 826 granted amnesty to Venezuelans who were irregular and granted temporary residence visas for humanitarian reasons but validated the visa requirement for Venezuelans to enter the country (Ecuador 2019c). These changes in immigration regulations worried the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) (OEA 2019).

In mid-March 2020, a decree proclaiming a State of Exception was published because of the pandemic, and a protocol for the operation of border centres was established, allowing the entry only of Ecuadorians and foreign residents (Ecuador 2020).

Peru

There have been fundamental changes to Peruvian immigration legislation, which was chronologically based on three primordial statutes: the 1991 Immigration Law (Peru 1991), which focused on security and came under scrutiny of institutions such as the *Comisión Andina de Juristas*, and the *Comité de Protección de los Derechos* and the *Defensoría del Pueblo* (Blouin 2021, 146); the 2015 Immigration Law (Peru 2015); and the Immigration Law, which was enacted in 2017 and amended in 2021 (Peru 2021), and remains in force until today. Meanwhile, in 2012, Legislative Decree 1.130 created the National Migration Superintendence (named *Migraciones*) within the Ministry of Interior to regulate services and policies on migration matters, which involved the creation of a system of sanctions and control elements (Barbieri 2020, 227).

Briefly, Legislative Decree n. 1.350 followed a human rights-based approach, recognizing migration as a complex phenomenon and expressing “the state’s commitment to providing comprehensive and multidimensional responses” (Said and Jara 2020, 5). Having been adopted within the framework of the intensification of Venezuelans’ entry, it presented certain advances in terms of human rights compared to previous legislation. However, despite its humanitarian appearance, it has not supplanted the idea of migratory control and governability (Blouin 2021) since it provides for sanctions such as impediments to entry and expulsions for reasons of national security, public health, and public order (Peru 2017). In this sense, the National Police supporting *Migraciones* can carry out expulsions and retentions which illustrates the omnipresent control of migrants (Blouin 2021).

Although Peru is a signatory to the Cartagena Declaration (1984), and thus recognizes its definition of refugee, Asylum Law (No. 27.840/2002) and Refuge Law (No. 27.891/2002) enacted alternative instruments to regulate the entry and stay in the national territory, which oscillated between opening and closing restrictions according to the government in place (Jubilut and Fernandes 2020). For example, the government of Pedro Kuczynski (2016-2018) established the Temporary Residence Permit (PTP), while Supreme Decree N° 007 (2017) added a new migratory quality of ‘Special Residence’ (Peru 2017). For about a year, the PTP was the most recurrent form of regularization, permanence, and access to rights and work for Venezuelans in Peru. The PTP was considered by State agents and international organisations as an unprecedented mechanism of solidarity with Venezuelan migrants in the region.

However, Blouin noticed too much emphasis placed on the issue of

regularisation of migrants and how this, to a certain extent, contradicted its humanitarian scope because of the temporality (one year) and exceptionality of the mechanism that translated the desire to frame the “flow in a convenient perspective, in this case of short duration, for the country” (Blouin 2021, 151-152, my translation). Moreover, during the interim government of Martín Vizcarra (2018-2020), this permission was terminated when the migration policy gradually moved towards a more restrictive situation based on a discourse of securitisation (Said and Jara 2020). A passport became required “to guarantee security and enable the police to properly record, with photographs and fingerprints” (G1 2018, my translation), a humanitarian visa was stipulated as *sine qua non* requirement for entry, and the asylum policy took on an even more restrictive form (see Blouin 2021).

