

## **Politics, Policies and International Immigration in Brazil: recent changes and perspectives**

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### **Introduction: From the Brazilian dream to the country of remigrations and forced emigrations**

From the field surveys conducted in the South, Centre-West, Southeast and North regions of Brazil between 2014 and 2018, we identified new migratory routes, transbordering relationships of human mobility and impacts of the desired South and Latin American regional integration on the immigration profile of Brazil, this one in constant transformation, including according to the political, economic and social moment of the country (Figure 1).

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**Figure 1 - Demonstration against the new Migration Law - 05/16/2017**



Source: Revista Veja/Cris Faga/Fox Press Photo/Folhapress.

In this sense, this article aims to review the cartographies, policies, routes and the state of the art of international immigration to Brazil in the last five years, which led to profound changes in domestic and foreign scenarios.

From the country of the “Brazilian dream” for Latin Americans and the Caribbeans, it has been changed to the country of remigrations and forced emigrations, including of refugees who settled here during the short period of the migratory Eldorado (SILVA; ASSIS, 2016).<sup>3</sup>

Using the instruments of thematic mapping, which is now revisited and revised in relation to our previous productions, we will discuss what remained from the then “new immigration country” based on the ruptures that occurred with the impeachment of 2016<sup>4</sup> and with the approval and effectiveness of the new Immigration Law from 2017.

The article also incorporates the recent discussions on the migration of Venezuelan refugees towards the Brazilian territory and its repercussions on the Latin American

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<sup>3</sup> There is a consensus among the Brazilian literature of international migrations that a phenomenon that was called "Brazilian dream" was created among the first groups of immigrants from the 2000s, especially between Africans and Latin Americans, that is, Brazil presented itself as a country that had economic, social and labour indicators adequate to the wishes, dreams, of the potential immigrants. See Silva & Assis (2016) for further discussion on this object.

<sup>4</sup> The impeachment process of President Dilma Rousseff, which took place in 2016, whose definitive destitution occurred on August 31, 2016. In addition to rupturing with the democratic structures and continuities of the country, the impeachment also promoted a discontinuity, therefore, ruptures, in a series of social and public policies of the Rousseff government, among them, those also focused on migratory issues.

integration project, apparently discontinued with the rise of so different governments in the region<sup>5</sup>.

The text follows a methodology of comparative and evolutionary studies such as those already used by Uebel (2015) and Carneiro Filho (2016), adding to the thematic cartography also the photographic resources, products of our field research, and is divided into four sections, besides this introduction and the final considerations, which are: 1) The immigration profile of Brazil: demographic, political and cartographic evolution; 2) The routes of international migration to Brazil: the new country of immigrations; 3) Regional and political (dis)integration and new flows: the case of the Venezuelans; and 4) Immigration perspectives: defence, geopolitics and geoeconomics.

We hope that this article will consolidate the importance of migration studies within the scope of Brazilian Social Sciences, both by civil and military academia, given the relevant repercussions of migratory flows and the debate within the society in the paths of Brazil, which has become increasingly multicultural and multipolar in the last five years.

### **The Immigration Profile of Brazil: demographic, political and cartographic evolution**

The “Brazilian dream” we mentioned in the introduction to this article was imagined by about 1,139 million immigrants who chose Brazil to live between the years of 2002 and 2017, according to the data we compiled from the bases of the Federal Police – Brazil’s immigration agency – and that made this information available through the Access to Information Law.

But what motivated this dream? We call it perspective migrations the large category which covers not only economic migrants, but also asylum seekers, refugees and stateless persons. Victims of human trafficking and political exiles are not considered in this categorization because of the scarcity of numerical data about these people and because of the real motivations that led them to live in Brazil. They are perspective migrants, because they migrate to a certain country, in this case Brazil, according to the economic, political and social perspectives of that country, that is, if they are propitious and open to immigration, then, an additional motivating element. Saskia Sassen (2007) calls these elements as binding mechanisms.

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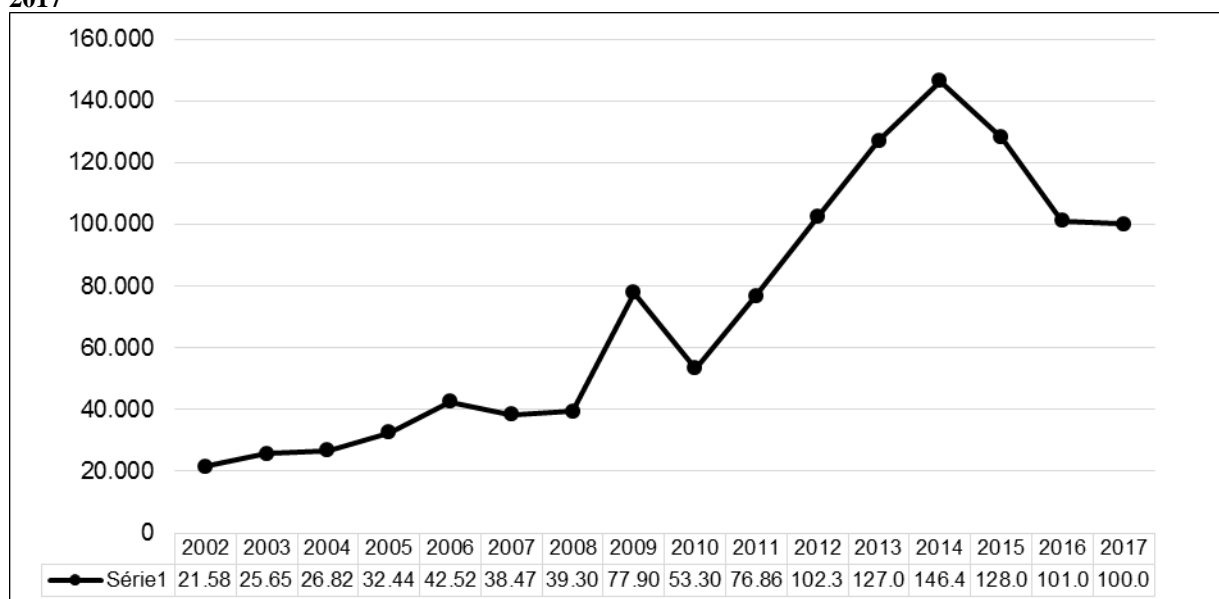
<sup>5</sup> When we mention different governments, we refer to the ideological, political and economic issues in South America. Today there is a visible polarization of left-wing governments based on Bolivarian socialism, as well as governments based on social democracy, right-progressives and extreme right-wing as in the recent case of Brazil, with the election of Jair Bolsonaro.

Nonetheless, the country’s demographic and political evolution was fundamental to reintegrate it into the main global migration routes and as a point of attraction for the new transnational flows, which justifies the arrival of such diverse groups from the Caribbean, Africa and Asia, in addition to the traditional immigration of Europeans, North-Americans and Arabs from the Middle East.

More specifically, in the period 2014-2018, the subject of analysis of this study, Brazil experienced different macroeconomic, demographic and political nuances, significantly altering the scenario of the domestic labour market: until then, favourable to immigration, after, restrictive and with high unemployment rates.<sup>6</sup>

Considering that perspective immigrants move from one country to another because of the binding mechanisms (SASSEN, 2007), which include social, economic, political, cultural, and even gender and religious issues, as well as being motivated by work (SAYAD, 1998), we present, in Graph 1, the evolution of admissions of immigrants in Brazil for the period from 2002 to 2017<sup>7</sup>, with the projection for 2018.

**Graph 1 - Evolution of annual immigration to Brazil - 2002 to 2017**



Source: Elaborated by the authors based on data from the Federal Police.

<sup>6</sup> The most recent unemployment rate released by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics was 12.7% in May 2018, equivalent to about 13.2 million people. At the height of the Brazilian economic and political crisis, the indicator reached 14%, according to the data of the official Brazilian institutions that research unemployment: FEE, IBGE and IPEA.

<sup>7</sup> Our analysis corresponds to the period from 2014 to 2018, however, we chose to reproduce this enlarged graph, in order to demonstrate the context of the migratory historical series, besides justifying the research issue that we are discussing in the temporal cut of the present article.

