

# Venezuelans in Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru

A Development Opportunity





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# Abbreviations

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<b>CPP</b>	Carnet de Permiso Temporal de Permanencia (Temporary Stay Permit)
<b>DTM</b>	Displacement Tracking Matrix
<b>ENAHO</b>	Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (National Household Survey on Living Conditions and Poverty)
<b>ENPOVE</b>	Encuesta Dirigida a la Población Venezolana que reside en el País (Survey Targeted at the Venezuelan Population Residing in Peru)
<b>EPEC</b>	Encuesta a Personas en Movilidad Humana y en Comunidades Receptoras en Ecuador (Human Mobility and Host Communities Survey)
<b>EPTV</b>	Estatuto Temporal de Protección para Migrantes Venezolanos (Temporary Protection Statute for Venezuelan Migrants)
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agricultural Organization
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GEIH</b>	Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares (Great Integrated Household Survey)
<b>HFPS</b>	High-Frequency Phone Survey(s)
<b>ILO</b>	International Labor Organization
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>INEI</b>	Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática (National Institute of Statistics and Information)
<b>IPE</b>	Identificador Provisorio Escolar
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>LAC</b>	Latin American and the Caribbean
<b>PEP</b>	Permiso Especial de Permanencia (Special Permit of Permanence)
<b>PPT</b>	Permiso por Protección Temporal (Temporary Protection Status)
<b>R4V</b>	Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela
<b>SERMIG</b>	Servicio Nacional de Migraciones de Chile
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	The United Nations Children's Fund
<b>WFP</b>	UN World Food Programme





Dr. Nestor Guillermo Márquez, a 53-year-old physician from Venezuela, poses for a portrait at the “Los Olivos de Pro” rehabilitation center in the Peruvian capital, Lima. All the personnel at the center, which recently opened due to a deal between UNHCR and Peruvian authorities that sees the UN Refugee Agency pay the salaries for around two dozen staff members for the initial months, are Venezuelans. While many of the more than 1.5 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants who have sought safety in Peru in recent years are highly qualified professionals, they oftentimes face administrative and other hurdles that make it difficult to work in their fields. This is particularly true for doctors and other medical staff, who often have trouble validating their Venezuelan diplomas in Peru. This means that sometimes doctors find themselves working as Uber drivers or in other precarious positions. This harsh reality meant that being hired at “Los Olivos de Pro” was even more gratifying for the new staffers. Before he was hired at the center, Dr. Márquez supported his family by working as a traveling book salesman.



# Executive Summary

## The Nature of Human Mobility

**The Venezuelan exodus is the largest migration flow of its kind in the recent history of the Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC) region.** It represents the second-largest population flow in the world (surpassed only by that of the Ukraine crisis) and the largest flow in the world for a non-conflict country. Since 2015, over seven million Venezuelans—about a quarter of the country's population—have left the country, escaping economic collapse, political persecution, and an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. The majority of these people (over six million) have settled in countries in the LAC region. Some have made their way to other countries, mainly the United States and Spain. This report examines their situation in the four main host countries: Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Chile.

## Mobility brings benefits

**If managed well, the increasing numbers of Venezuelans could create a development opportunity for both migrants and their host countries.** Potential benefits for migrants include economic opportunity, access to public services, such as education and health services, and safety from violence and oppression. Potential benefits for host countries include an increased labor supply (particularly in sectors where labor is scarce), a more skilled workforce, and a larger

tax base (World Bank 2019). Over time, migrants can contribute to a host country's efficiency, particularly if they are allowed to work formally at a level commensurate with their skills and experience (World Bank 2023).

**The Venezuelan exodus appears to have had a positive effect on economic growth in the region, thanks to additional labor supply and the boost to demand.** Recent estimates show that flows from Venezuela are likely to raise GDP growth among the largest recipient countries in LAC by an average of 0.10–0.25 percentage points a year between 2017 and 2030 (IMF 2022). This is largely a result of the increased labor supply (including human capital) which, in the long run, increases aggregate demand and tax revenues. Over the long term, the benefits of migration typically compensate for the costs associated with migrants' arrival and integration (IMF 2022).

**Some studies also find positive labor market effects.** Morales and Pierola (2020) found that a 1.0 percentage point increase in the share of Venezuelans in Peru is associated with a 1.5 percentage point increase in the probability of being employed for workers with tertiary education in the non-service sector. Groeger, León-Cillate, and Stillman (2022) also find that inflows of Venezuelans to particular locations in Peru led to increased employment.

## Human mobility also has negative effects

**Influxes of migrants can hurt some people in the host country, particularly workers who compete with migrants for jobs; and can impose short-term fiscal costs.** The additional labor supply can also induce a decline in wages in the short run. Studies of Brazil (Zago 2020), Colombia (Lebow 2022), Ecuador (Olivieri and others 2021), and Peru (Morales and Pierola 2020) show that the wages of less educated and informal workers are most likely to suffer but that the effect is modest and mostly short term. There are few, if any, negative effects on the intensive margin (how many hours per week are worked). The IMF (2022) estimates that the Venezuelan exodus increased fiscal costs by 0.1 percent of GDP in Chile and 0.5 percent in Colombia—another negative short-term effect.

## The net benefits depend on the policies and institutional arrangements host countries have in place

**When the skills of migrants match the needs of their destinations' labor market, the economic benefits of migration can be considerable, if policy and institutional design are conducive to development.** Host countries should try to realize these benefits by facilitating migrants' economic inclusion into the labor market, promoting social



cohesion, preventing segregation, and facilitating their access to basic services, such as education and health. They should also address potential adverse impacts on nationals. The response should be for the long term, as many Venezuelans express a desire to stay in their host countries for the foreseeable future and there are no signs that the outlook in Venezuela will change any time soon.

### The socioeconomic profile of Venezuelans can help inform policy

**This report seeks to inform policy and institutional arrangements in destination countries aiming to maximize societal benefits, including for people who migrate or flee for a variety of reasons.** Immigration is a complex issue, in which the international law (humanitarian) lens is critical for understanding migration flows and assessing the legal obligations of destination countries. Rather than provide a comprehensive diagnostic of Venezuelan migration, this report focuses on the economic challenges and opportunities created by Venezuelan migration flows while also acknowledging the importance of the humanitarian perspective in developing policy responses.

**It provides a detailed socioeconomic profile of Venezuelans in Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru.** It uses national household survey data to compare the profiles of Venezuelans with those of people in each host country, in order to shed light on contentious issues. It also describes the way Venezuelans perceive the migration process, including the discrimination they experience and the degree of integration into various social activities.

**Venezuelans differ from host populations in several ways.** In all four countries, the proportion of Venezuelans of prime working age (25–45) is larger than among hosts, particularly in Chile. The gender composition of Venezuelans is similar to that of hosts, with a slight predominance of women and girls in Ecuador and Peru. In all countries except Chile, most Venezuelans are married or cohabitating.

**In all countries, Venezuelans are better educated and, with the exception of Colombia, more likely to be employed than the host population.** The average Venezuelans completed secondary education (at least 12 years of education), which is two years more, on average, than locals. The proportion of Venezuelans with tertiary education is 65 percent in Chile and is close to 50 percent in Ecuador. There is demand for Venezuelans in local labor markets: In Ecuador, Peru, and Chile, more than 80 percent are employed (in Colombia the figure is about 63 percent). However, they are often employed in lower-level jobs than the ones they had in Venezuela, probably because their academic titles are not recognized in their host countries. The contribution of Venezuelans to the economy could be greater if they were able to fully utilize their skills and qualifications in all countries.

**In Peru and Colombia (the two countries for which wage data are available), Venezuelans' monthly labor income and returns to schooling are lower than those of their hosts.** Even though they are more educated than hosts on average, they earn less in both countries (in Peru this is the case even though migrants work more hours per week than hosts). In both countries, the returns on education are considerably lower for Venezuelans, which helps explain

why the difference in wages between workers with different levels of education is not as large as for hosts.

### Most Venezuelans report having left their country for economic reasons and having migrated as a family unit.

The majority of Venezuelans in Chile and Ecuador, for which information on the motives for migration is available, report leaving Venezuela for economic reasons, including lack of employment opportunities. A large majority migrated as a family, particularly in Colombia and Ecuador, where 65 and 57 percent, respectively, traveled with their families.

**The majority of Venezuelans report a desire to stay in the country in which they have settled.** Few report participating in social activities in their host countries (most that do participate in religious activities), however, and 26–40 percent report having faced discrimination, which the figures higher among women and younger migrants.



Darianny Simancas Alcalá, a 28-year-old Venezuelan journalist, prepares to record a radio spot in a studio at the Lima headquarters of the Unión Venezolana, where she works. The Unión Venezolana is among the largest organizations representing Peru's 1.5 million-strong community of Venezuelan refugees and migrants. The group even has its own TV and radio programs, aimed at keeping the community informed. Darianny, who studied journalism back home in Venezuela but left the country before she had a chance to work in the profession, got her big break after contacting the Unión Venezolana for assistance. As luck would have it, the head of the organization was looking for a journalist to join his team, and Darianny, who was struggling after becoming a single mother in Lima, was a perfect fit.

## Key Components of a Policy Response

**Most Venezuelans will remain abroad for years, if not permanently; the policy response should be long term and multisectoral.** Several factors are critical to reaping the benefits of migration:

- 1 Economic inclusion of Venezuelans by host countries.** The policy response should facilitate Venezuelans' access to labor markets through regular channels and with labor rights comparable to those of hosts, recognizing the potential negative effects on certain segments of the host population.
- 2 Access to basic services, such as education and health.** Given that most Venezuelans travel in family units, access to education, health, and early childhood services is crucial. Venezuelans and their families should be included in national systems for the delivery of education, health, and other essential services.
- 3 Social inclusion of Venezuelans and incentivizing prosocial behavior toward them.** Social integration enhances the gains from economic integration by increasing cooperation between hosts and Venezuelans. Given the low levels of social integration of Venezuelans in all four countries, this should form an important component of the policy response.
- 4 Collection and analysis of data on migrants.** Systematic and updated registration of migrants in national systems, as well as reliable up-to-date information on the profiles and situations of migrants are needed.

Targeted integration and anti-discrimination programs and the expansion of opportunities for both Venezuelans and hosts can foster social capital, thereby enhancing social inclusion. Targeted information campaigns can also promote social cohesion between Venezuelans and hosts.

## Sources of Data

**Detailed socioeconomic profiles of Venezuelans and host communities were obtained from recent household surveys of both populations in each country (see Table ES.1).** For Venezuelans, the report combines data from household, migration, and high-frequency surveys, collected mostly over the phone. For host communities (except Ecuador), official national household surveys conducted close in time to the other surveys were used; when feasible, the sample was restricted to areas where migrants are concentrated (see [Appendix A](#)).

**The methods and timing of the surveys were not identical across countries.** For Ecuador, the surveys

were administered simultaneously by phone. In Chile, the surveys were conducted close in time but through different methods (by phone for Venezuelans and face-to-face for hosts). In Colombia and Peru, the surveys of hosts were conducted a few months before the surveys of Venezuelans, in the context of a robust economic recovery, which may have resulted in less favorable labor outcomes for hosts. In Colombia, the survey of Venezuelans was conducted over the phone and the host survey in person. In Peru, both surveys were implemented in person. Phone surveys usually overrepresent educated and wealthier individuals.

**Surveying hard-to-reach and vulnerable populations, such as refugees and migrants, is**

**challenging and usually results in some data limitations, for several reasons.** First, adequate sampling frames do not exist or are not updated regularly, making it difficult to draw a representative sample of the population. Second, surveys of migrants usually suffer from selection bias, as individuals who are irregular migrants are more likely to refuse to participate in the survey. Surveys therefore usually overrepresent regular migrants, who tend to be more educated, have higher living standards, and have better labor market outcomes than their irregular counterparts. Third, surveys of hard-to-reach and vulnerable populations may suffer from sensitivity bias, in which respondents avoid responding or provide untruthful answers to questions considered sensitive.

**Table ES.1 Description of surveys used in this report**

Country/survey	National		Venezuelans		Modality	Data collection dates	Representativeness
	Unweighted sample	Expanded sample	Unweighted sample	Expanded sample			
<b>Chile</b>							
Encuesta de Migración	–	–	1,254	382,898	Telephone	January–February 2022	National (18+)
Labor Survey	48,171	12,187,095	–	–	In-person	January–March 2022	National, urban/rural and regional (15+)
<b>Colombia</b>							
Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares (GEIH)	447,888	26,370,254	–	–	In-person	2021	Venezuelan population at the national level (15+)
Migration Pulse (Round 4)	–	–	6,176	1,554,698	Telephone	March–April 2022	National, urban/rural, five large regions, and departments
<b>Ecuador</b>							
Encuesta a Personas en Movilidad Humana y en Comunidades Receptoras en Ecuador (EPEC)	3,018	10,870,890	1,261	244,512	In-person	June–July 2019	National
High-Frequency Phone Surveys (HFPS)	503	4,093,422	356	293,577	Telephone	June 2022	National (18+ with landline or cellphone)
<b>Peru</b>							
Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (ENAHO)	53,711	19,165,628	–	–	In-person	2021–2022	National and urban/rural
Encuesta Dirigida a la Población Venezolana (ENPOVE)	–	–	7,751	735,478	In-person	February–March 2022	Eight cities

Note: Unweighted and expanded samples correspond to the restricted samples (as opposed to full samples) used for this report.



# 1 Introduction

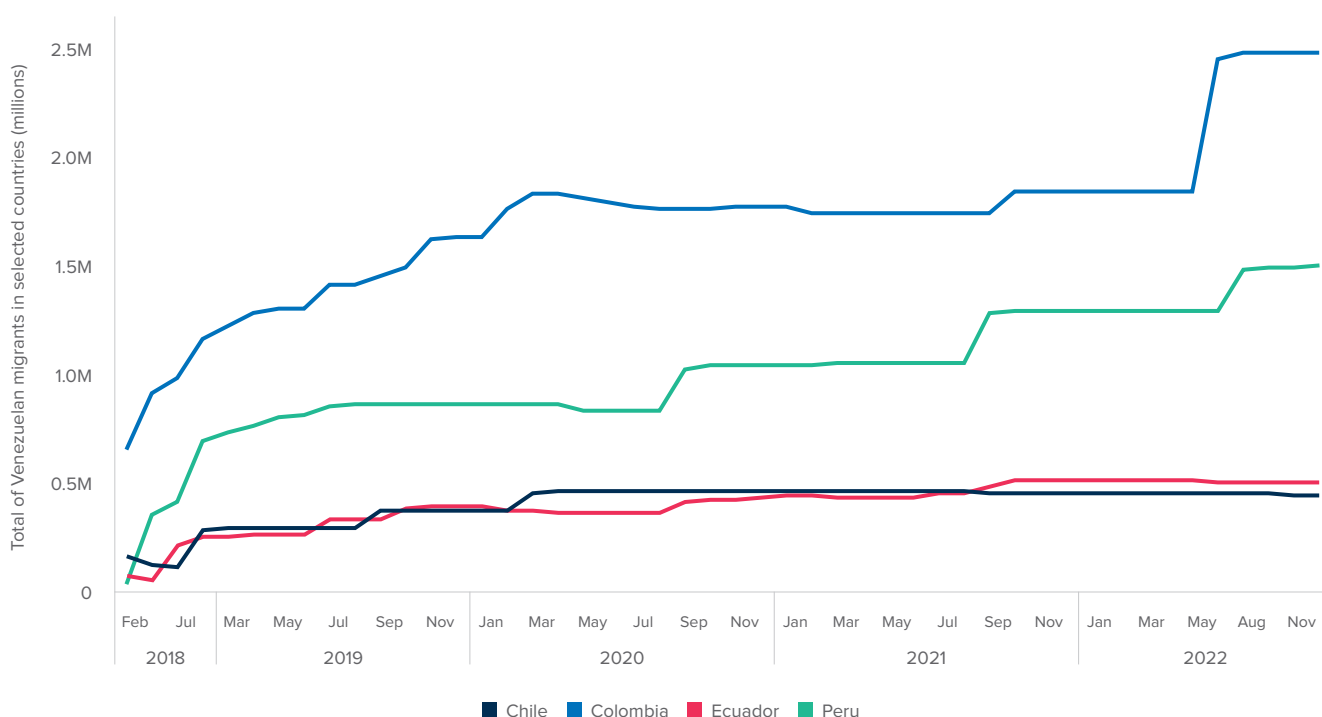
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Mabel Illescas is a psychologist and Juan Montalvo School's principal. The school, located in Machala, hosts 425 students, of which 20% are refugees and migrants, mostly from Venezuela. Juan Montalvo School is also one of the 185 schools participating in 'Respiramos Inclusión' (We breathe Inclusion), a methodology designed and implemented by UNHCR in Ecuador since 2013 to prevent discrimination and xenophobia in the education system from a protection and rights-based approach. Through this methodology, UNHCR promotes spaces, strengthening the right to access, stay and finish school among refugee, and local girls, boys and adolescents.

**As of December 2022, an estimated 7.13 million people had left Venezuela (R4V 2023b), and the figure is expected to reach nearly 8.4 million by 2025 (Arena and others, 2022).** The vast majority of Venezuelan migrants and refugees—over six million—have crossed international borders within the Latin American and Caribbean region (LAC), establishing themselves mainly in Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, and Chile (R4V 2023b).<sup>1</sup> At the end of 2018, more than 2.4 million Venezuelans had settled in these four countries; by the end of 2022, the figure had more than doubled to more than 4.9 million.<sup>2</sup> Between the end of 2018 and the end of 2022, the share of Venezuelans in these countries had risen by a factor of 1.60 in Chile, 2.00 in Ecuador, 2.13 in Colombia, and 2.17 in Peru.<sup>3</sup>

**In December 2022, Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, and Chile hosted 82 percent of Venezuelan migrants and refugees in LAC.** Colombia was home to about 2.5 million (41 percent of the total), Peru to 1.5 million (25 percent), Ecuador to 500,000 (8.3 percent), and Chile to 440,000 (7.4 percent) (R4V 2023a) (figure 1.1). These figures represent increases of 113 percent, 117 percent, 102 percent, and 59 percent, respectively, over September 2018.

**Figure 1.1 Number of Venezuelans, 2018–22**



Source: <https://www.r4v.info/>, as of December 2022.

1 For this study, migrants are defined as individuals who moved across an international border from their place of residence regardless of their legal status, for a variety of reasons (IOM 2023). Refugees are defined as those forced to flee their country because of persecution, war or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group (UNHCR 2023).