In this context, the borders were closed to Venezuelan citizens and policing at migration control posts was increased, as well as the mandatory passport, visa and ‘clean record’ for entry and stay of foreigners in the country. The humanitarian visa could only be issued in a few consular offices outside Peru and included a series of requirements and documentation, functioning as a barrier to contain the entry of Venezuelans. The focus was on surveillance, regularisation, and control of who enters and leaves (Blouin 2021). Thus, while the use of regional transit and migration mechanisms (e.g. the Andean Migration Card and the Mercosur Visa, which was suspended for Venezuelans in 2017) demonstrate international cooperation to respond to the emergency of the flow, and while the Migration Law is supposedly informed by human rights, they contradict the national regularisation, control and security mechanisms of Peru (see Barbieri 2020; Blouin 2021). Furthermore, during the electoral process of 2021, migration was among the central issues raised. For example, Pedro Castillo (then candidate for the Presidency) stated that “it is necessary to order the house, it is necessary to order the country. Here we ratify ourselves: assuming the mandate, we will issue a supreme decree so that people who have come from another country and fail to respect our homeland, will be given 72 hours to return to their country” (Pedro 2021).

IGOs/IIs, discourses, norms, and the contradictory practices on migration

The descriptive sections above indicate that all three IGOs/IIs presented discussions and decisions surrounding the issue of migration. The discourse of governments within these IOs/IIs and in their countries was generally focused on solidarity with migrants. However, in certain situations, especially

with the large increase of Venezuelans' entry, practices have indicated the adoption of restrictive measures, the closure of borders, and even the use of the military to host and control actions.

States ranged from adopting policies and mechanisms that facilitated migration to a series of measures hindering and restricting Venezuelan migration. An initial explanation for these attitudes might be found in the characteristics of the IGOs/IIs themselves, as well as the weight of their respective influence on members' decisions. The SCM is a discussion forum; it does not have the force of mandatory compliance, unlike Mercosur and CAN. Migration rules have the potential to be accepted even when they cause constraints, while influences and incentives relating this issue, both international and domestic, have even allowed changes in the approach – e.g. Mercosur, which changed from a focus on intra-bloc circulation to a more comprehensive and humanitarian approach.

SCM, due to its scope, worked with ideas and beliefs that would lead to a more humanitarian posture of the policies, regulations, and programs of South American countries in general. It sought through good practices to encourage their adoption within the scope of the Conference. Within the scope of Mercosur and CAN, decisions were much more focused on the interior of the bloc and on the common borders of its members, also implying migratory control. However, they sought to guarantee the right of mobility, the protection of migrants in these movements, and the guarantee of rights in the host countries.

Mercosur has gone through numerous phases of advances and setbacks in its 30 years of existence. If during the 2000s, Mercosur strengthened its political, social and citizen agenda, in the following decade the bloc was emptied due to the advance of right-wing governments, especially with ideological disagreements between the presidents of Brazil and Argentina from 2019. This became clear with the abrupt withdrawal of the Brazilian president from the virtual meeting of the bloc's thirty-year celebration, in March 2021 (Gavião 2021). With regards to CAN, over the last decade, the contestation of neoliberal policies by governments, the development of alternative initiatives with distinct ideological characteristics (e.g. ALBA), the functional and societal discredit of Andean integration, the lack of leadership, the low decision-making role of the Andean supranational institutions, and the prioritization of national interests, among other factors, decreed the disruption of Andean integration (Bressan and Luciano 2018). Consequently, during the Venezuelan migration crisis, both Mercosur and CAN suffered blows to their degree of legitimacy, especially relating to their social agenda. As a result, the weight of their respective influence on state decisions in the

migratory field can be considered low.

A second factor in the shaping of state policy might be the impact of migrants. While in Brazil the ratio between the country's population and the number of Venezuelans entering was 0.11%, in Colombia it was 3.2%, in Ecuador it was 2.18% and in Peru 2.6%. Consequently, while the impact was absented in Brazil, the ratio in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru potentially impacted country conditions and public opinion regarding Venezuelan migration. The impact could also been related to economic conditions. In Brazil, Venezuelan migration to Brazil began to grow in 2015 and reached its peak in 2018, with a decrease in numbers beginning in 2019. During the same period, the economy (measured in relation to GDP) grew from -3.546% in 2015, to 1.784% (2018) and 1.41% (2019), falling to -4.059% in 2020 because of the COVID 19 pandemic (World Bank 2022). The operations Control and Welcome were deployed in 2017 when GDP was increasing. It can therefore be inferred (dependent on supporting evidence in the continuation of this research) that, despite its scale, Venezuelan flow did not affect the country. As a result, the topic did not appear as part of the political debate of Brazil's 2018 electoral process. At most, the consequences of the migratory movement were limited to the state of Roraima, in the north of the country. The government's justifications for deploying the military were much more to protect migrants than to control or restrict their movement. In fact, it was the lack of capacity of Roraima's state to deal with the influx of Venezuelans that led its authorities to ask for federal support.

