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INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION: PARADOXES OF A GLOBALIZED WORLD

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PANORAMA INTERNACIONAL FEE

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Global migrations: a constant challenge for the international community

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Panorama Internacional FEE brings to the debate, in its third edition, the issue of international migration. The phenomenon of human migration has been recurrent in the evolutionary process of societies. Its dimensions, its causes and its effects lie in the fields of politics, economics, religion, the history of climate change, etc. The complexity of the issue is extremely important for the understanding of other historical, political, economic and social phenomena. How can one understand, for example, the formation of national states and their political and economic systems throughout history without taking into account the role of migration flows in the context of all these processes?

Given the complexity inherent to the dynamics of migration movements, assigning to these phenomena the label of "crisis" seems to be redundant considering that migrations represent a daily challenge for countries. Thus, one gets the impression that the potential crisis is inversely related to the ability of states to deal with the influx of foreigners in national territories. On the other hand, one has the perception that the causes are often related to the failure of states in providing the conditions for the permanence of its citizens in their homeland. Thus, taking into consideration that states' public policies are increasingly conditioned to international investors' positive expectations towards the management of their national public accounts, the adoption of immigration policies by countries has the challenge, among many others, to fit in the economic scope for a long time designed to the attraction of international capital flows.

At both extremes of this problem, home country and host country, the indisputable by-products of the capitalist system in which the world economy is inserted become

evident: the losers and the winners. In this sense, it has been observed that the international division of labor, which long ago crystallized the role of each country in the global economic system, has been gradually reconfigured by the spreading of the production processes worldwide in what is conventionally called the global chains of value.

The core countries that have already achieved high levels of economic and social development for their people, often at the expense of plunder and colonialism of people in the global periphery (Asia, Latin America and Africa), seek to maintain the "conquered" social welfare. As for the peripheral countries, global holders of strategic raw materials, they follow, inertially at a slow pace, and in totally different conditions, the path traced by the leaders of global capitalism in order to also ensure some economic and social welfare to their nationals. Thus, this economic interdependence enhances the degrees of dependency and vulnerability among countries and strengthens transmission channels that enable, for example, the building of North-North, South-South and South-North migratory bridges.

In addressing the immigration issue in the international context, it is also common to give too much weight to wars or to the emergence of ethno-religious conflicts in order to understand the intensity and direction of migration flows. In other cases, extreme weather events (earthquakes, tsunamis, desertification of arable land,

prolonged droughts, etc.) are seen as the driving force of great migrations. However, this issue requires a political analysis that sees these variables in a systemic approach that takes into account the complex inter-state disputes over power resources within the international system. In addition, and in a complementary fashion, this analysis should also take into consideration the contradictions of the capitalist system that are leveraged as the globalization process intensifies itself.

Last year, the challenge of the European Union facing the explosion in the number of international immigrants who got to the borders of its member countries has revived the debate on international migration flows. In 2015, many immigrants fleeing the conflicts in Syria and Africa sought asylum in European countries. The direct involvement of the United States and European powers in many of these conflicts has put them at the center of this debate as key players in addressing the refugee crisis.

In Brazil, this discussion had already been made by the federal authorities since 2010, when the country began to receive an influx of Haitian immigrants who left their country after the occurrence of a major earthquake that same year. With the outbreak of the civil war in Syria in 2011, Brazil also began to receive Syrian refugees in national territory.

Both in Brazil and in Europe, the discussion on refugees sparked debates on the countries' responsibility whether

or not to receive these migrants. At the heart of the arguments lie the impacts of the migratory influx in job markets of host countries; the pressure of this migratory influx on the social welfare system of the host states; besides xenophobic issues such as the cultural and religious impact of foreigners over local societies.

In Rio Grande do Sul, a Brazilian state with large foreign influence in its cultural, economic and social formation (Portuguese, African slaves, Italian and German), the migration issue has gained prominence due the fact that the state has become an attraction pole for Haitian workforce that enters Brazil through the state of Acre. Besides the Haitians, it is common to find African migrants looking for jobs and income opportunities in Rio Grande do Sul.

Therefore, considering the

complexity and the contemporaneity of this issue at the international, national and local contexts, **Panorama Internacional FEE** brings this systemic look on the current scenario of international migration and its global interactions in the fields of economics and geopolitics, as well as on the role of Brazil with respect to this challenge. More than finding answers and providing solutions to this issue, this edition discusses the difficulties of this topic, which may be analyzed from various perspectives.

Researcher and economist Jaime Carrion Fialkow reviews, in the first text of the publication, the main processes relevant to international migration nowadays. Based on UN data agencies that deal with international migration, his text considers the main variables in each one of the migratory flows

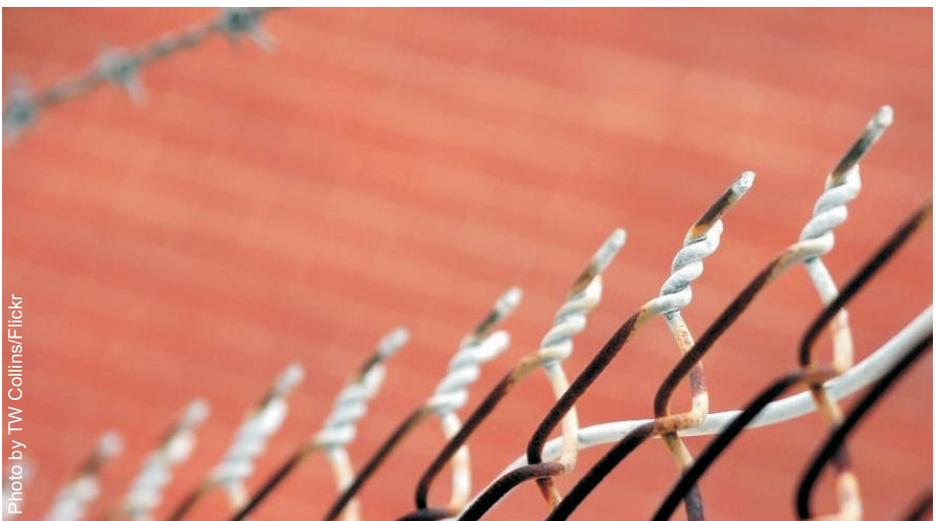


Photo by TW Collins/Flickr

suggested in his search. In the second article, researchers in International Relations Ricardo Fagundes Leães and Bruno Mariotto Jubran analyze the central variable of the current refugee crisis in Europe: the civil war in Syria. Moving away from dichotomous approaches that seek to identify the forces of good and evil, the researchers shed light on the complex web of conflicting geopolitical interests that involve a wide range of international actors in the Middle East region. In the third work of this edition, economist and researcher Iracema Keila Castelo Branco looks at this issue from a national perspective, investigating the impact of the recent international migration flow of the last 5 years on the labor market in Brazil and in Rio Grande do Sul. In the fourth and last article, researcher and historian Álvaro Antonio Klafke analyzes the perception of the press over the discussions that involve migratory inflows in Rio Grande do Sul in three distinct historical moments.

Finally, **Panorama Internacional FEE** interviews International Relations Professor of the Undergraduate Program at the University of São Paulo Deisy Ventura. Based on her extensive research curriculum on international human migrations, Deisy Ventura exposes her impressions on this important international issue, analyzing the behavior of key international actors as well as Brazil's attitude facing this challenge. **P**

Photo by: ONU/Flickr

Main processes in contemporary international migration

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Migration has always been part of human societies. Mobility and adaptation to distinct environments are trademarks of our evolutionary history. According to UN's International Organization for Migration estimates¹, there are around a billion migrants around the world, 230 million of them living outside their birth countries (international migrants). Over 10% of the population in developed countries is foreign-born, against 1.6% at the world periphery. In absolute numbers, this accounts for 135 million international migrants living in developed countries and 95 million in undeveloped ones.

The rising inequalities between poor and rich countries during the 20th century, the evolution in transport technologies and globalization suggest that international migration would be rapidly expanding. While that is true in absolute terms, the proportion of international migrants over total population is still low and has not risen significantly, from 2.9% to 3.2% between 1990 and 2013, according to UN data.² Migration costs and barriers (financial, informational, social and cultural), and restrictive entrance policies from states, which raise migration's costs while diminishing its benefits, exert a negative pressure on migration flows. However, those human movements' complexity and variety increase, and four

1 UNITED NATIONS (UN). *International Migration Report 2013*. New York, 2013. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/migration/migrationreport2013/Full_Document_final.pdf> in Jan. 2016.

2 UNITED NATIONS (UN). *International Migration Report 2013*. New York, 2013. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/migration/migrationreport2013/Full_Document_final.pdf> in Jan. 2016.

large processes stand out among them: a migratory pressure from developing to developed countries (South-North migration); greater mobility of a global elite among developed countries, due to higher mobility encouraged by wealth and productive complexity (North-North migration); the mobility between developing countries (South-South); and, also, the rising number of refugees and their consolidation as a specific human group.

South-North migration is mostly caused by higher income opportunities and better life conditions offered by developed countries. The possibility to earn above the subsistence level, in strong currencies, also allows migrants to send money to their family at their origin country, or accumulate to invest when returning. Studying and working abroad in a developed country tends to increase professional possibilities for those coming from the developing world when they return home, both for the qualification and status they provide. The number of migrants who took this route went from 40 to 74 million from 1990 to 2010, when it accounted for 35% of all migrants.

One can also perceive the expanding mobility of a global elite, mainly between developed countries. The recent globalization is focused on enhancing the mobility of capital and

goods, not on the circulation of workers among national states. In spite of that, highly qualified students and professionals, and those with enough financial resources, face fewer restrictions and do present high mobility. North-North migrant's volume shows this trend, with its stock going from 42 to 53 million between 1990 and 2010. Moreover, developed countries have 17% of the world's population, but are origin to 31% of international migrants (80% of those living in another developed country). Although mainly a rich-country phenomenon, middle-income countries like China, India, Brazil and Mexico have some social and economic sectors embedded in those networks.

South-South migration until recently comprehended the largest share of migrants, but has been losing relative importance, going from 40% to 34% of the total international migrant population between 1990 and 2010.³ Those are also the most difficult to categorize, as they involve a variety of determinants and features. One can perceive economic migration from poorer to middle-income countries, migrations motivated by specific productive sectors and niches; a series of circular and seasonal migrations; a “horizontal” move between neighboring countries; migration motivated by

³ UNITED NATIONS (UN). Migrants by origin and destination: the role of South-South migration. *Population Facts*, New York, n. 2012/3, June 2012. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/popfacts/popfacts_2012-3_South-South_migration.pdf> in Jan. 2016.

ethnic and religious issues, political and economic instability and civil or military conflicts, among others.