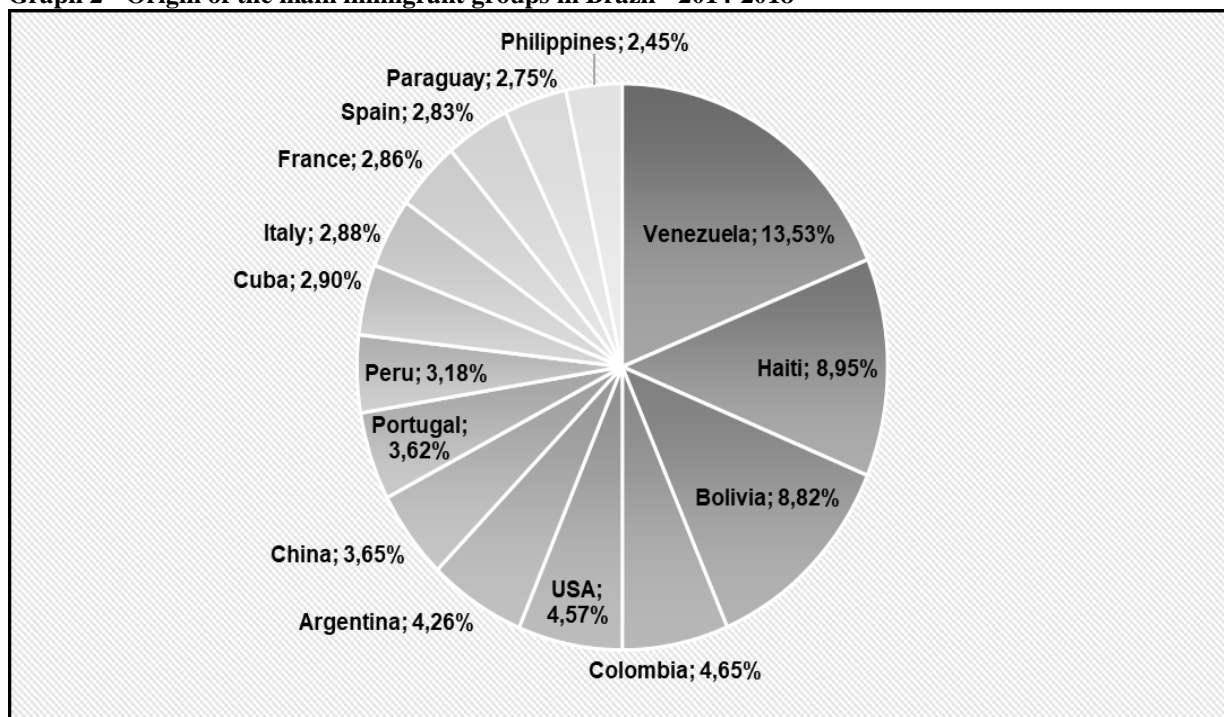
The Graph 1 shows a slight stabilization of international perspective immigration in Brazil from 2002 to 2008, when, in 2009, there was a small immigration boom due to the global economic and financial crisis that predominantly affected the countries of the Northern Hemisphere in the previous year.

Even with the decline of 2010, Brazil recorded a very considerable annual increase in admissions of immigrants until 2014, reaching a figure of about 100,000 immigrants per year, a number very close to those registered by traditional receiving countries such as Canada, Australia and Sweden.

In this context, another turning point occurs in 2014, with the re-election of the Rousseff government and subsequent political crisis instituted through the process of impeachment that led to her destitution, seriously impacting the country's economy, which underwent a sensitive recovery process, although slow and linked to the foreign scenario (PRINS, 2018).

When we advance in the analysis of these quantitative data, before we show the cartographic evolution resulting from this process, both exogenous (Brazilian scenario) and endogenous (the evolution of our research), we present the information in Graph 2 – perhaps the most interesting to the public reader of this article – with the main immigrant groups that arrived in the Brazilian territory between 2014 and 2018.

**Graph 2 - Origin of the main immigrant groups in Brazil - 2014-2018**



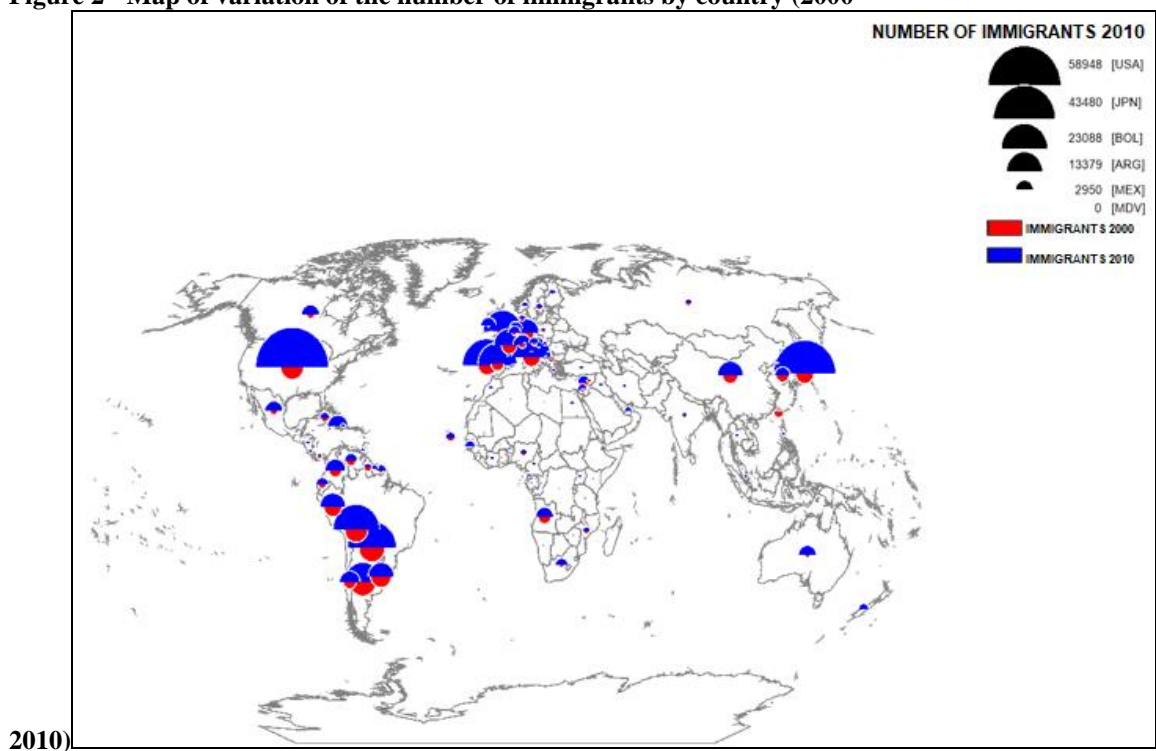
Source: Elaborated by the authors based on data from the Federal Police.

Graph 2 shows a concentration of the demographic-national distribution among immigrants from Latin America (including the Caribbean and Mexico), followed by North Americans, Europeans and Asians (Chinese and Filipino). African immigration, as reported by the Brazilian press, especially due to the hyperdynamic immigrant boom of West Africans (mostly Senegalese and Ghanaians during the 2014 World Cup), represented only 3.20% of immigrant flows between 2014 and 2018 in Brazil, while South Americans accounted for 40.54%, European 22.65% and Asian 13.83%.

We will now present the evolution of our thematic cartographic analysis, carried out and published over the last five years, in both national and international journals, in order to demonstrate how this evolution also happened in the cartographic field, based on qualitative information and data from demographic nature, that is, with the objective of showing how immigration and the moment of the country have also substantially modified their cartography and population geography.

Our first map (Figure 2), which sought to understand the immigration profile of Brazil, a nomenclature derived from the traditional and established International Migration Outlook of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), was published in 2014 (UEBEL; IESCHECK, 2014) and brought a very peculiar configuration and presentation, given its Philcarto design, an elementary cartographic production software.