2 The Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants (R4V) presents information on migrants from 2018 on.

3 Estimates are based on the latest published data from R4V (accessed May 9, 2023) for each month. Where data were not available, the figure from the last month for which data were available was used.

**With the right set of public policies, programs, and institutional arrangements, population flows can promote development in host countries.** These countries can benefit from increased labor supply (particularly in sectors in which labor is scarce and in countries experiencing demographic slowdown); a more skilled workforce; and a larger tax base. These economic benefits depend largely on how well the profile of migrants matches the needs of host country labor markets and whether migrants can work at the level of their skills and experience. An environment of social inclusion and integration, in which migrants have access to basic services, enhances potential gains.

**In the context of the 2023 World Development Report's match and motive matrix for migration, this report seeks to inform policy responses and institutional arrangements in destination countries that will maximize societal benefits.** Immigration is a complex and multifaceted issue, in which the international law (humanitarian) lens is critical to understand population flows and to assess the legal obligations of destination countries. Rather than present a comprehensive diagnostic of Venezuelan migration, this report focuses on understanding the economic challenges and opportunities created by Venezuelan human mobility flows while acknowledging the importance of the international law (humanitarian) perspective in developing policy responses.

**Policy responses are more effective when they are based on up-to-date evidence, including the profiles of migrants** Policies and institutional arrangements in host countries must be based on the latest available data about the characteristics of Venezuelans and their situation. In 2019, the Migration Policy Institute and the International Organization for Migration profiled Venezuelan migrants and refugees settled in LAC using the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM).<sup>4</sup> This report provides an update based on more recent data. It uses national household surveys to compare the demographic profile, socioeconomic characteristics, and labor market outcomes of Venezuelans with host communities in each of the four countries. It describes the perceptions of Venezuelans with respect to various aspects of their migration process, including discrimination and integration into various social activities.

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4 <https://repository.iom.int/handle/20.500.11788/2307>



## 2 The Match and Motive Matrix

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**This report is anchored in the framework of the *World Development Report 2023: Migrants, Refugees, and Societies* (World Bank 2023).** Its match and motives matrix is based on lessons from both labor economics and international law. Match refers to the degree to which a migrant's skills and related attributes meet demands in the destination country (regardless of the migrant's skill level).<sup>5</sup> *Motive* refers to the circumstances under which people move—in search of opportunity or out of fear of persecution, armed conflict, or violence in their country origin (World Bank 2023). The most appropriate policy response depends on how well migrants match the needs of their destination society and the circumstances (motives) that caused them to migrate. The framework recognizes that the decision to migrate is complex, with multiple reinforcing factors behind the decision.

**The match and motive matrix can help identify policy responses that maximize the potential gains of migration while ensuring that people's rights are respected.** The match—how well the profile of migrants matches the needs of host country labor markets—largely determines both the economic and social costs and benefits for the destination society. Migrants' needs for international protection may translate into legal obligations for host countries.

**Migrants can be grouped into four categories.** Most economic migrants are found in the upper-left quadrant of figure 2.1, “distressed” (mostly irregular) migrants are in the lower-left quadrant, refugees with skills in demand are in the upper-right quadrant, and many refugees are in the lower-right quadrant. This framework helps countries adapt their policies and their institutional arrangements based on the matrix.

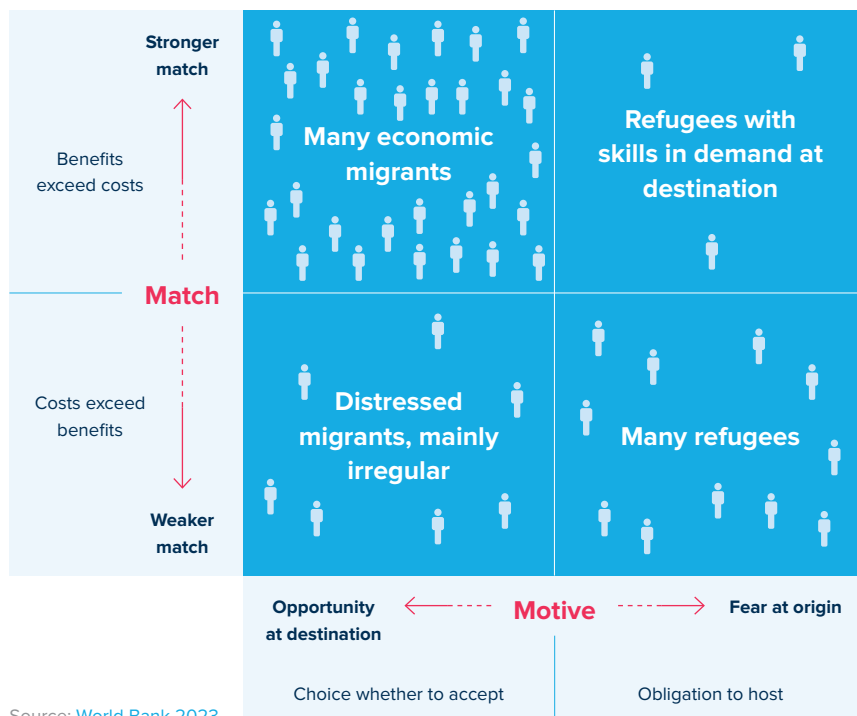
**An adequate policy response and institutional arrangement in host countries emphasizes different aspects, depending on the type of movement.** When the match between migrants and the destination country is strong, they fill gaps in their destination country's labor market. Their origin country can also benefit, through remittances and knowledge transfers. Potential gains are largest when migrants are engaged in the formal sector and at a level commensurate with their skills and experiences (World Bank 2023).

**Migration can also be costly for host countries.** Migrants put pressure on the provision of public services, and host country workers with similar skills as migrants may face lower wages and job loss.

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5 This depends on the unmet labor demand of the different sectors in the economy.

Figure 2.1 The World Bank's match and motive matrix



**The policy challenge is to maximize the gains and reduce the costs.** Doing so is best achieved through economic and social integration (which is particularly important for migrants with high protection needs) and addressing the concerns of nationals through inclusive public policies. Delivering these outputs entails regularization efforts, including the right to work, certification of educational degrees and expertise, and institutional capacity and coordination in key sectors, among other actions.

**Improving the outcomes of migration requires a better match between migrants' skills and attributes and the needs of destination societies, while addressing the causes of forced displacement.** The benefits of migration are much higher when migrants can contribute more to their host societies. Allowing them to do so requires that they can access the formal labor market, recognition of their skills and qualifications, and building their skills so that they better match the demands of the labor market. This strengthens their resilience, while recognizing that there may still be needed) a need for social protection (World Bank 2023). Cooperation between countries of origin and destination is essential to achieving this end.

**Policy approaches must be tailored to the specifics of each situation. Doing so requires data and analysis to determine what can work best in a particular context.** In the Venezuelan exodus, the type of movements varies across and within countries and over time. A country can host different types of movements at the same time. The migration policy framework in host countries must therefore be comprehensive, encompassing appropriate policy responses and institutional arrangements for different categories of migrants.

# 3 The Situation in Venezuela and Policy in Host Countries

## The Venezuelan Crisis

Over the last decade, Venezuela experienced an economic and social crisis characterized by a historic reduction in economic output, a severe decline in human capital, and widespread poverty. It is estimated that Venezuela's GDP shrunk more than 75 percent between 2013 and 2021, considerably more than what is officially reported (Maldonado and Olivo 2022). The only comparable experiences are countries facing war (IMF 2022). In response to the crises, private investment plummeted, from almost 16 percent of GDP in 1998 to just 2.1 percent in 2018 (Abuelafia and Saboin 2020). Venezuela's economic collapse is reflected in its large fiscal deficit, hyperinflation, substantial currency depreciation, and major debt crisis (IMF 2022).

The decline in oil production and its price partly explains Venezuela's economic collapse, but non-oil GDP also shrunk—by an estimated 54 percent between the first quarter of 2013 and the first quarter of 2019 (IMF 2022). The drivers of the reduction in oil production (from an average of 2.8 million barrels per day in 2008–13 to 400,000 barrels per day in mid-2020) include the fall in the world oil price in 2015, sectoral mismanagement, lack of transparency, declining investment, lack of funding for Petroleos de Venezuela (the national oil company), loss of human capital,

and power outages (Abuelafia and Saboin 2020; IMF 2022).

Venezuela experienced hyperinflation in 2017–21 and an increase in external debt. Once the oil boom ended, currency flows and access to external financing declined significantly. The government consequently turned to monetary policy to finance its debt, which resulted in hyperinflation that peaked at 200 percent in 2019 (Abuelafia and Saboin 2020; IMF 2022). The episode eroded the value of the minimum wage, which the government raised repeatedly. Other impacts of the economic collapse on the labor market were a reduction in labor force participation (now the lowest in the region, at 59 percent) and employment (which fell from 68 percent in 2014 to 56 percent in 2019).

The economic collapse has led to a deterioration in living conditions, a halt in the provision of basic services, and a scaling back of the presence of the state, particularly outside the capital city of Caracas. Agricultural areas resorted to subsistence farming, as a result of the collapse of the road system and the shortage of gasoline. Living conditions worsened, as reflected in the staggering increase in the national poverty rate, which skyrocketed from 33 percent in 2013 to 96 percent in 2019–20. A staggering 79 percent of

Venezuelans live in extreme poverty (IMF 2022); an estimated 9.4 million Venezuelans—almost a third of the population—need urgent food security assistance; and more than 30 percent are undernourished (FAO 2021).

The motives, profiles, and journeys of Venezuelans changed over the years, as the situation became increasingly critical. The literature identifies at least three migratory waves, distinguished by the motivation to migrate, the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of migrants, and the countries of destination.

In the first wave (2000–12), under the government of President Hugo Chávez, the push factors were mainly insecurity and political prosecution (or dissent), in the context of generalized social decline. During this wave, the average Venezuelans was highly educated (professionals, entrepreneurs, students); belonged to the upper-middle part of the income distribution; and had ample financial resources. Many of these people were politicians, businessmen, and business owners. They settled in the United States and southern Europe (Spain, Italy, and Portugal), destinations that require them to have substantial financial resources (Freier and Parent 2019; Vivas and Paez 2017).



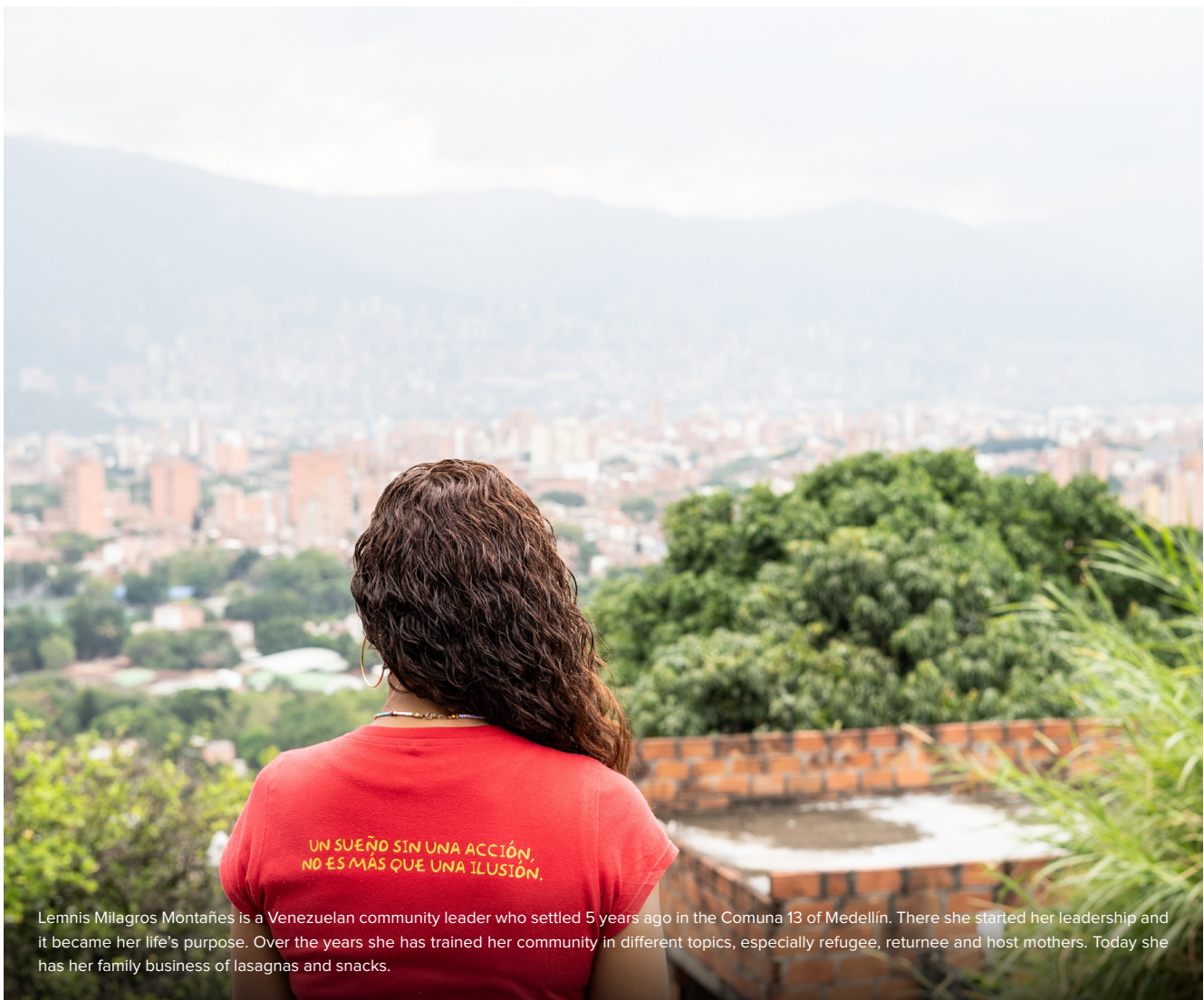
**As the country's prospects worsened, more low-income Venezuelans began to migrate, and LAC became the main destination.**

Between 2012 and 2015, mostly under the government of President Nicolás Maduro (who assumed power in 2013), the crisis escalated. Migration was a result of the severe economic crisis, political repression, and insecurity, coupled with shortages of fuel, food, and medicine. The lower and middle classes started to leave the country in search of better economic opportunities. They included individuals (mostly men)

with technical degrees and young people with college degrees but no work experience. The countries of destination included not only Europe and the United States but also nearby countries, such as Colombia, Panama, and the Dominican Republic (Freier and Parent 2019; Vivas and Paez 2017).

**Since 2015, with the unprecedented collapse of social and economic conditions in Venezuela, low-income households have been forced to leave.** Flows rose dramatically, particularly in 2017 and 2018, with

an increase in the prevalence of families (as opposed to adult men, as earlier). This wave was motivated by the critical shortage of food and medicine, as well as insecurity and despair (Freier and Parent 2019; Vivas and Paez 2017). With this collapse, the initial flow of educated and middle-income Venezuelans progressively turned into a humanitarian crisis, with millions of Venezuelans fleeing by foot, with no financial resources. Family reunification was an important factor in this wave. Many Venezuelans headed to close-by countries, such as Colombia and Ecuador.



Lemnis Milagros Montañes is a Venezuelan community leader who settled 5 years ago in the Comuna 13 of Medellín. There she started her leadership and it became her life's purpose. Over the years she has trained her community in different topics, especially refugee, returnee and host mothers. Today she has her family business of lasagnas and snacks.

## Migration Frameworks in Latin America and the Caribbean

In addition to normative and institutional change at the national level, important regional initiatives emerged to exchange information and coordinate regional approaches. One such initiative is the Quito Process, a regional consultative process initiated in 2018 to promote communication and coordination between LAC countries receiving Venezuelans.<sup>6</sup> Another important regional initiative, set up in 2018, is the Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (R4V), co-led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), with the participation of 200 organizations, including United Nations (UN) agencies, civil society groups, faith-based organizations, and nongovernmental organizations. The regional platform is replicated at the national level through local coordination mechanisms established with national governments (R4V 2023b).

In 2021, the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) developed a regional socioeconomic integration strategy for the main host countries, including government institutions and employers' and workers' organizations. The regional strategy aims to formulate concrete actions to achieve three objectives: (a) reduce the level of socioeconomic vulnerability of migrants from Venezuela, (b) maximize the

contribution of this population to the economies of the host countries, and (c) promote social cohesion through initiatives that also benefit host communities (ILO and UNDP 2021).

The following subsections describe the national migration frameworks in Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru and analyze how they vary with respect to access to health, social services, education, and the labor market for Venezuelans. Table 3.1 provides an overview of the relevant visa regimes, access to social services, and citizenship for Venezuelans in the four countries.

## Chile

Since 2019, Chile has hardened its immigration stance, increasingly viewing migration through the national security lens that has historically characterized migration policy there. The Migration and Alien Law, enacted in April 2021, limits migration to highly skilled individuals. Although the law promises to respect migrants' rights regardless of their status, it also limits the freedom of movement and residency of those who are in the country. It guarantees equal access to social security, but only for those who have lived in Chile for at least two years (Doña-Reveco 2022). The law also provides

**Table 3.1 Access of Venezuelans to social services and citizenship, 2023**

Feature/Country	Chile	Colombia	Ecuador	Peru
Visa regime	Visa upon entry and request for residence permit once in country	10-year Temporary Protection Statute for Venezuelan Migrants	Visa upon entry and request for residence permit once in country	Temporary Stay Permit License
Access to school feeding programs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Access to schools	✓	✓	✓	✓
Access to health care <sup>a</sup>	✓		✓	
Access to the labor market	Granted with residence permit	Granted with Estatuto Temporal de Protección para Migrantes Venezolanos (ETPV)	Granted with residence permit	Granted with CarnéCarnet de Permiso Temporal de Permanencia (CPP)
Citizenship granted to children born in host country to Venezuelan parents	Yes, if parent arrives on permanent visa	✓	✓	✓

Note: <sup>a</sup> In all four countries migrants can access emergency services, per constitutional mandate.

6 The Quito Process includes 13 member states from the region (including all four countries studied in this report) and four observer states (Canada, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United States). Brazil is the current chair.

a way for unauthorized migrants who legally entered the country as visitors before March 2020 to apply for legal status; migrants who arrived through irregular means were told to leave and apply for a visa from a Chilean consulate abroad. For the Venezuelan population, a “democratic responsibility visa” was created, which must be requested from the Republica Bolivariana de Venezuela. In June 2019, a tourist visa was established as an entry requirement for Venezuela. Children of Venezuelan parents can receive citizenship only if the parents have permanent visa status.