A fourth process to highlight is the expansion of the number of refugees. Urban centers, ever more populous, have become the focus of military conflict, and the rising power of weapons leads to growing mortality and destruction. In Africa and the Middle East, states divided in rival ethnic and religious groups are spaces of disputes whose goal, commonly, is to subjugate, expel or exterminate the adversaries, motivating forced migration. The Middle East, target of geopolitical dispute and external invasion in the last decades, houses the greater number of current conflicts and, consequently, refugees. According to UN estimates, there existed around 16.7 million international refugees in 2013 (7.2% of migrants) and 33 million internal refugees; those numbers have grown considerably for the last two years, given the deepening crisis in Iraq and Syria. Around 86% of refugees live in developed countries; 50% live in UN concentration camps, 40% are children⁴; most have little or no social and political rights. The low rates of return and asylum concession, combined with the growing number of displaced people, create a situation where around two thirds of refugees have been in this condition for more than five years.



Connected to all those trends, there has been unraveling an unprecedented structural transformation on the way human societies organize their territory: an urbanization process initiated in Western Europe around the 18th century that determines most contemporary human movements from then on. In 2009, UN-Habitat estimated⁵ that nowadays 3 million people migrate from rural to urban areas each week — most of them without leaving their country. Developed countries and most of Latin America already have high rates of urbanization, but in most of Asia and Africa this process is relatively recent, and occurs at high speed. From 1950 to 2013, urban population went from 30% to 54% of the total world population, and estimates suggest it will be near 70% in

4 INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION. *Global Migration Trends: an overview*. Geneva, 2014. Retrieved from <http://missingmigrants.iom.int/sites/default/files/documents/Global_Migration_Trends_PDF_FinalVH_with%20References.pdf> in Jan. 2016.

5 UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME. *State of the World's Cities 2008/2009: harmonious cities*. London; Sterling, VA: Earthscan, 2009. Retrieved from <<http://unhabitat.org/books/state-of-the-worlds-cities-20082009-harmonious-cities-2/>> in Jan. 2016.

► Main processes in contemporary international migration

2050. One in every eight urban inhabitants lives in one of the 28 cities whose populations lie above 10 million people. Among international migrants, concentration in large cities is even more impressive: according to 2015 UN's report on international migration, around 20% of international migrants live in one of the 19 metropolises whose foreign population exceeds that of one million (nine cities in North America, three in Europe, three in the Middle East, two in Southeast Asia and two in Australia).

The nature of migratory processes has also been changing in shape and form. Temporary and circular migrations increase with the advance of transport technologies, even if most of humanity lacks resources to appropriate those. Internet and other communication technologies increase the migrants' capacity to get information about their destination, enabling them to keep closer ties with their origin country. Advances in surveillance and control technologies might increase a state's power to effect restrictive migration policies and make it harder for irregular

migrants to cross borders. On the other hand, population ageing in developed countries might alleviate the pressure on restrictions as they need a younger workforce. In addition, global warming, rising seas, the deterioration of soils and rivers, environmental disasters, seismic and climatic extreme events, all may generate important human movements for the next decades, as disputes for scarce and valuable urban spaces push an increasing number of people to live in areas of risk.

The development of productive forces and the technological advances should keep increasing the volume and the complexity in human movements, but they also allow states to maintain or expand their capacity to limit them according to their interests. Broadening the dialogue and building an internationally coordinated policy to deal with migration become, in this context, essential to guarantee respect to basic rights and freedom of movement to a great part of the world's population. **P**



Photo by albyantoniazzi/Flickr

The prevailing discourse on the Syrian Civil War as an aggravating factor in the refugee issue

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The humanitarian crisis in Syria is one of the most prominent issues of the international agenda, given the huge amount of people forced to abandon their homes due to the civil war that has been raging the country since 2011. Generically speaking, it is stated that the humanitarian crisis has been triggered by the crackdown of dictator Bashar al-Assad, who has never been indeed willing to dialogue with the opposition. This perspective, although empirically true, is not enough to understand the extension of the problem, which is more multifaceted than it appears to be. In this paper, we will seek to show that the construction of this reductionist Manichean narrative by the United States and their allies in Europe and in the Middle East not only has proved to be misleading, but has also contributed to deteriorate the humanitarian situation by conceding power, tacitly and concretely, to fundamentalist organizations. Furthermore, our



goal is to show that the main active governments in the conflict, which helped to increase the flow of expatriates, have been reluctant to shelter war refugees.

The Syrian Civil War is a local outcome of a broader phenomenon in the regional context, the Arab Spring, in which authoritarian governments were impelled to react to mass demonstrations nourished by demands that were as comprehensive as complex. According to the most widespread and heralded narrative by the U.S. government and in large news agencies, the Syrian government, by then, felt pushed by its own people demanding for democratization. From this perspective, Syria would be divided between the oppressive government forces and a pro-democracy opposition taking up arms for a fair cause.

In this view, it was common to distinguish the two main rival groups in the conflict. On one side, the repression forces of dictator Assad sought to suppress any manifestation against the government and to maintain the supremacy of his family, which has been in power in the country since 1971. On the other, the so-called "freedom fighters", led by the Free Syrian Army (FSA), aimed to overthrow a despotic government, increasing support from public opinion. Thus, as Assad intensified repression to contain the internal pressures, groups willing to use weapons to overthrow him prospered, on the grounds of establishing democracy in the country. Indeed, soon

“However, contrary to what might seem, the situation in Syria could never be simplified to a dichotomy between an authoritarian regime and its democratic opponents”

it became clear that the assessment on Assad was justified, as his government did not avoid resorting to the most violent measures to suppress opposition, fostering a broad movement of internal and external displacement of the Syrian population.

However, contrary to what might seem, the situation in Syria could never be simplified to a dichotomy between an authoritarian regime and its democratic opponents. In fact, the Free Syrian Army was overrated by international analysts, both in terms of size and commitment to defend democracy. It soon became evident that this group was much smaller than announced and that its members controlled sparse and tiny regions. In addition, fundamentalist organizations such as Al-Nusra Front and the Islamic State (Daesh) were, in reality, the main opponents of Assad, thus weakening the hypothesis that if the Syrian President was deposed, democratic institutions would quickly flourish. Despite these issues, the United States and its allies in Europe and in the Middle East — including France, the UK, Turkey and Saudi Arabia — have

Photo by Fotomovimiento/Flickr



remained faithful to the idea that it was necessary to remove Assad in order to end the civil war and to start a coalition government.

The unyielding stance of the United States proved to be decisive for the continuity of the conflict in Syria as it gave, in practice, "green light" for al-Nusra and Daesh, which were advancing by leaps and bounds. Under the guise of defending the moderate rebels, the anti-Assad fundamentalists were given a "blind eye", hoping that their victory would strengthen the FSA. However, the result was the opposite: the success of fundamentalists further depleted the ranks of the FSA. Given the fact that many of the fighters who switched sides had been trained by the United States, we observe not an advance of democratic groups, but rather the strengthening of the fundamentalists, who have been relying on U.S. weaponry. Thus, pessimism among Syrian citizens increased, as they no longer hoped for a quick end to the civil war and were forced to flee not only from the government, but also from the al-Nusra and the Daesh.

We note, therefore, that those countries that consider Assad's fall as a primary goal for Syria not only have failed to promote democracy, but have also toughened fundamentalist movements, thus intensifying pressure on the Syrians, who found themselves forced to leave their country. Probably the situation would have been even worse if the UN Security Council had approved a military intervention in Syria, as wished President Barack Obama in 2013. This initiative would have been tragic for the country's population, given the fact that most of its inhabitants live in areas under Assad government's control. The purpose of Obama, ultimately, was to bomb the most populated areas of Syria, which would likely increase the number of refugees and contribute to the expansion of the territory controlled by Daesh and by al-Nusra and even to strengthen popular support for such groups.

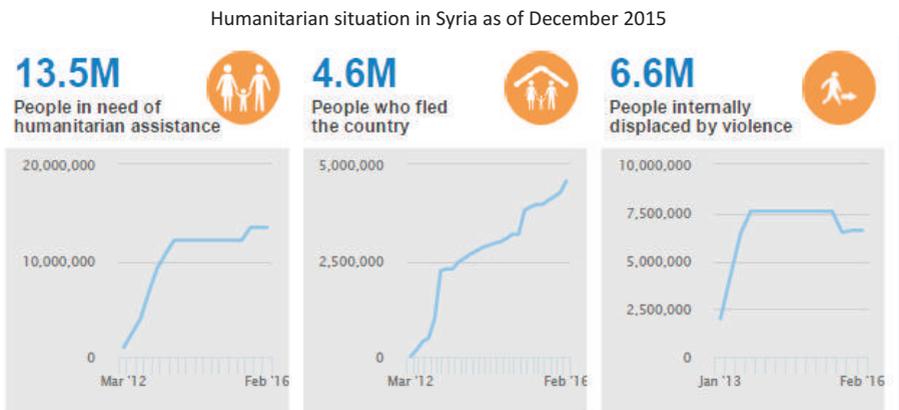
One of the central features of the Syrian crisis is the high number of people driven from their homes, around 11 million people by December 2015, according to the High Commissioner of

the United Nations for Refugees (UNHCR)¹, representing almost half of the national population at the beginning of the conflict in 2011. The majority remained in Syria (6.6 million), while the number of refugees in other countries was around 4.3 million. Nearly 90% of the refugees in other countries have moved to the neighboring nations of Syria, notably Turkey (about 2.2 million, or nearly half of all refugees abroad), Lebanon (about 1.2 million, representing an increase of nearly 30% the population of that country), Jordan (630,000), Iraq (250,000) and Egypt (130,000). A share of just over 10% of Syrian refugees abroad has sought protection in Europe, especially in Serbia (275,000) and Germany (185,000).

Germany's position in relation to the refugees has been dubious and irresolute. In August 2015, the German

Government announced that it would no longer apply the Dublin Agreement, under which asylum seekers in the European Union (EU) must remain in the country through which they entered. In practice, the treaty is a burden on the poorest states of the continent — the main gateway for refugees — and allows rich countries to deport migrants who reach their territory. Paradoxically, however, Germany has proposed, within the EU, a package of €3 billion to Turkey in order to contain refugee flow into Europe. Between the lines, it was inferred that a "favorable" conduct of Turkey could accelerate its membership process into the EU. To make matters worse, in November, Germany announced that it would enforce the Dublin Agreement again, burying the hopes that the country would lead a policy of open doors to Syrian refugees.

Figure 1



SOURCE: UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS. 2015. Retrieved from <<http://www.unocha.org/syria>> on Dec. 30, 2015.