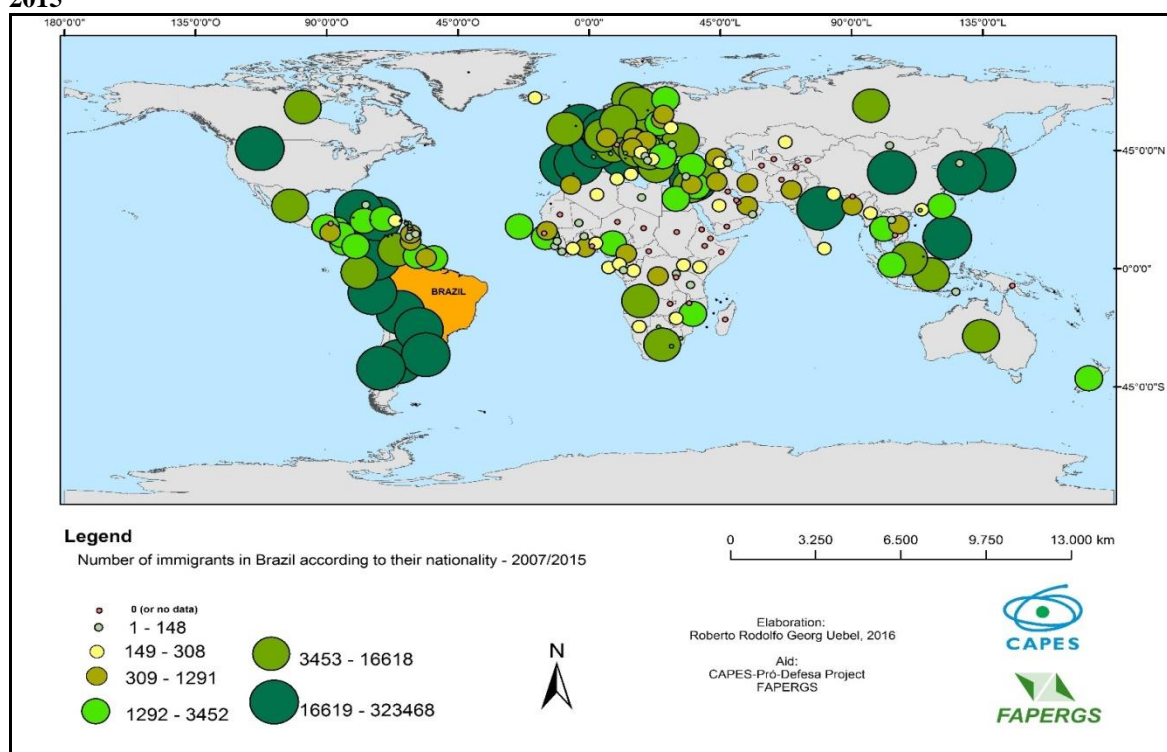
Figure 2 - Map of variation of the number of immigrants by country (2000-



Source: UEBEL; IESCHECK (2014).

In a very elementary way, the cartography of that time already presented a multi-origin immigration profile and with growth tendency, given the quantitative differences found between the years of 2000 and 2010. This cartography would be updated and redesigned with the instruments of ArcGIS in our productions from 2014, with special emphasis on what we published in Uebel and Rückert (2017), according to the map of Figure 3.

**Figure 3 - Map of the stock of immigrants in Brazil according to their nationality - 2007-2015**



Source: UEBEL; RÜCKERT (2017).

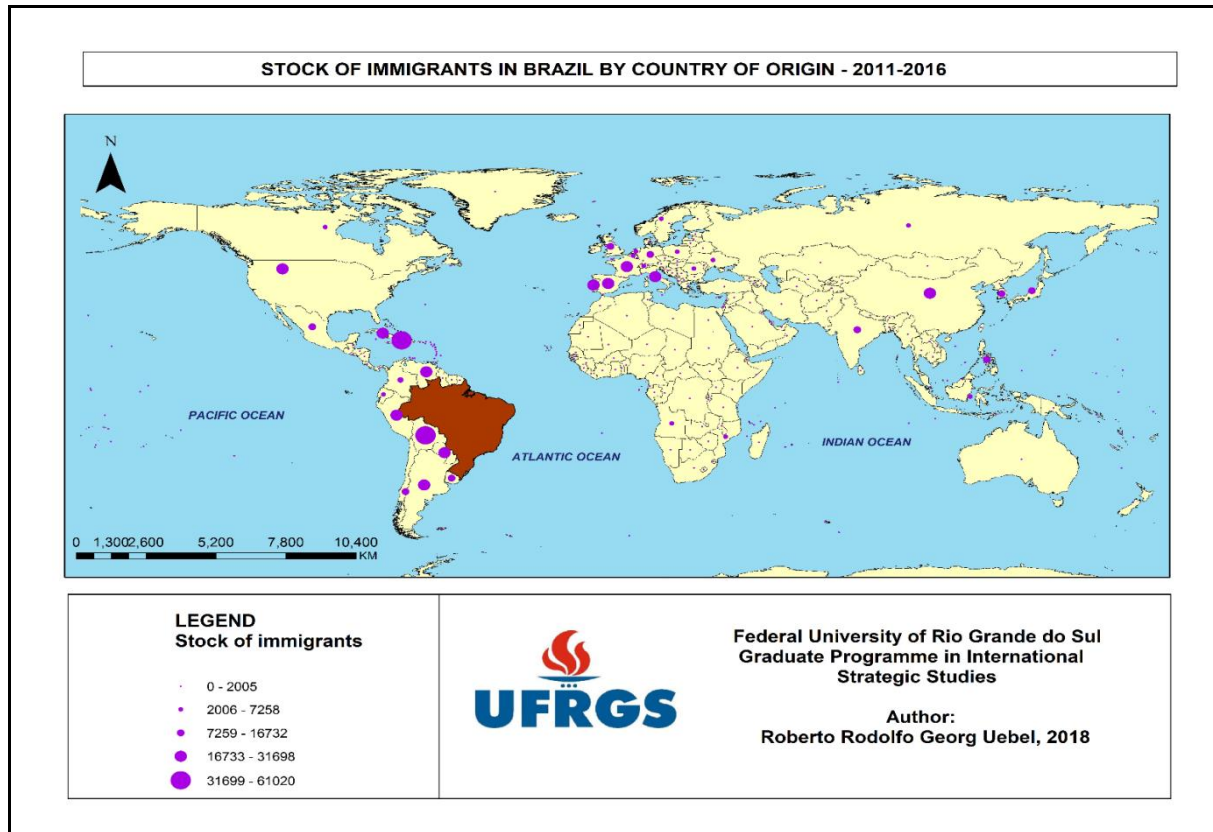
By incorporating the notions of nationality, later revised to countries of origin for methodological and conceptual issues, in the map of Figure 3, we were able to explore with greater clarity what were the main regions of origin of perspective immigrants and also their intensity, a work up to so unprecedented in the Brazilian literature.

To conclude this section of evolutionary study of immigration cartography in Brazil, we present our latest cartography, which cuts the country's immigration stock in two parts: during the Lula da Silva administration and during the Dilma Rousseff administration.<sup>8</sup> For

<sup>8</sup> Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva was president of Brazil between 2003 and 2010. Today he is imprisoned for corruption. Dilma Rousseff was Head of the Staff (Casa Civil) of Lula da Silva and later president of Brazil between 2011 and 2016, when she was dismissed after an impeachment process. Today she is a retired economist. Both belong to the left-wing Workers Party. The influence of these two governments in Brazil's migratory policies was evident with the process and discussion of the new migration law, whose first debates

the purpose of chronological linearity, we bring here only the most recent government, in order to illustrate how the immigration scenario in Brazil is at the moment<sup>9</sup> this article is written (Figure 4).

**Figure 4 - Stock of immigrants in Brazil by country of origin - 2011-2016**



Source: Elaborated by Roberto Rodolfo Georg Uebel and Jesica Wendy Beltrán Chasqui.

This latest cartography reflects a trend of continental concentration – according to the countries of origin – of the new immigration, given the economic and labour recovery of the central countries, and more intense than the new migratory trends of Latin American, Caribbean and West African countries, besides of Indians, Chinese and Filipinos, who are experiencing the moment of a new migratory wave, as the studies of Anglo-Saxon literature on the subject point out (ARCARAZO; WIESBROCK, 2015).

Thus, in the next section, we will focus on the unrecorded details of the cartographies presented so far, mainly exposing the new migratory routes that characterized Brazil as “the new country of immigration” over the last few years, but which also qualified as the country

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began under Lula da Silva's government, advanced at the end of Rousseff's administration, and were transformed into a law in May 2017 by her successor and former Vice-President, Michel Temer.

<sup>9</sup> This cartography also had as a temporal cut the immigration stock in Lula's government.



of remigrations and forced emigrations in a hyperdynamic process and based on the perspectives of their domestic scenario.

### **The Routes of International Migrations to Brazil: the new country of immigration**

In the previous section, we have seen that several transformations have reached the Brazilian scenario in the last five years: political reorientation, economic slowdown, increased unemployment, more intense migratory flows (both on arrival and departure) and changes in the demographic component of Brazil.