**Access to health care is universal; social services and housing are available but depend on the individual’s migratory status.** Chile has a universal health care system, but barriers such as fear of deportation and discrimination limit accessibility in practice (Chaves-Gonzalez and Méndez 2022). According to the 2021 law, immigrants who have resided in Chile for at least 24 months will be able to receive state-funded social security and related benefits. Only migrants with a permanent residency permit have the same housing rights as nationals.

**Primary and secondary education are freely accessible to all children in Chile, regardless of immigration status.** Chile has implemented a provisional school identifier or *Identificador Provisorio Escolar* (IPE) for people who lack identification, allowing Venezuelans to access educational benefits, take university selection tests, and obtain certification of past degrees (Summers, Crist, and Streitwieser 2022). However, the

irregular status of parents does affect children’s access to complementary support from the education system, as they cannot register in the Social Registry of Households (*Registro Social de Hogares*), which may affect migrant students seeking benefits and university enrollment.

## Colombia

**Colombia provides 10-year temporary protection status for Venezuelans, one of the world’s most progressive and internationally recognized migratory frameworks.**

In 2017, in response to growing migration flows, it implemented a two-year temporary Special Stay Permit (*Permiso Especial de Permanencia*, [PEP]) for regular migrants, which granted access to the labor market; financial services; and public services, including health, education, childcare, and social protection programs. In 2018, the Colombian government allowed irregular migrants to obtain the PEP (Bitar 2022). The program reached an estimated 40 percent of the Venezuelan population in Colombia, increasing their well-being, contributing to labor formalization and better working conditions, and expanding their access to public services (Bahar, Ibáñez, and Rozo 2021).

**In 2021, Colombia expanded its regularization efforts, through the Temporary Protection Statute for Venezuelan Migrants (*Estatuto Temporal de Protección para Migrantes Venezolanos*, [ETPV]), an unparalleled regularization program in the region.** The ETPV establishes the Temporary Protection Permit

(*Permiso por Protección Temporal*, [PPT]) as an immigration identification, documentation, and regularization tool. It provides a 10-year temporary legal status to Venezuelans who can prove they entered Colombia before January 31, 2021. The ETPV grants Venezuelans access to services (including education and emergency health services) and employment. It also provides Venezuelans with a pathway to permanent residence.<sup>7</sup> Its introduction has facilitated the regularization of around 1.8 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Colombia (Chaves-González and Méndez 2022) since its introduction. In 2021, the government also took measures to promote horizontal coordination between ministries, state agencies, and local government and defined a strategy for a coordinated response to the crisis (Bitar 2022).

**In addition to providing education for everyone, regardless of migratory status, Colombia has taken steps to accommodate the needs of Venezuelans.** Since 2018, it has allowed primary and secondary students to enroll at any time during the year (Summers, Crist, and Streitwieser 2022) and granted them access to housing subsidies. However, Venezuelans face other barriers, such as local institutional capacity, difficulties in the enrollment process, and discrimination. Access to the public health system requires Venezuelans to have a regular status (Opinio Juris 2020). Colombia also allows children born in the country to Venezuelan parents to acquire Colombian nationality, avoiding the prospect of them becoming stateless (UNHCR 2019).

<sup>7</sup> The program covers migrants that already have a Special Stay Permit, those that have applied for refugee status, those who have applied for a Colombian visa, and irregular migrants who can prove that they were in Colombia before January 31, 2021. It also covers migrants who entered the country through regular channels before March 2023.





Franyelis (23) y Antonio (28) arrived in Cuenca, in southern Ecuador, in August 2022 with their three children after leaving Venezuela. To reach their destination they had to walk for more than a month. In the Andean city of Cuenca they adopted their puppy, Kira. They spent the first seven days in the city at Posada San Francisco, an emergency shelter supported by UNHCR with Japan funding. “We had nowhere to go, but luckily we found the shelter. If it weren’t for that, we would have had to sleep on the street. We adults can cope, but for the children it is more difficult, because of the cold and how dangerous it is to sleep on the street,” says Franyelis.

## Ecuador

### As a result of the Venezuelan exodus, Ecuador adopted a more restrictive approach to immigration.

Venezuelans who entered the country between 2010 and 2016 were able to obtain a temporary residency that allowed them to acquire a work visa after three months. With the introduction of the Organic Law on Human Mobility (*La Ley de Movilidad Humana*) in 2017, the Venezuelan population could access the Union of South American Nations (Unasur) visa,<sup>8</sup> in addition to the tourist visa (which grants the right to stay in Ecuador for 180 days but does not grant the right to work).

In 2019, Ecuador established a new entry requirement for Venezuelan migrants—the exceptional humanitarian visa, which must be obtained outside the country. This visa offers the right to work and to enter and exit the country multiple times (World Bank 2020).

**In 2020, the government of Ecuador shifted its focus toward Venezuelan migrants already in the country.** It announced a year-long regularization process for thousands of Venezuelan migrants who were undocumented or lacked visas or regular migratory status. While the COVID-19 pandemic paused the process, it resumed in 2022. By February 2023, nearly

41,000 Venezuelans had received their temporary residence visa. Thousands of others are in the process (IOM 2023).

**By constitutional mandate, access to health and education is free to migrants, who can also access some of Ecuador’s social protection programs.** The Constitution also grants citizenship to anyone born in Ecuador. Migrants do not have access to the country’s cash transfer program, but they can access other social protection programs, such as childhood development programs and in-kind transfers when attending school (World Bank 2020).

<sup>8</sup> Requirements to obtain an Unasur visa were difficult to fulfill for most Venezuelans, as they required a valid passport, a certificate of a clean criminal record, and payment of a \$250 fee.

## Peru

**Peruvian migration policy has undergone considerable changes in recent years in response to the increase in population flows.** In 2017, the government introduced a temporary stay permit or the *Permiso Especial de Permanencia* (PEP), which allowed Venezuelans to live and work in the country for up to two years and offered a path to long-term residency. As flows intensified, the law changed. In 2018, the requirements for entering Peru tightened. In 2019, the government began requiring a visa to enter the country and reduced the window for Venezuelans to submit documentation for their regularization. To acquire the visa, Venezuelans must apply at specific Peruvian consulates abroad and provide documentation, such as passports, which may be difficult for some to obtain (Guerrero, Leghtas, and Graham 2020). In 2020, the government introduced a Temporary Permanent Permit Card or *Carnet de Permiso Temporal de Permanencia* (CPP). It provides migrants with identity documents and work authorization for one year, regardless of their migration status or expired permits (Guerrero, Leghtas, and Graham 2020). The CPP has been extended twice and is now valid until 2024 (Government of Peru 2022).

**In early 2023, Peru adopted legislation to promote the formalization of migrants living in the country.** It allows individuals with a CPP to apply for Special Resident status for a period of one year, which may be renewed. Less than 2 percent of people with CPP permit have applied for resident immigrant status,

because of the strict requirements and conditions. Legislation also facilitates the regularization of minors by allowing parents, guardians, or legal representatives to apply on behalf of minors even if they themselves are in an irregular immigration situation.<sup>9</sup>

**Access to education is universal in Peru and therefore accessible to Venezuelan children.** Enrollment of Venezuelan children has been limited, however, because of challenges related to the lack of necessary documentation, limited access to consular services, and associated expenses (Summers, Crist, and Bernhard 2022).

**Access to health care beyond emergency services is restricted to residents.** The CPP grants access to basic health care services; only migrants with resident status and a foreigner identity card can use the Integrated Health System, which caters to low-income patients.<sup>10</sup> For other health needs, only migrants with a specific type of residency card (the *Carnet de Extranjería*) can use this system. Few Venezuelans seek health care in Peru (IRC 2021).

9 The government of Peru (2023) estimates that 77 percent of migrant minors are irregular.

10 The program covers emergency services, health services for children under five, postpartum health services, and antiretroviral drugs for people living with HIV/AIDS.

# 4 The Journey: Why, Who, and How

## Why Venezuelans Leave

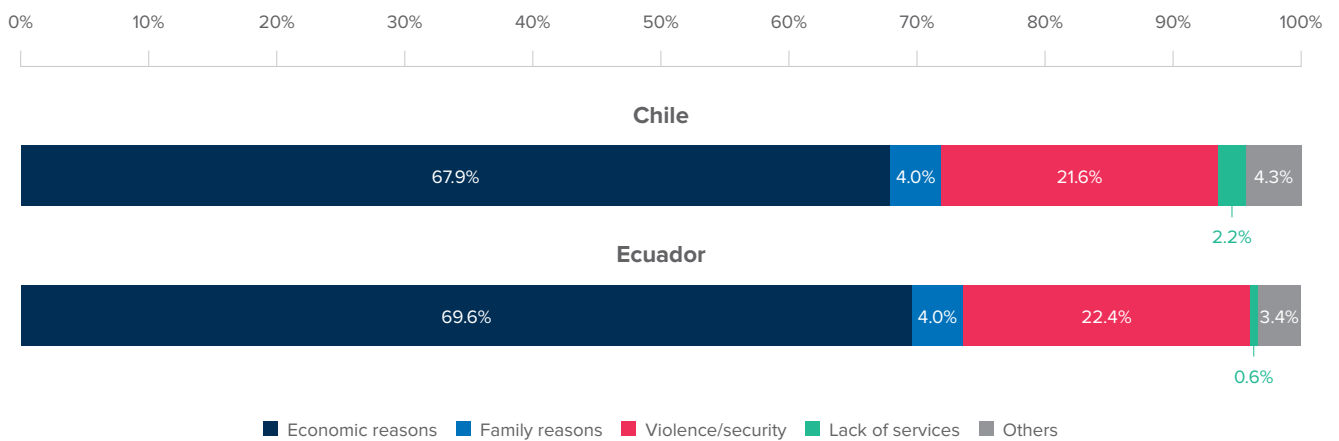
**Around 70 percent of Venezuelans in Ecuador and 68 percent in Chile reported leaving Venezuela for economic reasons, including lack of employment opportunities (figure 4.1).** No data were available on Colombia or Peru. According to the 2022 National Survey on Living Conditions (Encuesta Nacional sobre Condiciones de Vida [ENCOVI]), 25 percent of Venezuelans who left

the country were unemployed at the time of their departure.<sup>11</sup> This finding is consistent with the results for Chile and Ecuador, where lack of employment opportunities and the economic crisis were the main self-reported reasons for leaving across all education levels.

**Around 22 percent of Venezuelans in Chile and Ecuador reported violence and insecurity as a reason for leaving, a result driven by**

**those with secondary and tertiary education** (who represent 96 percent of the sample in Chile and 83 percent in Ecuador). In Chile and Ecuador, family-related reasons (likely reunification) were the second-most important reason for Venezuelans with primary education to leave (20 percent of respondents in Chile and 5 percent in Ecuador cited this reason) (figure 4.2). The surveys for Peru and Colombia did not include questions on the reasons for migrating.

**Figure 4.1 Main reasons Venezuelans in Chile and Ecuador cite for leaving their country**



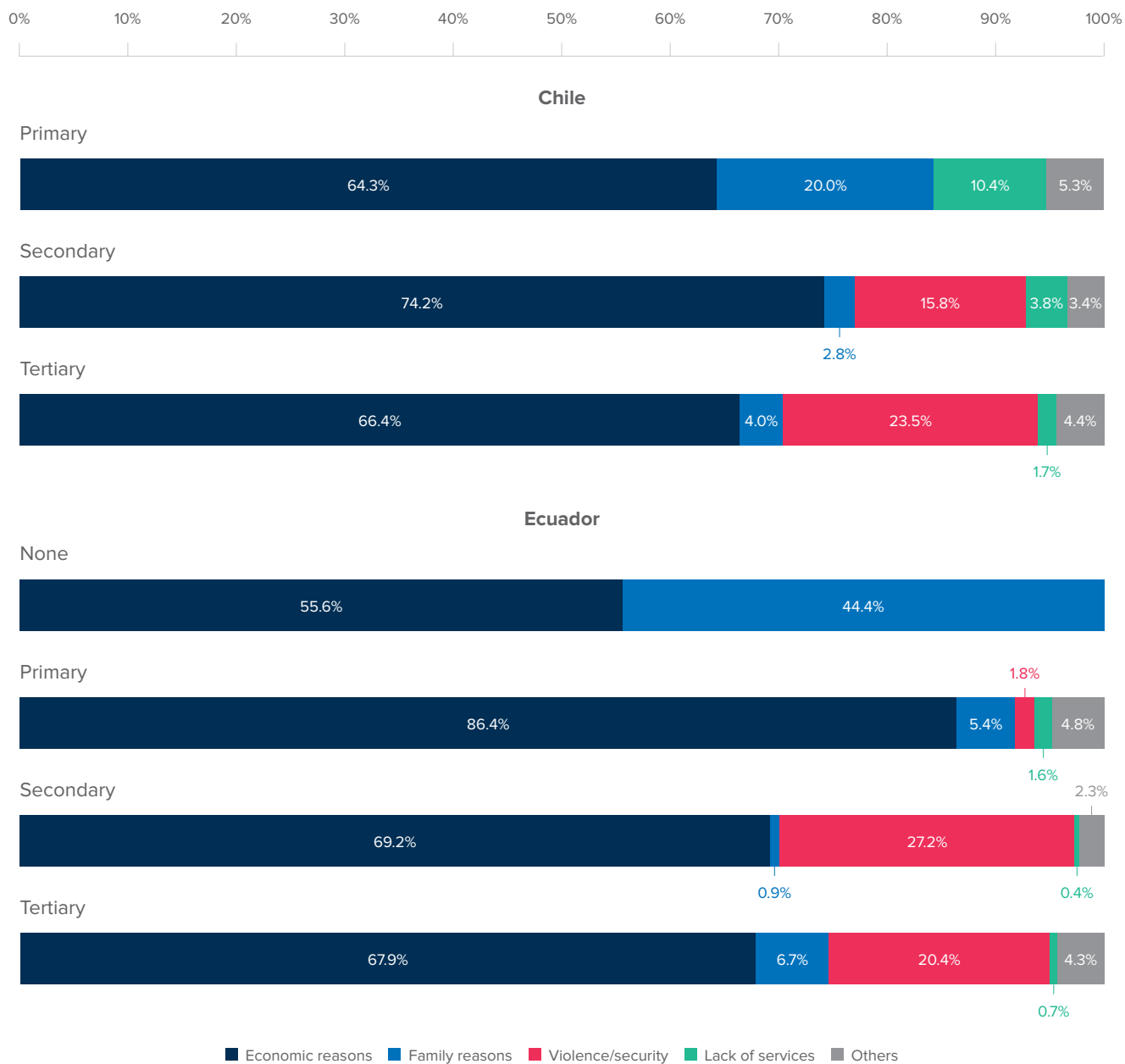
Sources: Authors, based on the following surveys. Chile: Encuesta de Migración (World Bank, SERMIG, and Centro UC 2022). Ecuador: Encuesta a Personas en Movilidad Humana y en Comunidades Receptoras en Ecuador (INEC 2019).

Note: For a list of specific reasons see [appendix B](#)

<sup>11</sup> This survey was administered in Venezuela in 2022 by Universidad Católica Andrés Bello. It is one of the few sources of information on the socioeconomic conditions of the population.



**Figure 4.2 Main reasons Venezuelans in Chile and Ecuador cite for leaving their country, by education level**



Sources: Authors, based on the following surveys. For Chile: Encuesta de Migración (World Bank, SERMIG, and Centro UC 2022). For Ecuador: Encuesta a Personas en Movilidad Humana y en Comunidades Receptoras en Ecuador (INEC 2019).

Note: For detailed list of reasons, see [appendix B](#).

## Registration

**The irregular status of many Venezuelans has been challenging for host countries.** In response, they have registered some migrants, issued humanitarian visas, and granted temporary residence permits. Registration allows Venezuelans to enter and stay in a country legally. It also permits governments and international organizations to keep track of the magnitude and profile of migrants, providing them with useful data for policy responses.

**A large percentage of Venezuelans in Ecuador and Peru registered upon arrival. In Colombia, a third of those surveyed registered under the ETPV program a few months after the program was introduced. Data is not available on Chile.**<sup>12</sup> Almost 90 percent of Venezuelans

in Ecuador and 77 percent in Peru registered upon arrival. In Colombia, 34 percent of respondents indicated having registered under the ETPV less than a year after the program was introduced. By March–April 2023, 57 percent of Venezuelans had registered under the EPTV (DANE 2023).

## Who Left—Individuals or Families?

**Large shares of Venezuelans in the four countries studied in this report traveled as family units** (65 percent in Colombia, 57 percent in Ecuador, and 47 percent in Chile; no data were available on Peru). Chile received the largest proportion of Venezuelans traveling alone (44 percent). This finding is explained by the nature of the survey sampling frame in Chile

(which included migrants who had started a regularization process), which likely resulted in a larger proportion of regular labor migrants. About 34 percent of Venezuelans in Ecuador and 29 percent in Colombia reported having traveled alone.

**These results provide insights into the needs of Venezuelans and the required policy response in each country.** They suggest that the need for access to education and health services for children is more pressing in Colombia, and, to a lesser extent, Ecuador than it is in Chile and Peru. Providing access to labor markets—accompanied by technical education, training, and other programs to enhance the match with the local labor market—seems particularly relevant in Chile.



This family left Venezuela in 2018, initially settling in neighboring Colombia before moving on to Peru, where they spent two years, finally deciding to move a third time, this time to Chile. Many Venezuelans have set their sights on Chile, which is widely seen as offering better job opportunities than other countries in the region.

<sup>12</sup> According to the Venezuelan household survey, two out of three Venezuelans abroad have regular migration status, having acquired citizenship (16 percent), permanent residency (22 percent), or temporary residency (27 percent) (ENCOVI 2022). Almost 12 percent of migrants remain irregular. The families in Venezuela of 17 percent of migrants do not know their status (ENCOVI 2022).