1 UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES. 2015 UNHCR country operations profile - Syrian Arab Republic. 2015. Retrieved from <<http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e486a76.html>> on Swc. 30, 2015.

Photo by Nobu Araki Network/Flickr

It is significant that, with the important exception of Turkey, several countries that have been actively involved in the conflict are not among the main receivers of war refugees, in particular the United States, which sheltered only 2,234 Syrian refugees until December 2015.² France has received 8,894 refugees³, while Russia has welcome, officially, about 2,000 Syrian citizens in this condition in its territory.⁴ Iran has limited itself to providing material assistance without registering significant incursions of Syrian refugees in its territory. The Gulf monarchies, some of which are crucial supporters of several rebel groups opposed to Assad, have been even more reluctant to receive refugees. Leaders of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and the UAE have limited themselves to extend the

residence period for Syrian nationals already established in those countries.⁵ This phenomenon is serious not only due to the participation of these monarchies in the conflict, but also because they are the countries of the region that exhibit the best financial conditions for hosting the refugees.

After four years of civil war, the outlook for Syria and its refugees remains adverse, to the extent that most of the country's territory remains under the control of fundamentalists, although the most densely populated regions remain under the firm grip of Assad. Moreover, the absence of a feasible democratic alternative to Assad's government intensifies the obstacles for stability in Syria, because the U.S. and its allies, although not offering a solution, insist on a regime change in that country,

2 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. Department of State. **Myths and Facts: Resettling Syrian Refugees**. 2015. Retrieved from <<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2015/11/250005.htm>> on Dec. 30, 2015.

3 UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES. **Europe: Syrian Asylum Applications**. 2015. Retrieved from <<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/asylum.php>> on Dec. 30, 2015.

4 Россия приютила 2 тысячи беженцев из Сирии. **Газета.Ру**. 2015. Retrieved from <http://www.gazeta.ru/social/news/2015/09/04/n_754383.shtml> on Dec. 30, 2015.

5 MARTINEZ, M. Syrian refugees: which countries welcome them, which ones don't. Retrieved from <<http://edition.cnn.com/2015/09/09/world/welcome-syrian-refugees-countries/>> on Dec. 30, 2015.

without bearing the costs involved in the intake and assistance regarding war refugees. Under such circumstances, there is an impasse, as the government and the fundamentalists are the most significant political forces in Syria, meaning that it is hard to fight them simultaneously. Indeed, Syria shows that the confrontation with the local

government has not fostered a democratic solution, but rather generated a power vacuum that is quickly filled by fundamentalists, just as happened in Iraq and Libya. This scenario is detrimental to the Syrian population, who has little choice but to swell the contingent of refugees. **P**



Photo by Fabio Penna/Flickr

The perception of immigration in the State of Rio Grande do Sul: three historical moments

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The issue of immigration, for reasons that range from structural problems such as population aging and low growth to the displacement of refugees, appears in current debates very often. In Brazil and particularly in the State of Rio Grande do Sul, the matter goes from the recognition of its convenience and necessity to outright expressions of rejection and, sometimes, clear xenophobia. Aiming to avoid the immediateness of certain analyses, this article intends to set a short historical overview on the perceptions of the media of immigration in Rio Grande do Sul in three historical moments. In the first one, in the 19th century, the negative stance on German immigrants is called to focus. In the second one, in the mid-20th century, in the post-World War II period, the feeling that Brazil was losing the “competition” to attract workforce released in Europe is highlighted. Finally, nowadays, a discussion about future demographic perspectives, workforce and racial issues is noteworthy. This analysis is very useful to show that some aspects, now indisputable facts, used to raise

controversy at some points, and that we should examine the question from a broader perspective.

In the then Province of Rio Grande do Sul, in 1831, the **Correio da Liberdade**, a newspaper of the city of Porto Alegre, called for more control by the government in the São Leopoldo Colony, which was already inhabited by numerous German immigrants, for that community was allegedly guided by people “whose languages and cultures differ much from ours and who are, in a large proportion, mercenary soldiers, well-accustomed to the immorality and plunder of the Campaigns, or even people coming from faraway countries, where clearly the most virtuous ones wouldn't be chosen to be exported”.¹

It seemed evident, back then, how hard it was to contain a population whose framing and assimilation was really difficult. Arriving from different nations, these culturally distinct people were, in a way, under evaluation. The possessive pronoun — language and culture that differ from ours very much — indicates a movement of belonging and, at the same time, of homogenization at an early stage in the establishment of a national identity.

The concern about the effective integration of foreigners was felt and answered by the immigrants themselves. The **Colono Alemão**, a paper that represented the interests of

settlers, claimed that their destinies were “closely related to those of the people of Rio Grande do Sul, and even if previous governments had failed to grasp the usefulness to the Province of tightening links in this natural and healthy union, the philanthropic man and true lover of his country would not give up the idea of incorporating such industrious and peaceful people into the bosom of the big Brazilian family”.²

Despite the resistance, time went by, and Brazil became a large recipient of workers from other countries. In a second moment, in the mid-20th century, still during World War II, the **Diário de Notícias** newspaper, of Porto Alegre, published an editorial entitled **Colonization and immigration**, in which it showed concern over the urbanization process and the demographic voids in Brazil, which would entice the greed of imperialist nations.³ While that article highlighted the internal aspects of migration, which was a result of the new phase of national development, another editorial of the end of the same year, **Problems of immigration policy**, discussed what immigration policy should be established after the war, recognizing the importance of welcoming foreign labor.⁴

When the war was over, the debate oscillated between the claim for more immigrants and the pessimism about the outcomes. In the same

1 CORREIO DA LIBERDADE. Porto Alegre: [S.n.], n. 23, 2 jun. 1831. Translation mine.

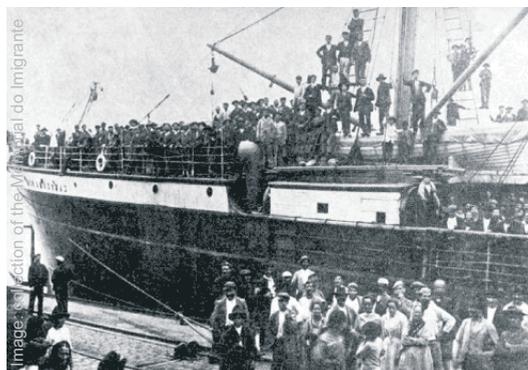
2 O COLONO ALEMÃO. Porto Alegre: [S.n.], n. 1, 3 fev. 1836. Translation mine.

3 COLONIZAÇÃO e imigração. *Diário de Notícias*, Porto Alegre, p. 4, 27 fev. 1943.

4 PROBLEMAS de política imigratória. *Diário de Notícias*, Porto Alegre, p. 4, 5 dez. 1943.

newspaper, an article, **Displaced to Brazil**, advocated the facilitation of the immigration policy concerning European war refugees, because, in their view, Brazil was wasting a unique opportunity for obtaining relatively skilled labor to countries such as Canada and the United States.⁵ Soon after that, in a report called **All Italian immigrants will go to Argentina**, it regretted the lack of a more effective policy by Brazil's government regarding Italian immigrants, who kept going en masse to Argentina. The consequence of this inaction would be to make Brazil “risk losing a valuable and irreplaceable contribution of blood”⁶. That was a recurrent complaint and if the country did not want to botch that opportunity, it should provide “work conditions that have compensations and guarantees capable of making them feel attached to the land”⁷.

The **Correio do Povo** newspaper, in its turn, expressed its perceptions in a similar way, although more frankly with respect to the racial issues. It encouraged the immigration of the Dutch, “a great racial element and a magnificent land worker” and stated, justifying itself, that this measure would not mean “to pretermite the native by choosing the foreigner. It would, instead, contribute to the improvement of the race itself and cooperate in the exploitation of the land to increase the



wealth of the nation”⁸. Almost in the mid-20th century, the issue of the advancement of the race still came up, with an appeal to eugenics that would reappear soon afterwards. In a piece properly called **Missed Opportunities**, it deplored the fact that Brazil did not consider the “marvelous immigration possibilities that the war and the world's maladjustments” generated, because “the import of first-class humans” would be of tremendous benefit, “due to the economical and ethnical factors it presents”⁹.

Although the ethnic aspect was indeed highlighted, the bulk of the matter still seemed to be economic, because of the chance of using well-trained labor. That happened in a piece of news that praised Argentina for its policy of welcoming immigrants. According to the author, besides farm workers, Argentina was about to receive

5 DESLOCADOS para o Brasil. *Diário de Notícias*, Porto Alegre, p. 4, 8 jan. 1948.

6 CONVERGIRÁ para a Argentina toda a imigração italiana. *Diário de Notícias*, Porto Alegre, p. 1, 5 fev. 1948. Translation mine.

7 DIÁRIO DE NOTÍCIAS. Porto Alegre: [S.n.], 19 maio 1948. Translation mine.

8 CORREIO DO POVO. Porto Alegre: [S.n.], 5 maio 1948. Translation mine.

9 OPORTUNIDADES que se perdem. *Correio do Povo*, Porto Alegre, p. 4, 11 ago. 1948. Translation mine.



highly-skilled people. In the end, he asks: “Meanwhile, what is being done in Brazil?”¹⁰

Looking at the contemporary press, at the end of this brief review, it is symptomatic to realize how some arguments now advocated resemble those that were used in previous moments. The Brazilian edition of **El País**, of June 8th, 2015, for instance, featured an article whose title is unequivocal: “Late in the international context, Brazil now studies how to attract immigrants”.¹¹ In the same way, but adding the consequences of the crisis, an article in the **BBC Brasil**, of December 1st, 2015, points to the falling number of immigrants coming to the country, asserting that the data available were part of a “broader research especially demanded by the Ministry of Labor to develop policies more suitable to attract immigrants to Brazil — with an eye on the arrival of skilled labor to boost the economy”.¹²

That view about immigration in Brazil, which seems to repeat itself throughout history, is not any different, generally speaking, from the ones in Rio Grande do Sul. The importance of welcoming foreign labor was featured in the issue of June 22nd, 2015 of **Sul21**, in which the immigrants' work capacity, discipline and employability are praised. The business community would be open to hire these immigrants, even though prejudice concerning the different cultures and religions of some groups still persisted.¹³ In fact, some cases of xenophobia, mainly against black immigrants, were reported by the state's press in 2015. Moreover, a vague notion that foreigners come to get the jobs that could be taken by local workers was also present in that discussion.

