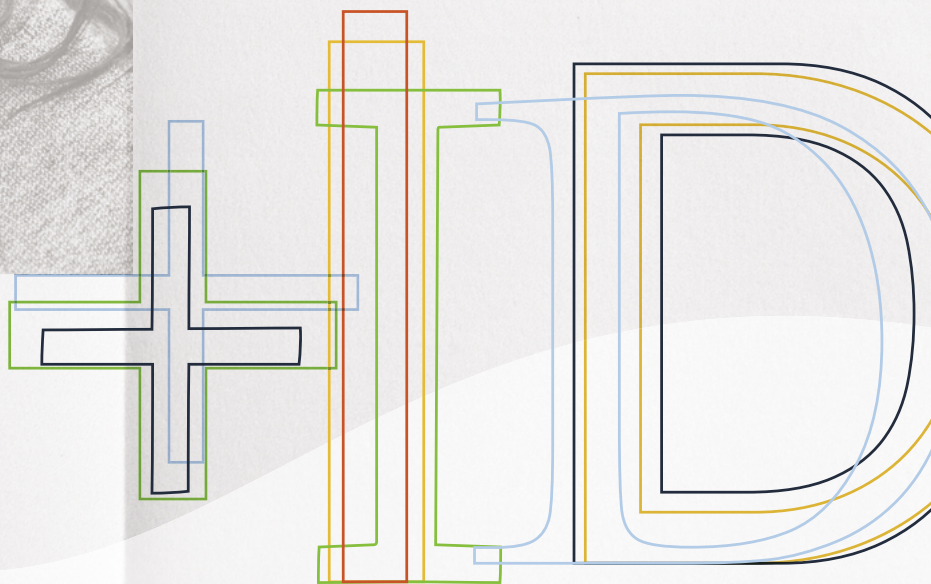




Migrants, Identification, and Services in Chile, Ecuador, and Peru: Experiences and Stories

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Executive Summary

Conflict and poverty have forced millions of people in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region to leave their homes and migrate to other countries in the region. The lack of legal protections for migrants makes their situation particularly challenging, especially when their ability to access services depends on their legal immigration status.

The purpose of this study is to identify the challenges facing migrants in Chile, Ecuador, and Peru when they attempt to access basic services, especially those related to their legal immigration status and the documentation that they must produce to prove it. Specifically, it focuses on their experiences of having to present identification (ID) when migrating to Chile, Ecuador, and Peru. It also explores the differences in the rights to protection and the legal status of refugees (i.e., involuntary migrants) versus voluntary migrants.

Despite recent changes in the law, migrants and refugees in Latin America still commonly cite lack of documentation as the main barrier to accessing services and legalizing status (IOM, undated). A survey conducted by the Migration Policy Institute in 2019 found that 24 percent of migrants in Peru and 18 percent in Ecuador reported problems with documentation as impediments in their journey (MPI, 2020). Experts suggested that the number of migrants who had trouble with their documents in Peru and Ecuador is much higher. This report illuminates the challenges associated with both accessing identification credentials and obtaining services that require particular credentials.

The study uses a qualitative approach to document individual experiences (12 experts and 16 migrants and refugees were interviewed) and derive recommendations by highlighting some of the actual challenges identified by refugees and migrants. Their experiences will inform policy suggestions and the development of solutions. The study employed a landscape literature review and conducted interviews with a cross-section of migrants and refugees and expert interviews with key stakeholders in NGOs, relevant government departments, and academia. The sample

is representative in terms of age, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, number of years in the host country and intended stay in the country, education, income, marital status, and disability.

A central finding of the study is that identification legislation is critical in determining the quality of the refugee experience. In contrast to many other regions, Latin America has historically been receptive and supportive of population movements, with commitments (Cartagena Declaration, 1984; San Jose Declaration, 1994; Brazil Declaration, 2014) and policies that are supportive of the free movement of people and local integration (Conectas, 2018; Agência Brasil, 2018). Yet many migrants and refugees have difficulty integrating into their new countries and accessing services. As the study will show, evolving legislation, lack of information, siloed departments, and other factors can shape migrant and refugee experiences.

Experiences and Challenges

All respondents stated that access to information, research, and advice were critical in helping them make informed decisions around migrating. The main sources of information about acquiring ID credentials were friends and social media, indicating a gap in official information. This was a particular challenge for those who left home without official documentation. In our illustration of ID journeys, we document the most common paths used to obtain credentials in host countries, which are determined by the legal context in each country.

Among the main challenges that migrants face in obtaining identification credentials are fragmented systems that lack interoperability, overcrowded registration and service centers, and lengthy processing times. Information is not shared across departments or institutions. Migrants must spend time waiting in line when they may not be able to afford missing work, and they may have to travel long distances. In Chile, it can take up to a year to receive an ID, leading to vulnerabilities associated with expired ID credentials. Even when migrants are able to submit applications, corruption causes further complications (mentioned especially by respondents in Peru). This is compounded by a perception that regulation and immigration requirements are constantly changing. Digital platforms help reduce some cases of corruption, and can make

information more accessible, but are less effective because of migrants' low levels of digital literacy, language difficulties, especially for those who do not speak Spanish (mainly migrants from Haiti) and the lack of flexibility that face-to-face transactions provide. COVID-19 has exacerbated problems around expiration and renewal of ID credentials, as well as mobility. Together, these barriers often outweigh the benefits of obtaining a legal credential, particularly as most migrants work in the informal sector. These factors leave little incentive for formal registration and obtaining a legally recognized credential.

This study also explores the different services that migrants seek to access along their migration journey. The first that most reported trying to access was a SIM card. While it was easy to obtain one without documentation in Chile and Ecuador, in Peru the requirements for official documentation forced migrants to rely on friends to obtain access to mobile services. The next service that most respondents reported attempting to access was financial services, which was difficult because of stringent KYC/AML (know your customer/anti-money laundering) requirements. This is particularly significant when attempting to open a bank account, but also for accessing credit and for sending money home.

The next step on the migrant journey is finding employment. Most respondents described being forced to work in the informal sector with all the attendant vulnerabilities because they lacked ID, work permit and/or evidence of qualifications to access formal, quality employment. This was also true for educational qualifications, where a lack of documentation or recognition of valid credentials makes it difficult to qualify for jobs. Peru was reported to have good models for revalidation of credentials, particularly in the health sector.

Many respondents described the difficulties in accessing healthcare. Access frequently depends on knowledge of the system, trust that it will not impact their status, and the goodwill of others. Housing is another challenge cited, because the lack of credentials limits access to quality tenancy or protection from arbitrary eviction. Many described difficulties in obtaining their children's documentation, which led to problems around accessing education. Despite the fact that all three countries offer specific

routes to education for migrants, they often depend on presenting formal credentials that many struggle to obtain.

Another main service cited by many migrants as challenging is access to justice. They mentioned two common challenges in particular: explicit discrimination in trying to achieve justice, and the anticipation and fear of discrimination, which prevents them from reporting crimes. Finally, a recurring theme was the psychological benefit that many migrants feel when they have a valid ID. They conveyed a connection between an ID (or lack thereof) and a sense of safety, belonging, and dignity.

Summary of Recommendations

Migrants cited different experiences with ID systems in Chile, Peru, and Ecuador. In Chile, they experience increased difficulty in entering the country or obtaining legal documents; by contrast, the introduction of the Temporary Residency Card (Carnet de Permiso Temporal de Permanencia, or CPP), or CPP Law, in Peru has made it easier for migrants to access services and entitlements. In Ecuador, the legal framework makes it harder for migrants to access services, but there are more workarounds.

Peru: Migrants' experiences could be improved through a structural integration of benefits and services that migrants can access if they regularize their status and obtain a legal ID. These could come as a package, which together would outweigh the costs of obtaining the ID. Specifically, it would include lowering the costs associated with obtaining a legal ID, increasing access to jobs, reform of foreigner taxation and employment caps, increasing access to education, and making health services available to those with a Temporary Residency Permit (Permiso Temporal de Permanencia, or PTP). These reforms should be widely communicated through appropriate channels and partners.

Chile: Migrants' experiences could be improved through strategic planning that maximizes benefits for both migrants and locals. These plans could include incentives for migrants to move to areas of lower population density to access jobs and public services, fostering genuine social inclusion. Planning should be ongoing, dynamic, and responsive to current and future shocks, such as COVID-19.

Ecuador: Migrants' experiences could be improved by increasing the quality of data on undocumented migrants. This includes improving the accuracy of numbers of migrants. Currently, the government and other entities have different estimates of the number of migrants in the country. Reforms should be widely communicated, and waivers for visa applications could be considered when migrants lack documentation to prove their migratory status or when the time to stamp their passport expires because of closures and COVID-19.



The Need for Legal Identification for Migrants to Chile, Ecuador, and Peru



Introduction

Against the backdrop of increasing human migration in the twenty-first century, there is an equal increasing need to have an identity. People want to know not only who they are, but what their rights are. Yet, the voices of those at the receiving end of the identification process are not often heard, especially when they find themselves in a country not of their birth.

The study is based on interviews with 16 migrants and 12 experts working in the fields of ID and/or migration. The sample includes refugees and people seeking refugee status.

Obtaining identification documents can be a frictionless process when credentials are easy to access. For those on the move without credentials, or with expired or invalid credentials, it can be rife with challenges. This study, conducted in 2021, seeks to share those voices through the experiences of migrants in Chile, Ecuador, Peru. The study is based on interviews with 16 migrants and 12 experts working in the fields of ID and/or migration. The sample includes refugees and people seeking refugee status.