In addition, regarding migratory flows, we also perceived new routes of international migrations to the country, which characterized it as a “new country of immigration”, with a broad sense, involving from the way in which such mobilities were given to the states, regions and cities of origin within the country.

In this context, thematic cartography again shows and illustrates the most varied paths of the 1,139 million immigrants, as well as synthesizes their trajectories, dreams and goals with the act of migrating to Brazil, a country that appeared to be so averse to immigration, given its internal constraints already highlighted, and that it still maintains nowadays.

Thus, in this section, we will present some thematic maps to discuss, albeit succinctly, these new dynamics and mobilities, which have had a significant impact on the Brazilian economy, society and politics, with repercussions also on borders, security and health issues – especially the recent case of the Venezuelans and the issue of measles (SARAMPO volta ao Brasil..., 2018).

The map in Figure 5 illustrates the main routes used by Haitian immigrants towards Brazil, which were also used by migrants from other parts of Latin America and the Caribbean, such as Bolivians, Cubans and Dominicans.

Haitian immigration occurred due to environmental impacts, so, it is an environmental immigration, but also is considered, according to the current literature (RODRIGUES, 2016), a climate change immigration. That said, Brazil would be the first major nation to receive environmental or climatic immigrants; once again, a new feature in the country’s new immigration profile.

Natural disasters such as those happened in Haiti can hardly be overcome by a society that is unprepared, because that, the community that is inserted in an area considered to be naturally vulnerable must possess a physical, economic and psychological structure, which is

not the case in Haiti, because it is an environmentally, socially and economically vulnerable country (SUTTER; KING, 2012).

The combination of environmental vulnerability with the social and economic vulnerability of the country has been aggravated by recurrent environmental disasters, as Sutter and King (2012) point out in their study on the quality of life in Haiti after earthquake, as can be seen in Table 1 and can also explain the reasons why Haitians leave their country of origin to try a more dignified life in others, like Brazil.

**Table 1 – Summary of living conditions before and after the earthquake in Haiti**

Aspects related to quality of life	Before the earthquake	After the earthquake
<b>Environment, physical space and housing</b>	Basic sanitation and poor garbage collection; insufficient supply of energy and water	One million homeless people living in camps. Significant increase in insalubrity and deterioration of sanitary conditions

Source: Sutter and King (2012).

As observed in Table 1, environmental and health conditions influence the quality of life of the population and in their choices, for example, of migration. Entering the discussion of environmental impacts in people's lives, we can highlight innumerable relationships of causes and consequences, as already known the human lifestyle impacts the environment. In this article there is no space for a long debate about conceptualizations of environmental impacts, but it is extremely important to understand the relation of these impacts to society.

The concept of environmental impact is commonly associated with a nature damage or loss in current literature, there are several definitions for this expression, for Moreira (1988) environmental impact is any change in the environment in one or more of its components caused by a human action, but for Westman (1978) environmental impact is the effect of a human-induced action on the ecosystem. The countries also seek to define their concept of environmental impact, in order to prevent them and thus preserve the environment, Brazil, for example has its definition in Conama Resolution 1/86 in its article 1:

- Any change in the physical, chemical or biological properties of the environment caused by any form of matter or energy resulting from human activities that directly or indirectly affects:
- I - the health, safety and well-being of the population;
- II - social and economic activities;
- III - the aesthetic and sanitary conditions of the environment;

IV - the quality of environmental resources. (BRASIL, 1986).

With the concepts and definitions presented on environmental impact. It may be noted that it is clearly the result of human action or activity in the environment. Then the actions according to Table 1, Haiti already suffered from numerous environmental impacts before the occurrence of earthquakes and natural disasters, and these impacts were sharply aggravated after the events. Therefore, it is possible to discuss briefly also on the so-called natural disasters.

According to the United Nations in its report on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN, 2016), a disaster is defined as:

A serious disruption to the functioning of a community or society that causes human losses and / or significant material, economic or environmental impacts or losses that exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope with the situation using its own resources. (UN, 2016).

The Earth has naturally undergone several climatic changes over the years, which have led to natural disasters, but the current geological period is marked by a certain climatic stability of natural origin and part for an industrial climate change. The influence of human actions on the climate is clear because greenhouse gas emissions are the highest in history, driven mainly by economic development and population growth, which ultimately affects international migration in an active and dynamic way (IPCC, 2014).

There are projections of scenarios where greenhouse gas emissions will increase Earth's temperature during the twenty-first century. Continuous emissions of these gases will cause warming and long-lasting changes in all components of the climate system, which increases the chances of severe, pervasive and irreversible impacts to mankind and ecosystems, as well as increasing migratory flows, such as that of Haitians and West-Africans towards Brazil, our central argument in this article (IPCC, 2014).

Even if the impact of climate change is treated as a contributor to increased disaster risk, understanding of risk becomes necessary as a result of the interaction of three factors: the threat from climatic extremes, which climate change; the vulnerability of the populations affected, their capacity for prevention and their resilience; and the exposure of human systems to areas that can be disruptively affected by disasters, such as occupations in areas subject to disasters and infrastructure (BRAZIL, 2015).

In a society where there is no structure for disaster prevention and resilience, often resulting in unsustainable living conditions in the country of origin, this, according to the data

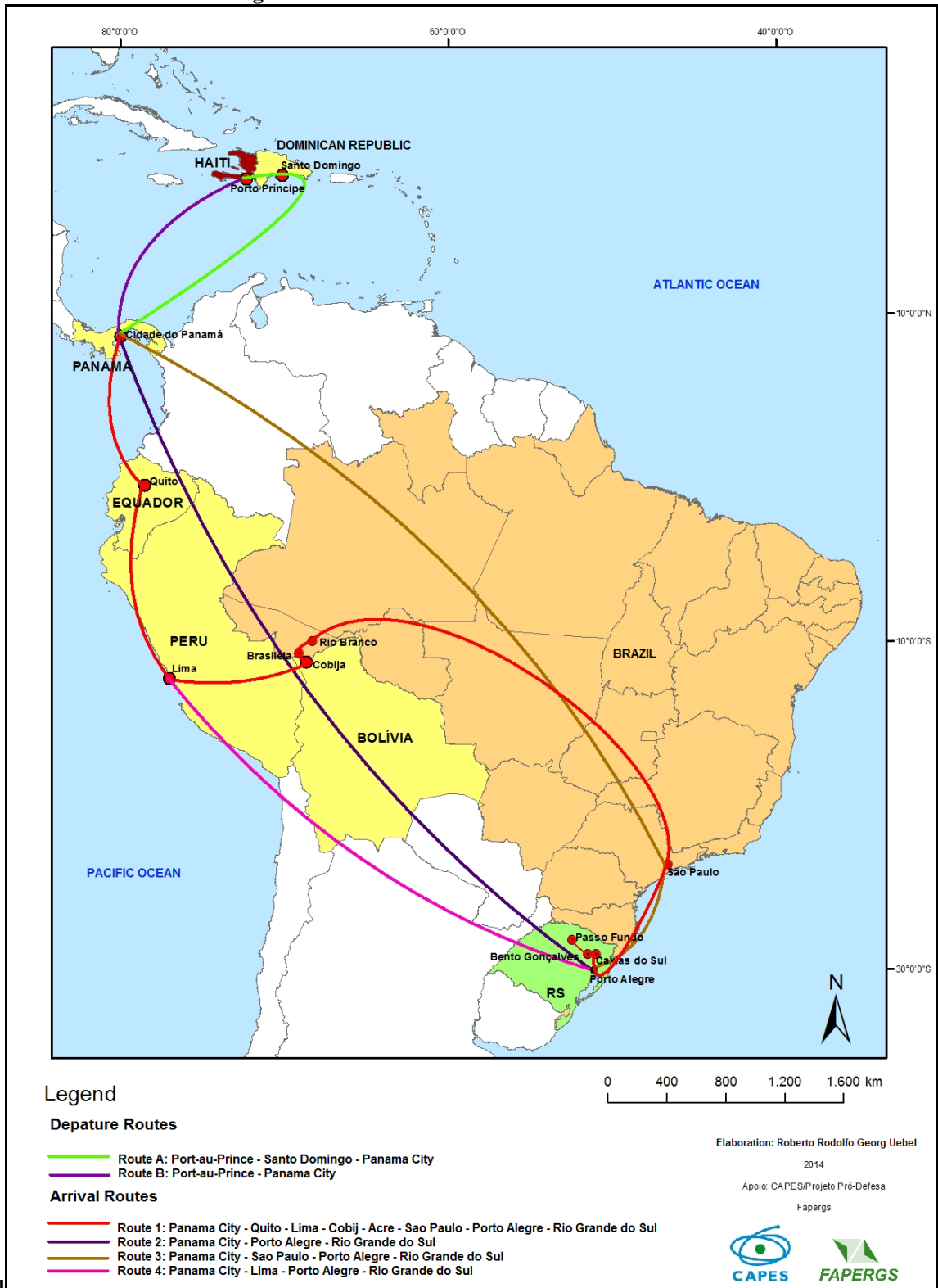
presented is the case of the Haitian population that migrates to other countries seeking better conditions of life.