In the case of Colombia, Venezuelan migration began to grow in 2014 and reached its peak in 2018, entering decline as of 2020. The country's GDP varied from 4.49% in 2014, to 2.95% (2015), 2.08% (2016) and 1.35% (2017), rising again to 2.56% in 2018 and 3.28% in 2019, and falling to -6.79% in 2020. In the years with the greatest flow of Venezuelans (2018 to 2019), GDP was on the rise. It was only in 2020 that it fell sharply, following the world trend due to the COVID-19 pandemic (World Bank, 2022). Nonetheless, certain restrictive measures came into effect in 2017-2018 when GDP was rising. The official discourse justifying restrictions was related to public security, although there is no evidence that the crimes committed by Venezuelan migrants would justify the measures.

In Ecuador, the number of Venezuelan migrants has grown considerably since the beginning of the crisis, rising from 102,910 arrivals in 2016 to 285,634 in 2017, reaching its highest number in 2018, when 955,488 Venezuelans crossed the borders (Ecuador 2022). Between 2017 and 2018, about 1,200,000 Venezuelans entered the country, excluding informal border crossings. The migratory flow provoked a policy reaction and, from 2017

onwards Ecuador's immigration legislation became more restrictive (Ecuador 2017). The country's GDP grew from -1.22% (2016) to 2.36% (2017). In the years with the highest Venezuelan influx, GDP fell to 1.78% (2018) and to 0.01% (2019). The accentuated outflow of migrants in 2020 happened during the same year that the GDP decreased -7.75% (World Bank 2022). During the greatest influx of migrants, the country saw an economic downturn. These factors coincided with more restrictive migration measures being adopted by the government.

In Peru, a country whose inflow of Venezuelan migrants was practically negligible prior to 2015, approximately 223,000 Venezuelan migrants entered through the country's borders in 2017, and 815,000 in 2018 (Migraciones 2020). From 2018 onwards, migration policy began to take a more restrictive approach. This shift in the character of migration policy was the result of changes in domestic public opinion when the number of Venezuelan migrants residing in the country increased (Said and Jara 2020). Entries fell by half in 2019 (440,925). Peru's GDP grew from 2.51% (2017) to 3.96% (2018), falling to 2.20% in 2019 and -11.14% in 2020 (World Bank 2022). Thus, during the peak of Venezuelan entries into the country, GDP was increasing considerably, the same year when more restrictive measures began to be adopted.

In Brazil there is no perceived relationship between the arrival of migrants, economic growth variation, and the need for restrictive measures relating to security. In Colombia, in the 2015 and 2021 period, the peak of Venezuelan migrant flows occurred during the same year that the economy was on the rise. In this way, this initial assessment has not allowed us to establish a relationship between the arrival of Venezuelan migrants, economic variation, nor regarding security reasons. In Ecuador, there is a potential correlation between the arrival of Venezuelan migrants and economic variation in the country, although there is no evidence that security concerns acted a central motivation for the restrictive measures adopted by the government. In Peru, there is no possible correlation between the increase of Venezuelan migration, economic variation, and restrictive measures adopted by the country. There is also no evidence of real security reasons for restrictive measures.