Following an introduction to the context of migrants and ID in Latin America, we introduce the qualitative research with migrants and refugees, together with the expert perspectives on experiences and challenges of these individuals. We then conclude with policy recommendations.

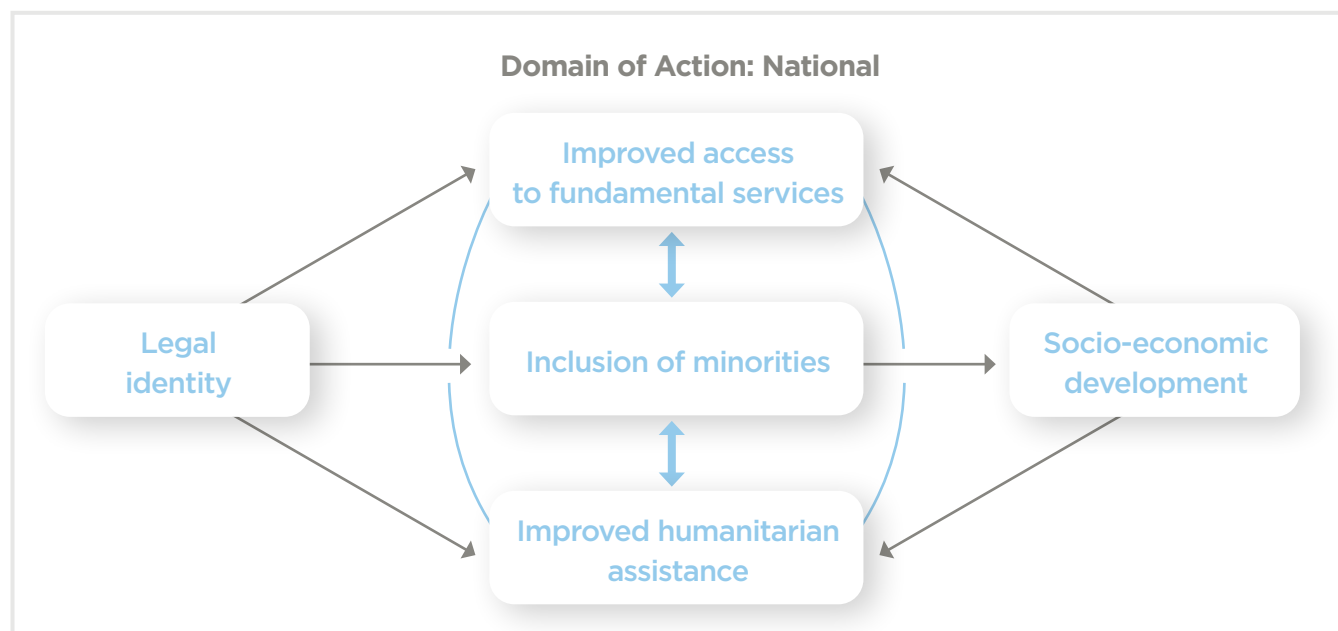
The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the study in two ways: first, it brought out additional challenges faced by migrants and refugees, such as the lack of jobs and lack of access to healthcare, and second, the interviews were all conducted remotely, either over WhatsApp or Zoom. This method enabled us to collect information about these challenges over time.

Legal Identity in the Digital Age

The increasing focus on legal identification in the digital age rests on the premise that identification will enable access to services, offer better humanitarian assistance, and include the entire population. These premises presumably stimulate socio-economic development.

FIGURE 1.

THEORY OF CHANGE FOR LEGAL IDENTIFICATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE



Source: Adapted from Masiero and Bailur (2021)

The United Nations defines legal identity as “the basic characteristics of an individual’s identity, such as name, sex, place, and date of birth conferred through registration and the issuance of a certificate by an authorized civil registration authority following the occurrence of birth. In the absence of birth registration, legal identity may be conferred by a legally recognized identification authority” (UN Legal Identity Expert Group, 2019). The significance of this definition, particularly for the migrants and refugees interviewed for this report, is the importance of credentials issued by a legal authority, either in their country of origin or their new host country.

Legal identity has become more complex in the digital age (Donner, 2018). The processes for establishing identity and establishing the uniqueness of the person (or thing) identified are changing as registries and credentials such as identity documents are increasingly digitalized. The emergence of identification schemes such as national identity initiatives introduces new challenges, such as whether they bestow a legal or a digital identity,

and whether it is recognized in law in either the country of origin or the country of residence (Manby, 2021). These challenges are acute for migrants and refugees.

Evidence from other contexts demonstrates how individuals negotiate legal status and associated rights related to different categories of identity. For example, Syrian refugees in Lebanon choose between refugee or non-refugee status to access rights and opportunities such as resettlement and employment. The forms of identity also matter. For example, some people view biometrics as invasive, while others welcome them as recognizing legal status and rights (Weitzberg et al., 2021). Credentials refer to both digital and analog documents that serve as proof of recognition of legal status or entitlement.

The importance of these terms and their distinctions is that for migrants and refugees, legal status is essential. The ability to prove one's identity is key to accessing rights, entitlements, employment, education, and services such as SIM cards and financial services. It also confers a sense of belonging. This report focuses on the human perspective of this issue.

Legal Identity in the Context of the Latin American and Caribbean Region

The Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region has been characterized primarily by inter-regional movements of people. Factors such as conflict and poverty have created both refugees and migrants. A refugee is understood in international law to be a person who is outside his or her country of origin who cannot return due to a well-founded fear of persecution (UN 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol). On the other hand, the IOM defines a migrant as “a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons.”¹ Importantly,

¹ At the international level, no universally accepted definition for “migrant” exists. This definition was developed by IOM for its own purposes and is not meant to imply or create any new legal category. See <https://www.iom.int/who-migrant-0>.

refugees are entitled to protection and legal status under the 1951 Refugee Convention. Protection for migrants is defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers and their families, but not legal status or identity. This makes the situation of migrants particularly challenging, especially in the context of the large-scale movements of people in Latin America.

Statistics on Migration in Latin America

By August 2021, more than 5.7 million Venezuelans were estimated to be living abroad, 4.6 million of them within the LAC region (R4V, 2021a).

According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), by 2019 there were 11.7 million international migrants in the LAC region (United Nations, 2019). Between 2017 and 2018, inter-regional migration on the continent gained global attention due to the number of refugees and migrants from Venezuela in several countries of the region. By August 2021, more than 5.7 million Venezuelans were estimated to be living abroad, 4.6 million of them within the LAC region (R4V, 2021a). By 2022, it was projected that 6.05 million Venezuelans will have left their home country (R4V, 2021b).

This report describes migrants' (most of whom are from Venezuela) experiences seeking ID when migrating to Chile, Ecuador, and Peru. A parallel IDB-funded study on migrant communication and common phrases used over social media in Chile, Ecuador, and Peru by SocialTic found that migrants in Ecuador and Peru are predominantly Venezuelan. In Chile, countries of origin include Colombia, Haiti, and Peru.

Table 1 illustrates net migration to Chile, Ecuador, and Peru from Venezuela and other countries. It is important to note that many migrants who enter countries and remain undocumented are not counted in the statistics. As can be seen, migration from Venezuela far exceeds migration from other countries of origin, including neighboring countries. In Chile, the second most predominant migrant population after Venezuelans are Haitians, while in Ecuador the second largest migrant population are Colombians, many of whom are fleeing armed conflict.

TABLE 1.
NET MIGRATION TO CHILE, ECUADOR, AND PERU

HOST COUNTRY	NET MIGRANTS (I.E., THOSE WHO STAYED IN THE COUNTRY) FROM TOP FIVE COUNTRIES TO CHILE, ECUADOR, AND PERU
Chile	<p>Venezuela: 610,035 (2021)^a</p> <p>(Resident permits and visas granted between 2016 and 2020)^b</p> <p>Haiti: 304,132</p> <p>Peru: 248,618</p> <p>Colombia: 232,685</p> <p>Bolivia: 167,114</p>
Ecuador	<p>Venezuela: 431,207 (as march of 2021)^c</p> <p>(2016–2020)^d</p> <p>Colombia: 52,748</p> <p>Peru: 10,296</p> <p>India: 8,456</p> <p>Cameroon: 3,658</p>
Peru	<p>Venezuela: 1,165,858 (by March 2021)^e</p> <p>(2016–2020)^f</p> <p>Ecuador: 32,392</p> <p>Colombia: 22,897</p> <p>Chile: 14,562</p> <p>Bolivia: 12,764</p>

a R4V. *Residence Permits and Regular Stay Granted*, March 2021. This does not take into account Venezuelans coming into Chile through unofficial crossings. Estimates of this up to September 2020 can be found at Migración Chile. [Ingreso por paso no habilitado](#).

b Resident permits and visas granted between 2016 and 2021. Departamento de Extranjería de Chile. [Estadísticas Migratorias](#). March 2021.

c This figure takes into account the official government-issued migratory balance, plus an estimate of Venezuelans entering through unofficial crossings elaborated by IOM and UNHCR. R4V. *Residence Permits and Regular Stay Granted*, March 2021.

d Positive migratory balance from top five countries of origin, 2016–2020. Ministerio de Gobierno de Ecuador. [Nacionalidad y Puerto Mes a Mes](#). March 2021.

e This figure takes into account the official number of resident permits issued, plus the government's official estimate of undocumented Venezuelan migrants in Peru by early 2021.

f Positive migratory balance from top five countries of origin, 2016–2020. Superintendencia Nacional de Migraciones Perú. [Boletín Estadístico Migratorio](#). March 2021.