## How Did They Travel?

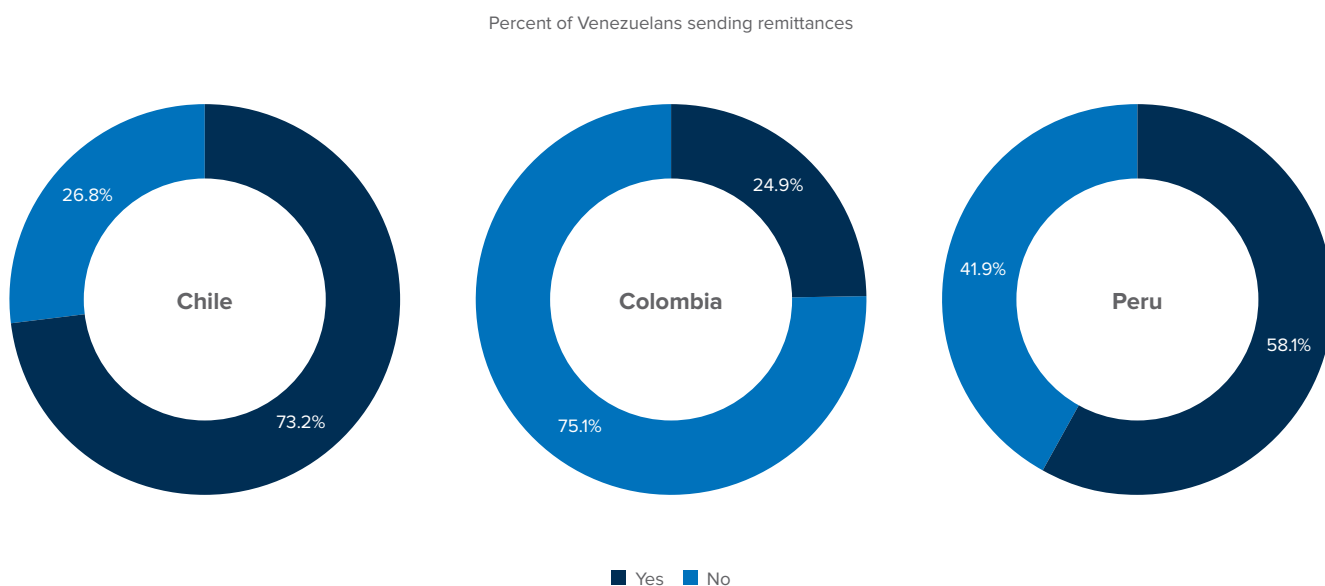
The mode of transport from Venezuela to each host country reflects geographic proximity as well as the socioeconomic profile of Venezuelans residing in the country of destination. A little over half of Venezuelans in Chile arrived by bus; nearly half arrived by plane. In Colombia, 88 percent arrived by public transport, with 9 percent arriving on foot and 3 percent by private transport. No data were available for Ecuador or Peru.

## Remittances

Sending remittances is prevalent among Venezuelans in Chile (73 percent) and Peru (58 percent). It is less common in Colombia (25 percent) (figure 4.3). No data were available on Ecuador.<sup>13</sup> These differences likely reflect the profiles of Venezuelans in each country. Venezuelans in Chile are more likely to be regular labor migrants who travel as individuals, leaving their families behind. In Colombia, family groups is more prevalent, and employment levels are relatively low.

In all countries for which information was available, employed and better-educated Venezuelans were more likely to send remittances back to Venezuela. In Chile and Peru, Venezuelans who are employed and those who are better educated are more likely to send remittances. In Peru, remitting is more equally spread across education levels. The majority of Venezuelans in Colombia do not remit, but those who are better educated and employed are far more likely to do so than those with low education levels and lack of employment.<sup>14</sup>

Figure 4.3 Remittances sent by Venezuelans in Chile, Colombia, and Peru



Sources: Authors, based on the following surveys. For Chile: Encuesta de Migración (World Bank, SERMIG, and Centro UC 2022). For Colombia: Pulso de la Migración (DANE 2021). For Peru: Encuesta dirigida a la población venezolana que reside en el país (INEI 2022).

<sup>13</sup> Most recipient households in Venezuela reported receiving remittances monthly or biweekly (ENCOVI 2022).

<sup>14</sup> The share of migrants who send remittances was 32 percent among the employed versus 13 percent among the unemployed and 35 percent among migrants with tertiary education versus 16 percent among migrants with no more than primary education.



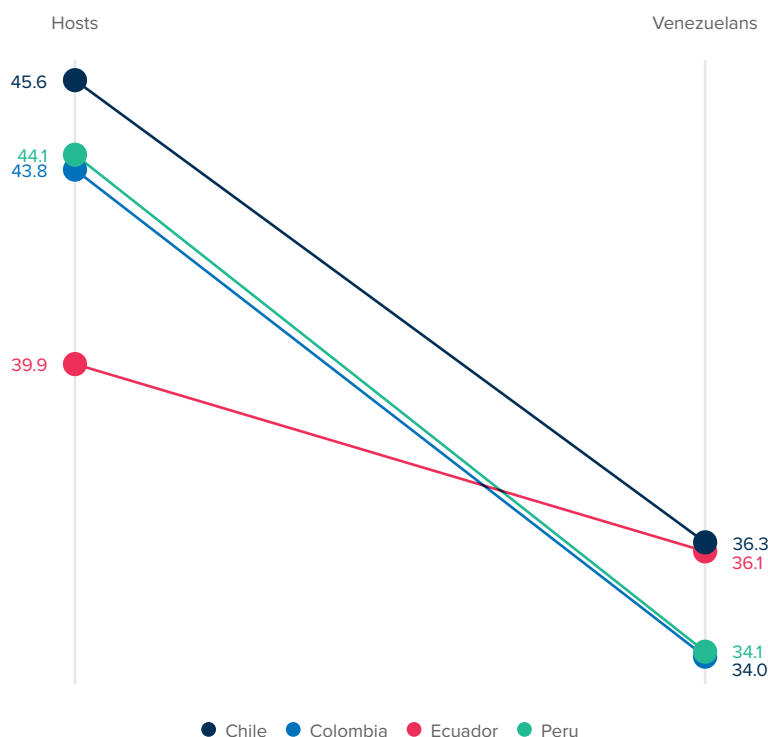
# 5 The Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics of Venezuelans and Host Communities

## Age

**On average, Venezuelans are younger than their host communities.**<sup>15</sup> The average age of Venezuelans is 34 in Colombia and Peru and 36 in Chile and Ecuador. The average age of host communities ranges from 39.9 to 45.6 (figure 5.1). Large shares of Venezuelans are in the 26–35 age range (48 percent in Chile, 43 percent in Ecuador, 40 percent in Peru, and 36 percent in Colombia). Venezuelans in Colombia are more evenly distributed across age groups than in the other three countries, mainly because their average household size is larger and more of them traveled as a family unit.

**In all four countries, the proportion of people of prime working age (25–45) is larger among migrants than hosts.** In Chile, the gap between Venezuelans and their host communities in the 26–35 age range is almost 30 percentage points. This large gap reflects the fact that the Venezuelans covered by the Chilean

Figure 5.1 Average age of hosts and Venezuelan migrants



Source: Authors, based on the following surveys. For Chile: Encuesta de Migración (World Bank, SERMIG, and Centro UC 2022) and Encuesta Nacional de Empleo (INEI 2022). For Colombia: Pulso de la Migración (DANE 2022) and Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares (DANE 2021). For Ecuador: LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys (World Bank 2022). For Peru: Encuesta dirigida a la población venezolana que reside en el país (INEI 2022), and Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (INEI 2021).

15 The sample used in this analysis is restricted to the population 18 and over. As a result, the estimators could differ from the official statistics in each country.

survey are applying for a residency permit and are therefore more likely to be regular (labor) migrants. In Chile and Ecuador, the gaps are driven mostly by women. In Peru, men drive the gap. The gap between the share of migrants older than 46 is negative in all countries, probably a result of the restrictions on mobility that come with age. The age profiles of Venezuelans in Colombia are similar to those of host communities, possibly because of the geographic proximity of the countries, which allows entire families to travel together.

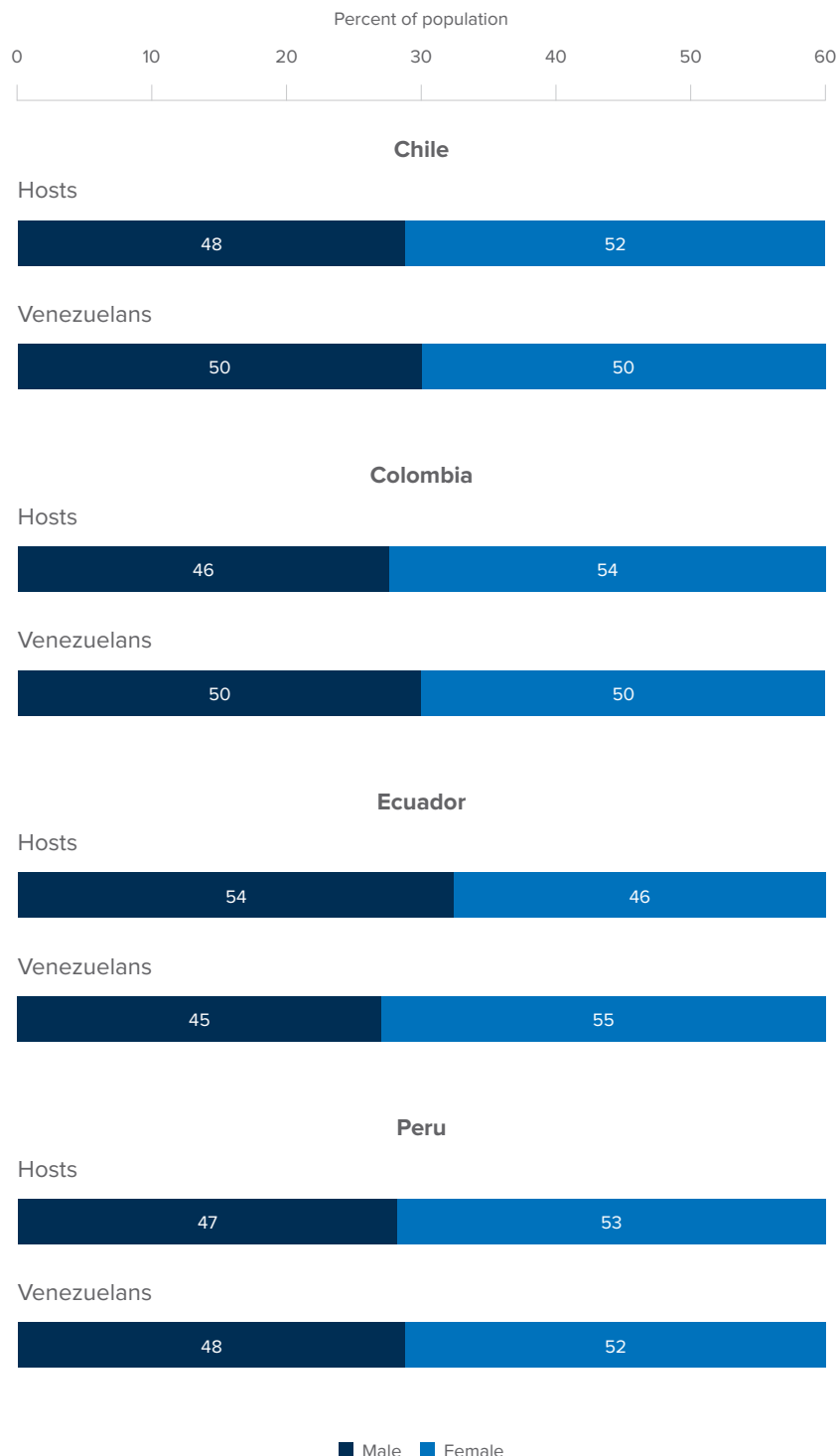
## Gender

**In all countries except Ecuador, women make up slightly more than half the population (figure 5.2).** The share of women among migrants is 55 percent in Ecuador and 52 percent in Peru. Only in Ecuador, is the share of men larger in host communities.

## Household Size

**In Colombia, households of Venezuelans are significantly larger than those of host communities; in the three other countries the difference is smaller.** Venezuelans in Colombia report an average of five members per household, the largest of all countries; the average household size of hosts is just three. In Chile, both host and Venezuelan households are small, with Venezuelan households slightly larger (3.2 versus 2.9 members). In Peru and Ecuador, host households are slightly larger than the households of Venezuelans. Differences in household composition highlight the need for differentiated policies on the social and labor market integration of migrants, particularly with respect to caregiving responsibilities within the household.

Figure 5.2 Population by gender



Source: Authors, based on the following surveys. For Chile: Encuesta de Migración (World Bank, SERMIG, and Centro UC 2022) and Encuesta Nacional de Empleo (INE 2022). For Colombia: Pulso de la Migración (DANE 2022) and Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares (DANE 2021). For Ecuador: Encuesta a Personas en Movilidad Humana y en Comunidades Receptoras en Ecuador (EPEC 2019) and LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys (World Bank 2022). For Peru: Encuesta dirigida a la población venezolana que reside en el país (INEI 2022), and Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (INEI 2021).

## Marital Status

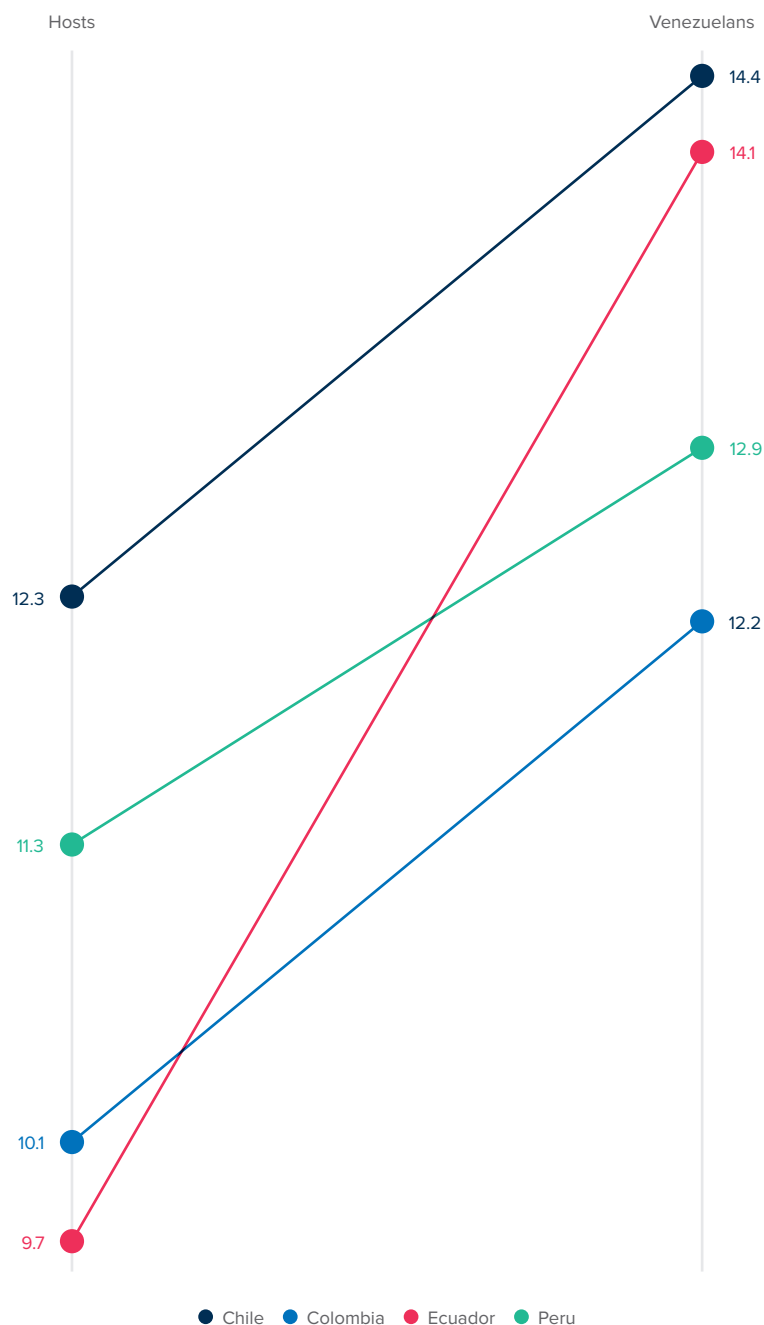
In all countries except Chile, most Venezuelans are married or cohabitating. In Chile, only about 36 percent of Venezuelans are married or in cohabitation; this figure is much lower than the figure for Chileans (48 percent). It is also much lower than the figures for Venezuelans in Colombia (72 percent), Peru (64 percent), and Ecuador (51 percent). These differences partly reflect the fact that the sample from Chile is more likely to include labor migrants (young workers). These figures could affect the stay duration and preferences of Venezuelans, as changes in marital status are likely to affect return rates.

## Education

In all countries, Venezuelans 18 and older are more educated than their host country peers on average (figure 5.3). The gap is largest in Ecuador (4.4 years of education in favor of Venezuelans), followed by Chile and Colombia, (2.1 years), and 1.6 in Peru (figure 5.3). In all countries, the average Venezuelans completed at least secondary education (12 years of education or more), two years more than the average local person.

In Chile and Ecuador, Venezuelans are considerably more likely than the host population to have some tertiary education. In Chile, 65 percent of Venezuelans have some tertiary education compared with 27 percent of hosts.<sup>16</sup> In Ecuador, the figures are 48 percent among Venezuelans and 11 percent among locals. In Colombia and Peru, 76 percent and 80 percent of Venezuelans have some level of secondary or tertiary education, respectively. Among nationals, the figures are 77 and 79 percent, respectively (see figure 5.4).