This quick overview intends to show the historicity of the views on the phenomenon, since aspects related to the openness of the general public to immigration depend on particular

10 CORREIO DO POVO. Porto Alegre: [S.n.], 9 jul. 1948. Translation mine.

11 MARTIN, M. Atrasado no contexto mundial, Brasil estuda agora como atrair imigrantes. **El País**, Madrid, 7 jun. 2015. Retrieved from <http://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2015/05/29/politica/1432914508_370989.html> on 14 Aug. 2015. Translation mine.

12 CARNEIRO, J. D. Cai entrada de imigrantes no Brasil, aponta pesquisa. **BBC Brasil**, [Rio de Janeiro], 1 dez. 2015. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/portuguese/noticias/2015/12/151201_imigracao_brasil_jc> on 7 dez. 2015. Translation mine.

13 NEM TODOS entendem que a migração é um Direito. **Sul 21**, Porto Alegre. 22 jun. 2015. Retrieved from <www.sul21.com.br/.../nem-todos-entendem-que-a-migracao-e-um-direito> on 10 nov. 2015.

conjunctures. Immigration, recognized a posteriori as a driving force behind development, went through a hard time to be effectuated. The “selection” justified by the argument of the improvement of the race echoes even today in some hostile manifestations, especially against black immigrants. Nevertheless, governments must deal with this subject in a more rational way, because, in a more realistic perception, the repeated argument of the necessity of making it easier for immigrants to come, stay and adapt to Brazil and Rio Grande do Sul, following the example of other nations, is still noticeable.

It is possible that now, when the population aging process (particularly in Rio Grande do Sul) and the lack of professionals in many areas (especially in some regions) are making matters worse, the debate about immigration might be made on different grounds. For that to happen, it is paramount to recognize the historical contribution of

immigration to the foundation of both the Brazilian society and that of Rio Grande do Sul and to change our attitude in order to make sure that immigrants are welcomed in the present and in the future. **P**



Photo by Sérgio Vieira/Agência de Notícias do Acre/Flickr

The new immigrant workers: the “Brazilian dream”

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The restructuring process of the Brazilian labor market, since 2004, with the creation of formal jobs, has been attracting foreigners. Brazil, which has exported many workers in search of the "American dream", has more recently represented the "Brazilian dream" for many immigrants, mainly from Haiti. The analysis of permits for foreigners to work in Brazil has revealed this new migratory flow, which has been increasingly visible in recent years.

Based on migration data in Brazil, it is possible to divide the migration phenomenon into two groups: the first one may be named as the regular flow and depends on the level of economic activity, which somehow corresponds to the domestic demand for foreign professionals. According to Coordenação Geral de Imigração (CGI), an agency of the Brazilian Ministry of Labor and Employment (MTE, the initials in Portuguese), Brazil granted 244,096 work permits for foreigners between 2011 and 2014, of which 95% were temporary and 5% permanent. They were mostly men (89.7%), between 20 and 49 years of age (82.8%) and with a high level of education (55% with bachelor's degrees and 37% with high school). By country of origin, the United States ranks first in permits (13.9%), followed by the Philippines (9.2%) and the United Kingdom (1.6%). Most U.S. citizens came to attend events, while the Filipinos and the English came to work on board of vessels. São Paulo (43.9%) and Rio de Janeiro (36.9%)

were the major destinations. Rio Grande do Sul had 2% of permits in this period.

The second migration flow represents the "Brazilian dream". They are people who come looking for job opportunities in Brazil, striving for a better life, similarly to thousands of Brazilians who have grown out of poverty in recent years. According to the Conselho Nacional de Imigração (CNIg,) 14,981 permits for foreigners were issued from 2011 to 2014. Among them are work permits, residence permits by family unions and special situations. It is noteworthy that all permits issued by CGIg were of work and 87% of CNIg permits were of special situations. This means that the first group heads to Brazil given their current work, unlike the second one, which arrives in Brazil searching for a job. Regarding the country of origin, Haiti accounts for 63.4% (9,492) of permits by CNIg, all of which were of special situations. According to CNIg¹, there are still 40,000 Haitian processes under analysis.

The movement of Haitians to Brazil started after the 2010 earthquake and has intensified after the issuing of the Normative Resolution 97, of 12 January 2012, which sets forth the granting of permanent visas for humanitarian reasons to Haitian nationals. Haitian immigrants are the only ones to bear this kind of resolution in CNIg, based on Art.

16 of Law No. 6.815, of 1980. It should be noted that Brazil is leading the United Nations peacekeeping mission in that country, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

Between 2010 and 2014, 34,887 Haitian refugee requests were recorded, 83% thereof were in the last two years of that period, which means that this flux is recent and may still grow. The Republic of Haiti has 10.3 million inhabitants, of which 80% live in poverty.² Moreover, rebuilding the country becomes even more difficult as the younger male and highly educated population emigrates, leaving behind women, children and elderly people and about 40% of illiterates. They arrive in Brazil through a route comprising a flight from Port-au-Prince to Quito, in Ecuador, following a land route crossing Peru, then reaching Brazil, through the State of Acre, then heading to other Brazilian regions in search of jobs.

According to the **Relação Anual de Informações Sociais (RAIS)**, Haiti has ranked first since 2013 in the number of formal workers in Brazil, surpassing Portugal, which, between 2010 and 2012, held the lead. The amount of immigrants with formal contract grew by 107.5% between 2010 and 2014, totalizing 119,312 in 2014, of which 73.2% were men and 26.8% were women. Regarding the country of origin,

1 Minutes of the agenda of June 10, 2015, according to Cavalcanti, L. (Ed.) et al. *Relatório Anual 2015: a inserção dos imigrantes no mercado de trabalho brasileiro*. Brasília, DF: OBMigra, 2015.

2 United Nations in Brazil. **EXCLUSIVO: cinco anos depois do terremoto que destruiu o Haiti, ONU continua apoiando reconstrução do país**. 2015. Retrieved from <<https://nacoesunidas.org/exclusivo-cinco-anos-depois-do-terremoto-que-destruiu-o-haiti-onu-continua-apoiando-reconstrucao-do-pais/>> on Dec. 15, 2015.

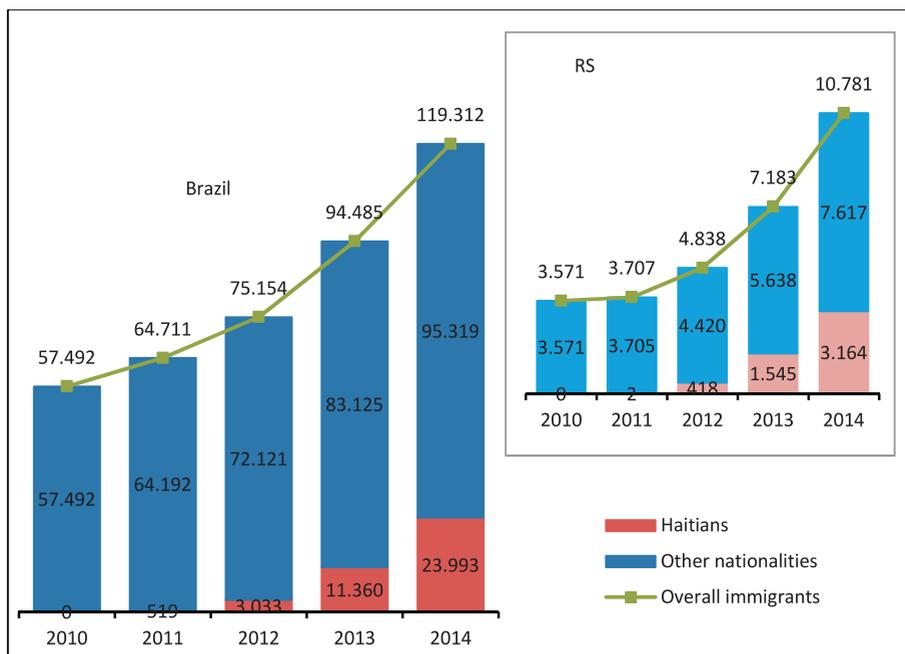
the top three were Haiti, comprising 20.1% (23,993), Portugal (9.0% or 10,770) and Argentina (6.6% or 7,832). The growth rate of Haitians was 484.4% in 2012, 274.5% in 2013 and 111.2% in 2014. It is noteworthy that Haitian immigrants are younger and less educated than other formal work immigrants.

As for occupation type, the group of **sciences and arts professionals**, in

which 31.2% of immigrants were employed in 2010, shrank to 18.9% in 2014, and the group of **manufacturing and industrial services workers** increased its share from 12.2% to 31.9% in the same period, according to the Brazilian Classification of Occupations (CBO, the initials in Portuguese)³. This implies that the massive influx of Haitians into the Brazilian labor market has redirected foreigners' employment

Figure 1

Overall immigrants with a formal job in Brazil and in Rio Grande do Sul — 2010-14

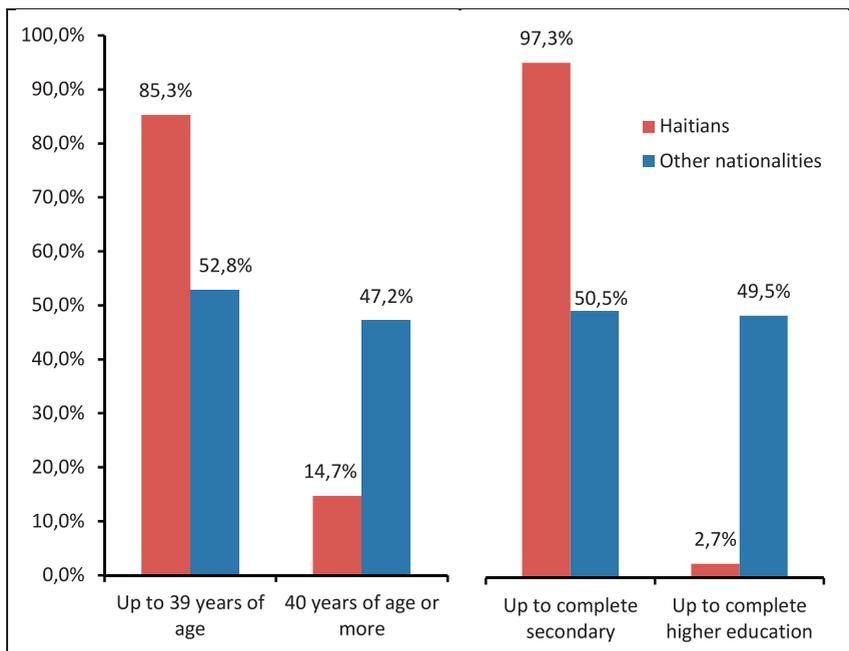


SOURCE: Brasil. Ministério do Trabalho e Emprego. **Relação Anual de Informações Sociais**. 2015. Retrieved from <http://bi.mte.gov.br/bgaged/caged_rais_vinculo_id/login.php> on Dec. 14, 2015.