Legislation on Identification in Chile, Ecuador, and Peru

In contrast to many other regions, Latin America has historically been receptive to migrants and supportive of population movements. Countries across the region are signatories of the Cartagena Declaration (Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, 1984), the San José Declaration (San José Declaration on Refugees and Displaced Persons, 1994), and the Brazil Declaration (Brazil Declaration, 2014). They have introduced policies to assist with the integration of migrants, such as the formation of emergency assistance committees (Conectas, 2018) and voluntary relocation of asylum seekers from poorer to wealthier areas (Agência Brasil, 2018).

Since 2017, Chile, Ecuador, and Peru have reported an increase in applications for legal residency and refugee status. In Chile, visa applications increased by 66 percent in 2018 over the previous year, with the largest number of applicants from Venezuela and Haiti (Servicio Nacional de Migraciones). In Ecuador, one of the respondents for this study, himself a migrant from Venezuela and working in a migrant shelter, said that between July 2018 and February 2021, he had seen around 4,000 migrants, 95 percent of whom were from Venezuela, and the rest were from Colombia, Peru, and Morocco (IDB, 2021).

Ecuador has extended humanitarian visas for Venezuelans as a temporary measure to guarantee a non-permanent legal residence. Between 2019 and 2020, Ecuador issued humanitarian visas to the 48 percent of Venezuelan migrants currently living in the country (Venezuela Migrante, 2020a). Many of those who did not obtain visas were not informed of the procedures, or lacked the resources to obtain a passport or pay the application fee, and therefore faced challenges accessing the labor market or even opening a bank account. However, since Ecuador began requesting that migrants obtain humanitarian visas in their home countries and have a passport to enter Ecuador, 15 percent of Venezuelan migrants reported having entered the country via unofficial crossings, commonly known as “trocha,” or dirt roads, which are paths that avoid legal border controls. As a result of this method of entry into a country, governments cannot keep an accurate count of the number of migrants being hosted. This includes migrants whose final destination was Chile or Peru. According to Colombia’s foreign minister, it increases the risks in their journey, boosting crime and human trafficking (El Comercio [Ecuador], 2020a; Reuters, 2019).

Similarly, in 2019, Peru began issuing humanitarian visas to Venezuelan migrants attempting to enter the country. By 2020, the government had issued this credential to 37.1 percent of migrants and extended temporary residency permits to 14.6 percent. However, 63.1 percent of Venezuelan migrants were denied entry to the country for lack of proper documentation (IOM, 2020). This is partly because, even if migrants hold a humanitarian visa, they are not allowed in the country if they do not have entry and exit stamps from Ecuador because they crossed the border unofficially (Amnesty International, 2020).

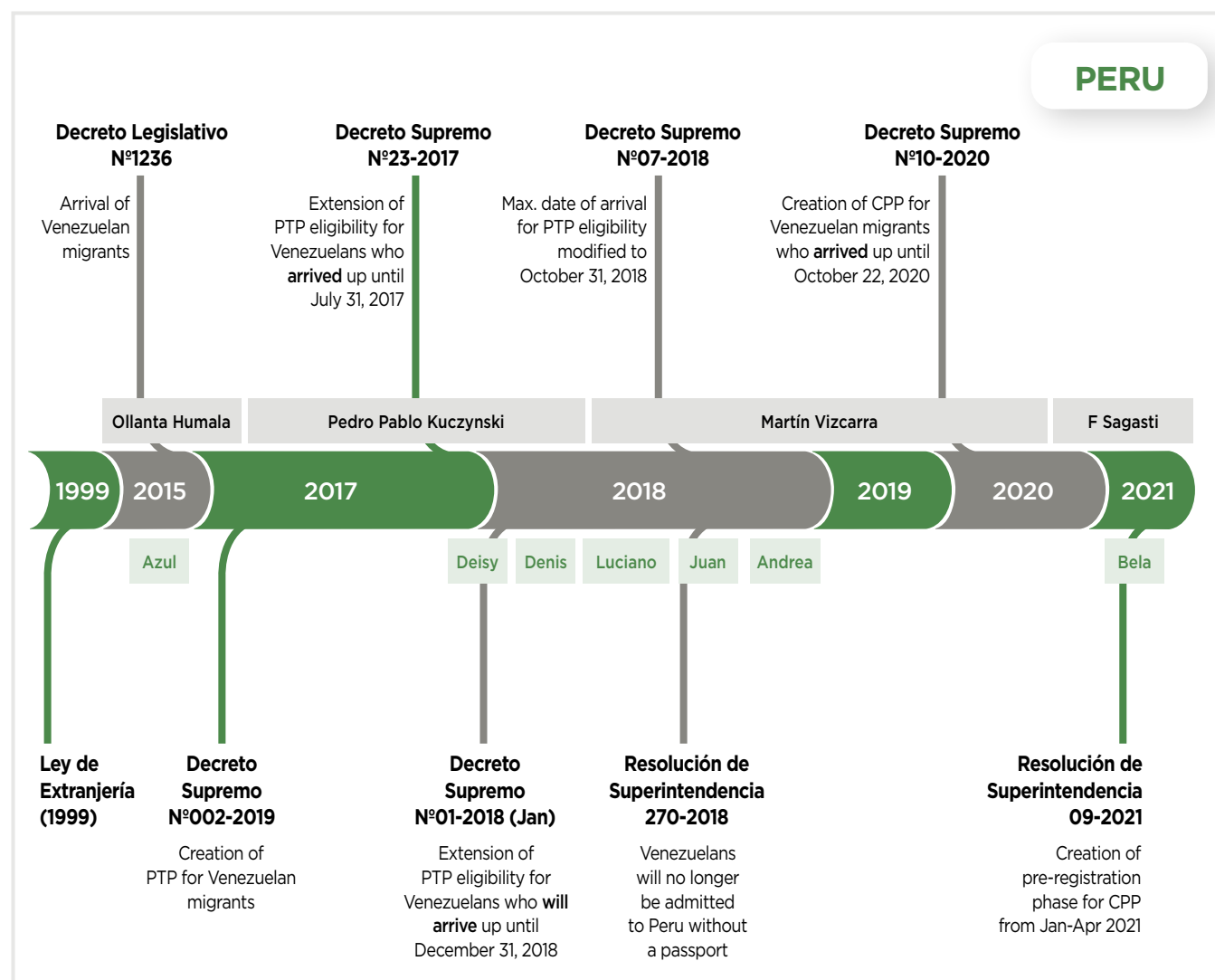
An even greater challenge in understanding migration flows and ID challenges is that the number of migrants is likely to be much greater than reported, as many migrants enter Latin American countries through unofficial entries. This was particularly the case during COVID-19, when borders were closed but migrants were still crossing unofficially.²

2 In an interview with Waleska Ureta, the National Director of Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes, Chile, she states the number of migrants is likely to be much higher than official figures show.

The figures below illustrate the overall timelines and legislation for the three countries studied and when the migrants and refugees interviewed for this study entered the country.

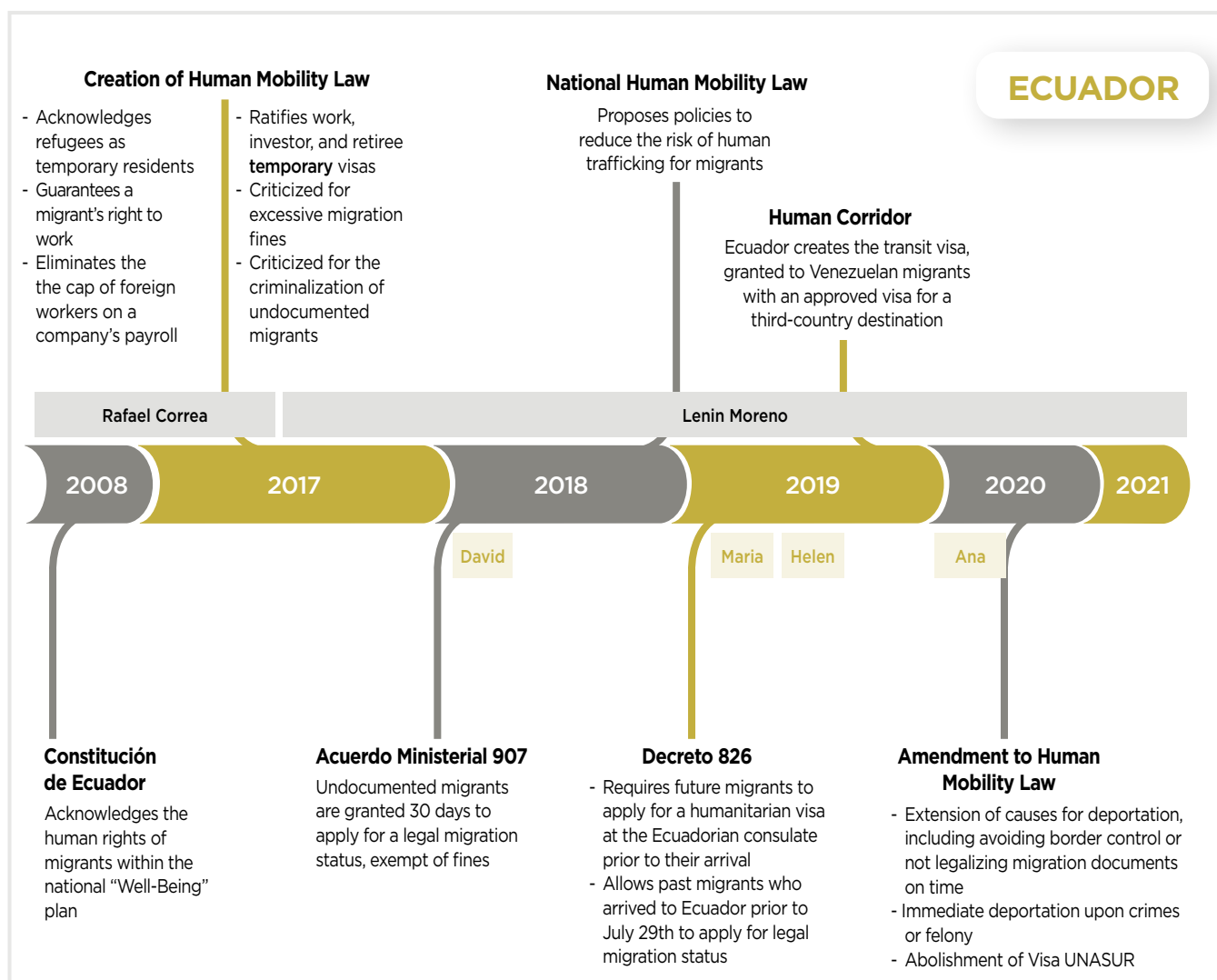
FIGURE 2.