According to the Geneva Convention of 1951 (Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees), Haitians who arrived in Brazil do not fit the refugee status, nor are they covered by the Brazilian Refugee Act 9,474/97, however, according to Rodrigues (2016) subsection III of Article 1 of the Brazilian law where it is considered that “due to a serious and widespread violation of human rights, it is obliged to leave his country of nationality to seek refuge in another country”, it allows a broad interpretation, including Haitians could be recognized as environmental/climate refugees by the Brazilian government.

The Brazilian government, in response to the request of the National Committee for Refugees to the National Immigration Council on Haitian refugee requests due to the situation in Haiti after the earthquake of January 2010, considering the impacts of the earthquake on the social and governmental structure, decided grant Permanent Residence for humanitarian reasons, based on Normative Resolution No. 27/1998. These humanitarian reasons, therefore, recognized the climatic, environmental and political issues as motivating to emigration.

According to Federal Police data, updated by our compilation and methodological cleansing, just over 61 thousand Haitians migrated to Brazil in the last five years, being the second largest immigrant group, behind only 92 thousand Venezuelans.

Figure 5 - Route of Haitian immigrants to



Brazil  
Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The cartography of Figure 5 is very peculiar in the sense that it leads us to two conclusions hitherto not envisaged by the scientific literature on migrations in Brazil: 1) migrations are both transnational and international; and 2) the role of regional transbordering integration, that is, of transborder movements themselves in the conduction of these migratory processes.

With this information, we come to another important inference: perspective migrations to Brazil could only be realized and were driven by their terrestrial borders and their regional integration, although precarious in many border cities (CARNEIRO FILHO, 2016).

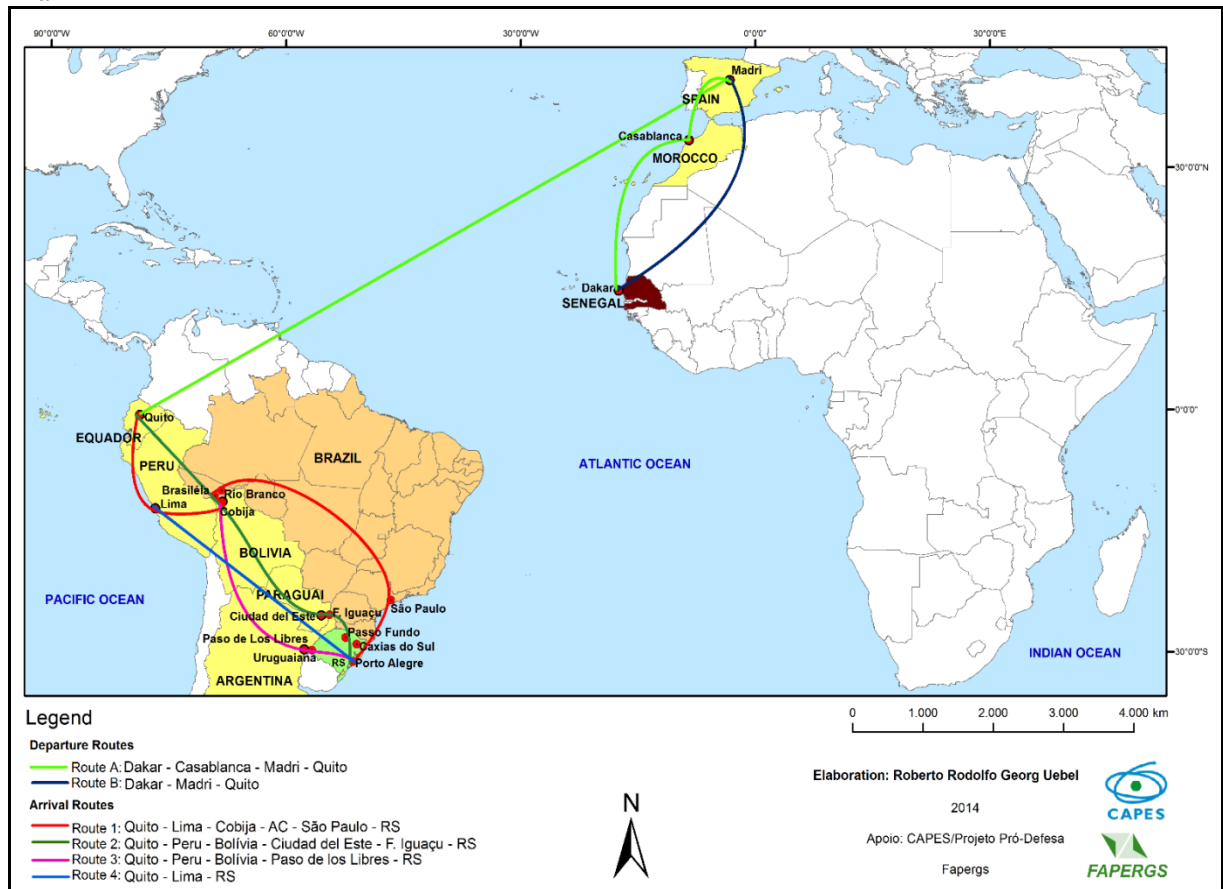
In the case of Haitian immigration, issues ranging from the reception of immigrants and referral to public health and education services to border security were debated and coordinated between the Brazilian and Bolivian and Peruvian authorities, something previously unheard of in Brazilian history. This allowed human rights discussions and free movement of workers to advance in the working groups of Mercosur, the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), the Organization of American States and the Pacific Alliance as well as.

Figure 6, although revealing another dynamic, presents similarities relevant to the role of migratory logistics and intraregional integration. The map illustrates Senegalese immigration, but also adapts to other West African migrations, as well as translate an equally unprecedented South-South migratory movement in Brazil, since until then African immigration was restricted to specific groups and small quantities.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Many authors advocate that the process of African slavery in Brazil was based on the forced migration of Africans to the country. However, such a debate and its succeeding statements must be made with great caution and observance of historiographical records. The very notion of immigration when slavery in the country (between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries) was very different from the one we use today.

**Figure 6 - Route of Senegalese and West African immigrants to Brazil**



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

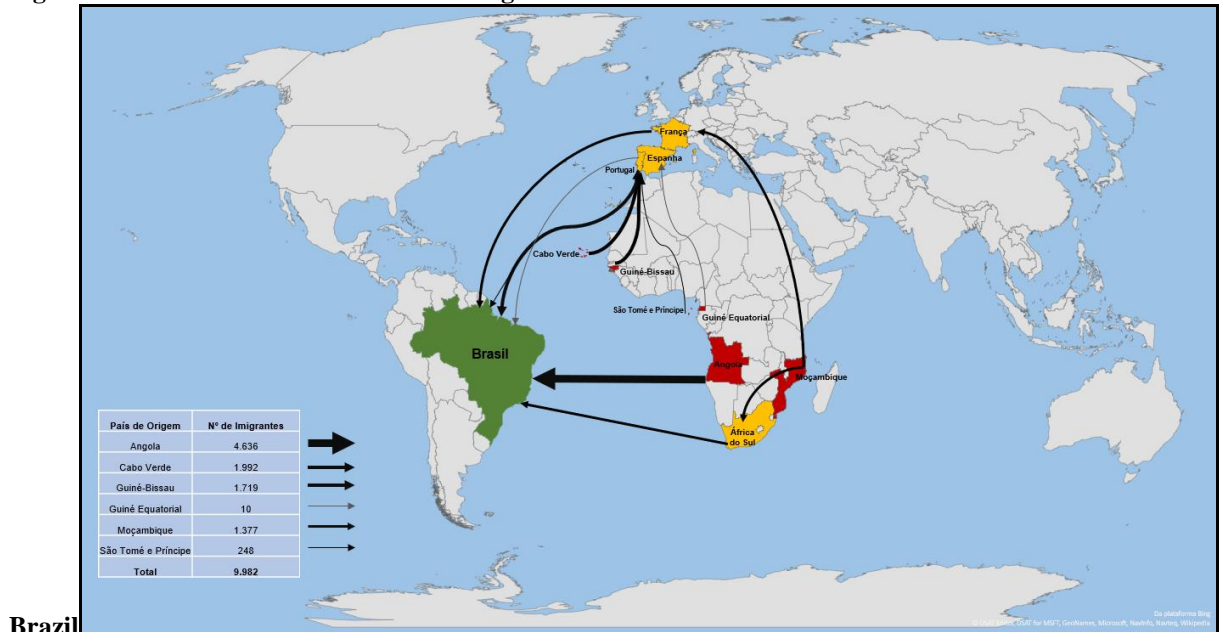
Let us note how the European Union and Morocco play a decisive role in West African immigration to Brazil. In addition, a new fact that we discovered throughout the research is that the costs of an air-terrestrial immigration were smaller and promised, at least initially, more security to potential immigrants, who claimed to be more easily admitted to Brazil's terrestrial borders, as in Brasília (AC), Foz do Iguazu (PR), Corumbá (MS) and Uruguaiana (RS), than in the airports of Guarulhos and Galeão-Rio de Janeiro, where immigration control is effectively more rigid.