3 BRASIL. Ministério do Trabalho e Emprego. **Classificação Brasileira de Ocupações**. 2015. Retrieved from <www.mteco.gov.br/cbosite/pages/home.jsf> on Dec. 14, 2015.

Figure 2

Immigrants with a formal job in Brazil, by age and by educational level — 2014



SOURCE: Brasil. Ministério do Trabalho. **Relação Anual de Informações Sociais**. 2015. Retrieved from <http://bi.mte.gov.br/bgcaged/caged_rais_vinculo_id/login.php> on Dec. 14, 2015.

from sectors requiring high qualification and better wages towards others, which do not demand high educational level and pay lower wages. This migration process has coincided with a favorable moment of the Brazilian labor market, which showed uninterrupted decline in unemployment rates from 2004 to 2014, increasing formalization and growing average of real earnings, especially in those occupations that do not require high educational level.

As for the administrative units, São Paulo is in the lead in the number of immigrant workers with formal jobs, but the trend is that these immigrants are moving to other regions. Remarkably, the South Region had the largest increase between 2010 and 2014 (289.4%). Rio Grande do Sul, where 6.2% of immigrants worked in 2010, had its share raised to 9.0% in 2014, an increase of 201.9% in the amount of immigrants, less than in Santa Catarina (411.1 %) and

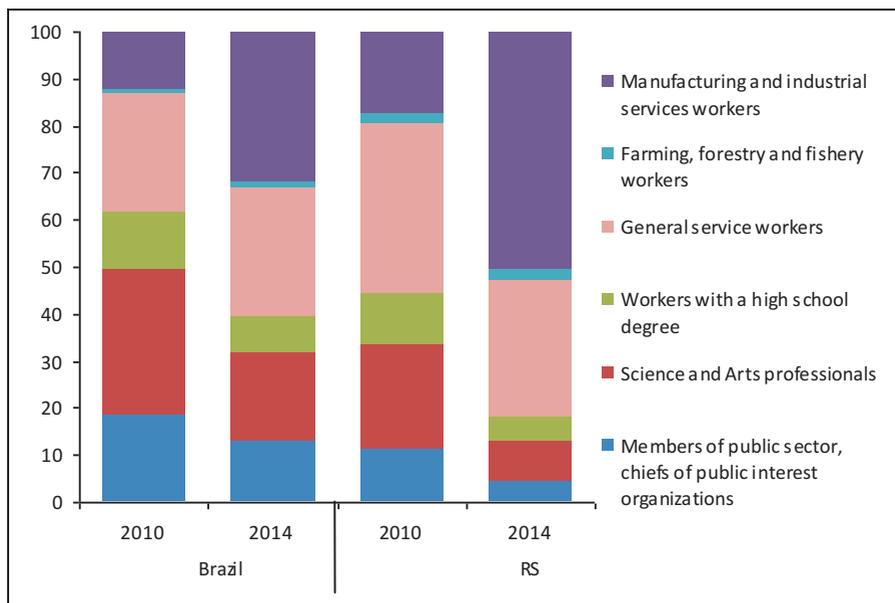
Paraná (287.5%) over the same period.

According to RAIS, Rio Grande do Sul recorded a continuous increase in the immigrant workforce with a formal contract, from 3,571 in 2010 to 10,781 in 2014. The main nationalities in 2014 were the Haitians, with 29.3% (3,164), the Uruguayans, with 19.0% (2,049), and the Argentinians, with 7.9% (851). These immigrants were men (73.5%), young people up to 39 years of age (70.1%) and

with a low level of education (81.3% had up to high school finished). As for occupational group, the state is following the national trend. The group of Science and Arts professionals had its share reduced from 22.0% in 2010 to 8.4% in 2014, whereas the group of manufacturing and industrial services workers increased from 17.3% to 50.5% in the same period. Among the Haitians, the proportion in the latter group was

Figure 3

Immigrant workers with formal jobs, by main occupational groups, in Brazil and in Rio Grande do Sul — 2010 and 2014



SOURCE: Brasil. Ministério do Trabalho. **Relação Anual de Informações Sociais**. 2015. Retrieved from <http://bi.mte.gov.br/bgcaged/caged_rais_vinculo_id/login.php> on Dec. 14, 2015.

NOTE: Workers of general services is a sum of the following groups: administrative services workers, repairing and maintenance services workers, and service workers and commercial sellers in shops and markets

78.4% in 2014.

For the first half of 2015, the data from the Annual Report of Observatório das Migrações Internacionais (OBMigra, 2015)⁴ indicate a positive balance in hiring immigrants in Rio Grande do Sul: 1,878 were employed and 424 were laid off; in Porto Alegre, 362 were hired and 116 were laid off. This suggests that, despite the economic recession and the increasing unemployment rate,⁵ the labor market was still favorable for this population.

It is worth noting that these data refer only to the formal labor market. Unfortunately, there are no data on the informal market. Yet there has been a remarkable increase of immigrants in local commercial centers, mainly as street vendors, a classic case of informal and unprotected labor.

After 10 years of positive figures, the labor market in Brazil has been rapidly deteriorating from 2015 to date, due to the economic downturn. This makes even harder for the lives of those who left their country in search of the “Brazilian dream” and also affects the integration of immigrants to social life. However, it is necessary to bear in mind that Brazil is facing a demographic transition and that Rio Grande do Sul is among the states at a more advanced

“After 10 years of positive figures, the labor market in Brazil has been rapidly deteriorating from 2015 to date, due to the economic downturn. This makes even harder for the lives of those who left their country in search of the ‘Brazilian dream’ ”

stage of this process. This means that, in a few years, there will be more elderly than young people in the active working age population. The influx of immigrants, mostly young, may alleviate this demographic phenomenon. Therefore, an integration policy for foreigners is required in Brazilian society, taking advantage of their knowledge and skills for the development of Brazil, thus restoring growth and creating jobs. **P**

4 Cavalcanti, L. (Ed.) Et al. *Relatório Anual 2015: a inserção dos imigrantes no mercado de trabalho brasileiro*. Brasília, DF: OBMigra, 2015.

5 According to *Pesquisa de Emprego e Desemprego (PED)*, the overall unemployment rate in the Metropolitan Area of Porto Alegre increased from 5.9% in 2014 to 10.2% in November 2015. See DESEMPENHO do mercado de trabalho da Região Metropolitana de Porto Alegre em 2014. *Informe PED-RMPA*, Porto Alegre, ano 23, número especial, 2015. Retrieved from <<http://www.fee.rs.gov.br/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/20150127informe-ped-rmpa-numero-especial-jan.15.pdf>> on Dec. 14, 2015.

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

and its contradictory flows

By Robson Valdez

In an interview to **Panorama**, Deisy Ventura evaluates the migration policies in developed and developing countries and considers the difference between migrants and refugees more and more tenuous. In the global context, the researcher argues that migration ends up being desired in conditions that attend to the labor market needs, not the migrants' rights. Deisy also criticizes the role of international powers in the crisis of Syrian refugees and, when it comes to Brazil, she points out the urgent need for an adequate legislation and coordination between the federation units and the different sectors so that migration and asylum do not generate humanitarian or political crises whenever a new migration flow takes place.



Deisy Ventura is a Professor of International Law and lectures at the International Relations Institute of the University of São Paulo (IRI-USP), Professor at the Public Health Faculty (FSP) of USP and member of the Coordinating Committee of the Graduate Program in Global Health and Sustainability. She holds a Doctor's degree in International Law and a Master's degree in European Law from the European University of Paris 1, Panthéon-Sorbonne. She has a degree in Law and a Master's degree in Latin American Integration from the Federal University of Santa Maria. She also coordinates, at the IRI, the extension project Cosmopolis on migration policies (a partnership between USP and the Municipality of São Paulo).

Panorama: What is your general view of international migration in the current global geopolitical context?

The current migration cycle, which began in the 80s, is a slow and continuous process, linked to the deepening of the economic inequalities between the countries, the changing forms of production brought about by economic globalization, and some other specific factors, namely armed conflict, ethnic or religious persecution and natural disasters.

Mireille Delmas-Marty refers to globalization as a "factory of migrants", in the sense that workers move in search of employment and a decent life. However, developed countries have adopted increasingly restrictive immigration policies. Developing countries, on the other hand, do not usually adopt restrictive policies of entry into their territories, but do not encourage migratory regularization and access to rights either. Thus, the right to migrate is the human rights' poor relative. While only about

“Developing countries, on the other hand, do not usually adopt restrictive policies of entry into their territories, but do not encourage migratory regularization and access to rights either”

40 States have adhered to the 1990 United Nations Convention on the rights of migrant workers and their families, most of the international human rights treaties are signed by well over 100 States. In Brazil, for example, this convention has been processed in Congress for years, and the Foreigner's Statute, inherited from the military dictatorship, still is the current law.

The non-recognition of the right to migrate seems to be a big contradiction of the economic globalization ideal, which lists, among its touted advantages, an unprecedented freedom of movement of people, made possible by the

extraordinary progress in the transportation sector. However, I believe that it is not a contradiction, but a feature: the freedom of movement that actually finds full support in contemporary society is the one linked to tourism and business or to people whose income is high enough that their free establishment in another country is not an obstacle. Thus, for globalization to work, it is necessary to encourage these flows. To the States is reserved, however, the prerogative to interrupt them at any time, for different reasons (economy, security, public health, etc.).

As for the migrant workers, it is not that their migration is unwanted; it may be desired, but under the often precarious conditions that meet the labor market demands and for as long as these workers are needed. Actually, it is the market that is free, not the people. Every time the rights of migrants are enshrined — both the right to migrate and, once the migrants are installed, the "right to have rights" (a phrase by Hannah Arendt, in her

remarkable book on the origins of totalitarianism) —, the ability of both market players and States to get rid of unwanted contingent is reduced. This explains why countries with highly restrictive immigration policies keep a vast "black market" in which workers in an irregular migratory situation undergo equally irregular working conditions, which are often inhuman or similar to slavery.

Panorama: When the international migration flows (North-North, North-South and South-South) are addressed, socioeconomic factors are commonly listed to explain this phenomenon. However, when it comes to refugees, the subject is treated as a humanitarian crisis. Do you believe that migration should be treated differently?