MIGRATION LAWS OVER TIME IN PERU



Note: The names in the gray boxes indicate the president in Peru at the time and the names in colored boxes show when each migrant interviewed arrived in the country.

FIGURE 3.
MIGRATION LAWS OVER TIME IN ECUADOR



Note: The names in the gray boxes indicate the president in Ecuador at the time and the names in colored boxes show when each migrant interviewed arrived in the country.

CHILE

Migration Law Project Is Created
Held in congress for 7 years

Haitian Family Reunification Visa
President Bachelet creates this visa for the wives and children of male **Haitian** immigrants with temporary resident visas

Democratic Responsibility Visa for Venezuelans
Aug. 2018: Application at Chilean consulates in Venezuela which requires a passport. Has to be acquired before arrival in Chile. Allows for employment, valid for 1 yr.

Decreto 265

- Militarization of borders to prevent migrants avoiding border controls
- Criminalization of undocumented migration
- Growth in deportation flights

Timeline:

- 1975:** **Ley de Extranjería DL 1094**
Tightens the ability of migrants to enter into Chile
- 2013:** **Welcoming of Haitian immigration**
Arriving as tourists, Haitians are then easily granted temporary working visas
- 2014:** **Halt to Haitian immigration**
Haitians are now asked to apply for a tourist visa at the Chilean consulate in Haiti prior to arrival
- 2016:** **Tourist Visa Requirement for Venezuelans**
Venezuelan migrants are asked to apply for a tourist visa at Chilean consulates abroad prior to their arrival in Chile
- 2018:** **New Chilean Migration Law**
 - Creates a new Chilean Migration Agency
 - Ratifies that Venezuelans and Haitians have to apply for a tourist visa at a consulate abroad prior to arrival
 - Undocumented migrants can apply for a temporary residence visa 180 days following the law's approval as long as they a) arrived before March 2020 and b) passed through border control
 - Those who skipped border control have to leave and apply for a visa from their home countries
 - Prioritizes the protection of children and adolescents

Presidents: A. Pinochet (1975-1980), S. Piñera (2010-2014), M. Bachelet (2013-2018), Sebastián Piñera (2018-2021)

Ministers: Ivan (2013-2014), Westin (2014-2016), Fausto (2016-2018), Omar (2018-2021)

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Identification Challenges Facing Migrants in Latin America and the Caribbean

Despite legal changes, migrants in the LAC region still commonly cite lack of documentation as the main barrier to accessing services and legalizing status (IOM, undated). For example, to obtain residency permits, migrants need a passport, and not all of them can obtain this document from their home countries. According to the International Organization for Migration, in 2019, 53 percent of Venezuelan migrants entering Ecuador (Venezuela Migrante, 2020b) and 34.9 percent of migrants entering Peru (IOM, undated) did not have a passport. Chile has promoted immigration instruments such as the Democratic Responsibility Visa to regulate the immigration status of Venezuelans, facilitating their access to labor markets. However, it is reported that 73 percent of applications are rejected (IOM, 2020). Likewise in Chile, the Family Reunification Visa is available to immigrants from Haiti, but no more than 10,000 applications can be processed per year.

Migrants in the LAC region still commonly cite lack of documentation as the main barrier to accessing services and legalizing status.

A survey conducted by the Migration Policy Institute in 2019 found that 24 percent of migrants in Peru and 18 percent in Ecuador reported issues with migration documents as a challenge to their journey (MPI, 2020), on a par with challenges of financial resources, safety, food, and transportation (see Table 2). Experts suggested that the number of migrants who had trouble with their documents in Peru and Ecuador was much higher. Once in Chile, only 47 percent of migrants used public health services, while 26 percent accessed emergency services. In Ecuador, 44 percent used public health services, while 35 percent stated that they did not seek any assistance. Although the report does not state the reasons, the interviews conducted for this study revealed that lack of ID was often a reason for the lack of access to services. The report does not define the categories (e.g., finances or transportation), noting only that they are problematic for migrants.

TABLE 2.

MAIN CHALLENGES IN VENEZUELAN MIGRANT JOURNEYS TO CHILE, ECUADOR, AND PERU

	CHILE	ECUADOR	PERU
Main challenges entering the country based on IOM data ^a	[Lack of reliable data available]	Finances (62%) Safety (30%) Food (29%) Shelter (24%) ID (19%) Health (17%) Transport (16%) Lack of information (5%) Arrests (2%)	Finances (48%) Transport (47%) ID (24%) Safety (23%) Food (20%) Shelter (8%) Health (14%) Lack of information (14%) Arrests (8%)

a The numbers used by the IOM sample are indicative. Its size varies greatly: n=79 in Chile, n=657 in Peru, and n=3698 in Ecuador.



Primary Research: Migrant Voices



Methodology

This study followed a qualitative approach, based on the migrants' own descriptions of the challenges they have faced in accessing basic services that require identification. The narrative of the challenges that migrants identify supports the analysis and the development of recommendations. Three methods were employed to answer the research question "What challenges do migrants in Chile, Ecuador, and Peru have in accessing basic services that are dependent on identification?"³:

i) A broad landscape review in each country, incorporating academic and government literature as well as news reports in Spanish and English. We also incorporated findings from a parallel internal analysis conducted by SocialTic, funded by the IDB, on a keyword analysis of YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook groups used by migrants in Chile, Ecuador, and Peru.

ii) "End user" interviews with a cross-section of migrants.⁴ These interviews began with the "identification inventory," or the credentialing journey of the respondents. We then followed a human-centered design (HCD) or "jobs to be done" approach where we asked questions around experiences, behaviors, pain points, and how respondents felt about their identification journey. See Appendices B and C for end users and questions.

iii) Expert interviews with key stakeholders, such as those working in NGOs, relevant government departments, and academia. Experts provided insights and helped determine whether the stories were generalizable or unique. Given the critiques of HCD in recent years for being too individualistic, we also used a social design approach to understand what shapes the individual and their behavior. Interviewing experts helps understand this bigger picture. As a Chilean expert stated, "it is customary to think of migration (and by extension identification) from the perspective of law. The user is lost in all this."

3 Note that the IDB selected Chile, Ecuador, and Peru.

4 Some refugees were interviewed as part of the sample, considering that there are differences between migrants and refugees regarding their legal status. However, both face similar ID challenges.

FIGURE 5.

HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN APPROACH AS APPLIED IN PREVIOUS RESEARCH PROJECTS ON IDENTIFICATION

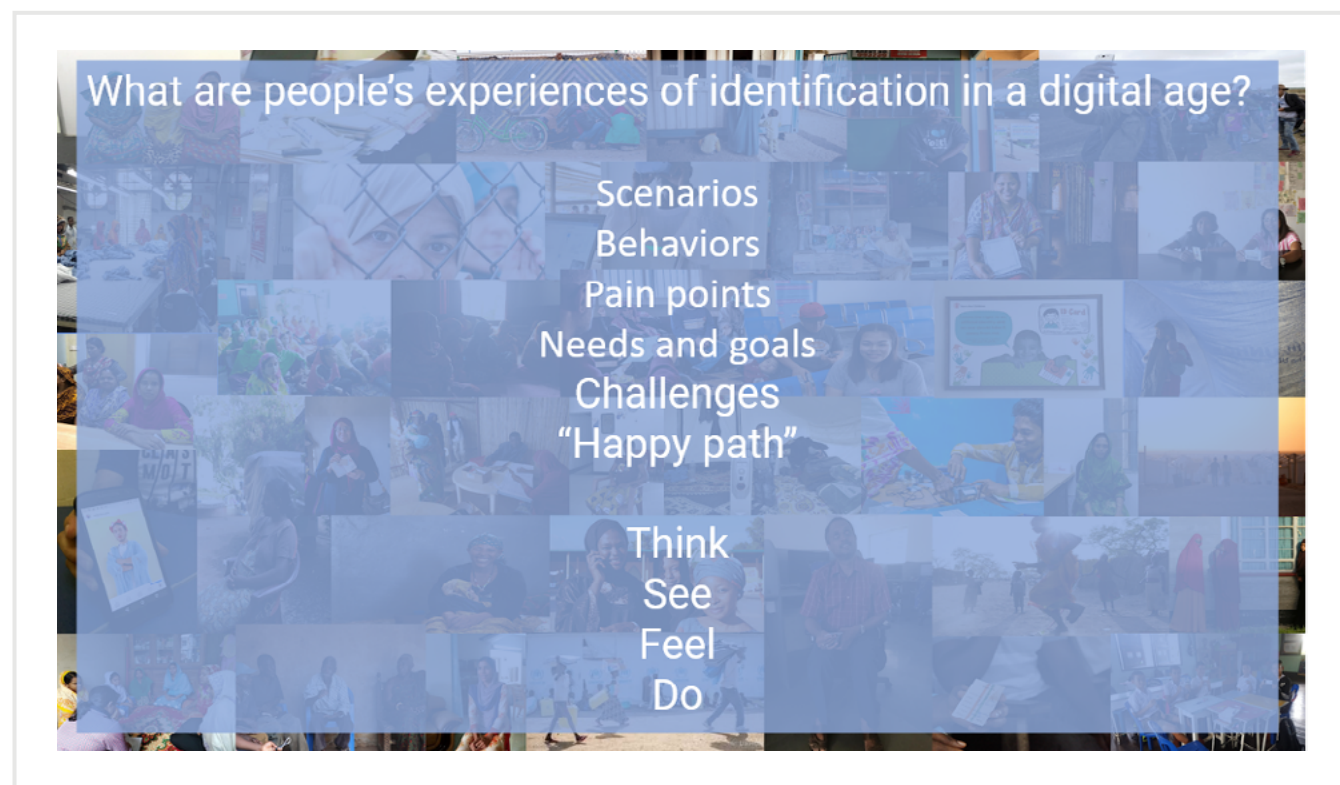


Table 3 provides more details on numbers and rationale. Appendices B and C provide more details on the questions asked.