Domestic public opinion regarding Venezuelan migration can also influence governments to enact restrictive measures. In Brazil, a 2018 study by the Fundação Getúlio Vargas (FGV) analysing news-related blog posts, news sites, and Twitter publications indicated that immigration was far more likely to be used to criticize left-wing ideology than it was to discuss the issue of migration itself. While part of those engaged in debates were against the unrestricted entry of Venezuelans, others were in favour of welcoming them.

The 2017 Migration Law was the main point of contention for actors and groups critical of the reception of immigrants. In this context, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Aloysio Nunes was criticized for “opening doors” to Venezuelans, “referring to a socialist policy of welcoming foreigners” and privileging immigrants to the detriment of Brazilian citizens who face “various problems of access to public services and will suffer from the competition of Venezuelans for employment and social benefits” (Calil and Barboza, 2018, my translation).

In Colombia, surveys on the perception of migration carried out by the Venezuela Migration Project have shown that 62% believed that Venezuelan migration led to increasing poverty levels, while only 34% believed that they represented an opportunity for development. 72% also considered that migratory irregularity implies greater crime or citizen insecurity, and between 59% and 61% perceived that Venezuelans generated no/low confidence (Proyecto... 2021). According to the Americas Barometer survey, 54% of Ecuadorian respondents expressed the belief that migrants worsened crime in the country, where 71% indicated migrants in general and 56% indicated Venezuelan migrants as a factor for the worsening of crime. 62% of Ecuadorians in the Sierra believed that Venezuelan migrants contributed to increasing crime, compared to 50% of coastal people (World Bank 2020). In Peru, 70% considered that Venezuelan displacement has a negative impact, emphasizing the increase in citizen insecurity and crime (63%) and a higher level of informality and fewer jobs in the country (39%). In contrast, 8% considered that the arrival of Venezuelan refugees and migrants had a positive impact (ACNUR 2021). Thus, except for Brazil, where the migration issue was associated with the political-ideological debate, negative public opinion towards Venezuelans was largely associated with public security issues (criminality).

Political contexts can also influence attitudes towards Venezuelan migration. In August 2017, when Venezuela was in the middle of a wave of protests and acts of repression from Maduro’s regime, and the outflow of Venezuelans from the country has increased drastically, the Trump administration endorsed the opposition leader Juan Guaidó and attempted to support the protesters through an aggressive policy of sanctions (Wilson 2019; Jraissati and von Laer 2021). That same month, Mercosur suspended Venezuela from the bloc based on the Ushuaia Protocol on Democratic Commitment (Mercosul 2017).

However, the stance of the governments of the countries studied in this article varied, as did the possible relationship between them and the policies targeted at Venezuelan migrants. In Brazil, since the 2016 Temer

government, the ideological divide between the right and the left has polarised the political debate on immigration, which is used as a way of criticising left-wing ideology more broadly. Notwithstanding the turn to the right with the Bolsonaro government, who adopted strong critical stance and isolation of Maduro, there were no restrictions applied to migrants, Operation Welcome was maintained, and regulations allowed for easier recognition of refugee status for Venezuelans.

In Colombia, the largest flow of Venezuelans coincided with the second term of Juan Manuel Santos (2014-2018) and the presidency of Iván Duque (2018-2022). The former was a member of the *Partido de la Unidad Nacional*, which proposed a third way composed of both liberals and conservatives. The latter, from the *Centro Democrático* party, founded by Alvaro Uribe and which calls itself centre, although some members consider it to be right-wing (La Derecha 2014; Presidente... 2013). During this particular period of Venezuelan migrant inflow, speeches highlighted the need for solidarity and a fraternal attitude towards immigrants. When Ecuador started to require a humanitarian visa for Venezuelan immigrants, in 2019, and the return to Colombia in the absence of the requirements to enter the country, the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs criticised this attitude.