Figure 5.3 Average years of education of hosts and Venezuelans



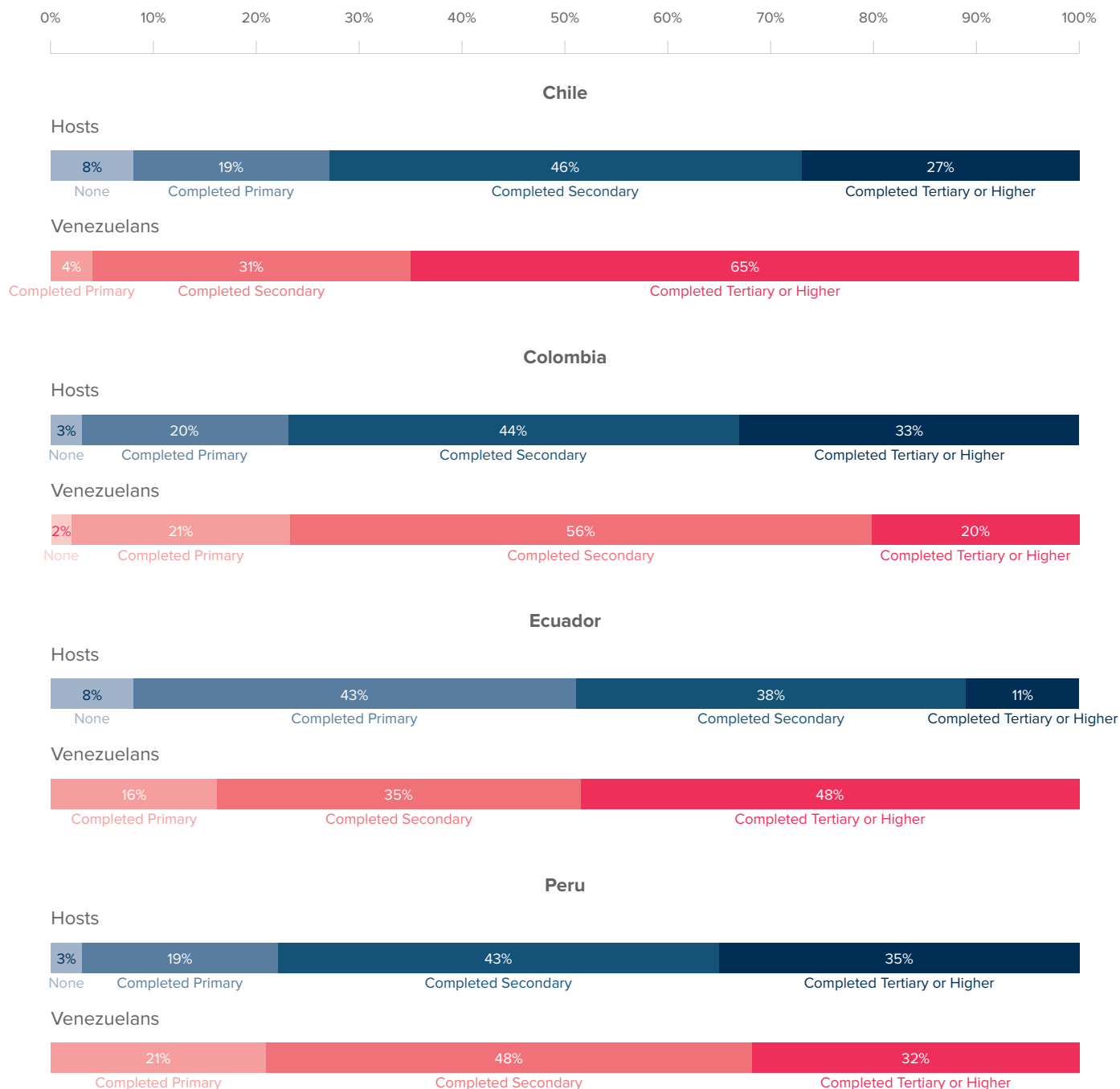
Source: Authors, based on the following surveys. For Chile: Encuesta de Migración (World Bank, SERMIG, and Centro UC 2022) and Encuesta Nacional de Empleo (INE 2022). For Colombia: Pulso de la Migración (DANE 2022) and Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares (DANE 2021). For Ecuador: LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys (World Bank 2022). For Peru: Encuesta dirigida a la población venezolana que reside en el país (ENPOVE II 2022) and Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (ENAHO 2021), INEI.

Note: In Ecuador, for migrants and hosts, the category 'Completed Tertiary or Higher' includes university and non-university studies regardless of whether the educational level is completed or not. In the case of Peru, the educational categories consist of complete or incomplete levels due to the survey design.

16 This finding reflects the fact that the sample is more likely to capture labor migrants.



**Figure 5.4 Distribution of educational level of hosts and Venezuelans**



Source: Authors, based on the following surveys. For Chile: Encuesta de Migración (World Bank, SERMIG, and Centro UC 2022) and Encuesta Nacional de Empleo (INE 2022). For Colombia: Pulso de la Migración (DANE 2022) and Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares (DANE 2021). For Ecuador: LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys (World Bank 2022). For Peru: Encuesta dirigida a la población venezolana que reside en el país (ENPOVE II 2022) and Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (ENAHO 2021), INEI.

Note: In Ecuador, for migrants and hosts, the category 'Completed Tertiary or Higher' includes university and non-university studies regardless of whether the educational level is completed or not. In the case of Peru, the educational categories consist of complete or incomplete levels due to the survey design.

**In Chile and Ecuador, among both Venezuelans and hosts, significantly more women than men have some tertiary education. In Peru and Colombia, men have more secondary education.** In Chile, there is a 42-percentage point gap between Venezuelan women with some tertiary education and host women; for men the gap is nearly 34 percentage points. In Ecuador, the gap is 42 percentage points for women and 33 percentage points for men. In Colombia, the share of Venezuelans with secondary education is 13 percentage points than hosts among women and 11 percentage points higher among men. In Peru, this gap is 5 percentage points for women and 4 percentage points for men.

## Certification

**Venezuelans often find it difficult to prove their qualifications in their host countries.** On the labor supply side, Venezuelans may be unaware of how to certify their titles or the importance of doing so or may lack the documents or resources they need. On the labor demand side, the lack of information about educational systems in other countries may affect employers' perceptions of Venezuelans' productivity. As a consequence, both returns to education and the probability of being employed for Venezuelans are likely lower than they would have been if the Venezuelans had studied in the country of destination.<sup>17</sup>

**A certificate of equivalence issued by a recognized institution in the destination country can help**

**migrants find employment, as international experience shows.**

In Sweden, for example, the recognition of a foreign degree increased the probability of migrants being employed by 4.4 percentage points and their wages by 13.9 log points (Tibajev and Hellgren 2019). In Switzerland, a certificate of equivalence allowed migrants to use their skills as if they had studied in the host country (Pecoraro and Tani 2023).

**Most Venezuelans have not certified their academic titles in their host countries.**

Only 5 percent of Venezuelans living in Colombia, 10 percent in Chile, and 22 percent in Ecuador have done so (no data were available for Peru). This problem may partly explain why many Venezuelans are employed below their skill level and mostly in the informal sector. The main reason why Venezuelans do not certify their titles in Ecuador (45 percent) and Colombia (41 percent) is the lack of necessary documents. In Chile, the main reason for not certifying is the lack of interest by Venezuelans and the perception that it may represent an unnecessary administrative measure (25 percent).

**As Venezuelans flows in the region intensify, the need to create or simplify qualification recognition mechanisms and to inform and orient migrants about the process increases.**

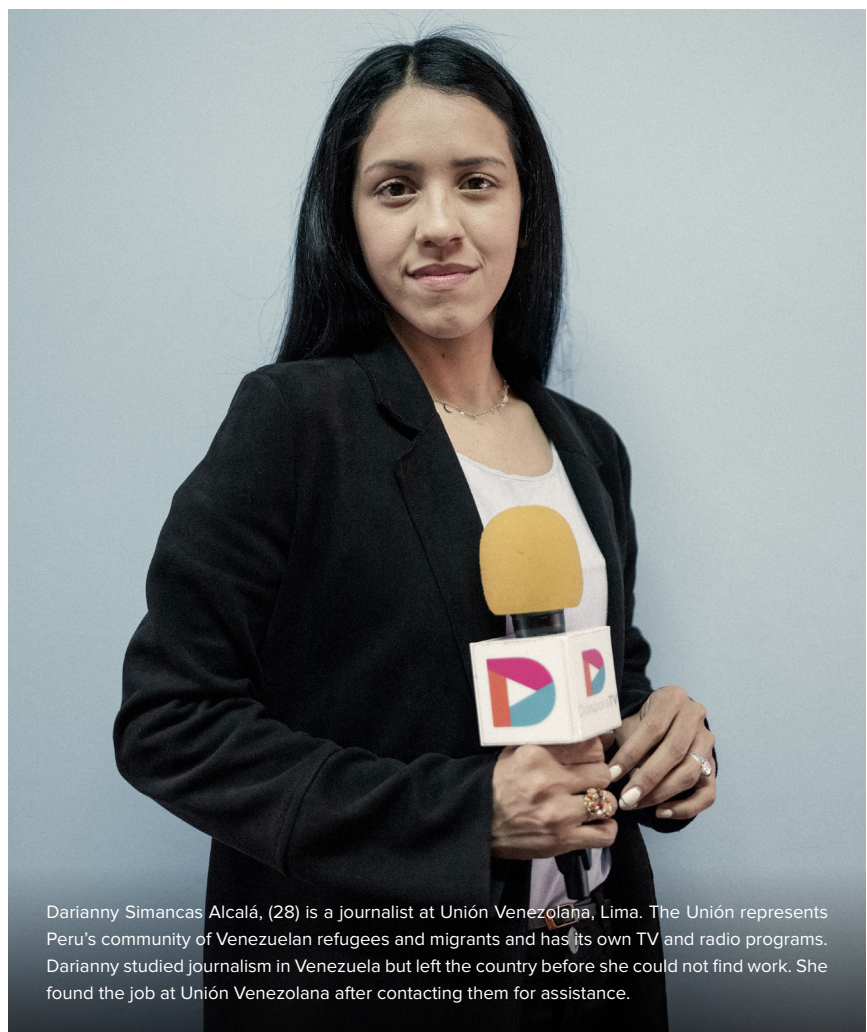
Boosting productivity in these countries requires promoting the economic integration of migrants into occupations in which they can fully use their skills. The economic benefits of accreditation are likely to exceed the political and implementation costs of doing so.

17 For example, Basilio and Bauer (2010) show that in Germany, the return for an additional year of education for men depends on where it was acquired, in Germany (7.0 percent) or abroad (5.5 percent).

# 6 Labor Market Outcomes for Venezuelans and Hosts

## Employment Rates

**Venezuelans are more likely to be employed than hosts in all countries except Colombia, where the difference is very small (figure 6.1).<sup>18</sup>** In Chile, where the largest gap (25 percentage points) is observed, almost 90 percent of Venezuelans are employed, compared with 64 percent of hosts. Approximately 90 percent of Venezuelans are employed in Ecuador, where the gap with hosts is smaller (12 percentage points). Venezuelans in both countries have higher levels of education than their hosts, although many of them are not able to work at the level of their skills and preparation.<sup>19</sup> In Peru, 81 percent of Venezuelans are employed, and the gap with hosts is 9 percentage points. In Colombia, the employment situation of migrants and hosts is similar: 63 percent of Venezuelans are employed, 25 percent are inactive, and 12 percent are unemployed; the figures for hosts are 64 percent, 25 percent, and 11 percent, respectively. These figures suggest that there is a higher degree of substitutivity among workers, at least for some segments of the labor market.



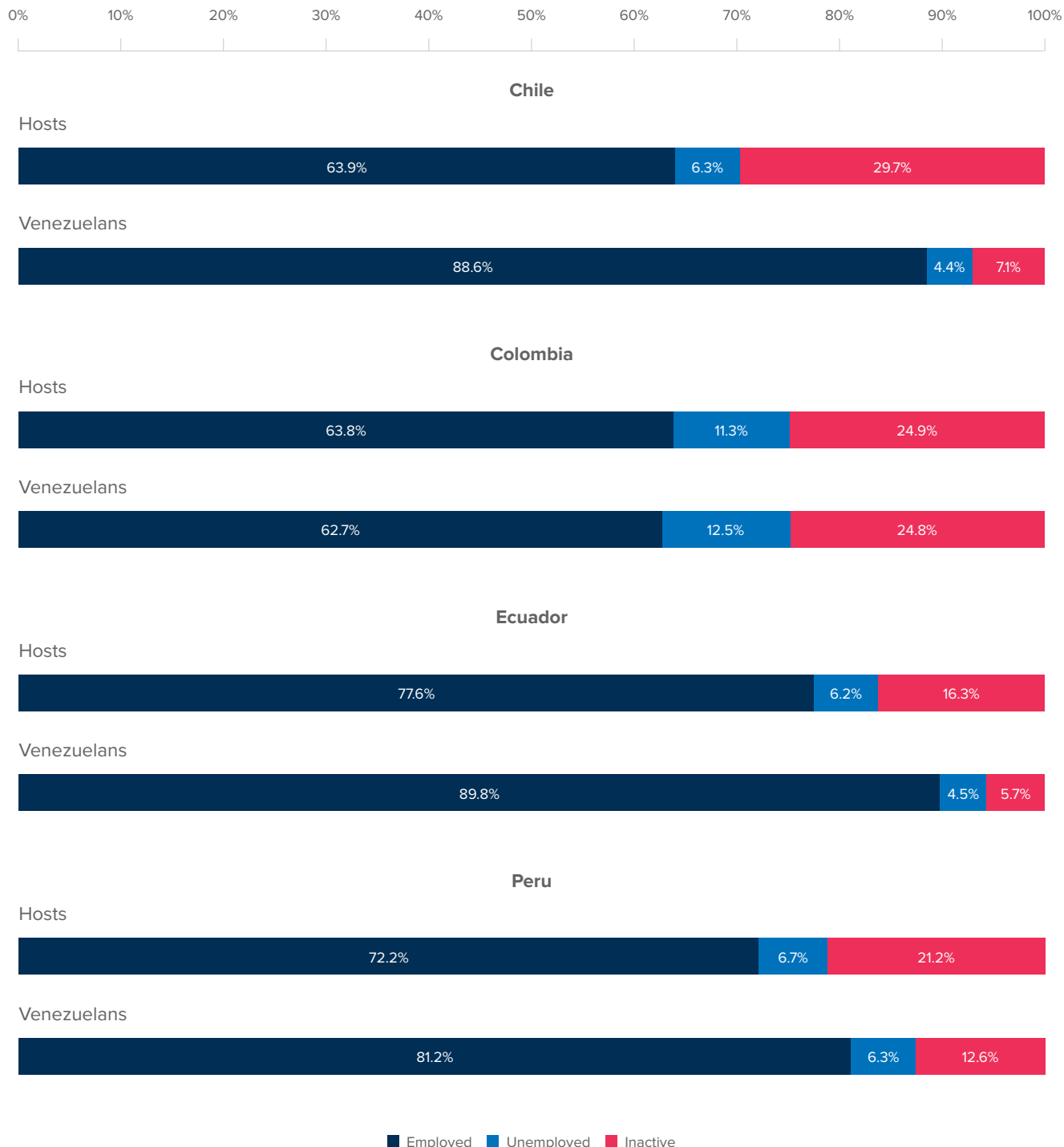
Darianny Simancas Alcalá, (28) is a journalist at Unión Venezolana, Lima. The Unión represents Peru's community of Venezuelan refugees and migrants and has its own TV and radio programs. Darianny studied journalism in Venezuela but left the country before she could not find work. She found the job at Unión Venezolana after contacting them for assistance.

<sup>18</sup> Employment rates are among people 18–65 who are active in the labor market.

<sup>19</sup> The results for Chile may also be related to the nature of the sample, which is more likely to capture labor migrants.

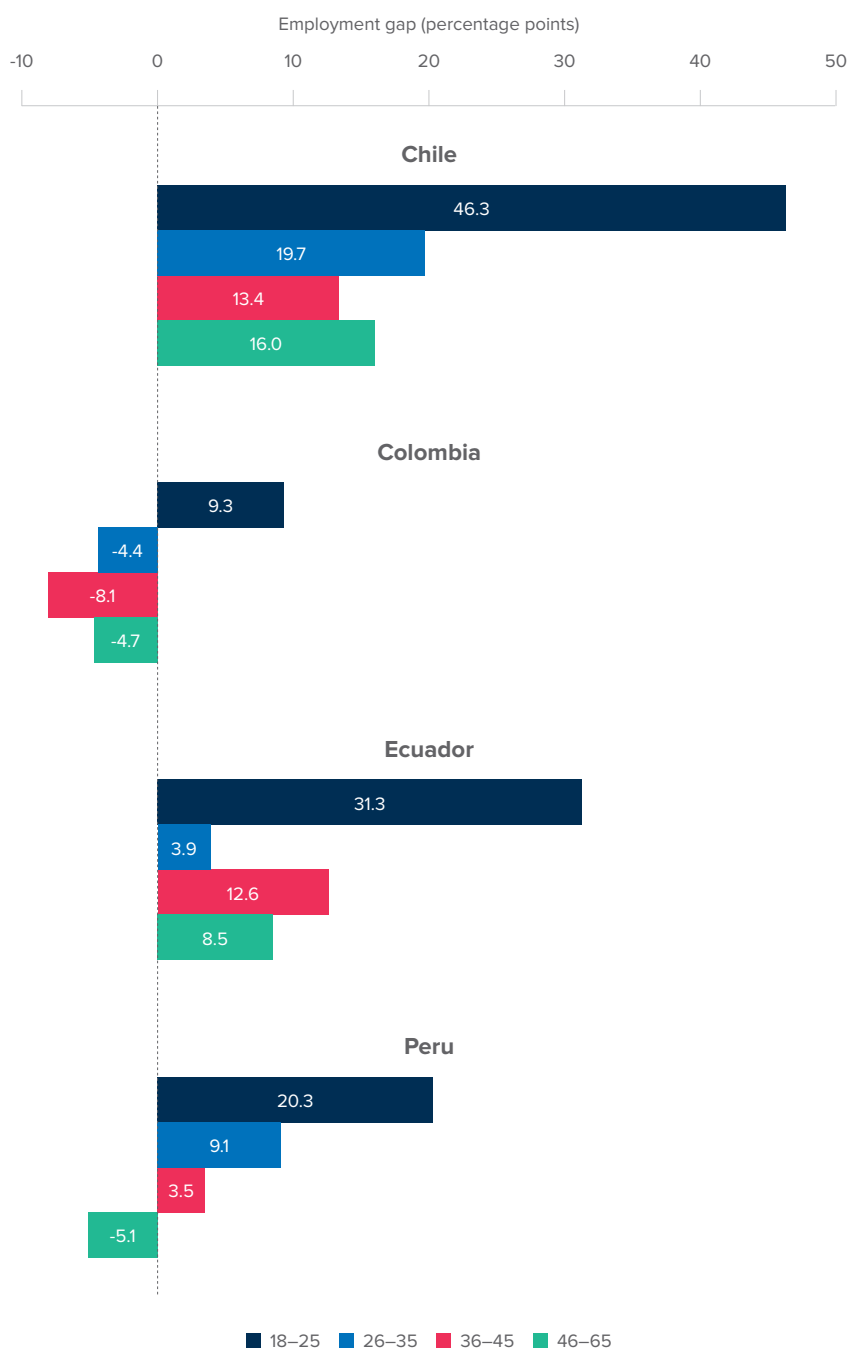


**Figure 6.1 Population by employment category**



Source: Authors, based on the following surveys. For Chile: Encuesta de Migración (World Bank, SERMIG, and Centro UC 2022) and Encuesta Nacional de Empleo (INE 2022). For Colombia: Pulso de la Migración (DANE 2022) and Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares (DANE 2021). For Ecuador: Encuesta a Personas en Movilidad Humana y en Comunidades Receptoras en Ecuador (INEC 2019) and LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys (World Bank 2022). For Peru: Encuesta dirigida a la población venezolana que reside en el país (INEI 2022) and Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (INEI 2021).