Sampling Frame

Qualitative research is not representative of the migrant population in these countries. Bearing this mind, we aimed to include as broad a sample of migrants as possible in terms of age, gender and sexual orientation, country of origin, years in host country, intended stay in country (if in transit), education, income, marital status (including whether they traveled with or without children), and disability.

As seen in Table 1, most migrants to Chile, Ecuador, and Peru in the past five years have been from Venezuela. For this reason, most of our sample were Venezuelans. Several of our experts from organizations providing support to Venezuelan migrants assisted in identifying Venezuelan migrants. To diversify our participant experiences, we also included migrants from Bolivia, Cuba, Haiti, and Peru (i.e., a Peruvian migrant in Chile). To overcome the challenge of finding non-Venezuelan migrants, which was greatly alleviated with the help of World Vision Chile,⁵ we used the migrant Facebook groups in Peru identified by SocialTic to find Haitian respondents. We also interviewed a Haitian migration paperwork advisor in Chile, who provided insights on the different challenges faced by different nationalities when applying for legal immigration status.

We interviewed a diverse group of organizations to understand the challenges faced by vulnerable sub-groups. In Ecuador, we interviewed an organization working to advance migrant LGBTQ rights, and in Peru we spoke with representatives of an organization that addresses gender-based violence among migrant women.

5 We are grateful to World Vision Chile for helping us identify non-Venezuelan migrants in Chile.

TABLE 3.
COUNTRIES UNDER STUDY AND RATIONALE FOR METHODS

COUNTRY AND RATIONALE FOR METHODS	NUMBER OF END USERS INTERVIEWED (WITHIN BUDGET AND TIMEFRAME)	NUMBER OF EXPERTS INTERVIEWED
Chile	5 (2 from Venezuela, 1 from Haiti, 1 from Cuba, 1 from Peru)	6
Ecuador	4 (3 from Venezuela, 1 from Colombia)	2
Peru	7 (All from Venezuela)	4
Rationale for method	Direct interviews with end users (migrants and refugees) gave unparalleled insights into the challenges and experiences they encountered. We used a storytelling or narrative approach where we prompted the respondents to speak about specific experiences and how they felt about these (Nasheeda et al., 2019).	Experts give broader “supply-side” insights into challenges as well as legal frameworks. We asked experts to validate whether the experiences were generalizable or unique.

Conducting Research during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Many migrants are reluctant to discuss issues around identification out of fear for potential repercussions. The COVID-19 pandemic made it more difficult to interview them because of the inability to conduct interviews face to face. Many of those who were willing to be interviewed faced

challenges in finding the time when they were also struggling to work and put food on the table. One respondent spoke to us while he was delivering food for a food delivery site. For all these reasons, we could only conduct interviews with 10-15 percent of those we contacted. This was despite compensation. All respondents were compensated with US\$10 for their time, deposited either into their bank accounts or as mobile money credit. As a reference, in Chile (Entel Chile, undated) and Ecuador (Claro, undated), \$10 in phone credit pays for 8GB for 30 days. In Peru, it pays for 2.5GB for 20 days (Entel Peru, undated).

Out of an abundance of caution, we planned for all interviews to be conducted remotely via Zoom (for experts) and WhatsApp (for migrant and refugee respondents) or on whatever platform the respondent felt comfortable.

We were aware of the limitations of conducting interviews remotely, especially with respect to establishing rapport regarding such a sensitive topic. However, one unanticipated benefit of WhatsApp interviews was it provided respondents a way to contact us with any follow-ups on their experiences or answer any additional questions we had (Colom, 2021). WhatsApp also allowed participants to refer us to other migrants whom we could interview if they met our sampling criteria. Some respondents sent further contacts of NGOs who had helped them and photos of experiences. This allowed for an open channel and a more sustained research relationship, with greater longitudinal potential and more informality.



Migrants Interviewed



TABLE 4.
PERU RESPONDENTS
Method: WhatsApp video call

Nationalities of respondents: Venezuelan

PSEUDONYM	DATE OF INTERVIEW	AGE	GENDER	SELF-IDENTIFIED RACE	EDUCATION LEVEL	JOB	ID	DATE OF ARRIVAL
Denis	Feb 1	30	M	White Hispanic	Technical degree	Wine delivery	Carnet de Extranjería (CE)	March 2018
Deisy	Feb 2	46	F	Andean Hispanic	College degree (x2)	Self-employed (sells decorations at a local fair)	CE	March 2018
Bela	Feb 3	44	F	Afro Latina	High school diploma	Self-employed (sells homemade desserts)	None	January 2021
Juan	Feb 3	21	M	Afro Latino	High school diploma	Agricultural worker	None	August 2018
Andrea	Feb 4	28	F	White Hispanic	Technical degree	Self-employed (sells homemade donuts)	Expired Temporary Visa	May 2018
Azul	Feb 12	40	F	White Hispanic	College degree	Freelance nurse	CE	July 2016
Luciano	Feb 17	20	M	Andean Hispanic	High school diploma	Food delivery	CE	June 2018

TABLE 5.

ECUADOR RESPONDENTS

Method: WhatsApp video call

Nationalities of respondents: Venezuelan (except Ana, who is Colombian)

PSEUDONYM	DATE OF INTERVIEW	AGE	GENDER	SELF-IDENTIFIED RACE	EDUCATION LEVEL	JOB	ID	DATE OF ARRIVAL
Helen	Feb 8	37	F	Hispanic	College degree	Veterinary assistant	None	August 2019
David (visual impairment)	Feb 9	38	M	Hispanic	College degree	Migrant services volunteer	Legal resident	March 2018
Maria	Feb 16	48	F	Hispanic	College degree	Shelter volunteer	None	August 2019
Ana	Feb 14	48	F	Afro Latina	None	Unemployed refugee	None	February 2020

TABLE 6.

CHILE RESPONDENTS

Method: WhatsApp video call

Nationalities of respondents: Various

PSEUDONYM	DATE OF INTERVIEW	AGE	GENDER	COUNTRY	SELF-IDENTIFIED RACE	EDUCATION LEVEL	JOB	ID	DATE OF ARRIVAL
Omar (Venezuela)	Feb 9	31	M	Venezuela	Hispanic	College degree	Delivery driver and computer technician	Expired Visa	September 2019
Ivan (Venezuela)	Feb 11	33	M	Venezuela	Hispanic	College degree	Supermarket clerk and delivery driver	Expired Visa	2016
Westin (Haiti)	April 1	30	M	Haiti	Afro-Caribbean	College degree	Self-employed migrant paperwork facilitator	Temporary Visa	January 2017
Fausto (Cuba)	April 6	44	M	Cuba	White Hispanic	High school diploma	Mechanic and welder (informal)	"Refugee Applicant" Visa (8m)	May 2018
Lucia (Peru)	May 11	51	F	Peru	Andean	Primary school	House cleaner	Expired Temporary Visa	January 2018

Experiences and Challenges



Common Experiences around Identification

All respondents stated that access to information, research, and advice was critical in helping them make informed decisions around migrating (and conversely, lack of information led to a confusing process). This is difficult when government rules and regulations keep changing, but those who armed themselves with information and had their documents validated as soon as possible faced fewer problems.

“My recommendation is to always arrive with all your documents in order. That is what opens doors.”

Omar, Venezuelan in Chile

Friends and social media provided this support. An analysis by SocialTic of a sample of migrant social media groups in Chile, Ecuador, and Peru found that the most frequent word searches were related to visas, passports, and legal migration documents. Most of these were based on questions or problems around attempts to change their legal immigration status. This shows how much of the migrant’s daily lives revolve around their legal migration process.

SocialTic also found that in Chile, the most salient word in social media comments was “passport” while in Peru it is “carnet” (i.e., ID), validating our finding that a passport is a crucial migration document, while in Peru, migrants can apply for a PTP with their Venezuelan ID.⁶

⁶ See also <https://www.instagram.com/acca.Peru/?hl=en> mentioned by Deisy.



“The key to my success with documentation was advice. I asked a lot, with many details, and a lot of people. The second factor was time. I was told to do everything with my passport while I was a tourist and while my passport was still valid. This allowed me to open a bank account, which was extremely important.”

