

Migration in Perú

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According to the National Governor of Miraflores, due to the social and economic crisis brought about by the dictatorial rule of Nicolás Maduro, some 635,000 Venezuelans have entered Perú in the past months. That number increased six times during 2018. In the month of January of 2019 alone, 100,000 migrants from that country were registered. José Iván Dávalos, head of the mission of the International Office for Migration (OMI) in Perú estimates the number of Venezuelans migrating to Perú multiplied six times between January and December of 2018. The OMI daily attends to some 5,000 Venezuelans who solicit the Temporary Permit for Residence, PTP, which is for one year.

Juan Eduardo, a 27-year-old Venezuelan migrant from the Caribbean city of Maracaibo, says it is necessary to do a weather prediction every morning before leaving his home in Villa María del Triunfo. He is twenty-seven years old, wearing a yellow, red, and blue hat. He says he has become an expert in predicting the weather in Lima. "I look at the sky and count the clouds. That way I determine if it will be a grey day or if there will be sun in the afternoon. Happily, summer is almost here because the cold here is unbearable." It is only by predicting what the day will be like that he knows how to organize the backpack that he will carry all day and where he will take the bag of candies that he will sell on a busy street in Miraflores. He also takes the bottle and the change of clothes for little Antonio, his two-year-old son, who accompanies him on each work day. If it is appropriate, depending upon the weather, he will also take a jacket or his favorite hat, like the one he is wearing. He says, "It's hard on the streets. I've been doing it for a year. In Venezuela I was a mechanic. In Lima I am a roving salesman, but with pride and dignity. Just a couple of months ago my family was able to join me in Lima and that is all that matters."

Just like Juan Eduardo, the majority of Venezuelans who flee to Perú are youth of working age (18 to 39 years old) and 65% choose Lima for their residence. Nevertheless, according to the OMI mission in Perú, they have also begun to live in other Provincial Capitals like Trujillo (8%), Piura (3%), and Arequipa (3%). Juan Iván Dávalos, head of OMI, explained to El Comercio (Lima newspaper) that, initially, more men and fathers of families crossed the border in Tumbes but now the number of mothers entering with their children has increased (23% of the migrants enter with younger children). There is a new period of family reunification happening, a phenomenon that has no precedent in Perú. If this continues, there may be a million migrants coming into Perú by the end of 2019.

In January of 2019 there were 660,000 Venezuelans in Peru and 495,000 of those had applied for Temporary Permit for Residence. Migration verifies the backgrounds of foreigners who ask for residence in Peru and is in the process of employing new measures for the security of migration. There is a great deal of movement at the borders for migration, tourism, commerce, and to receive services between Perú and Chile with mainly Peruvians, Chileans, Bolivians, and Venezuelans crossing the border in both directions.

Reflection Suggestions

Given the difference of size between the United States and Perú and the number of migrants declaring the need for amnesty, what is the difference in the way the two countries approach a huge increase of migrants on their borders?

What seems to be the difference in the speed and efficacy with which the two countries process requests for entry and permission to live and work in the country?

How do you regard the leniency with which Perú allows for the reunification of families and how do you regard the treatment of families by the United States Border and Customs Patrol?

If you found it necessary to flee your home to find safety and sustenance for your family how would you hope to be treated?