**Figure 6.2 Employment gap between hosts and Venezuelans, by age group**



**Employment rates of men and women differ more for Venezuelans than for hosts, except among women in Colombia.** This Venezuelan/host gap is wider among women in Chile and Ecuador (31 percentage points in Chile and 20 percentage points in Ecuador) than among men (18 percentage points in Chile and 7 percentage points in Ecuador). Colombia is the only country in which the employment rate of women is lower for migrants than for hosts (inactivity is also higher), possibly as a result of the presence of larger migrant households in the country.

**The probability of being employed is higher for men, people with tertiary education (except in Ecuador), and people 26–45 (table 6.1).** Women are less likely than men to be employed in all countries, whether they are migrants or hosts. In Colombia, the gender gap for hosts is 23 percentage points and 31 percentage points for migrants. Venezuelans with tertiary education are between 10 percentage points (in Chile) and 24 percentage points (in Peru) more likely to be employed than Venezuelans with no schooling. In Chile, Venezuelans 26–35 are 7 percentage points more likely to be employed than younger Venezuelans (18–25).

Sources: Authors, based on the following surveys. Chile: Encuesta de Migración (World Bank, SERMIG, and Centro UC 2022) and Encuesta Nacional de Empleo (INE 2022). Colombia: Pulso de la Migración (DANE 2022) and Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares (DANE 2021). Ecuador: Encuesta a Personas en Movilidad Humana y en Comunidades Receptoras en Ecuador (INEC 2019) and LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys (World Bank 2022). Peru: Encuesta dirigida a la población venezolana que reside en el país (INEI 2022) and Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (INEI 2021).

**Table 6.1 Probability of hosts and Venezuelans being employed**

	Chile		Colombia		Ecuador		Peru	
	Hosts (1)	Venezuelans (2)	Hosts (3)	Venezuelans (4)	Hosts (5)	Venezuelans (6)	Hosts (7)	Venezuelans (8)
<b>Age group</b>								
26–35	0.292*** (0.009)	0.070* (0.028)	0.279*** (0.007)	0.111*** (0.015)	0.210*** (0.051)	–0.044 (0.066)	0.210*** (0.010)	0.068*** (0.008)
36–45	0.375*** (0.012)	0.046* (0.018)	0.326*** (0.009)	0.136*** (0.017)	0.136* (0.055)	0.009 (0.068)	0.266*** (0.011)	0.070*** (0.010)
46–65	0.279*** (0.012)	–0.008 (0.036)	0.209*** (0.015)	–0.006 (0.020)	0.155** (0.057)	–0.010 (0.071)	0.207*** (0.013)	–0.040** (0.017)
<b>Gender</b>								
Female	–0.211*** (0.005)	–0.074** (0.026)	–0.228*** (0.010)	–0.312*** (0.010)	–0.223*** (0.036)	–0.113*** (0.034)	–0.194*** (0.008)	–0.234*** (0.011)
<b>Education level</b>								
Primary	0.053*** (0.013)	0.003 (0.020)	0.158*** (0.011)	0.075 (0.041)	–0.328* (0.137)	–0.638 (105.714)	0.090*** (0.024)	0.166 (0.093)
Secondary	0.125*** (0.011)	0.057*** (0.014)	0.204*** (0.012)	0.128** (0.040)	–0.318* (0.137)	–0.670 (105.714)	0.098*** (0.022)	0.202* (0.090)
Tertiary	0.260*** (0.013)	0.100*** (0.019)	0.245*** (0.015)	0.184*** (0.042)	–0.205 (0.139)	–0.626 (105.714)	0.114*** (0.025)	0.242** (0.092)
<b>Marital status and household size</b>								
Married	0.010* (0.005)	–0.017 (0.015)	0.023*** (0.004)	–0.032* (0.013)	–0.029 (0.040)	–0.026 (0.031)	–0.002 (0.006)	–0.071*** (0.010)
Household size	–0.008*** (0.002)	–0.005 (0.004)	–0.013*** (0.002)	–0.015*** (0.002)	–0.016 (0.010)	–0.006 (0.008)	–0.007*** (0.002)	–0.011*** (0.002)
Mean	0.614	0.887	0.598	0.622	0.748	0.906	0.733	0.808
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.123	0.060	0.093	0.116	0.135	0.084	0.079	0.133
Observations	38,244	1,215	383,075	6,046	473	352	44,971	7,588

Sources: Authors, based on the following surveys. Chile: Encuesta de Migración (World Bank, SERMIG, and Centro UC 2022) and Encuesta Nacional de Empleo (INE 2022). Colombia: Pulso de la Migración (DANE 2022), and Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares (DANE 2021). Ecuador: Encuesta a Personas en Movilidad Humana y en Comunidades Receptoras en Ecuador (EPEC 2019) and LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys (World Bank 2022). Peru: Encuesta dirigida a la población venezolana que reside en el país (INEI 2022), and Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (INEI 2021).

Note: Multivariate probit model, with clustered standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\* Statistically significant at the 1 percent level. \*\* Statistically significant at the 5 percent level. \* Statistically significant at the 10 percent level.

**Marital status and household size are negatively correlated with the probability of a Venezuelan being employed.** Being married reduces the probability of Venezuelans being employed by around 7 percentage points in Peru and 3 percentage points in Colombia. In host communities, being married increases the probability of being employed by 1 percentage point in Chile and 2 percentage points in

Colombia. The number of household members reduces the probability of being employed for both Venezuelans and host communities. Among Venezuelans, it decreases the probability of employment by 1.5 percentage points in Colombia and 1.0 percentage point in Peru.



## Occupation

**The most common occupation among Venezuelans in Chile is services and sales.** About 29 percent of Venezuelans are employed as service and sales workers (21 percent among hosts). About 15 percent work as technicians and associated professionals (14 percent among hosts), and 14 percent work as professionals (17 percent among hosts).

**Almost half of Venezuelans in Ecuador work in the services and sales sector—almost three times the rate of hosts (16 percent).** About 25 percent of Venezuelans in Ecuador are employed in as unskilled or semi-skilled laborers (19 percent of hosts).<sup>20</sup> About 13 percent of Venezuelans are engaged in craft and related trades (19 percent of hosts). Peru has the largest concentration of Venezuelans in low-productivity occupations, with 38 percent working in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs and 26 percent working in sales and services. About 68 percent of Venezuelans in Peru have primary or secondary education, compared with 62 percent for hosts. Information on occupation was not available on Colombia. These results suggest that Venezuelans are employed below their skill level.

**The loss of productivity as result of downgrading limits the economic gains from migration. These losses can be permanent if this situation continues.** A well-designed response framework should provide the conditions for migration to have the largest positive impact on the labor market. Countries can, for example, accelerate the recognition of degrees and the validation of migrants' skills. In Peru, municipalities certify migrants' skills. Ecuador and Argentina have implemented fast-track certification systems (IMF 2022).

## Health Insurance

**Employed Venezuelans in Chile and Peru are more likely than hosts to have health insurance; the opposite is true for Ecuador.**<sup>21</sup> In Chile, 96 percent of Venezuelan employees report having health insurance through their employers, a proxy for formality in the labor market.<sup>22</sup> This proportion is slightly higher than among hosts (91 percent). A plausible explanation for these numbers is the nature of the sample in Chile, which is likely biased in favor of regular and highly skilled migrants. In Peru, access to health care among Venezuelans (nearly 23 percent) is slightly higher than among host communities (16 percent). In Ecuador, hosts are more likely to have health care through their employer (21 percent) than Venezuelans (4 percent).

## Wages

**In the two countries for which wage data were available (Peru and Colombia), migrants earn less than hosts.** Venezuelans earn an average monthly wage of \$698 (US dollars, PPP 2017) working in Peru and about \$595 in Colombia (figure 6.3).<sup>23</sup> Although the distribution of wages for Venezuelans between the two countries is skewed to the left, there is a higher concentration of Venezuelans with wages below \$400 in Colombia than in Peru. Peru has a higher concentration of Venezuelans earning more than \$1,000 (figure 6.4).

**A significant gender wage gap is observed for both Venezuelans and hosts in both countries.** In Colombia, the wage gap between Venezuelan men and women is \$110. In Peru, it is \$154. In both countries, both men and women from host communities earn higher wage income than Venezuelans.

**For Venezuelans in Colombia and Peru, wages increase with education levels, but the differences are not as marked as they are for hosts (figure 6.5).** On average, the monthly wage gap among hosts between someone with tertiary education and someone with secondary education is about \$478 in Colombia and \$343 in Peru. For Venezuelans, the gap narrows to about \$54 in Colombia and \$50 in Peru. These results suggest that more educated Venezuelans are not employed at the level of their education and skills.

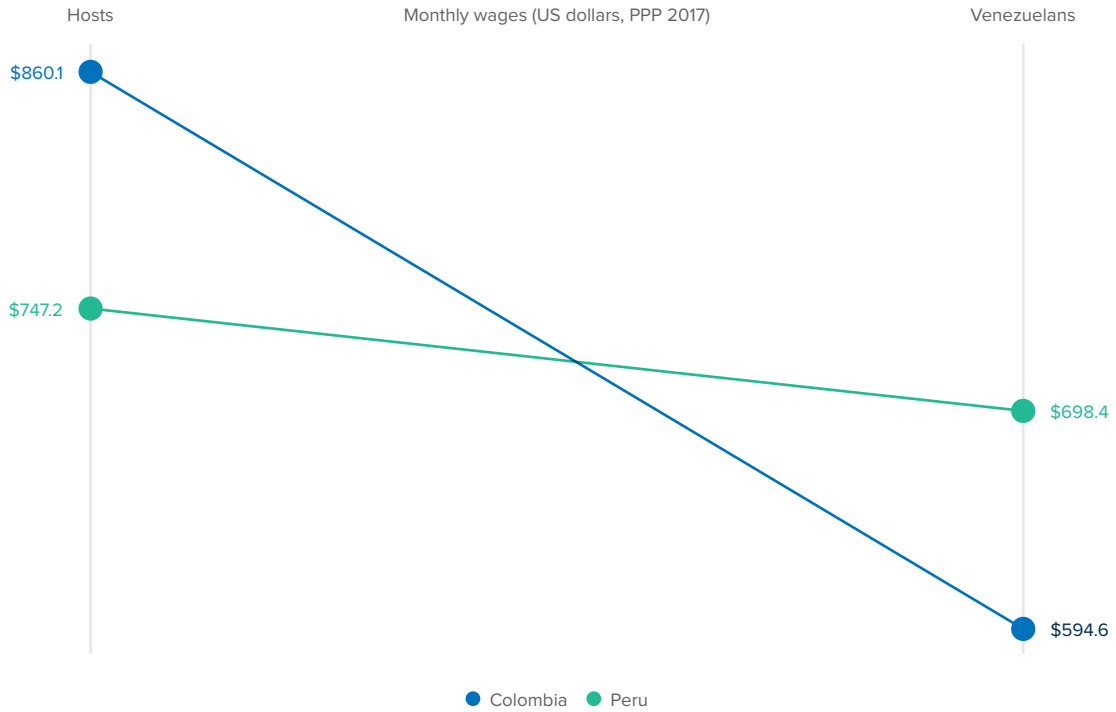
20 Examples of unskilled or semi-skilled occupations include domestic cleaners and helpers, vehicle cleaners, garden and horticultural workers, and street and related service workers.

21 In Chile, migrants and hosts were asked "Does your employer contribute to the health system (public or private) on your behalf?" In Ecuador, they were asked "Do you receive medical insurance from your employer?" In Peru, they were asked "To which of the following health insurance systems are you currently affiliated?"

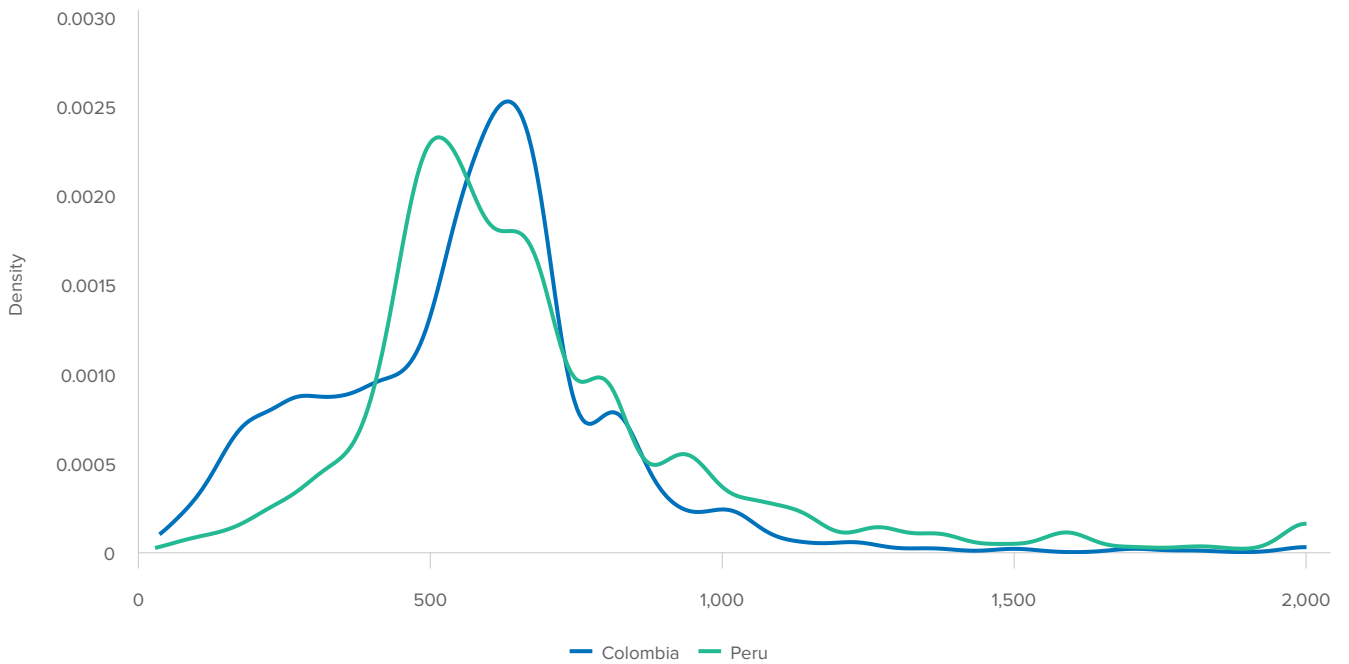
22 Formality as measured by contributions to the health system and the pension system based on the worker's employment relationship reaches 75 percent among migrants.

23 All wages reported are in 2017 purchasing power parity dollars.

**Figure 6.3 Monthly wages in Colombia and Peru**



**Figure 6.4 Monthly wage distribution in Colombia and Peru**



Sources: Authors, based on the following surveys. Colombia: Pulso de la Migración (DANE 2022) and Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares (DANE 2021). Peru: Encuesta dirigida a la población venezolana que reside en el país (ENPOVE II 2022), and Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (INEI 2021).

Note: Wages are measured in US dollars (PPP 2017) and censored at 2000 dollars. Confidence intervals are included.

### Box 6.1 Effects of Venezuelans on labor markets of host countries

Venezuelans appear to have had a small negative impact on wages in host countries. The burden fell disproportionately on workers with little education engaged in the informal sector in areas with large concentrations of migrants.

In Colombia, Caruso, Gomez, and Mueller (2021); Delgado-Prieto (2021); Peñaloza-Pacheco (2022); Lombardo and others (2021); Santamaria (2020); and Bonilla-Mejía and others (2020) find negative effects on the hourly wages of native Colombians, with the effect concentrated among less-educated host country workers in the informal sector. The magnitude and significance of this wage effect varies substantially across studies, mainly because of differences in the definition of migration, particularly stock versus flows (Lebow 2022). Conservative estimates of the decrease in the hourly wage effect on host country workers associated with a 1 percentage point increase in the migrant share are 1.0–1.7 percent (Delgado-Prieto 2021; Lebow 2022).

Pedrazzi and Peñaloza-Pacheco (2023) find that increased labor market competition in Colombia reduced the labor supply of low-skilled women in the host country but increased the participation of highly skilled host women with children at home. This disparity is explained by the increased availability of cheaper domestic services. Delgado-Prieto (2021) also finds a negative effect on labor force participation (extensive margin), mostly in the formal sector, where many workers earn the minimum wage.

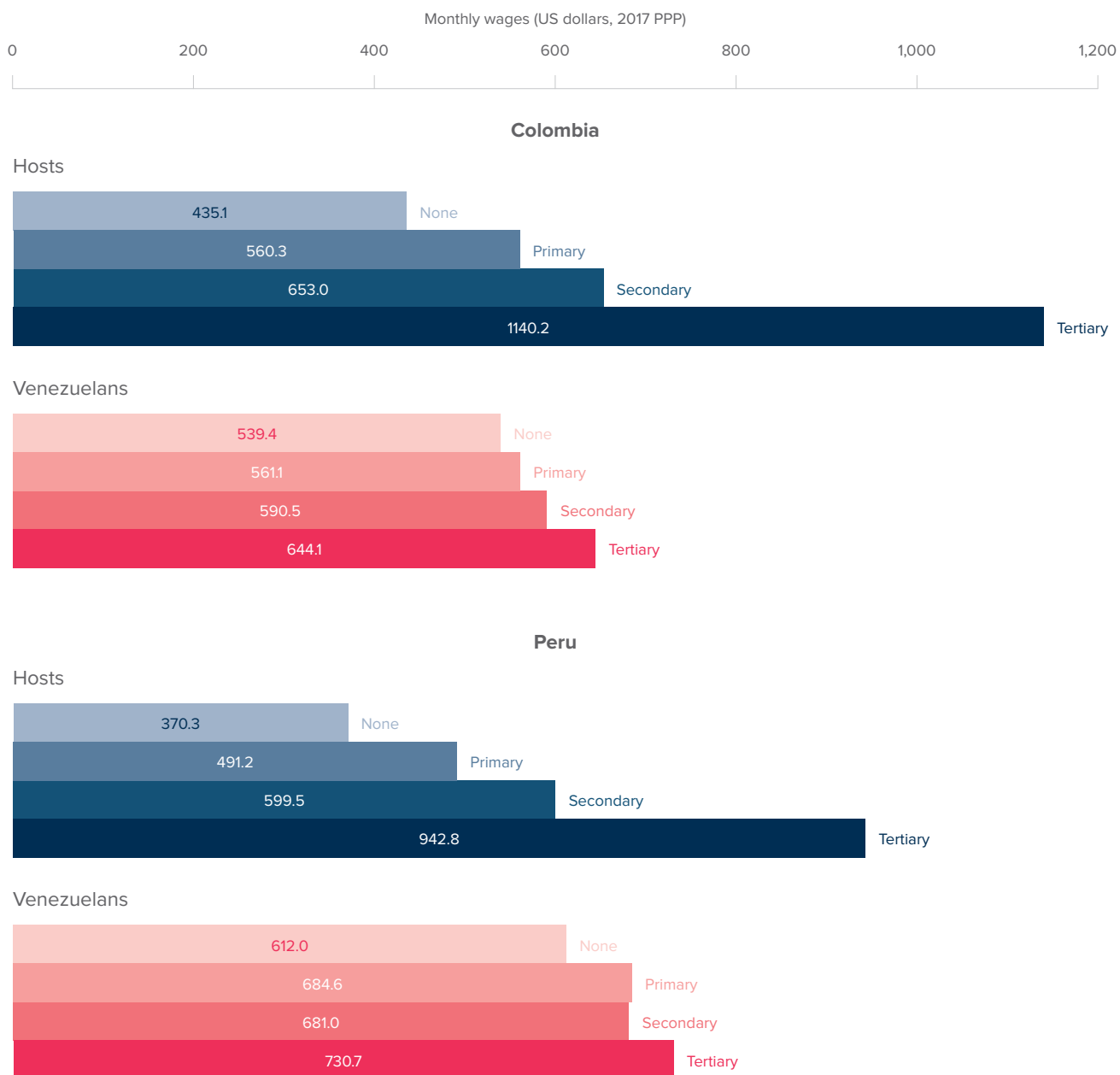
A study of Ecuador also finds negative effects, especially on less educated, informal sector workers. Olivieri and others (2021) find that young Ecuadorian workers with low levels of education residing in high-inflow regions experienced a decline in employment quality, a 5 percentage-point increase in informal employment, and a 13 percentage-point reduction in labor earnings compared with workers with similar characteristics living in areas with very low or no inflows of Venezuelans.