Denis, Venezuelan in Peru

In some cases, however, Venezuelan respondents had left the country without a valid passport, as it was too difficult to obtain one in the country itself (one respondent said that he had waited nearly one and a half years to get an appointment). According to an interview with the National Director of Jesuit Migration Services (Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes), the greatest challenges to having no documentation are finding a safe place to rent (unscrupulous landlords may take advantage of undocumented people), access to work, and healthcare.

Table 7 illustrates the ID journey pursued by most migrants in Chile, Ecuador, and Peru. It describes the initial ID credential that migrants arrive with, the most common prerequisites for applying for temporary immigration status, and the migration credential that migrants seek to obtain.

TABLE 7.
COMMON ID JOURNEYS

COUNTRY	ID JOURNEY BY PLACE OF ORIGIN
Chile ^a	<p>Venezuela: Passport^b → Visa de Responsabilidad Democrática^c or Contract-tied visa^d → Cédula de identidad para extranjeros → RUT^e → Visa de permanencia definitiva</p> <p>Haiti: Passport → Work visa, family reunification visa, temporary resident visa → Cédula de identidad para extranjeros → RUT → Haitian penalty record → Visa de permanencia definitiva</p> <p>Other countries of origin: Passport → Work visa, temporary resident visa → Cédula de identidad para extranjeros → RUT → Visa de permanencia definitiva</p> <p>Refugees: Passport → Visa de solicitud de refugio → Cédula de identidad para extranjeros → RUT → Visa de refugio</p>
Ecuador	<p>Venezuela: Passport (within 5 yrs. past its expiration date) → Tourist visa, UNASUR visa,^f Humanitarian Visa^g → Cédula de identidad para extranjeros con residencia temporal</p> <p>Other countries of origin: Passport → Tourist visa, Work permit visa, permanent resident visa → Cédula de identidad para extranjeros con residencia temporal o permanente</p>
Peru	<p>Venezuela: Passport or National ID^h → Tourist visa → Interpol security checks → PTP (Permiso Temporal de Permanencia) or CPP (Carnet de Permiso Temporal de Permanencia) → CE (Carnet de Extranjería)</p> <p>Other countries of origin: Passport → Tourist visa, Business visa</p>

a In April 2022, a new immigration law was approved in Chile that could reflect changes in the ID journey mentioned in this research.

b The Responsabilidad Democrática is only granted with a valid passport. ChileAtiende. [Visa de Responsabilidad Democrática para nacionales Venezolanos](#).

c [Servicios Consulares Chile. Visa de Responsabilidad Democrática](#).

d [EmigraVenezuelaChile](#). Visas are subject to work contract.

e In Chile and as confirmed by respondents, a RUT (Rol Único Tributario, or tax number) is essential to acquire after the visa in order to access many services. Even cashiers at supermarkets may ask for a RUT, though it is not mandatory to show it there. A RUT or similar identification number is not as critical an ID in Ecuador or Peru.

f As of February 21, 2021, Ecuador suspended the issuance of the UNASUR visa as it is stated in the Ley Orgánica Reformatoria de la Ley Orgánica de Movilidad Humana.

g As of August 13, 2020, Ecuador suspended the issuance of the Humanitarian Visa, as stated in Presidential Decree 826.

h Government of Peru. Sacar Permiso Temporal para migrantes. 2020.

Most Haitian migrants speak French and Creole only, which makes it much harder for them to navigate migration documents. They must incur additional costs to get their documents translated.

Some of the migrants we interviewed expressed ambiguity around taking the next step—becoming citizens of their host country. One of them mentioned being hesitant because of the rise of xenophobia and stated that she was considering eventually moving somewhere else.

In Chile, one distinction between the Responsabilidad Democrática (RD) Visa and any other work permit is that the former is not restricted to the sponsoring company. With the RD visa, one can change jobs and work in more than one job. Omar, one of the respondents, stated that this was important for him so that he could accumulate enough income to qualify for residency. A peculiarity of the migrants arriving in Chile is that they are encouraged to apply for an RD Visa at the Chilean consulate in Venezuela. Omar, for example, applied online and was granted the visa fairly quickly and smoothly. According to him, the hardest part for a Venezuelan is to get a passport, because of the year-long wait time.

In Chile, Haitians have an additional obstacle when applying for the permanent visa. The Departamento de Extranjería asks all migrants to present a police record from their country of origin—a costly and time-consuming document for Haitians to obtain. Haitians first pay \$25 at their embassy to obtain a form that they subsequently mail to Haiti. The police record is mailed back to Chile. The process is so lengthy that the police record sometimes expires before it arrives in Chile. Haitians mentioned that other migrants, such as Colombians, do not have this requirement, which makes it easier for them to get a permanent visa. Further, most Haitian migrants speak French and Creole only, which makes it much harder for them to navigate migration documents. They must incur additional costs to get their documents translated.

In Chile, the most persistent problem seems to be the long time it takes to process visa applications. Migrants report having waited 8–12 months to get a response on their temporary or permanent visa application. This leads to another problem: expired IDs. Further, SocialTic’s analysis shows that one of the most common words on YouTube migrant video comments is “extension,” and it is captured within phrases asking about the application or payment of a visa extension. Many migrants had difficulty paying for the extension application online. Additionally, the migrants we interviewed felt that the Departamento de Extranjería in Chile randomly denies permanent

visas, even when migrants have all their documents in place. And once a migrant is denied, they have no choice but to accept the denial, because an appeal takes around two more years to process. It is wiser to wait for a period of time and apply again. Westin, for instance, stated that he was denied a permanent visa when he applied for an employment-tied visa, because he needed to show his contract as proof of residence and income in Chile. He planned to reapply later in 2021 and would provide proof that he owns two businesses in Chile, calling this a “commercial” justification.

Fausto, a Cuban migrant in Chile, applied for refugee status in May 2018. He and his family were granted a Refugee Application Visa (Visa de Solicitud de Refugio) at no cost, which expires every eight months. This visa is granted to refugees while their file is being evaluated, which in his case had already taken three years. However, this visa allowed Fausto and his family to obtain national IDs, which were crucial in accessing services, getting jobs, and enrolling in school. Once their refugee status is approved, they will be able to obtain formal refugee visas, which last longer. Nevertheless, Fausto and his family’s request for refugee status was rejected, allegedly because they did not have a good enough reason to leave Cuba. Fausto shared that they did not leave because of the regime, like many other Cubans, but for religious reasons, because he and his family (especially his daughter) were discriminated against for being Jehovah’s Witnesses. His daughter was attacked several times in school, prompting them to leave the country. Upon the rejection for refugee status, Fausto appealed to the migration agency in Chile. However, he fears that, like other failed refugee applicants, they might receive an expulsion letter.

In Ecuador, before 2019, migrants could enter by presenting their passport or identity document, which allowed them to stay in the country as tourists for no longer than 180 days. During that time, some migrants managed to legalize their migratory status by requesting the UNASUR visa application, which also granted them a work permit. However, the cost of that visa was excessive.⁷ David commented that it was easy for him to obtain the visa because he was able to access a subsidy due to his visual impairment.

⁷ UNASUR visa application US\$50 and visa approval US\$250. <https://www.cancilleria.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Ficha-RUTER-Concesio%CC%81n-de-visa-de-residencia-permanente-UNASUR.pdf>.

For asylum seekers, conditions are not favorable, and there is a lot of misinformation about how to apply for asylum.

After the humanitarian visa requirement for Venezuelans was launched, the option of entering Ecuador by stamping only the passport became unfeasible. The measure was adopted to legalize the migratory status of thousands of migrants, but fewer than half of the migrants were able to obtain that visa. Helen and Maria mentioned the difficulties in regularizing their status, due to the lack of information on how and when to apply for the visa. For asylum seekers, conditions are not favorable, and there is a lot of misinformation about how to apply for asylum. Ana had to navigate the entire immigration system looking for an answer that allows her to guarantee her refugee status. In her case, and since she entered the country through the coastal port, the migration officials at the border did not stamp her documents, and in Ecuador, having a stamped document is one of the main requirements when requesting any migratory status. In general, incomplete information is reported as one of the main challenges faced by migrants,⁸ mainly for those who overstayed the time allowable. The pandemic exacerbated this problem, as many were unable to get their passports stamped within 180 days, due to lockdowns and quarantines.

Additionally, in Ecuador, biometric registration for Venezuelan migrants crossing the border was launched in 2019, yet up until mid-2020, only 165,000 migrants had registered. Beyond registering their actual biometric data, the government states that its interest in the sociodemographic data that they fill out (level of education, income, intention to stay) is to create better public policies targeted to their needs (Government of Ecuador, 2020b).

In Peru, obtaining a foreigner's ID (Carnet de Extranjería, or CE) is one of the final steps in the ID journey. However, it is also one of the most elusive, as it requires security clearance (both local and international police report). Denis spoke of his experience in 2018. As appointments were full in Lima, he traveled three hours to Chinchipe by bus, got in line at 3:00 a.m. and slept in the line until the office opened. The police also came by and charged everyone S/.5 (US\$1.35) for being there. More recently, however, he believes the process has become much easier. "The first time was traumatic," he said.

⁸ The procedures manual to apply for a humanitarian visa indicates that if there are errors or missing data or not all the requirements are met, the applicant will not be able to continue the process. Migrants also reported this obstacle.

“There were so many Venezuelans asking for the police clearance. Now it’s all digitized, and you can get a clearance on the web, instantly. You pay on the web, you get the certificate immediately, and you don’t have to travel to police offices. No corruption or delays either.”

Denis, Venezuelan in Peru who arrived in March 2018

In June 2019, the Peruvian migration agency introduced a fingerprint recognition system through which it validates the identity of the migrant when they come to pick up their PTP or CE. The biometric data are stored for future identity verification when migrants enter or leave the country (Government of Peru, 2020).