The classic difference between asylum seeking and migration refers to the person's will: in the first case, he/she is unable to stay, while in the second one he/she desires to leave. While the refugees' international rights are

“Actually, it is the market that is free, not the people”

quite consolidated in the Member States' legislation, the right to migrate, as mentioned before, is still new in most countries. However, the difference between migrant and refugee is becoming increasingly tenuous. Although armed conflicts fully match the idea of the impossibility of staying in a territory, the collapse of a country's economy, for example, can also easily lead us to believe that our livelihood will soon disappear. I reckon that neither migration nor asylum should be approached from a humanitarian perspective. Obviously assistance should be provided to refugees in their displacement and upon their arrival to the destination country, but

the only approach that can effectively respond to the sharp increase in forced displacements is the attainment of peace in conflict regions and the reduction of inequalities between States. One cannot counteract the effects without tackling the causes — and now, on the contrary, developed countries have largely contributed to the deepening of both the armed conflicts in their areas of interest and the economic inequalities.

Panorama: How do you evaluate the role of international powers in the Syrian refugees' crisis?

The international powers have played a shameful role in flagrant breach of their own laws on asylum. Unfortunately,

“While the refugees' international rights are quite consolidated in the Member States' legislation, the right to migrate, as mentioned before, is still new in most countries”



the electoral appropriation of themes regarding migration and asylum by the extreme right wing has led governments of all stripes to address the current flow of Syrian refugees as a problem to be tackled through stricter border control and legislation. Regrettably, we have now exceeded the number of refugees of World War II and the images broadcast from Europe show an open air, real time humanitarian tragedy. This, however, has not made the world powers review their policies on the Middle East and especially their attitude towards Syria. The bomb attacks that took place in Paris in November last year have contributed both to stigmatize Syrian refugees and for France to get further involved in the ongoing conflicts.

Panorama: The refugees' crisis in the Middle East and Africa has intensified the already complex issue of international migration flows. What is your opinion about that?

In my opinion, the numbers are very helpful

in this assessment, although many of the available statistics deserve criticism, especially for their incompleteness. Nevertheless, the figures available allow us to understand that the vast majority of refugees is in developing countries (according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 86% of them), most of which living in refugee camps in Turkey, Pakistan and Lebanon (which hosts 30% of all refugees), as well as in Iran, Ethiopia, Jordan and Kenya. In other words, Europe is by no means the region with the largest flow of refugees. It is estimated that today there are more than 60 million forcibly displaced people, more than 20 million of which dislocated to a country that is different from the one in which they used to live (i.e., they are refugees), mainly from Syria, Afghanistan and Somalia. As regards migration, according to the United Nations, 3.2% of the world's population has remained largely unchanged since 1995, which now accounts for

“We have now exceeded the number of refugees of World War II and the images broadcast from Europe show an open air, real time humanitarian tragedy”

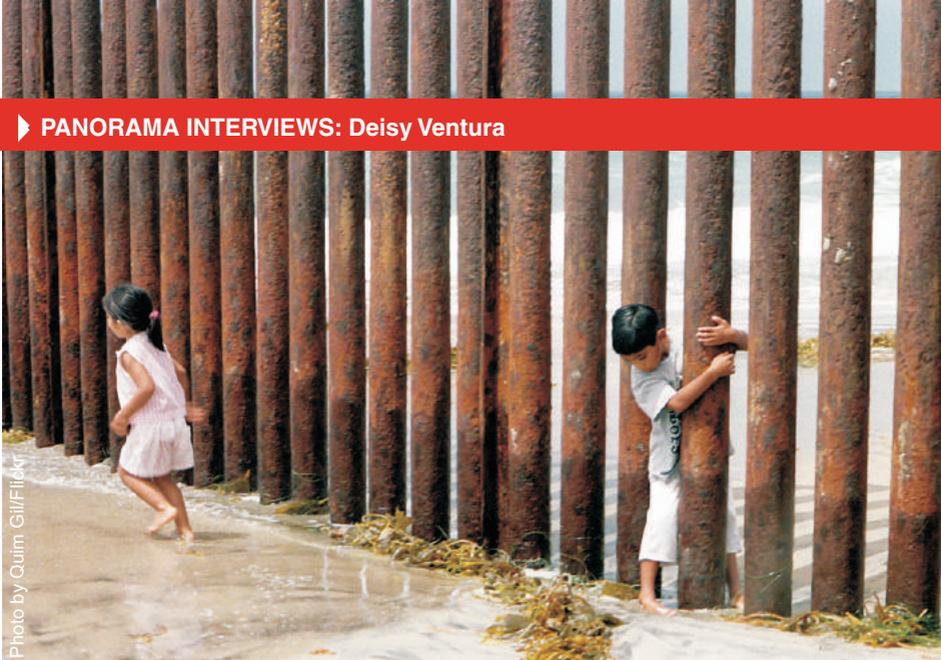


Photo by Quim Gil/Flickr

about 250 million people. If the international refugee law were obeyed, the current flow of Syrian migrants would not complicate the migration issue because the destination countries would be required to integrate these people into their societies until the armed conflicts ceased, for asylum, in principle, is a transitional legal status.

Panorama: Brazil has been receiving migratory flows of Syrian and Haitian refugees. How do you evaluate Brazil's challenges and attitudes towards this issue?

First of all, I would like to mitigate this claim. Compared to other

countries, Brazil has hosted few Syrian refugees. In July 2015, according to the UNHCR, Turkey, for example, welcomed 1.8 million Syrian refugees, while Lebanon received another 1.1 million of them. As for Haitian migrants, according to the specialized literature, there are three major migration poles: the Caribbean, North America and Europe. I am concerned about the false idea, often spread by the media, that Brazil has been impacted by a "wave" or an "invasion" of migrants and refugees. It is estimated that in the current migration cycle Brazil has a number of emigrants

"Europe is by no means the region with the largest flow of refugees"



Photo by SyriaFreedom/Flickr

equivalent to or greater than the number of immigrants it welcomes.

I believe that Brazil has made plenty of progress in managing this issue, but we still have a long way to go. We urgently need an adequate legislation and coordination between the federative units and also between the different sectors so that migration and asylum do not cause humanitarian or political crises whenever a new flow takes place. The

arrival of Haitians in Acre and their forwarding to São Paulo, for example, were a real comedy of errors. Migration is a highly positive phenomenon for the host countries, both from a cultural and an economic point of view. Asylum, on the other hand, is an ethical obligation of any society under the rule of law. Any of us can become a migrant or a refugee by will or by necessity. It is this awareness that the State

"I am concerned about the false idea, often spread by the media, that Brazil has been impacted by a "wave" or an "invasion" of migrants and refugees"

Photo by Gleilson Mirandaa/ Agência de Notícias do Acre/Flickr



and the Brazilian society lack, both often unable to overcome the rampant prejudice in our country in order to be able to see, in the black migrants and Arab refugees, the features of our ancestors — mainly Africans, Asians and Europeans, most of which poor and stray like today's migrants —, who, after all, have built Brazil. [P](#)

The perception of immigration in the State of Rio Grande do Sul: three historical moments

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The issue of immigration, for reasons that range from structural problems such as population aging and low growth to the displacement of refugees, appears in current debates very often. In Brazil and particularly in the State of Rio Grande do Sul, the matter goes from the recognition of its convenience and necessity to outright expressions of rejection and, sometimes, clear xenophobia. Aiming to avoid the immediateness of certain analyses, this article intends to set a short historical overview on the perceptions of the media of immigration in Rio Grande do Sul in three historical moments. In the first one, in the 19th century, the negative stance on German immigrants is called to focus. In the second one, in the mid-20th century, in the post-World War II period, the feeling that Brazil was losing the “competition” to attract workforce released in Europe is highlighted. Finally, nowadays, a discussion about future demographic perspectives, workforce and racial issues is noteworthy. This analysis is very useful to show that some aspects, now indisputable facts, used to raise

controversy at some points, and that we should examine the question from a broader perspective.

In the then Province of Rio Grande do Sul, in 1831, the **Correio da Liberdade**, a newspaper of the city of Porto Alegre, called for more control by the government in the São Leopoldo Colony, which was already inhabited by numerous German immigrants, for that community was allegedly guided by people “whose languages and cultures differ much from ours and who are, in a large proportion, mercenary soldiers, well-accustomed to the immorality and plunder of the Campaigns, or even people coming from faraway countries, where clearly the most virtuous ones wouldn't be chosen to be exported”.¹

It seemed evident, back then, how hard it was to contain a population whose framing and assimilation was really difficult. Arriving from different nations, these culturally distinct people were, in a way, under evaluation. The possessive pronoun — language and culture that differ from ours very much — indicates a movement of belonging and, at the same time, of homogenization at an early stage in the establishment of a national identity.

The concern about the effective integration of foreigners was felt and answered by the immigrants themselves. The **Colono Alemão**, a paper that represented the interests of

settlers, claimed that their destinies were “closely related to those of the people of Rio Grande do Sul, and even if previous governments had failed to grasp the usefulness to the Province of tightening links in this natural and healthy union, the philanthropic man and true lover of his country would not give up the idea of incorporating such industrious and peaceful people into the bosom of the big Brazilian family”.²

Despite the resistance, time went by, and Brazil became a large recipient of workers from other countries. In a second moment, in the mid-20th century, still during World War II, the **Diário de Notícias** newspaper, of Porto Alegre, published an editorial entitled **Colonization and immigration**, in which it showed concern over the urbanization process and the demographic voids in Brazil, which would entice the greed of imperialist nations.³ While that article highlighted the internal aspects of migration, which was a result of the new phase of national development, another editorial of the end of the same year, **Problems of immigration policy**, discussed what immigration policy should be established after the war, recognizing the importance of welcoming foreign labor.⁴

When the war was over, the debate oscillated between the claim for more immigrants and the pessimism about the outcomes. In the same

1 CORREIO DA LIBERDADE. Porto Alegre: [S.n.], n. 23, 2 jun. 1831. Translation mine.

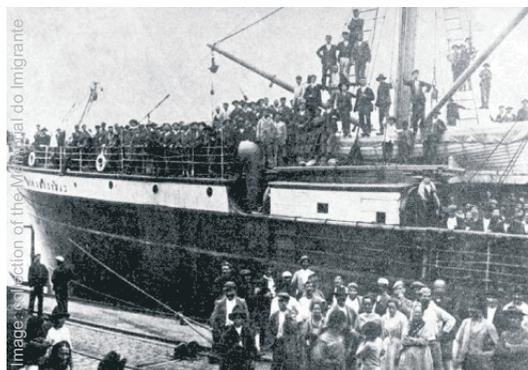
2 O COLONO ALEMÃO. Porto Alegre: [S.n.], n. 1, 3 fev. 1836. Translation mine.