Boruchowicz, Martinelli, and Parker (2021) find that the inflow of Venezuelans in Peru led to a reallocation of local workers toward less skilled jobs but that the market adjustment to such a large shock in labor supply was smooth. Morales and Pierola (2020) find a decline in real monthly earnings for workers in Peru with secondary education and formal employment in the service sector but an increase for workers with tertiary education in some sectors.

In Brazil, particularly in the state of Roraima, Shamsuddin and others (2022) find that although the Venezuelan influx created formal employment for natives, the effects on wages are heterogeneous across different groups and municipalities, with low-skilled and female workers adversely affected. Zago (2022) estimates that a 1 percent increase in the population of Roraima as result of migration led to a 1.6 percent decline in monthly earnings for workers in the region, with greater impacts on racial minorities, men, and workers in the construction and food services industries.



**Figure 6.5 Monthly wages of hosts and Venezuelans in Colombia and Peru, by education level**



Sources: Colombia: Pulso de la Migración (DANE 2022) and Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares (DANE 2021). Peru: Encuesta dirigida a la población venezolana que reside en el país (INEI 2022) and Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (INEI 2021).

Note: Wages are measured in US dollars (PPP 2017) and censored at 2000 dollars.

**In Colombia and Peru, returns to schooling are lower for Venezuelans than for hosts. In Peru, there are positive (albeit diminishing) returns to years of experience.** Returns to education are analyzed using a Mincer equation, which regresses the logarithm of wages on years of education and experience, among other relevant variables (table 6.2). An additional year of education is associated with an increase of about 10 percent in the monthly wage of hosts in both countries; for Venezuelans it represents an increase of just 2.1 percent in Colombia and 1.4 percent in Peru. In Peru, the return to one year of experience is 1.2 percent for Venezuelans and 3.8 percent for hosts. This effect decreases with more years of education. In Colombia, years of experience has no significant correlation to wages for Venezuelans.

**Gender and other demographic factors, such as marital status and household size, are also correlated with the monthly wages of Venezuelans.** One additional household member for a Venezuelan in Colombia is associated with a decrease of 2.5 percent in monthly wage. In Peru, there is no correlation. The marital status of Venezuelans is correlated with wages: married Venezuelans in Peru earn on average 2.5 percent higher wages than single ones, all other factors constant. Accounting for other factors (such as education, experience, marital status, and household size), the wages of Venezuelan women are 28 percent lower than the wages of Venezuelan men in Colombia and 27 percent lower in Peru. The gap in host communities is 19 percent in Colombia and 26 percent in Peru.

**Table 6.2 Mincer model for wages of hosts and Venezuelans in Colombia and Peru**

Variable	Chile		Peru	
	Hosts (1)	Venezuelans (2)	Hosts (3)	Venezuelans (4)
Education (years)	0.1012*** (0.0025)	0.0210*** (0.0046)	0.1007*** (0.0031)	0.0147*** (0.0020)
Experience (years)	0.0193*** (0.0014)	-0.0028 (0.0060)	0.0383*** (0.0034)	0.0123*** (0.0016)
Experience squared	-0.0002*** (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0001)	-0.0005*** (0.0000)	-0.0002*** (0.0000)
Female	-0.1915*** (0.0087)	-0.2788*** (0.0330)	-0.2585*** (0.0268)	-0.2705*** (0.0178)
Married	0.0926*** (0.0064)	0.0404 (0.0359)	0.1305*** (0.0160)	0.0254* (0.0084)
Household size	-0.0221*** (0.0021)	-0.0250*** (0.0071)	0.0001 (0.0032)	-0.0040 (0.0028)
Constant	5.1313*** (0.0550)	6.2051*** (0.1019)	4.5603*** (0.0913)	6.2287*** (0.0315)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.383	0.104	0.301	0.103
Observations	102,952	1,008	17,687	4,066

Sources: Authors, based on the following surveys: Chile: Encuesta de Migración (World Bank, SERMIG, and Centro UC 2022) and Encuesta Nacional de Empleo (INE 2022). Colombia: Pulso de la Migración (DANE 2022) and Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares (DANE 2021). Ecuador: Encuesta a Personas en Movilidad Humana y en Comunidades Receptoras en Ecuador (INEC 2019) and LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys (World Bank 2022). Peru: Encuesta dirigida a la población venezolana que reside en el país (INEI 2022), and Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (INEI 2021).

Note: Clustered standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\* Statistically significant at the 1 percent level. \*\* Statistically significant at the 5 percent level. \* Statistically significant at the 10 percent level.





Deisy Ydrogo Zúñiga, a 36-year-old Venezuelan woman, poses for a portrait in the Colombian city of Cali. Deisy took part in a training program aimed at securing both Venezuelan refugees and migrants and vulnerable locals with entry-level positions in sectors that are in chronic need of personnel. Thanks to the program, which is run by the NGO Cuso International and has enjoyed UNHCR support, Deisy trained to work on the janitorial staff at a hospital in Cali, a large city in northwestern Colombia that is home to a substantial community of Venezuelan refugees and migrants. Before arriving in Cali several years ago with her mother and siblings, Deisy worked in customs in Venezuela.



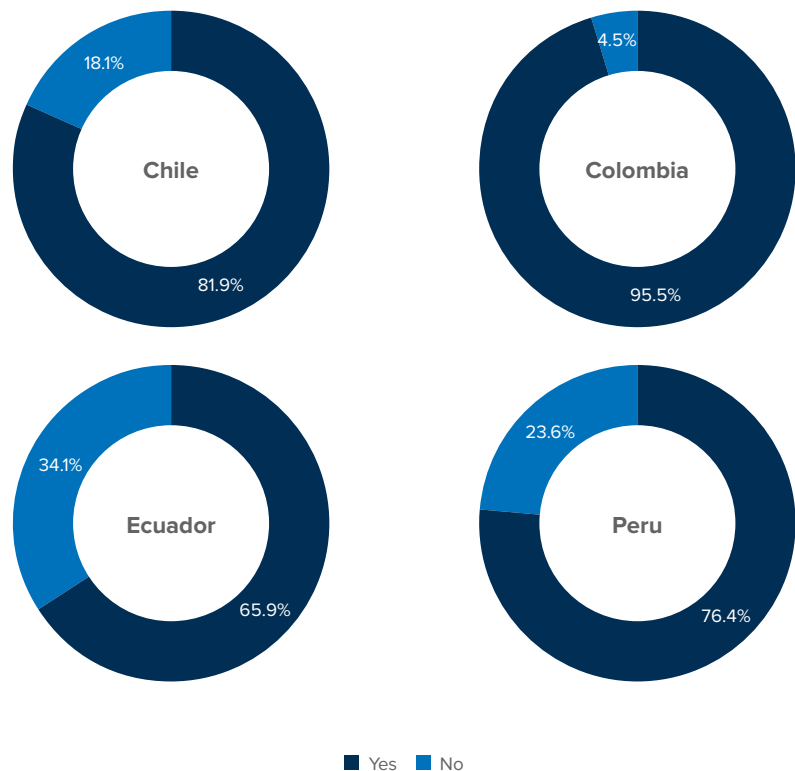
# 7 Venezuelans' Intentions to Stay in the Host Country and Perceptions of Integration and Discrimination

## Plans to Stay

The vast majority of Venezuelans report wanting to stay in the country where they are currently located. That is 96 percent in Colombia, 82 percent in Chile, 76 percent in Peru, and 66 percent in Ecuador (figure 7.1) irrespective of gender. This intention is slightly higher among those who are employed, particularly in Chile, where 83 percent of employed Venezuelans and 75 percent of unemployed Venezuelans report a desire to stay.

As most Venezuelans indicate that they plan to stay in their host countries, integration policies should be prioritized. Host countries should focus on facilitating the economic and social inclusion of Venezuelans into their communities, as well as addressing their basic needs.

Figure 7.1 Intention to stay



Source: Authors, based on the following surveys. Chile: Encuesta de Migración (World Bank, SERMIG, and Centro UC 2022). Colombia: Pulso de la Migración (DANE 2021). Ecuador, Encuesta a Personas en Movilidad Humana y en Comunidades Receptoras en Ecuador (EPEC 2019) and LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys World Bank (HFPS 2022). Peru: Encuesta dirigida a la población venezolana que reside en el país (ENPOVE II 2022), INEI.

Note: The timeframe of residency plans for migrants is one year in Colombia and five years in Chile. In Peru and Ecuador, it is unspecified.

## Social Integration

**The participation of Venezuelans in activities in their host communities is low and is mainly limited to religious activity, despite the shared language and, to some extent, culture.** The share of Venezuelans who report taking part in religious activities is 39 percent in Ecuador, 11 percent in Colombia, 8 percent in Chile, and 7 percent in Peru. In Colombia, 23 percent reported taking courses (on childbirth, pottery, and entrepreneurship, for example); the majority (60 percent) reported not participating in any social activity. These results suggest that there is room to enhance the social inclusion of Venezuelans in host communities. Strengthening their integration in all spheres of society has the potential to reduce discrimination and xenophobia (box 7.1).

## Perceptions of Discrimination

**Discrimination is cited as a salient issue by 26–40 percent of Venezuelans in the four host countries (figure 7.2), particularly by women and younger migrants.** In Ecuador, 40 percent of Venezuelans reported discrimination, with more women than men doing so. Significantly fewer Venezuelans in Colombia reported discrimination (26 percent). In Peru, 33 percent of Venezuelans report this experience, and more women than men reported discrimination. These results are consistent with recent studies reporting comparatively low levels of discrimination for Colombia and for men in general (Chaves-Gonzalez, Amaral, and Mora, 2021). Discrimination declines with age in all four countries. In Ecuador and

Peru, it peaks in middle age (36–45), at 49 and 35 percent respectively. In Colombia and to a lesser extent Peru, discrimination increases with the level of education of the migrant. In contrast, in Ecuador and Chile, people with the lowest education levels report the highest rates of discrimination.

### Box 7.1 Lessons from the successful integration of asylum-seekers in Germany

Nearly 1 million Syrian refugees and asylum-seekers entered Germany between July 2015 and February 2016, putting pressure on the government and civil society organizations. Germany's efforts to integrate the newcomers into society were largely successful, albeit not without challenges.

Over half of them (55 percent) were employed within five years of arrival, with increasing employment rates each year. Factors contributing to labor market integration included guaranteed residence status, decentralized implementation of integration schemes, the presence of dynamic medium-size enterprises, and vocational training opportunities. Challenges in labor market integration included gender gaps in employment and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on unemployment rates and integration measures.

Decentralization played a crucial role in addressing some of the challenges of inclusion. Language acquisition was a key factor in education and entry into the labor market. Segregating teenage refugees into separate classes proved counterproductive for integration. The introduction of electronic health care cards improved access to health care services by asylum-seekers. The influx of migrants highlighted shortcomings in education and health care delivery, prompting efforts to improve data collection, identify specific needs, and address gaps in service provision. The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees enhanced data collection and digitalization efforts to better manage the integration process.

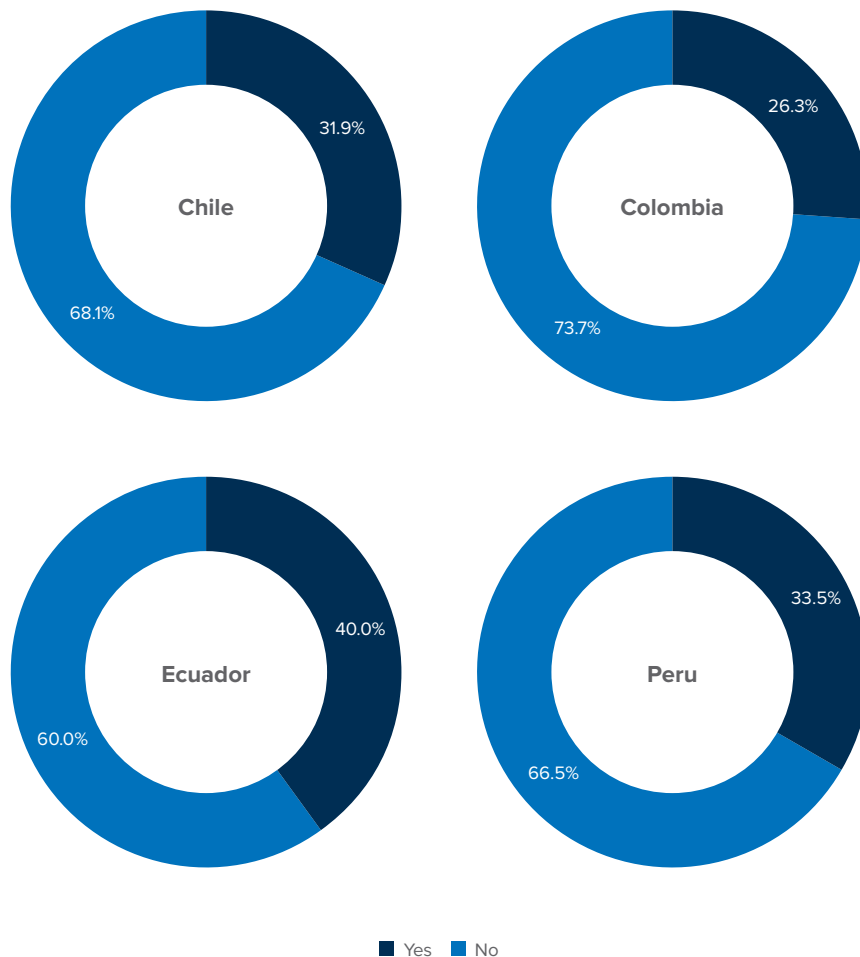
Source: World Bank (2023).

**In Colombia and Peru, age and household size are correlated with the probability of feeling discriminated against (table 7.1).** In Colombia and Peru, older Venezuelans (46–65) and Venezuelans in large households tend to face lower levels of discrimination than other Venezuelans. In Colombia, Venezuelans with tertiary level of education tend to report more discrimination than Venezuelans with lower levels of education.

**Discrimination against migrants can be a significant barrier to their successful integration into host communities.** It can lead to social exclusion, reduced access to services, and lower levels of well-being for Venezuelans, all of which reduce the potential mutual benefits of migration. In many cases, discrimination is related to the perceptions and preferences of individuals.

**Initiatives to combat discrimination, such as information and communications campaigns, have shown some degree of success.** However, large heterogeneity continues to exist across countries and segments of the population (World Bank 2023). Interventions aimed at reducing discrimination must take into account the specific context and how perceptions vary according to different characteristics.

Figure 7.2 Perception of discrimination



Sources: Authors, based on the following surveys. For Chile: Encuesta de Migración (World Bank, SERMIG, and Centro UC 2022). For Colombia: Pulso de la Migración (DANE 2021). For Ecuador: Encuesta a Personas en Movilidad Humana y en Comunidades Receptoras en Ecuador (EPEC 2019) and LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys (World Bank 2022). For Peru: Encuesta dirigida a la población venezolana que reside en el país (ENPOVE II, [INEI 2022]).

**Table 7.1 Probability of Venezuelans feeling discriminated against**

	Chile (1)	Colombia (2)	Ecuador (3)	Peru (4)
<b>Age group</b>				
26–35	–0.044 (0.049)	0.018 (0.017)	0.014 (0.033)	–0.013 (0.016)
36–45	–0.126** (0.047)	0.018 (0.020)	0.057 (0.039)	0.001 (0.022)
46–65	–0.100 (0.092)	–0.043* (0.021)	0.004 (0.044)	–0.077*** (0.021)
<b>Gender</b>				
Female	–0.028 (0.027)	0.019 (0.013)	0.029 (0.026)	0.037 (0.008)
<b>Education level</b>				
Primary	n.a. n.a.	0.021 (0.042)	–0.177 (0.251)	–0.013 (0.113)
Secondary	–0.099 (0.123)	0.061 (0.042)	–0.186 (0.248)	0.005 (0.107)
Tertiary	–0.027 (0.138)	0.118** (0.044)	–0.218 (0.248)	0.042 (0.113)
<b>Marital status and household size</b>				
Married	–0.036 (0.043)	0.021 (0.015)	0.000 (0.028)	0.015 (0.015)
Household size	0.006 (0.008)	–0.009*** (0.003)	–0.007 (0.006)	–0.015*** (0.002)
Mean	0.892	0.624	0.796	0.809
Pseudo $R^2$	0.011	0.014	0.004	0.009
Observations	1,177	4,299	1,240	7,588

Sources: Authors, based on the following surveys: Chile: Encuesta de Migración (World Bank, SERMIG, and Centro UC 2022). Colombia: Pulso de la Migración (DANE 2021). Ecuador: Encuesta a Personas en Movilidad Humana y en Comunidades Receptoras en Ecuador (INEC 2019) and LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys (World Bank 2022). Peru: Encuesta dirigida a la población venezolana que reside en el país (INEI 2022).