In October 2020, the Peruvian government passed a new migration law creating the Temporary Residency Card (Carnet de Permiso Temporal de Permanencia, or CPP) (El Peruano, 2020). It is similar to a PTP, which grants migrants permission to work for a year. The CPP law allows migrants who came into Peru without going through border control or whose tourist visa has expired to apply for a CPP, provided they entered the country before October 22, 2020.

In January 2021, the Peruvian government launched an online pre-registration phase for CPP. However, according to Marta Fernandez, by mid-March, only 300,000 out of an estimated 700,000 eligible migrants had pre-registered.⁹ Fernandez, the director of the Association for the Protection of the Vulnerable Population, attributed this to migrants’ fear that they will have to pay a fine for every day that they have been in Peru under an expired tourist visa.

9 Interview with Marta Fernandez, Asociación Protección Población Vulnerable.

Migrant Experiences Obtaining Identification

Lack of Systems Integration

A major problem for all migrants and refugees in terms of identification is the lack of interoperability between systems. According to one Chilean expert, government departments function as silos. Recently, while the COVID pandemic allowed some exemptions, each entity had the authority to accept or reject documents, causing more confusion. Andrea, a Venezuelan migrant from Peru, applied for a Carnet de Extranjería through a route called “with resident family member,” because she has a Peruvian-born daughter. However, because RENIEC (the ID-issuing authority for Peruvians) and the migrations department do not share information, the migrations department has no proof of her daughter’s birth or her relationship to Andrea. Therefore, her Carnet de Extranjería has been stuck in limbo for six months.

“Truth be told, people have documents that are half accepted, they aren’t complete, and you can’t be at peace. Why can’t the government have something like a QR code in my documents so that any authority can see what their status is?”

Ivan, Venezuelan in Chile

Overcrowded Registration and Service Centers

City centers can be crowded for registration and processing. In Chile, Omar was unable to obtain an appointment with the police station in Santiago to obtain his police record. He chose to travel south of Santiago to find a less crowded agency. In Ecuador, Helen was unable to get an appointment in Quito for the UNASUR visa. She was advised to go to a less crowded

agency two hours away from Quito. However, once she arrived, she was denied service because she had a Quito address. When attempting to get his police record in Peru, one of the migrants traveled to Chinchá, three hours south of Lima, and stayed with a friend. He had been unable to find an appointment in Lima. The Chinchá center was also overcrowded, so he arrived before dawn and stood in line until midday. These efforts cost money and time away from work (and confusion when there are mixed messages as for Helen). They can also be risky, as some of the men reported sleeping on the street before the appointment when they could not find accommodation. Migrants in all three countries reported long lines as one of the most painful parts of legalizing their immigration status.

Lengthy Processing Times

Experts suggest that the low number of visas is a deliberate act to keep migration levels low, rather than the result of inefficiency.

Migrants such as Ivan, a Venezuelan in Chile, state their frustration with the surprisingly long time it takes for visas and permits to be approved. Both the Chilean experts and migrants we interviewed generally perceive that the Chilean government is issuing too few temporary resident visas in relation to the demand for them. Other experts suggest that the low number of visas is a deliberate act to keep migration levels low, rather than the result of inefficiency. For migrants in Chile, “It is a nightmare to go around with an expired ID,” especially because no matter how diligent they are, once they submit their documents, there is nothing else they can do. This problem is rampant in Chile, where migrants reported waiting for months or even up to a year for a visa to be approved. Lucia, a Peruvian migrant in Chile, submitted her temporary labor visa application in March 2018 and was granted the visa in December 2019, 21 months later.

The wait time for visa approval in Chile was worse for refugees. Fausto, a Cuban refugee in Chile who escaped the island because of religious persecution, waited three years to obtain an answer to his family’s refugee application.

This problem seems to be more common in Chile than in Ecuador or Peru, according to the migrants and experts interviewed. The director of the Jesuit Migration Service highlighted that the main challenge to migrants is the slow and inefficient administrative process by the Chilean government.

Migrants we interviewed in Peru and Ecuador reported waiting times of two to three months at the most, and the experts interviewed did not identify length of processing time as a problem.

Corruption

Several respondents reported anecdotes of corruption that they had personally experienced or heard about. Denis recalled being asked for small bribes by police officers in Chinchá while waiting in line for a police clearance. Deisy was visibly upset, wiping tears away, as she recalled a policeman asking her for \$200 while she was getting Interpol clearance. Luciano said that many of his Venezuelan acquaintances had paid bribes to get the PTP in less than two months. Azul, on the other hand, went through a streamlined, rapid process because her employer bribed the migration authorities. “I entered through the big doors, as if I were a millionaire and I was immediately served. No long lines for me. I don’t know how much it cost either, my boss paid it,” she said.

“I had saved \$200 for a mattress but the policeman asked for this money in order to let me into the agency. I slept for a month on the ground after I paid him because I didn’t have money for the mattress, but I’d rather sleep on the ground than to be illegal.”

Deisy, Venezuelan in Peru

High Costs and Patchy Knowledge

Fausto migrated from Cuba because he was told that anyone would be able to enter Chile upon request at the border. However, this information turned out to be erroneous, because he was denied legal entrance, and had to cross the border unofficially. He had also been told that anyone arriving in Chile before May 22, 2018, could apply for a legal temporary immigration status immediately. He later learned that the deadline was May 12, and he and his family arrived late. His only option was to apply for refugee status. Many other fellow migrants that arrived after him were not even allowed to apply for refugee status.



“I came to this country because I had incorrect information about the laws. If the government had stated long ago that it did not welcome migrants, and that migrants are not allowed to apply for legal temporary residence, many of us would not have come. It is my fault, for being ignorant, but also the government’s fault for not communicating their policies internationally. I have heard recently about a video called “Don’t Risk It” (*“No te Arriesgues”*), in which the Chilean government discourages migrants from coming. I think that is good. If they don’t want us, they should be clear about it upfront.”

Fausto, Cuban in Chile

Helen in Ecuador stated that “sometimes all paths are shut. There should be ways to make us legal. I have been trying to bring my son here for two years but no consulates were open in Venezuela.”

Similarly, Bela, a Venezuelan migrant in Peru, suggested two changes would make it easier for migrants to obtain IDs in Peru: lowering the cost of obtaining a legal status and having a centralized center for migration-related consultations. “Migrants have to pay for every single piece of paper when the last thing we have is money. If we could just go to one office and settle everything, it would be much easier.” Part of what makes

the process so costly is the number of officials involved. She added that “when there are intermediaries, everyone takes a cut.” Andrea, another migrant in Peru, had to save up for months before she and her husband were able to apply for a legal immigration status. Because of the lack of knowledge about the process and the number of offices involved, many migrants seek out an informal paperwork facilitator (“*tramitador*”). Andrea paid US\$8 to a *tramitador* to get her an appointment for her clearance before the PTP.

The Peruvian experts interviewed underscored that the migration legislation passed in October 2020 discourages migrants from applying for a CPP temporary permit, because now, migrants have to pay a fine for every day they remain country unofficially. This fine is onerous for migrants who have spent more than a year in the country under irregular status and have seen their incomes reduced due to COVID-19 restrictions.

In analyzing user comments on migrant groups on Facebook, SocialTic found that migrants are continuously seeking information about immigration procedures. Even though there is plenty of information on social media and government websites, migration procedures and regulations are constantly changing, making it difficult to for people know what to do.

“We came here to work, not to steal. We want to contribute to this country. You should make it easier for us, not more difficult. We want to be legal, to have everything in order, but everything is so expensive, and there are too many intermediaries and requirements.”

Bela, Venezuelan in Peru

Challenges of Online Services

Denis, a Venezuelan migrant in Peru who encountered corruption when applying for his police clearance, found that online applications have significantly reduced corruption. However, applying online has its own

It requires technical skills to access websites, which older migrants frequently lack.

challenges. First, it requires technical skills to access websites, which older migrants frequently lack. Fausto, a 44-year-old Cuban migrant in Chile, mentioned how hard it was for him and his family to apply through a smartphone because there is no mobile internet in Cuba. Not having face-to-face time with agencies reduced his trust in the migration system.

Lucia, a 51-year-old Peruvian migrant in Chile, had no problem applying for a temporary work visa in person. However, she submitted her application for visa renewal in September 2020, online, and her experience was completely different. She did not hear from the agency in months, and no one responded when she tried to call the agency on the phone. When someone finally answered, she was told that she had not paid the US\$90 fee for her temporary visa renewal. After paying, she did not hear back again, through any of their communication channels: phone, email, or the migration portal. She could not go in person to the migration office, so she went to the police station to ask for help, without success.

Lucia left the country for a month to care for her ill father in Peru and, upon returning to Chile, she received a deportation letter stating that because she had not obtained the *estampado electrónico* or digital seal, her application was rejected, and she had to leave the country in 15 days. Lucia did not know she had to obtain the digital seal, as she had received no email, phone call, or message through the migration portal. All along, she believed that her application was in process. She was frustrated and scared, and her boss hired a lawyer who is now reviewing her case. Lucia believes that if she had been able to go to the migration office in person, this would not have happened.

The second challenge to online portals is that most websites are only in Spanish, which can be an obstacle for non-Spanish speakers.¹⁰ Westin, a Haitian migrant in Chile, had the advantage of speaking Spanish. He was able to work as a *tramitador* for fellow Haitian migrants.