However, the governments hardened their speeches. President Iván Duque declared that those considered illegal could not enter Colombian territory and, if they did, they would be deported; that any criminal or illegal conduct on the part of Venezuelans would not be tolerated and result in appropriate criminal and immigration sanctions, including immediate deportation. Moreover, the Special Migration Group was created with clear security intentions regarding respect for order and public space, and the control of prostitution, smuggling, and illegal migration, especially to take people to courts (Colombia 2018c). In the context of the pandemic, official speeches indicated concerns surrounding irregular migrants, including threats to make vaccines against Covid-19 unavailable to them (Nexo Journal 2020). Relations with Maduro remained conflictive during the governments of Santos and Duque regardless of political ideologies, consequently it can be said that the restrictions applied to Venezuelans were much more linked to irregular migrants and the pressure to regularise the situation of those who were in the country than to the conflictive relations between the two governments or external pressure against Maduro.

In Ecuador, Lenín Moreno had been Rafael Correa's vice-president and came to power with a discourse of continuity with the previous government. However, he broke with '*correrismo*' and invested in unpopular neoliberal reforms that resulted in intense protests across the country. As

regards to Venezuela, after a greater proximity between the governments of the two countries during Rafael Correa's government (Pincay 2018), relations between Ecuador and Venezuela deteriorated with the Moreno government, especially in October 2018 (González 2019), even with the president leading Alianza País, the same party as his predecessor and considered leftist. Moreno administration's initial approval rating of 66% reached just 4.8% by the end of his term (Rueda 2021). This may provide some explanation as to the country's change of discourse. Initially based on solidarity and on guaranteeing human rights, the country's policy has shifted to prioritizing the security of Ecuadorians and using the association between Venezuelans and crime as a way of justifying the adoption of restrictive measures. Thus, changes in the legislation for the reception of Venezuelans and securitization measures adopted by the government can be linked to both, conflictive relations with Venezuelan regime and domestic politics of Ecuador.

In Peru, the political situation in the period of greatest Venezuelan inflows was likely to have influenced the restrictive measures adopted. Pedro Kuczynski who was elected in 2016, resigned in 2018 (Ya es... 2018). Although elected by the centre-right party *Peruanos por el Kambio*, at first, Kuczynski's approach was to advocate for guaranteeing the rights of Venezuelan migrants. But this changed when the number of Venezuelans entering the country increased and Congress advanced a debate regarding his impeachment. During the Venezuelan crisis of 2017, Kuczynski withdrew his ambassador to Caracas and condemned Maduro regime (Peru... 2021). Moreover, during his government the Lima Group was created as political articulation forum composed of 14 American countries in order to monitor the situation in Venezuela (Rossi 2019). Vice President Martín Vizcarra then took over the presidency and governed as an independent until deposed by Congress in November 2020 (BBC 2020).

When in the presidency, Vizcarra's stance emphasised the expulsion of 140 Venezuelans stating that "we are not going to allow people who bring delinquency to continue [...] If necessary, 500, 800, 1,000, 2,000 of those who commit these type of crimes will be expelled to their home country [...] we want to ensure an orderly and safe migration [...] through better control of the entry of citizens of Venezuela" (Perú... 2019, my translation), and added that "we are now going to be more rigorous in controlling the people who enter. And those who have entered illegally will be expelled" (Latina Noticias 2019, my translation). President Vizcarra's tightening of the requirements for entry into the country can be seen as an attempt to gain public support and legitimise his government. Thus, changes in the posture regarding Venezuelan migrants can be linked to both, conflictive relations with Venezuelan regime

and domestic politics of Peru. When Pedro Castillo of the left-wing *Peru Libre* party took the power in July 2021, diplomatic relations with Venezuela were re-established (Peru..., 2021).