This cartography also allows us to infer that the new African immigration and its routes constitute a hyperdynamization, that is, they were equally intense in the arrival and departure – emigration or remigration – of Brazil. The slightly more than 21,000 immigrants in five years are now estimated at just under 3,000 immigrants, mostly Senegalese.

Two more recent cartography turn to the mobilities of Mercosureans and Luso-Africans, two groups that stood out in the period from 2014 to 2018 as the most stable in the migratory balance, that is, admissions and exits were stabilized levels. Figure 7, following the

previous map of West Africans, refers to the immigration of Luso-Africans (Angolans, Cape Verdeans, Mozambicans, Sao Tomeans, Guineans, and Guinean-Ecuadorians).

**Figure 7 - Routes of the Luso-African immigrants to**



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

In addition to the strategic importance of the European Union, represented here by Portugal, Spain and France, South Africa was another country that, through the integration of the BRICS, served as an intermediary between South-South migrations in the new immigration panorama of Brazil, including allowing the creation of working groups on human mobility within the BRICS, as discussed by Stuenkel (2017).

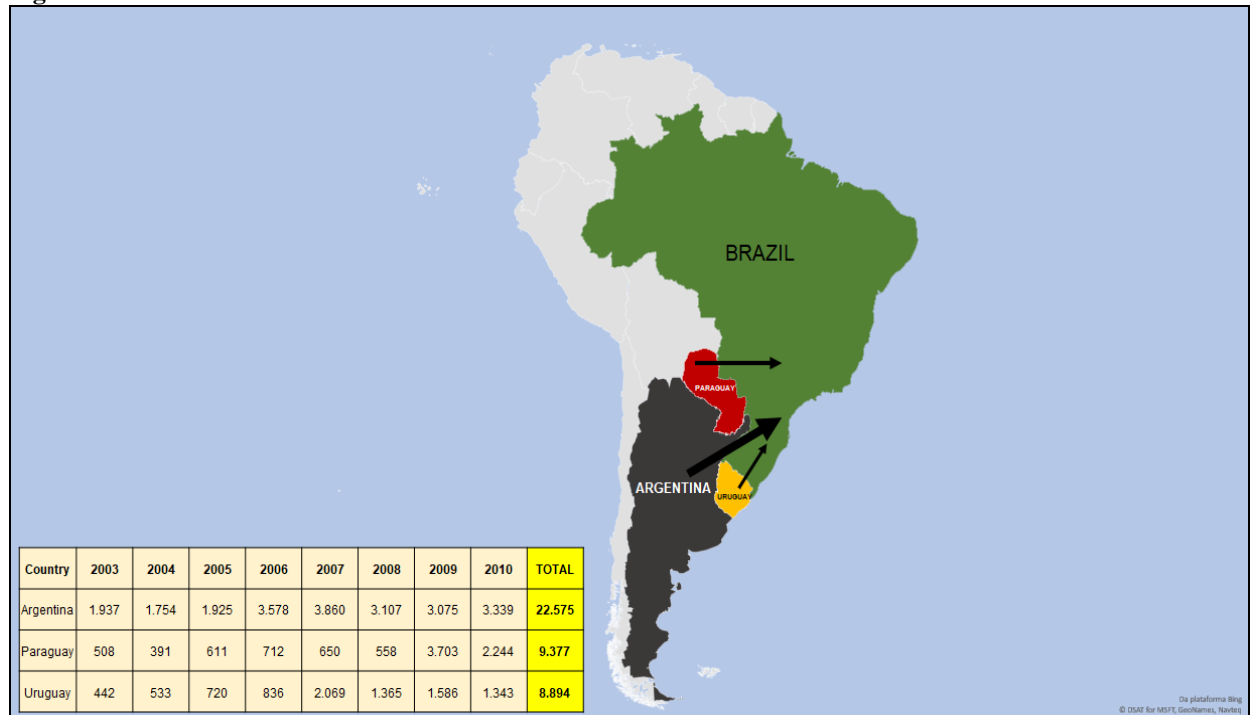
To conclude this section, we present the last thematic map (Figure 8), which draws on the discussion of the following section: the South American regional (dis)integration and its repercussions on the mobility of workers and families in the subcontinent, a situation that directly impacted the multiple relations between the countries of the region, from economic to diplomatic, against Venezuela and its “legion of emigrants”.

Figure 8, therefore, seeks to update the mapping of Mercosurean immigration that has been carried out in the past by other researchers, such as Neide Patarra, but which has not been revisited or updated by Brazilian cartography and geography, despite the continuing intense debates between demographers and anthropologists.



The thematic mapping of flows in Figure 8 thus rescues the flows of Mercosureans towards Brazil and contributes to our argument about the role of terrestrial borders as drivers of new migrations to the country in the twenty-first century

**Figure 8 - Mercosurean flows to Brazil**



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Regarding the localization of these groups of immigrants in Brazil, there is no large-scale academic study carried out so far, and Federal Police data, in order to protect personal information, only indicate the states where the records were made, which do not necessarily correspond to the real residence of the immigrants.

Despite this, historically Argentine and Uruguayan immigration has been distributed in the Southern Region of Brazil, especially in the states of Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina, although there is also a large resident community in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

On the other hand, Paraguayan immigration is more widely distributed throughout the Brazilian territory, with significant communities in Rio Grande do Sul, Paraná, São Paulo, Mato Grosso do Sul, Mato Grosso and Rondônia, as well as small nuclei in other states in the North and Centre-West regions.

Finally, it should be mentioned that Mercosurean immigration to Brazil during the administration of Lula da Silva and Rousseff responded to one of the main points of the foreign policy then in force: to orient Brazil to its neighbours as a way of structuring the

subsequent UNASUR proposal, in the fields of labour, migration, residence and economic relations, according to President Lula da Silva himself at the 2007 Mercosur Summit held in Asunción, Paraguay:

Our view of integration has in Mercosur a starting point. But this trajectory gains more breath, complements and incorporates new possibilities in the interaction with the Associated States, with the partners of the South American Union of Nations and with our members of ALADI. (SILVA, 2007)

In this context, Venezuelan immigration, as we will see in the next section, constituted an important substrate from a second migration institutionalization, reaching the unprecedented position of greater immigration flow and immigrant community in Brazil between 2014 and 2018, whose repercussions were crucial for the decision to act in favour of immigration reform, begun in 2014 with the National Conference on Migration and Refuge.

### **Regional and Political (Dis)Integration and New Flows: the case of Venezuelans**

At the time this article was written, a new immigrant phenomenon was developed in South America, and especially in Brazil, of greater intensity than those we have hitherto recorded: that of Venezuelans. In 2003, Brazil received only 190 immigrants from Venezuela; already in 2015, received 28,670, an increase of 14.989%, generating an immigrant stock of 102 thousand immigrants in fourteen years, of which 92 thousand arrived only during the Rousseff government.

Motivated mainly by political persecutions, coupled with the scarcity of food, medicines and the low minimum wage in the country, hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans sought refuge and requested political and economic asylum in their two main neighbours: Brazil and Colombia.