3 COLONIZAÇÃO e imigração. *Diário de Notícias*, Porto Alegre, p. 4, 27 fev. 1943.

4 PROBLEMAS de política imigratória. *Diário de Notícias*, Porto Alegre, p. 4, 5 dez. 1943.

newspaper, an article, **Displaced to Brazil**, advocated the facilitation of the immigration policy concerning European war refugees, because, in their view, Brazil was wasting a unique opportunity for obtaining relatively skilled labor to countries such as Canada and the United States.⁵ Soon after that, in a report called **All Italian immigrants will go to Argentina**, it regretted the lack of a more effective policy by Brazil's government regarding Italian immigrants, who kept going en masse to Argentina. The consequence of this inaction would be to make Brazil “risk losing a valuable and irreplaceable contribution of blood”⁶. That was a recurrent complaint and if the country did not want to botch that opportunity, it should provide “work conditions that have compensations and guarantees capable of making them feel attached to the land”⁷.

The **Correio do Povo** newspaper, in its turn, expressed its perceptions in a similar way, although more frankly with respect to the racial issues. It encouraged the immigration of the Dutch, “a great racial element and a magnificent land worker” and stated, justifying itself, that this measure would not mean “to pretermite the native by choosing the foreigner. It would, instead, contribute to the improvement of the race itself and cooperate in the exploitation of the land to increase the



wealth of the nation”⁸. Almost in the mid-20th century, the issue of the advancement of the race still came up, with an appeal to eugenics that would reappear soon afterwards. In a piece properly called **Missed Opportunities**, it deplored the fact that Brazil did not consider the “marvelous immigration possibilities that the war and the world's maladjustments” generated, because “the import of first-class humans” would be of tremendous benefit, “due to the economical and ethnical factors it presents”⁹.

Although the ethnic aspect was indeed highlighted, the bulk of the matter still seemed to be economic, because of the chance of using well-trained labor. That happened in a piece of news that praised Argentina for its policy of welcoming immigrants. According to the author, besides farm workers, Argentina was about to receive

5 DESLOCADOS para o Brasil. *Diário de Notícias*, Porto Alegre, p. 4, 8 jan. 1948.

6 CONVERGIRÁ para a Argentina toda a imigração italiana. *Diário de Notícias*, Porto Alegre, p. 1, 5 fev. 1948. Translation mine.

7 DIÁRIO DE NOTÍCIAS. Porto Alegre: [S.n.], 19 maio 1948. Translation mine.

8 CORREIO DO POVO. Porto Alegre: [S.n.], 5 maio 1948. Translation mine.

9 OPORTUNIDADES que se perdem. *Correio do Povo*, Porto Alegre, p. 4, 11 ago. 1948. Translation mine.



highly-skilled people. In the end, he asks: “Meanwhile, what is being done in Brazil?”¹⁰

Looking at the contemporary press, at the end of this brief review, it is symptomatic to realize how some arguments now advocated resemble those that were used in previous moments. The Brazilian edition of **El País**, of June 8th, 2015, for instance, featured an article whose title is unequivocal: “Late in the international context, Brazil now studies how to attract immigrants”.¹¹ In the same way, but adding the consequences of the crisis, an article in the **BBC Brasil**, of December 1st, 2015, points to the falling number of immigrants coming to the country, asserting that the data available were part of a “broader research especially demanded by the Ministry of Labor to develop policies more suitable to attract immigrants to Brazil — with an eye on the arrival of skilled labor to boost the economy”.¹²

That view about immigration in Brazil, which seems to repeat itself throughout history, is not any different, generally speaking, from the ones in Rio Grande do Sul. The importance of welcoming foreign labor was featured in the issue of June 22nd, 2015 of **Sul21**, in which the immigrants' work capacity, discipline and employability are praised. The business community would be open to hire these immigrants, even though prejudice concerning the different cultures and religions of some groups still persisted.¹³ In fact, some cases of xenophobia, mainly against black immigrants, were reported by the state's press in 2015. Moreover, a vague notion that foreigners come to get the jobs that could be taken by local workers was also present in that discussion.

This quick overview intends to show the historicity of the views on the phenomenon, since aspects related to the openness of the general public to immigration depend on particular

10 CORREIO DO POVO. Porto Alegre: [S.n.], 9 jul. 1948. Translation mine.

11 MARTIN, M. Atrasado no contexto mundial, Brasil estuda agora como atrair imigrantes. **El País**, Madrid, 7 jun. 2015. Retrieved from <http://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2015/05/29/politica/1432914508_370989.html> on 14 Aug. 2015. Translation mine.

12 CARNEIRO, J. D. Cai entrada de imigrantes no Brasil, aponta pesquisa. **BBC Brasil**, [Rio de Janeiro], 1 dez. 2015. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/portuguese/noticias/2015/12/151201_imigracao_brasil_jc> on 7 dez. 2015. Translation mine.

13 NEM TODOS entendem que a migração é um Direito. **Sul 21**, Porto Alegre. 22 jun. 2015. Retrieved from <www.sul21.com.br/.../nem-todos-entendem-que-a-migracao-e-um-direito> on 10 nov. 2015.

conjunctures. Immigration, recognized a posteriori as a driving force behind development, went through a hard time to be effectuated. The “selection” justified by the argument of the improvement of the race echoes even today in some hostile manifestations, especially against black immigrants. Nevertheless, governments must deal with this subject in a more rational way, because, in a more realistic perception, the repeated argument of the necessity of making it easier for immigrants to come, stay and adapt to Brazil and Rio Grande do Sul, following the example of other nations, is still noticeable.

It is possible that now, when the population aging process (particularly in Rio Grande do Sul) and the lack of professionals in many areas (especially in some regions) are making matters worse, the debate about immigration might be made on different grounds. For that to happen, it is paramount to recognize the historical contribution of

immigration to the foundation of both the Brazilian society and that of Rio Grande do Sul and to change our attitude in order to make sure that immigrants are welcomed in the present and in the future. **P**



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The new immigrant workers: the “Brazilian dream”

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The restructuring process of the Brazilian labor market, since 2004, with the creation of formal jobs, has been attracting foreigners. Brazil, which has exported many workers in search of the "American dream", has more recently represented the "Brazilian dream" for many immigrants, mainly from Haiti. The analysis of permits for foreigners to work in Brazil has revealed this new migratory flow, which has been increasingly visible in recent years.

Based on migration data in Brazil, it is possible to divide the migration phenomenon into two groups: the first one may be named as the regular flow and depends on the level of economic activity, which somehow corresponds to the domestic demand for foreign professionals. According to Coordenação Geral de Imigração (CGI), an agency of the Brazilian Ministry of Labor and Employment (MTE, the initials in Portuguese), Brazil granted 244,096 work permits for foreigners between 2011 and 2014, of which 95% were temporary and 5% permanent. They were mostly men (89.7%), between 20 and 49 years of age (82.8%) and with a high level of education (55% with bachelor's degrees and 37% with high school). By country of origin, the United States ranks first in permits (13.9%), followed by the Philippines (9.2%) and the United Kingdom (1.6%). Most U.S. citizens came to attend events, while the Filipinos and the English came to work on board of vessels. São Paulo (43.9%) and Rio de Janeiro (36.9%)

were the major destinations. Rio Grande do Sul had 2% of permits in this period.

The second migration flow represents the "Brazilian dream". They are people who come looking for job opportunities in Brazil, striving for a better life, similarly to thousands of Brazilians who have grown out of poverty in recent years. According to the Conselho Nacional de Imigração (CNIg,) 14,981 permits for foreigners were issued from 2011 to 2014. Among them are work permits, residence permits by family unions and special situations. It is noteworthy that all permits issued by CGIg were of work and 87% of CNIg permits were of special situations. This means that the first group heads to Brazil given their current work, unlike the second one, which arrives in Brazil searching for a job. Regarding the country of origin, Haiti accounts for 63.4% (9,492) of permits by CNIg, all of which were of special situations. According to CNIg¹, there are still 40,000 Haitian processes under analysis.

The movement of Haitians to Brazil started after the 2010 earthquake and has intensified after the issuing of the Normative Resolution 97, of 12 January 2012, which sets forth the granting of permanent visas for humanitarian reasons to Haitian nationals. Haitian immigrants are the only ones to bear this kind of resolution in CNIg, based on Art.

16 of Law No. 6.815, of 1980. It should be noted that Brazil is leading the United Nations peacekeeping mission in that country, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

Between 2010 and 2014, 34,887 Haitian refugee requests were recorded, 83% thereof were in the last two years of that period, which means that this flux is recent and may still grow. The Republic of Haiti has 10.3 million inhabitants, of which 80% live in poverty.² Moreover, rebuilding the country becomes even more difficult as the younger male and highly educated population emigrates, leaving behind women, children and elderly people and about 40% of illiterates. They arrive in Brazil through a route comprising a flight from Port-au-Prince to Quito, in Ecuador, following a land route crossing Peru, then reaching Brazil, through the State of Acre, then heading to other Brazilian regions in search of jobs.

According to the **Relação Anual de Informações Sociais (RAIS)**, Haiti has ranked first since 2013 in the number of formal workers in Brazil, surpassing Portugal, which, between 2010 and 2012, held the lead. The amount of immigrants with formal contract grew by 107.5% between 2010 and 2014, totalizing 119,312 in 2014, of which 73.2% were men and 26.8% were women. Regarding the country of origin,

1 Minutes of the agenda of June 10, 2015, according to Cavalcanti, L. (Ed.) et al. *Relatório Anual 2015: a inserção dos imigrantes no mercado de trabalho brasileiro*. Brasília, DF: OBMigra, 2015.

2 United Nations in Brazil. **EXCLUSIVO: cinco anos depois do terremoto que destruiu o Haiti, ONU continua apoiando reconstrução do país**. 2015. Retrieved from <<https://nacoesunidas.org/exclusivo-cinco-anos-depois-do-terremoto-que-destruiu-o-haiti-onu-continua-apoiando-reconstrucao-do-pais/>> on Dec. 15, 2015.