Finally, governments’ justifications for implementing restrictions and (in some instances) deploying the military were often related to security reasons. In Brazil, federal forces were sent to Roraima in 2018 in the name of guaranteeing the safety of migrants following incidents of violence against them (Mendonça 2018). Meanwhile, the establishment of Operation Control aimed to curb cross-border crimes and prevent the entry of migrants through clandestine routes. In Colombia, the measures were justified by the necessity to control migratory movement in favour of security. In Ecuador, the creation of the National Committee for Integral Border Security and the militarization of the northern border with Colombia were justified by the increase of insecurity on the northern border and the risks associated with drug and arms trafficking, among others (Ecuador 2018a). In Peru, the restrictions imposed took place within a discursive framework that associated migrants with an increase in crime.

The graph below summarises this explanation.

Figure 1

	Binding effect	Weight of influence during migration crisis		
SCM	No	Low		
Mercosur	Yes	Low		
CAN	Yes	Low		
↓				
	Brazil	Colombia	Ecuador	Peru
Effect of local vs migrant population ratio	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Economic conditions	No	No	Yes	No
Negative public opinion	Partial	Yes	Yes	Yes
Political context	Ideological division; No concerns on migration; Measures facilitating migrants	Solidarity	Solidarity	Solidarity
		↓	↓	↓
		Political interest	Political interest	Political crisis
		↓	↓	↓
		Restrictions	Restrictions	Restrictions
Justification for restrictions	No	Security	Security	Security

Source: The author (2023)

Conclusions

This article has sought to analyse how the migration issue has been dealt within three South American IGOs/IIs through practices surrounding Venezuelan migration to Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. The aim of the article was to examine contradictory practices and discrepancies between, on the one hand, the discussions, and decisions of these IGOs/IIs, and on the other hand, the measures adopted by states during the Venezuelan migration crisis of 2015. By exploring selected factors, we sought to explain this contradictory behaviour.

The observations led to the following conclusions. The IGOs/IIs in question sought to encourage and to create norms to facilitate migratory movements and guarantee the rights of migrants, in a broader sense in the case of the SMC, and in a more intra-bloc sense in the cases of Mercosur and CAN. However, during the Venezuelan crisis, both Mercosur and CAN suffered from an emptying of the social agenda which may have led to a low ability to influence its members on migration issues. Except for Ecuador, which experienced a downturn in the economy during the peak of Venezuelan inflows, it was not possible to establish a correlation between a drop in GDP and the restrictive measures implemented domestically. While the relative impact of migrant inflows was significant in Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, and may have influenced the negative public opinion and restrictive measures these countries adopted, in Brazil the impact seems to have been felt only in Roraima, a state that acted as the gateway for migrants and that lacked the means to deal with the problem. Finally, public opinion, combined with the political situation of the countries, may have been the main cause of contradictory behaviour (by changing discourse and adopting restrictive measures). Consequently, migration was possibly politicised in Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, leading the political elite to break with previously agreed upon norms for political gains and to the use of a security discourse to justify restrictive measures and legitimize decisions for the benefit of domestic and international audiences.

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ABSTRACT

Intergovernmental organisations and institutions are generally created to discuss and find collective solutions to problems that transcend national borders and individual states' capacities. However, certain crises push for isolated, typically restrictive, actions from governments, making the role of such institutions somewhat murky. The South American Conference on Migration (SCM), the Specialized Migration Forum of the Southern Common Market (Mercosur), and the Andean Committee of Migration Authorities of the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) are three intergovernmental forums that were created with the aim of negotiating agreements, creating, and implementing community legislation, and achieving regional policy with regards to migration. However, from 2015, mass migration from Venezuela, which was considered a crisis by South American governments, led to restrictive policies in some countries. In this context, this paper discusses the linkages between institutions, actors, norms, and practices by examining the interactions between SCM, Mercosur and CAN and the practices of Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru regarding the Venezuelan migration crisis. Through a qualitative approach, observations of practice and discourse, and the critical analysis thereof, this paper discusses debates and decisions within institutions; the emergence and non-compliance of collective norms; and the contradictory practices employed as responses to the migration crisis.

KEYWORDS

Venezuelan Migration; International Institutions; International Norms.

Received on November 10, 2022

Accepted on March 31, 2023