Despite Venezuela's relative economic prosperity during the administration of Hugo Chávez, the country's political and economic scenario has undergone a profound transformation with the installation of Chavez's political heir, Nicolas Maduro, who received a democratically elected government and turned him into an authoritarian regime.

In this period of Venezuelan economic prosperity, an interesting immigrant flow was observed coming from other Latin American nations, counting with a considerable immigrant population of Brazilians, inclusively.

However, the external constraints arising from the devaluation of the price of a barrel of oil - the only engine of the Venezuelan economy – in conjunction with internal issues - such as the death of Chávez, Maduro’s disputed succession and his political persecution agenda, a militant population and a restriction on individual and press freedoms – served as the ingredients for Venezuela to move from one of the most vibrant economies in the Americas to one of the most unstable countries in the world, causing regional political instability and, consequently, regional disintegration.

In this context, according to a recent study by the International Organization for Migration (IOM): “Between 2015 and 2017 in South America, more than 300,000 residence permits (temporary and permanent) were granted to Venezuelan nationals through ordinary and extraordinary immigration.” (ORGANIZAÇÃO INTERNACIONAL PARA AS MIGRAÇÕES, 2018).

According to IOM, “the entry of Venezuelan citizens through the State of Roraima, the terrestrial border with Venezuela, has increased in the last two years. In fact, a large part of applications for residences and asylum were requested in the State of Roraima” (Ibid., p. 5).

In order to explain the Brazilian government's action in relation to this immigration, which, according to our understanding, was the rupture of Brazil's migratory foreign policy with the practices in force since Lula da Silva for a new conception, amalgamated in the new Migration Law, sanctioned by the Temer government, it is relevant to present the map of Figure 9, which is explanatory and leads us to the inference of subjective topics and until then not raised by other studies of Venezuelan immigration in Brazil.

**Figure 9 - Routes of contemporary Venezuelan migration**



Source: International Organization for Migration (2018, p.7).

Again, Brazil's terrestrial borders were preponderant for the management and perception of international immigration flows, as well as for Haitians and West Africans.

However, the Brazilian state's action was different and strategically rethought by the Rousseff administration, which was at its end when the boom of Venezuelan immigration occurred.

Unlike the previous administrations, the Rousseff government acted in a timely and immediate manner when the first Venezuelan immigrants arrived in Roraima, a state that received this migratory flow, since the border between the two countries (Figure 10) is between the cities of Pacaraima (Brazil) and Santa Elena de Uairén (Venezuela). The motivations for the immediate action of the federal government, however, differed from those taken by Michel Temer as soon as he took office as acting President in May 2016 and as definitive President in August of the same year.

**Figure 10 - Border between Brazil and Venezuela**



Source: Jorge Macêdo, Revista Viagem, 2016 (<https://viagemturismo.abril.com.br/estados/roraima/>).

The Rousseff government, albeit an ally of Maduro's authoritarian regime, saw the possibility of welcoming Venezuelan refugees – even if they were not classified by the Brazilian authorities like that – as a way of diverting attention from the attacks directed by the opposition, the press and a considerable part of Brazilian society, who wished for the irregular dismissal of President Rousseff.

In this sense, Rousseff's Brazilian migratory foreign policy made its final appeal by invoking multilateral cooperation within Mercosur, in order to manage the high influx of Venezuelans into Brazilian territory. However, with the dismissal of Dilma, the rupture of this action was immediate.

After assuming the Presidency, Michel Temer gave a new perspective to the treatment of migratory issues by appointing José Serra as his chancellor, and later Senator Aloysio Nunes Ferreira, who was the responsible for the draft of the new Migration Law, quickly approved on April 18, 2017 by the Federal Senate.

In the meantime, between Rousseff's removed government and the interim administration of Temer, Brazil experienced a rupture in its migratory foreign policy and the country's own strategic insertion agenda in Latin America from two axes, which, as a result, influenced in the intensity of the migrations: 1) the prohibition of the admission of Venezuelans who wanted the permanent residence and its consequent deportation (DEPORTAÇÕES de venezuelanos..., 2016); 2) the withdrawal of Brazil from the forums and working groups that discussed the theme, notably from UNASUR (ARGENTINA, Brasil, Chile, Colômbia, Peru e Paraguai abandonam Unasul, 2018).

However, the change in Brazilian foreign migration policy was fast, considering that the perspective immigration of Venezuelans intensified, as well as their requests for work and refuge permit, as we will see in the next section. Soon the new Migration Law was approved and allowed the action of the Brazilian government to be coordinated and positive regarding the admission and resettlement of the thousands of Venezuelans who arrived in the country, at least in the first months.

Considering this, we can affirm that Brazil, despite all the political, institutional, economic and social tensions that it has felt since 2014, reached a new level in the way of dealing with the immigration issue, with the ultimate phenomenon of the Venezuelans. Although Dilma Rousseff assumed the government and continued the treatment and agenda of Lula da Silva, which in turn continued with Cardoso's agenda, although adapted and now part of the "active and assertive foreign policy", his migratory foreign policy would suffer a rupture and change in the transition to the contested government of Temer, whose perspectives we will see in the next section.

## **Immigration Perspectives: defence, geopolitics and geoeconomics**

In order to synthesize the main discussions we have brought throughout this article, which was more a briefing of our researches from the last five years than a descriptive-propositional analysis, we thought this section four as an outlook of the immigration perspectives from and to Brazil, from three axes: defence, geopolitics and geoeconomics, which are precisely those that synthesize the contemporary migration debate, both in Brazil and in the European Union.

In this context, choosing for a division by topics, we present below an illustrating figure of the immigration perspectives for the next years and that, therefore, we consider relevant to be studied and taught in future researches

### **Figure 11 – Immigration perspectives from/to Brazil**

- **Defence**
  - In the defence framework, in anticipation of Brazil's domestic political tension, the securitization of the borders could be strengthened according to the government that will inaugurate in January 2019, reflecting in the barrier to immigration and free movement of people.
  - Moreover, there is a movement within the Armed Forces concerned with migration issues, especially that of Venezuelans, when they consider political and military instability in the neighbouring country.
  - The perspective that is drawn in the immigration, defence framework is a greater control by the Federal Police in partnership with the Armed Forces in relation to the admission of immigrants and asylum-seekers, despite the new Migration Law provides for a more humane treatment.
  - In this sense, Brazil tends to adopt the same procedures and protocols for migratory control and border securitization of countries of the European Union, which have already been adopted by neighbours such as Argentina.
- **Geopolitics**
  - Regarding the geopolitics of migration, the change in the Brazilian migratory foreign policy and the political discourse of the authorities and candidates for the Presidency points to an increase in the debates about migrations in Brazil, something that had not happened since the beginning of the twentieth century.
  - There is also a perspective of intensification of nationalist, separatist and xenophobic movements in Brazil, which have, among their speeches, the anti-immigration, anti-globalization and anti-integration flags.
  - In any case, such groups are not expected to assume prominent positions and full persecution of immigrant populations in the country, even though they (the immigrant population in Brazil) are declining year after year.
  - Regional political stability in contrast to that of Brazil will inevitably favour a large emigration and remigration flow to countries like Uruguay and Chile or to Canada and the United States.
- **Geoeconomics**
  - The slow economic recovery in Brazil and the slowing of the labour market, which has remained unstable and with signs of worsening in the last five years, are major factors for us to point out a prospect of reducing immigration for the coming years, especially considering the data from 2014, which already indicate a decline.
  - The improvement of socioeconomic and socio-environmental indicators in the countries of origin in Latin America (except Venezuela) and Africa are also supported as components of repulsion to migrate to Brazil, that is, there are no perspectives for immigration to the country.
  - There is an evident cycle of decline of immigration in and to Brazil, following what the migratory literature defines as the great cycles or large migratory waves. The difference is that, in the Brazilian case, the growth and expansion cycle was concomitant and hyperdynamic, that is, it occurred in a fast period, in little less than five years.

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Therefore, as far as the migratory perspectives for Brazil are concerned, we inevitably enter into an analysis of the geopolitical outlook - more political than geographical – according to what our own migrations of perspective induce us.

In addition to a legal revisionism of the migration order, according to the intense and extensive discussion of the new Migration Law, which took place during the process of political tension that led to the dismissal of President Rousseff and the rise of his VP, Michel Temer, to the Presidency of the Republic in a highly contested way, the oncoming of the general elections also allows the immigrants still established in the country to guess a process of remigration to the neighbours of Mercosur or even to the United States or Canada.