Note: Multivariate probit with clustered standard errors are in parentheses. n.a. Not applicable. \*\*\* Statistically significant at the 1 percent level. \*\* Statistically significant at the 5 percent level. \* Statistically significant at the 10 percent level.



## Perceptions of Venezuelans by Host Communities

This subsection looks at the correlation between the socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics of hosts with prosocial behavior toward Venezuelans in Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, and Peru. It draws on data from the first wave of the second phase of the LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys (HFPS), which are representative of the national adult population (18 and older) with a cellphone or a landline at home in each country.<sup>24</sup>

**Three indexes were constructed using the HFPS migration module** (see box 7.2 based on Mejía-Mantilla, C., Rozo, S., and González S. (Forthcoming)).

The Policy Altruism Index summarizes the extent to which hosts approves of the government's provision of services such as education, health, and humanitarian aid to Venezuelans. The Attitudes Index measures how nationals feel about having a Venezuelan as a neighbor or whether a close relative would marry a Venezuelan. The Belief Index captures hosts' perceptions of whether Venezuelans take jobs away from nationals, the perceived impact of Venezuelans on the economy, and how the government treats Venezuelans relative to nationals.

### Box 7.2 Methodology used to construct the Policy Altruism, Belief, and Attitude indexes

Construction of the three indices is based on the methodology described by Kling, Liebman, and Katz (2007) using data from the first wave of the HPFS II, which includes responses from nationals of Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. Each question was treated as follows:

- Alternatives were ordered based on the probability of being pro-immigration.
- Each variable was transformed into a Z-score using sampling weights at the individual level.
- A set of standardized variables was averaged to create each index.

The indices were standardized using sampling weights at the individual level. For each standardized index, only observations with non-missing values for all components of the index have a non-missing value.

The Altruism Index was constructed based on six questions. The main question was “Do you strongly agree, agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree that the government should provide Venezuelans living here with access to ...?” Respondents were then asked about humanitarian aid, work permits, health services, education, training, and the COVID-19 vaccine.

The Attitude Index was constructed from two questions: “Would it bother you to have a Venezuelan neighbor?” and “Would it bother you if a close relative married a Venezuelan?”

The Belief Index was based on the responses to the following questions: “Do you believe that Venezuelan migrants take jobs away from nationals?”; “Do you believe that Venezuelan migrants receive better, equal, or worse treatment from the government than nationals?”; “Do you believe that the arrival of Venezuelan migrants has a positive, negative, or null on the economy?”; “Do you believe that crime levels have increased, decreased, or been maintained with the arrival of Venezuelan migrants?”; and “Do you believe that Venezuelan migrants experience sexual harassment to a greater, lesser, or equal extent than nationals?”.

24 The surveys took the socioeconomic pulse of households in the region and measured well-being 18 months into the pandemic, in mid-2021. They were administered in 24 LAC countries (World Bank and UNDP 2022).

**The data show that younger and older people hold more prosocial views toward Venezuelans than middle-aged people (except on the Attitude Index, where older people were not more open). Men were more open than women, and better-educated and higher-income<sup>25</sup> individuals were more open than less-educated and lower-income individuals. People in urban areas had higher Policy Altruism and Attitude indexes than people in rural areas (except in Chile). These results are consistent with international evidence.**

**Communication programs and other interventions targeting individuals characterized by low levels of**

**prosocial behaviors and aimed at improving perceptions of and attitudes toward Venezuelans could help increase their social inclusion.**

The design of socio-psychological interventions for attitude change must take into account dimensions such as the communicator, the message, the target audience, and the context (Bartal and Hameiri 2020).

**Research shows that information has the potential to encourage prosocial behavior.** In Colombia, for example, raising awareness about the conditions Venezuelans faced before they migrated had a positive impact on locals' altruism and attitudes toward them (Rodríguez and Rozo 2021).<sup>26</sup> An informative

and an emotion-eliciting video improved short-term perceptions of locals toward Venezuelans in nine LAC countries (Barbados, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Trinidad and Tobago); but its impact varied across countries, populations, and dimensions (IDB and UNDP 2023). Videos that aimed to shift responsibility for climate migration from migrants to natural forces, industrial countries, and local authorities had no impact on locals' perceptions (Kolstad and others 2019).



Katherin Pacheco and her two sons, Óscar and Kevin, bask in the morning sun in the patio of the temporary shelter where the family is staying after their recent arrival in the Chilean capital, Santiago, from their native Venezuela. Shelters such as this one, run by the Fundación Educere, are critical for recent arrivals - many of whom have made the grueling journey to Chile overland, with some having walked hundreds of kilometers. The southern hemisphere winter makes these spaces all the more crucial, with thermometers in Santiago regularly dipping into the low single digits Celsius - temperatures unlike anything most Venezuelan refugees and migrants have ever before experienced.

25 Income level is proxied by ownership of the following assets: a washing machine, a refrigerator, a motorcycle, and a computer or tablet. The high-income category includes people who reported having at least three of the four assets.

26 Results from a recent information intervention using the second phase of the LAC HFPS found no significant impact on locals' views of Venezuelan migrants in Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru.

# 8 Conclusions and Policy Implications

**In the past 10 years, LAC has experienced the largest relative increase in human mobility in the world, as a result of the Venezuelan exodus.** As of December 2022, an estimated 7.13 million Venezuelans had fled Venezuela—about a fourth of the population in 2015. The large majority (over 6 million) have settled in countries in the region, mainly in Colombia, Chile, Peru, and Ecuador. Together, these four countries host 82 percent of all Venezuelans in LAC.

**Managed correctly, population flows have the potential to greatly benefit host communities and countries, despite costs and disruptions to some.** These potential net benefits depend greatly on the set of policies and institutional arrangements in place in host countries, the policy response framework, and regional cooperation and coordination.

**With the right policies, institutional arrangements, and programs, the benefits can be significant.** Host countries can benefit greatly from migration through increased labor supply (particularly in sectors in which labor is scarce or in countries experiencing a demographic slowdown), a more skilled workforce, and a larger tax base. These economic benefits depend largely on how well the profile of migrants matches the needs of host country labor markets. An environment of social inclusion and integration, in

which migrants have access to basic services, enhances these gains.

**Large population flows also put pressure on the provision of public services (leading to fiscal pressure) and on certain segments of the labor market (particularly in the short term).** If unattended, these pressures can lead to lack of fiscal sustainability and social unrest and tensions among host and migrant communities.

**Although this report focuses on how Venezuelan population flows can be an opportunity for development, it acknowledges the importance of the international law (humanitarian) perspective.** The need for international protection does not relate to the voluntary or forced nature of their movement. At issue instead is whether migrants have a “well-founded fear” of persecution, conflict, or violence, and when a return without risking harm is not possible, they are entitled to protection under international law.

**Many Venezuelans will remain abroad for years, if not permanently. The policy response should be framed accordingly.** In Peru, Chile, and Colombia, more than three-quarters of Venezuelans reported their desire to stay. Host countries therefore need to craft medium- to long-term responses that include specific actions to maximize the benefits and mitigate the negative impacts of migration.

## The Need for Data

**Informed policy making requires the collection and analysis of data on migrants.** Systematic and updated registration of migrants in national systems as well as reliable and updated information on the profiles and situations of migrants are needed. National statistical systems and national statistical offices need to include migrants in official national household surveys or conduct migrant-specific household surveys. These efforts can be jumpstarted by the international community, but they must be sustainably embedded in each country’s national system.

**Survey definitions, questions, and sampling across countries need to be standardized, to facilitate cross-country comparisons.** International and regional organizations can help with the coordination, providing technical assistance to statistical offices if needed.

## The Need for Inclusion

### Economic Inclusion

**Economic inclusion of migrants by host countries is critical.** Venezuelans are younger and more educated than hosts in all four countries. The large majority are of prime working age (26–36). On average, they are more educated than the host population.



If they are well integrated in host country labor markets, they increase productivity. The policy response should facilitate their access to the labor market through regular and long-term channels and grant them labor rights that are comparable to those of hosts, in order to prevent exploitation.

**The potential economic benefits of migrants are larger when migrants are employed in the formal sector in jobs that make full use of their skills.** Labor misallocation limits the economic gains from migration and can become permanent. A response framework that facilitates the recognition of credentials (titles) and professional experience and promotes a good match between firms and migrants (labor demand and supply) is essential to maximizing the gains. This approach is particularly appropriate in Ecuador and Chile, where the proportion of Venezuelans with tertiary education is high.

**The policy response must also acknowledge and compensate for the labor market effects of migrants on some groups of the population.** Competition from migrants can hurt some host country workers, particularly vulnerable ones (Lebow 2022; Olivieri and others 2021; Zago 2020; Morales and Pierola 2020). It is therefore important to create mechanisms—such as upskilling and training programs to support their engagement in the labor market—to prevent social unrest and tensions.

## Access to Basic Services

**Migrants and their families require access to basic services, such as education and health.** The magnitude and profile of Venezuelan flows in such a short period has put pressure on the provision of basic services. The challenge is magnified

by the fact that migrants usually concentrate in certain areas and regions. Coordination across multiple levels of government is necessary, as these services are decentralized.

**Improving the efficiency of service provision and leveraging support from the international community may help reduce the costs of expanding public services.** When host communities accommodate large numbers of additional children, additional resources are required. In most countries, migration increases fiscal revenues by expanding the tax-paying workforce, creating the space for the necessary spending. Harnessing the extra revenues takes time, however. Countries should look at ways to improve the efficiency of service provision to lower costs and to leverage the support of the international community and financial institutions.

**The profile of Venezuelans in each country highlights some of the vulnerabilities that migrants already face, underlying the need for certain services.** More than half of Venezuelans are women, except in Chile. Most of them are young, leaving them vulnerable to gender-based violence and harassment. At the same time, given the prevalence of Venezuelans who travel in family units, access to early childhood development services is also important.

## Social Inclusion

**Social integration improves the well-being of migrants, increases cooperation between hosts and migrants, and enhances the mutually beneficial gains from economic integration.** The formation of social networks in host communities can help migrants develop a feeling of belonging. The level of social

integration of Venezuelans is low in all four countries. Most who participate in any activity engage in religious activities. Targeted integration programs to foster the formation of social capital and efforts to expand opportunities for migrants and hosts to engage with one another in daily and civic life can promote social integration.

**Host countries should foster the social inclusion of Venezuelans and incentivize prosocial behavior toward migrants.** Some 26–40 percent of Venezuelans in Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, and Peru cite having perceived discrimination, despite the fact that they speak the same language and share numerous cultural referents with their hosts. These countries should consider targeted anti-discrimination interventions and avoid the segregation of large numbers of migrants in certain areas.

**Information campaigns and interventions aimed at increasing prosocial behavior among hosts can enhance social cohesion.** A recent effort by UNDP and the Inter-American Development Bank (Cruces and others 2023) in nine LAC countries (including the four on which this report focuses) shows that informational videos and videos appealing to emotions promoted prosocial behaviors among hosts in the short term. However, results varied across countries and characteristics of host individuals (including initial migration attitudes), which highlights the need for these types of programs to be contextualized and targeted.



**Table 8.1 Policy recommendations**

Policy	Actions to take
Maintain an updated profile of migrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ensure that registration of migrants is consistent and updated.</li> <li>– Include migrants and refugees in official household surveys or develop migrant-specific household surveys.</li> <li>– Promote the standardization of data collection systems on definitions, questions, and sampling across countries.</li> </ul>
Integrate migrants and refugees into formal sector jobs that make use of their skills, avoiding resource misallocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Develop a certification system of equivalence for educational degrees.</li> <li>– Enhance recognition of prior experience</li> <li>– Promote labor intermediation and matching.</li> <li>– Recognize locals' concerns and provide support for them (e.g. upskilling/ training programs).</li> </ul>
Provide access to basic services, including education and health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ensure that the required infrastructure and resources are in place.</li> <li>– Strengthen the institutional capacity to respond to the expansion of service provision.</li> <li>– Identify priority services according to the demographic profile.</li> <li>– Ensure multisectoral coordination.</li> </ul>
Promote social inclusion and prosocial behavior toward migrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Expand opportunities for migrants, refugees, and hosts to engage with one another in daily and civic life.</li> <li>– Avoid segregation into less desirable neighborhoods.</li> <li>– Implement anti-discrimination interventions, such as information campaigns to increase prosocial behaviors.</li> </ul>

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# Appendix A Sources of Data, by Country

## Chile

**The profile of Venezuelans in Chile is based on the 2022 National Migration Survey, which collected information on migrants 18 and older that had started the regularization process.** This survey, conducted over the phone in early 2022, was designed and implemented by Centro UC, SERMIG, and the World Bank. The sampling frame was obtained from the SERMIG registry, which covers all foreigners and the entire country. It is representative of migrants from the top five countries (including Venezuela) who entered the country between 2016 and 2020 and started an application for a residence permit or regularization program, independent of their migration status.<sup>27</sup> Venezuelans who entered the country irregularly via unauthorized points of entry and had not regularized their migratory status with SERMIG are not part of the registry and were thus not covered by the survey. Most survey respondents are therefore likely labor migrants.<sup>28</sup> The sample comprises 3,742 migrants, including 1,254 Venezuelans.

**The analysis of host communities in Chile is based on the 2022 Q1**

**National Labor Survey**, implemented by the National Statistics Institute. It is representative at the national, regional, provincial, and metropolitan levels and used to monitor the evolution of the main labor market indicators in the country. The survey collects socioeconomic information on respondents and their households. It allows disaggregation of the data into urban and rural areas at the national and regional levels. Given that the large majority of Venezuelans in Chile live in urban areas, the analysis of the host community was restricted to people born in Chile and living in urban areas. The restricted unweighted sample included 48,171 individuals.

## Colombia

**The profile of Venezuelans in Colombia is based on four rounds of the Migration Pulse Survey administered between 2021 and 2022.** The survey—which collected longitudinal data by computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI) from Venezuelans 15 and older—is representative of the Venezuelans population living in Colombia. The sample consists of about 4,200 households with at

least one migrant member, identified through the migration module of the Great Integrated Household Survey or Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares (GEIH). The surveys were implemented by the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) in collaboration with the World Bank and Universidad del Rosario. They collected information on Venezuelans' living conditions, migratory status, and sociodemographic and employment characteristics. This report is based on the fourth wave of the survey, conducted in March and April 2022. The sample included 6,176 individuals.<sup>29</sup>

**Host communities are characterized based on data from the 2021 GEIH**, the main household survey used to monitor labor market outcomes in Colombia. Conducted by the DANE, the GEIH gathers comprehensive information on sociodemographic and labor market characteristics at the national level. With an annual sample of about 232,000 households in 2021, the GEIH is representative of the 24 capital cities and metropolitan areas (including Bogota), rural and urban geographical zones, and 23 departments. This report restricts host communities to

27 The survey covers migrants from Venezuela, Bolivia, Colombia, Haiti, and Peru. Migrants from all other countries are grouped into a single category.

28 Migrants were not asked about their migration (regular/irregular) status, in order to not to discourage them from responding.

29 Information from the first (July–August 2021) and second (October–November 2021) waves was also used, depending on availability.



urban households, where almost all Venezuelans live. The sample includes 447,888 Colombians and the survey conducted a few months before the migrant survey (2022 rather than 2021).

## Ecuador

**The analysis for Ecuador is based on the fourth round of the HFPS conducted in 2022 and the 2019 Human Mobility and Host Communities Survey or EPEC.**

The fourth round of the HFPS was a joint effort by the World Bank and UNDP to measure the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on households in the LAC region. It also gathered data on Venezuelan households to assess whether the pandemic had a differential effect on migrants. The phone survey is representative of Venezuelans in Ecuador and Ecuadorians 18 and older who had an active cellphone number or a landline at home. Given that most phone companies require a national ID, it is likely that the sample underrepresents irregular migrants. However, over 54 percent of respondents reported an irregular status. The unweighted sample included 503 Ecuadorians and 356 Venezuelans living in Ecuador.

**Most indicators come from the HFPS, some come from the EPEC.**

The 2019 EPEC—a joint effort by the World Bank and six other organizations (UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, UNDP, the World Food Programme, and the United Nations Population Fund)—was a face-to-face survey that collected information on human mobility to evaluate the impact of Venezuelan migrants and refugees in Ecuador. It is nationally representative and covers Venezuelan migrants and refugees who entered the Ecuador since 2016 and registered at a

checkpoint upon entry. For this report, migrants and individuals in host communities are defined based on their place of birth. The unweighted sample included 3,018 Ecuadorians and 1,261 Venezuelans.

## Peru

**The analysis of Venezuelans in Peru is based on the ENPOVE.** The ENPOVE was implemented by the INEI and supported by the World Bank.

The survey was conducted in two waves. The first was implemented in November–December 2018. The second was carried out in February–March 2022, with the support of the UNHCR Joint Data Center (JDC) and the World Bank. Both rounds were conducted in person. They provide detailed information on dwelling characteristics as well as characteristics of household members, such as migration status, health, education, employment, discrimination, gender, and victimization. This report uses information from the 2022 wave, which has a sample of 7,751 individuals.

**Information on host communities was obtained from the ENAHO.**

Implemented by INEI, the ENAHO provides detailed information on dwelling characteristics and household members. It is used to monitor the evolution of poverty, welfare, and life conditions indicators in Peru. The ENAHO is representative at the national, urban, rural, and regional levels, as well as across natural region areas (the coast, the sierra, and the rainforest). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the surveys were conducted both in person and by phone in 2020 and 2021. This report limited host communities to urban areas, where the majority of

Venezuelans reside (Lima alone hosts 75 percent of Venezuelans in Peru according to the ENPOVE 2022). The result is a restricted sample of 53,711 individuals. The survey of hosts was conducted several months before the survey of Venezuelans (2021 versus early 2022), which may result in more favorable economic conditions for them due to the improvement of economic conditions.

# Appendix B Reasons for out-migration from Chile and Ecuador

## Appendix B Reasons for Out-Migration from Chile and Ecuador

Reason	Chile	Ecuador
Economic	Food insecurity; lack of opportunities for working, studying, or training; economic crisis	Economic situation, lack of job opportunities, food insecurity
Family	Family reunification	Family reunification
Violence	Increasing crime, insecurity, and persecution	Direct threat to leave, extortion, presence of armed groups, generalized violence and insecurity, fear of being attacked or persecuted, fear of forced recruitment
Lack of services	Lack of access to housing, education, and/or health services	Lack of access to housing, education, and/or health services
Other	Climate-related and natural disasters	Other