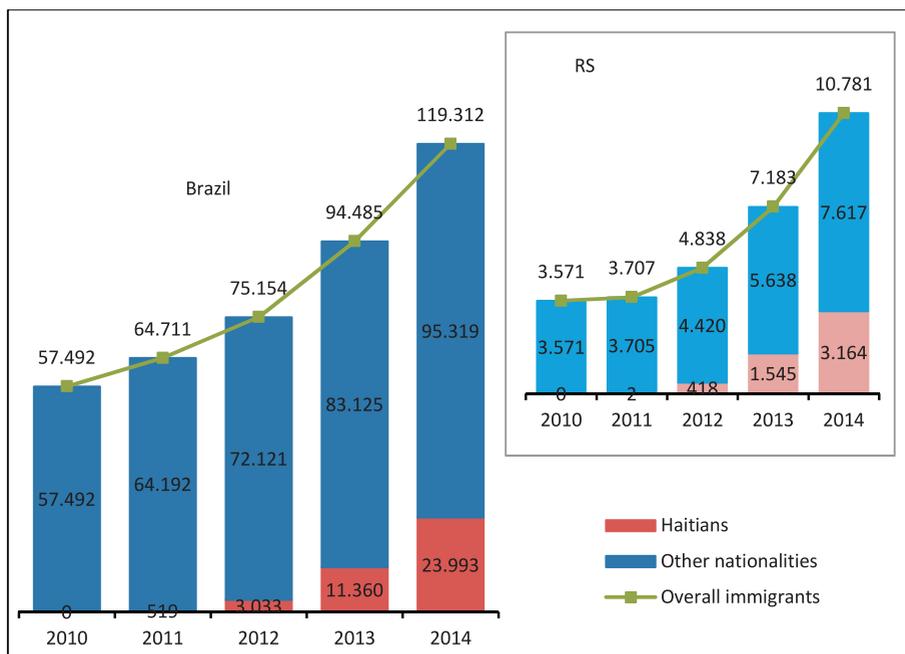
the top three were Haiti, comprising 20.1% (23,993), Portugal (9.0% or 10,770) and Argentina (6.6% or 7,832). The growth rate of Haitians was 484.4% in 2012, 274.5% in 2013 and 111.2% in 2014. It is noteworthy that Haitian immigrants are younger and less educated than other formal work immigrants.

As for occupation type, the group of **sciences and arts professionals**, in

which 31.2% of immigrants were employed in 2010, shrank to 18.9% in 2014, and the group of **manufacturing and industrial services workers** increased its share from 12.2% to 31.9% in the same period, according to the Brazilian Classification of Occupations (CBO, the initials in Portuguese)³. This implies that the massive influx of Haitians into the Brazilian labor market has redirected foreigners' employment

Figure 1

Overall immigrants with a formal job in Brazil and in Rio Grande do Sul — 2010-14

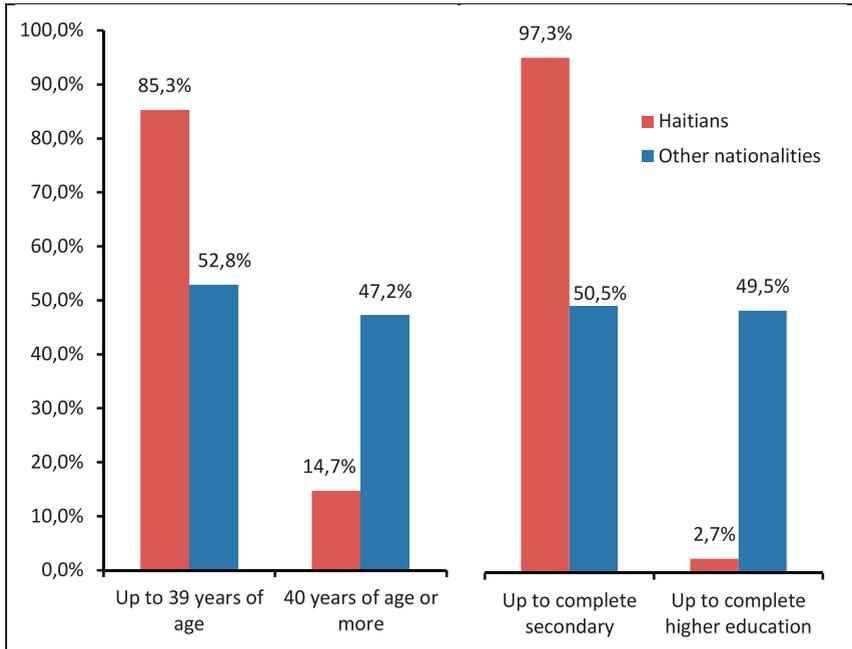


SOURCE: Brasil. Ministério do Trabalho e Emprego. **Relação Anual de Informações Sociais**. 2015. Retrieved from <http://bi.mte.gov.br/bgaged/caged_rais_vinculo_id/login.php> on Dec. 14, 2015.

3 BRASIL. Ministério do Trabalho e Emprego. **Classificação Brasileira de Ocupações**. 2015. Retrieved from <www.mteco.gov.br/cbosite/pages/home.jsf> on Dec. 14, 2015.

Figure 2

Immigrants with a formal job in Brazil, by age and by educational level — 2014



SOURCE: Brasil. Ministério do Trabalho. **Relação Anual de Informações Sociais**. 2015. Retrieved from <http://bi.mte.gov.br/bgcaged/caged_rais_vinculo_id/login.php> on Dec. 14, 2015.

from sectors requiring high qualification and better wages towards others, which do not demand high educational level and pay lower wages. This migration process has coincided with a favorable moment of the Brazilian labor market, which showed uninterrupted decline in unemployment rates from 2004 to 2014, increasing formalization and growing average of real earnings, especially in those occupations that do not require high educational level.

As for the administrative units, São Paulo is in the lead in the number of immigrant workers with formal jobs, but the trend is that these immigrants are moving to other regions. Remarkably, the South Region had the largest increase between 2010 and 2014 (289.4%). Rio Grande do Sul, where 6.2% of immigrants worked in 2010, had its share raised to 9.0% in 2014, an increase of 201.9% in the amount of immigrants, less than in Santa Catarina (411.1%) and

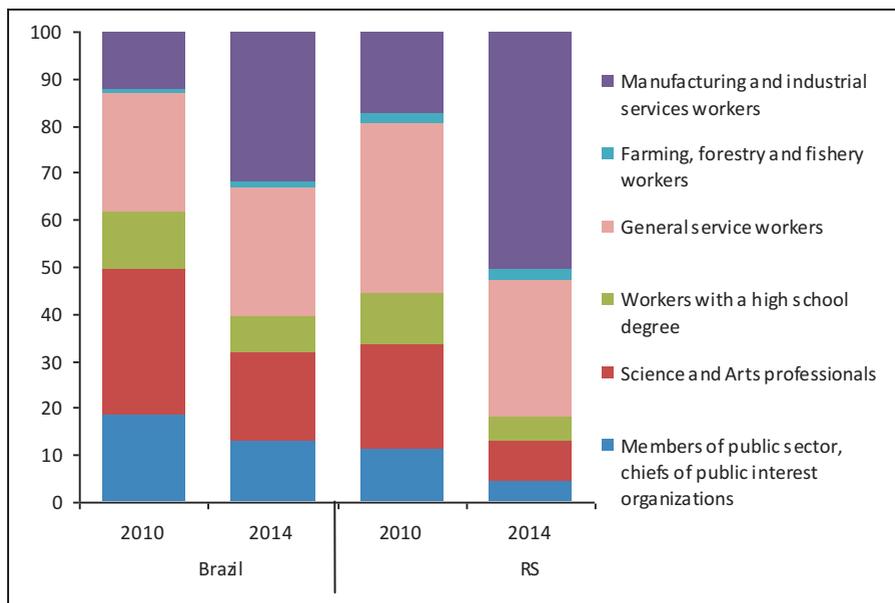
Paraná (287.5%) over the same period.

According to RAIS, Rio Grande do Sul recorded a continuous increase in the immigrant workforce with a formal contract, from 3,571 in 2010 to 10,781 in 2014. The main nationalities in 2014 were the Haitians, with 29.3% (3,164), the Uruguayans, with 19.0% (2,049), and the Argentinians, with 7.9% (851). These immigrants were men (73.5%), young people up to 39 years of age (70.1%) and

with a low level of education (81.3% had up to high school finished). As for occupational group, the state is following the national trend. The group of Science and Arts professionals had its share reduced from 22.0% in 2010 to 8.4% in 2014, whereas the group of manufacturing and industrial services workers increased from 17.3% to 50.5% in the same period. Among the Haitians, the proportion in the latter group was

Figure 3

Immigrant workers with formal jobs, by main occupational groups, in Brazil and in Rio Grande do Sul — 2010 and 2014



SOURCE: Brasil. Ministério do Trabalho. **Relação Anual de Informações Sociais**. 2015. Retrieved from <http://bi.mte.gov.br/bgcaged/caged_rais_vinculo_id/login.php> on Dec. 14, 2015.

NOTE: Workers of general services is a sum of the following groups: administrative services workers, repairing and maintenance services workers, and service workers and commercial sellers in shops and markets

78.4% in 2014.

For the first half of 2015, the data from the Annual Report of Observatório das Migrações Internacionais (OBMigra, 2015)⁴ indicate a positive balance in hiring immigrants in Rio Grande do Sul: 1,878 were employed and 424 were laid off; in Porto Alegre, 362 were hired and 116 were laid off. This suggests that, despite the economic recession and the increasing unemployment rate,⁵ the labor market was still favorable for this population.

It is worth noting that these data refer only to the formal labor market. Unfortunately, there are no data on the informal market. Yet there has been a remarkable increase of immigrants in local commercial centers, mainly as street vendors, a classic case of informal and unprotected labor.

After 10 years of positive figures, the labor market in Brazil has been rapidly deteriorating from 2015 to date, due to the economic downturn. This makes even harder for the lives of those who left their country in search of the “Brazilian dream” and also affects the integration of immigrants to social life. However, it is necessary to bear in mind that Brazil is facing a demographic transition and that Rio Grande do Sul is among the states at a more advanced

“After 10 years of positive figures, the labor market in Brazil has been rapidly deteriorating from 2015 to date, due to the economic downturn. This makes even harder for the lives of those who left their country in search of the ‘Brazilian dream’ ”

stage of this process. This means that, in a few years, there will be more elderly than young people in the active working age population. The influx of immigrants, mostly young, may alleviate this demographic phenomenon. Therefore, an integration policy for foreigners is required in Brazilian society, taking advantage of their knowledge and skills for the development of Brazil, thus restoring growth and creating jobs.^P

4 Cavalcanti, L. (Ed.) Et al. *Relatório Anual 2015: a inserção dos imigrantes no mercado de trabalho brasileiro*. Brasília, DF: OBMigra, 2015.

5 According to *Pesquisa de Emprego e Desemprego (PED)*, the overall unemployment rate in the Metropolitan Area of Porto Alegre increased from 5.9% in 2014 to 10.2% in November 2015. See *DESEMPENHO do mercado de trabalho da Região Metropolitana de Porto Alegre em 2014. Informe PED-RMPA*, Porto Alegre, ano 23, número especial, 2015. Retrieved from <<http://www.fee.rs.gov.br/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/20150127informe-ped-rmpa-numero-especial-jan.15.pdf>> on Dec. 14, 2015.