We considered until the writing of this article in July 2018 that the new flows of Haitians, West Africans, Cubans and Venezuelans would follow two patterns of behaviour, given the worsening labour market in Brazil: 1) stay in the same country with informal jobs or labour exploitation; or 2) remigrate to one of the countries mentioned above, this being the most common case, according to data from the Federal Police (54% DOS VENEZUELANOS..., 2018).

However, new issues, stemming from the electoral debate rooted in Brazilian society, this one divided and ideologically pulverized at this moment, invoke a third possibility, which we do not discard if we consider the most fundamental concepts of political geography and geopolitics as well as: xenophobia, anti-immigration, anti-frontiers and anti-integration.

Thus, the Brazilian political debate is part of the globalization of polarized politics and especially in the world anti-integration discourse, which has led to processes such as the election of populist leaders, both left and right, in the United States, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Turkey and Russia, among other nations, as well as new geopolitical agendas such as BREXIT, the end of UNASUR, the insertion of NATO and OECD in South America via Colombia, and the global anti-immigration campaign, which increasingly attracts nationalist sympathizers, once unconcerned with the subject, given the situational conditions of employability and the proper welfare state.

More specifically, in the Brazilian case, we observe migratory trends closely linked to the country's political and economic perspectives from the new government that may be elected, and can be driven top-down, in the case of the need for labour for governmental programs, or restricted, if elected an ultra-nationalist, conservative, and being like an administration that Ventura (2017) describes as governmental xenophobia.

The indicators of the Brazilian immigration outlook are under multiple pressures and depend on the political perspective of the country, thus suffering little influence of geographical constraints, such as the probability of immigrants migrating from Africa rather than the Caribbean, for example, since we infer that these flows were fostered more by the perspective of the destination country, Brazil, than by the instability scenarios in their countries of origin, a phenomenon relatively peculiar to a peripheral country – until then, only nations like Canada and Australia verified similar movements.

## **Final Considerations**

Giovani Arrighi (2009) presents the existence of a “long twentieth century” while Vizontini (2015) considers a “chaotic twenty-first century”. With regard to the international migrations to the Brazilian territory and the transformations of this one from them, we can say that it is a long and chaotic decade of the migrations.

Not only was Brazil’s legal, material and immaterial infrastructure undergoing a profound transformation with the arrival of just over one million new immigrants in fifteen years, but also the country's own political, economic and social roots were tied to a constant transformation with direct impacts on the daily life of the country and its political geography.

Within this political geography of migration, as we call this new agenda of policies and concepts, new immigration trends emerged, new groups (notably of the Caribbeans and West Africans), a new immigration law and a new debate in Brazilian society, with new approaches, discourses and practices, including hatred, xenophobia and anti-integration of peoples, something that was historically peculiar and born in Brazil.

In this context, we infer that the country has achieved new interrelations with the migratory issue, gathering space and regional and international projection in forums, working groups and international organizations that deal with this topic. However, Brazil has also been included in a global agenda, or counter-agenda, of segregation, nationalism, populism and xenophobia, previously apparently restricted to the countries of the centre, or rarely verified in the periphery.

Adding to Brazil’s own dilemmas, such as social and income inequality, multilevel corruption, political, partisan and ideological tension, a new condition appears at the beginning of this century and in the new thematic cartographies: the Migration Geopolitics.

It is our understanding, therefore, that depend on the new political agendas of Brazil the direction of the new perspective migrations and its more interested participants: immigrants and their families. They will be admitted, integrated into Brazilian society and be the last-minute workers in the development of the country as a semiperipheral nation, or if they will be rejected, unwanted and disintegrated from the most multicultural country in South America and in the Southern Hemisphere.

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## **Politics, Policies and International Immigration in Brazil: recent changes and perspectives**

### **Abstract**

From the field surveys performed in the South, Centre-West, Southeast and North regions of Brazil between 2014 and 2018, new migration routes, transbordering relationships of human mobility and the impacts of the desired South and Latin American regional integration were identified in the immigration profile of Brazil. In this sense, this article aims to review the cartographies, policies, routes and the state of the art of international immigration in Brazil for the last five years, which saw profound changes in the domestic and foreign scenarios. From the country of the “Brazilian dream” of Latin Americans and Caribbeans, the country changed to the country of remigrations and forced emigrations, including refugees who settled here during the short period of the migratory Eldorado. Using the instruments of thematic mapping, which is now revisited and revised in relation to our previous productions, we will discuss what remained of the “new immigration country” from the ruptures that occurred with the 2016 impeachment and with the approval and effectiveness of the new Immigration Law from 2017. The article also broaches the recent discussions on the migration of Venezuelan refugees to the Brazilian territory and its repercussions on the Latin American integration project, apparently discontinued with the rise of such disorganized governments in the region. Finally, we bring in topics the immigration perspectives for Brazil in the coming years and linked to issues of defence, geopolitics and geoeconomics, including also the discussion on environmental migration.

**Keywords:** Brazil. Immigration. Policies. Perspectives.

## **Política, Políticas e Imigração Internacional no Brasil: mudanças recentes e perspectivas**

### **Resumo**

A partir das pesquisas de campo realizadas nas regiões Sul, Centro-Oeste, Sudeste e Norte do Brasil entre 2014 e 2018, identificou-se novas rotas migratórias, relações transfronteiriças de mobilidade humana e impactos da almejada integração regional sul e latino-americana no perfil imigratório do Brasil. Nesse sentido, o presente artigo tem como objetivo revisar as cartografias, políticas, rotas e o próprio estado da arte das imigrações

internacionais no Brasil para os últimos cinco anos, que vislumbraram mudanças profundas nos cenários doméstico e externo. Do país do “sonho brasileiro” para latino-americanos e caribenhos, passou-se para o país das remigrações e emigrações forçadas, inclusive de refugiados que aqui se estabeleceram durante o curto período do eldorado migratório. Utilizando os instrumentos da cartografia temática, agora revisitada e revisada em relação às nossas produções anteriores, discutiremos o que restou do então “novo país das imigrações” a partir das rupturas ocorridas com o impeachment de 2016 e com a aprovação e vigência da nova Lei de Migração a partir de 2017. O artigo também incorpora as recentes discussões sobre a migração dos refugiados venezuelanos com direção ao território brasileiro e as suas repercussões no projeto de integração latino-americana, aparentemente descontinuado com a ascensão de governos tão destoantes na região. Por fim, trazemos, em tópicos, as perspectivas imigratórias para o Brasil nos próximos anos e atreladas às questões de defesa, geopolítica e geoeconomia, incluindo também a discussão de migrações ambientais.

**Palavras-chave:** Brasil. Imigração. Políticas. Perspectivas.

## **Política y Políticas de Inmigración Internacional en Brasil: cambios recientes y perspectivas**

### **Resumen**

A partir de las investigaciones de campo realizadas en las regiones Sur, Centro-Oeste, Sudeste y Norte de Brasil entre 2014 y 2018, se identificaron nuevas rutas migratorias, relaciones transfronterizas de movilidad humana e impactos de la deseada integración regional sur y latinoamericana en el perfil inmigratorio de Brasil. En este sentido, el presente artículo tiene como objetivo revisar las cartografías, políticas, rutas y el propio estado del arte de las inmigraciones internacionales en Brasil para los últimos cinco años, que vislumbraron cambios profundos en los escenarios doméstico y externo. Desde el país del “sueño brasileño” para latinoamericanos y caribeños, se pasó al país de las remigraciones y emigraciones forzadas, incluso de refugiados que aquí se establecieron durante el corto período del Eldorado migratorio. Utilizando los instrumentos de la cartografía temática, ahora revisitada y revisada en relación a nuestras producciones anteriores, discutiremos lo que restó del entonces “nuevo país de las inmigraciones” a partir de las rupturas ocurridas con el impeachment de 2016 y con la aprobación y vigencia de la nueva Ley de Migración desde 2017. El artículo también incorpora las recientes discusiones sobre la migración de los refugiados venezolanos con dirección al territorio brasileño y sus repercusiones en el proyecto de integración latinoamericana, aparentemente descontinuado con el ascenso de gobiernos tan distantes en la región. Por último, traemos, en tópicos, las perspectivas inmigratorias para Brasil en los próximos años y ligadas a las cuestiones de defensa, geopolítica y geoeconomía, incluyendo también la discusión acerca de las migraciones ambientales.

**Palabras clave:** Brasil. Inmigración. Políticas. Perspectivas.