Bela described one example of the advantage of face-to-face interactions:

10 Interview with Maracena Rodriguez, Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes, Chile.

“When I got to Tumbes, this young boy in a cybercafe was so kind to me. He helped me get a 180-day tourist permit. He asked for it, got confirmation on his phone, gave me the code. He wrote it on a piece of paper and said with this I could be at peace... I could be in Peru for 180 days while I applied for the PTP, that they wouldn’t detain or imprison me. He then took me to the bus terminal in Tumbes to go to Lima. This boy was like a messenger of God for me. Then some police stopped the bus. I was very nervous, but I didn’t say anything. The boy had given me his number so I called him (another Peruvian had helped me buy a SIM as I couldn’t do it myself). I put him on speaker, and he told the agents that my code was valid, that he had helped me get it. With this, they let me go. Other Venezuelans were not so lucky and were turned back. That boy was my salvation.”

Bela, Venezuelan in Peru who arrived in January 2021

Pandemic Challenges

“COVID-19 has had a catastrophic impact on the lives of migrants across South America.”

World Vision expert

The COVID-19 pandemic has been devastating for the economic stability of migrants. According to a recent World Vision survey, by June 2020, 80 percent of Venezuelan migrants had lost their source of income, and 20 percent lost their homes and had to move to a shelter or with a family member (World Vision International, 2020b). Moreover, COVID-19 delayed passage of legislation on the status of migrants. In Chile, Omar and Ivan’s IDs and driver’s licenses expired, and although the government extended the validation period of all credentials, apps that provide transport services do not allow them to work with an expired license. They said that they have become wary of the police.

All migrants in Chile, including Venezuelans and Haitians, are now subject to the new Chilean migration law, enacted in 2021, and must therefore become acquainted with another set of rules.

Helen, a Venezuelan in Ecuador, is currently undocumented as her passport and 180-day tourist visa expired and she was denied the humanitarian visa and UNASUR visa. She is unable to legalize her son's residency though he is enrolled in public school.

In Peru, some migrants cited reduced income due to the COVID-19 pandemic as a barrier to obtain a legal immigration status. Others, like Bela, could not navigate the online platform and were waiting for the nationwide lockdown to be lifted so that they could go to the migration agency in person.

A review of comments on Instagram migration pages revealed that at the start of the pandemic, COVID-related words such as “quarantine” and “cases” were more prevalent than words on migration documents. This shows the enormous impact of the crisis on migrants' lives. Migrants also focused more on health and money as SocialTic's analysis found.

Constantly Changing Regulations

In the past five years, all three countries have amended their migration regulation laws a number of times. Many of these changes follow political sentiment and reflect the priorities of the president or congress in power at the time. Figures 2, 3, and 4 document the regulatory changes over time.

Westin shared that many Haitians came to Chile as a result of former President Bachelet's welcoming speech toward Haitians and the creation of the Family Reunification Visa. Inspired by this openness, he came to Chile and obtained a one-year temporary work visa. However, this welcoming policy toward Haitians came to an end at the end of her administration. Haitians later struggled to change their immigration status when these visas ceased to be issued. Similarly, Venezuelan respondents in Chile shared their optimism after President Piñera's speech and the creation of the Democratic Responsibility Visa. However, they were soon disappointed to see that such a visa was difficult to obtain in practice. All migrants in Chile, including Venezuelans and Haitians, are now subject to the new Chilean migration law, enacted in 2021, and must therefore become acquainted with another set of rules.

Likewise, migrants in Ecuador expressed confusion about the changing regulation. Ecuador was one of the first South American countries to draft a comprehensive migration law—the Human Mobility Law—in response to the Venezuelan exodus. However, it was amended only three years later, abolishing the UNASUR visa which many migrants were eager to obtain.

In Peru, a number of migrants interviewed had arrived in 2018 in response to President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski's creation of the temporary work permit or PTP in January 2018. Kuczynski resigned soon thereafter, and his successor, Martin Vizcarra, shortened the window to obtain PTP. This created confusion and fear among many incoming migrants, and, as some of the migrants told us, a feeling of hostility from a country that had previously opened its doors to them.

Lack of Incentives to Obtain Legal Identification

In Chile, applying for permanent residency can take up to two years, according to the experts interviewed. Further, if there is an observation with the migrant's application, the application is rejected, and the migrant has to start all over again. However, anytime a migrant wishes to change his or her migratory status, he or she has to pay a fine for every day spent in the country under an undocumented status (i.e., with no ID or with an expired ID). According to Lucia, a Peruvian migrant in Chile, it is a long, painful, and tedious process which caused her a lot of anxiety.

“Once a migrant on an undocumented migratory status obtains a legal ID, his or her economic situation does not improve.”

Sociologist, Universidad Antonio Ruiz de Montoya in Peru

According to a Peruvian sociologist we interviewed, migrants will only invest in obtaining a legal ID if they see an economic benefit, which currently does not exist. Because only 50,000 migrants are employed in the formal sector in Peru, with an average monthly wage of \$530, the informal sector is a more attractive option. Most of the undocumented

migrants we interviewed explained that lack of money, time, and information were the main reasons for their irregular status.

Further, many migrants choose not to invest in a legal ID because they are unsure that they want to remain in the country permanently. In Peru, migrants who arrived in the past two years have encountered a market saturated with foreigners, and have faced increasing xenophobia and hostility, causing them to consider a third-country destination.

Continuing Discrimination with or without ID

“The other servers at the restaurant where I worked said I was a Venezuelan prostitute who had come to Peru to take away their boyfriends and husbands. I did not last for more than two months at that establishment.

While exiting a retail store, my purse activated the security check and the store’s alarm went off. The guard immediately grabbed my purse and said, ‘*Veneca ladrona*. Haven’t you seen the news and the TV? They always show the Venezuelans and their crimes! The Venezuelans have brought AIDS and prostitution to this country.’”

Azul

“You brought this on yourself. This happened because you are too flirtatious.”

Policeman at a local station in Lima responding to a victim of gender-based violence, as recounted by a representative of the Association for Protection of Vulnerable Populations

Discrimination and xenophobia are barriers to accessing services and peace of mind. Migrants recounted that the local news and media outlets have turned the local population against them by blaming migrants for many local problems that existed before they arrived, such as theft and prostitution. SocialTic found that YouTube videos uploaded by Venezuelan migrants sharing their experience and looking to help other migrants often had random discriminatory and racist comments posted by other users.

Migrant Experiences Using ID to Access Services

“All of the problems that migrants have in accessing services stem from a lack of proper ID.”

Association for Protection of Vulnerable Populations

SIM Cards

Migrants or refugees need SIM cards, but they are not easy to obtain. In Chile and Ecuador, migrants reported that it was easy to get a prepaid SIM card without any documentation. Helen, a Venezuelan migrant in Ecuador, said that they were sold on the street. Only the prepaid option is available in both countries for migrants.

“It is very easy to get a SIM card here. I got one right after crossing the border, in the local market. You can get one SIM card, or ten. They don’t ask for any ID.”

Fausto, Cuban in Chile

In Peru, by contrast, valid migrant ID documents are required to obtain a SIM card. Therefore, most respondents stated they obtained one (mainly the Bitel network for pricing) through a friend as they could not get it with their passport or a Venezuelan ID, and they were eager to get a SIM card immediately upon their arrival, to communicate with their family back home. Andrea, a Venezuelan migrant to Peru, stated that when she tried to get a SIM using her tourist visa, she was told she needed to get her PTP. She had to ask a cousin to obtain a SIM card for her. Migrants in Peru said that some Bitel distributors, such as small corner stores, used to accept passports, but it varies by location.

Financial Services

The next ID-based step in a migrant's journey is to access financial services, such as a bank account. SocialTic found that bank-related words and phrases frequently came up in social media discussions. For Venezuelan migrants in particular, the lack of ability to obtain a bank account can be a shock. According to Marta Fernandez, of the Association for Protection of Vulnerable Populations, "the Pre-Chavez Venezuelan professional is used to having formal employment. It was part of the culture in Venezuela to be on a formal payroll, as it granted access to private health insurance. That is why we are all used to having bank accounts, and that is why a checking account is one of the first things that migrants look for upon their arrival."¹¹

In Chile, respondents reported that opening a bank account is challenging because passports are not accepted as valid proof of ID, and most banks require migrants to have a permanent residence, residence in Chile for at least two years, and proof of income (Prensa Digital Chile, 2017). Ivan, a Venezuelan migrant in Chile, was unable to open a bank account until he could show proof of income, two years after his arrival to the country. A viable option for non-permanent residents is to obtain a RUT bank account at Banco Estado, a government-owned Chilean bank. Omar, another Venezuelan migrant in Chile, mentioned that the national ID card, which he obtained after his temporary visa, granted him a RUT number and allowed him to open a RUT account. However, this account is very limited, and the financial information it generates is not useful for credit purposes. Further, Westin, a Haitian migrant in Chile, added that although Banco Estado grants documented migrants a RUT bank account, it is hard to use this account with an expired ID. Westin's debit card expired around the same time as his temporary visa. Although he applied for a permanent visa, he was unable to renew his Banco Estado debit card with his expired ID. Thus, he remained unbanked throughout the permanent visa application process.

¹¹ Interview with Marta Fernandez, Asociación Protección Población Vulnerable.



Further, a study by CIPER Académico (2020) shows that most Venezuelan migrants borrow to meet their needs but do so from friends and family. Those who are more established and have been in Chile for over two years are sometimes granted credit cards by retail stores such as Falabella, yet these are not desirable because of their high interest rates. The end goal of all of the Venezuelan migrants interviewed is to access credit from financial institutions, which they reported was very difficult.

In Ecuador, most banks allow migrants to open an account with a valid passport, but also require a valid temporary or permanent resident visa, apart from proof of address and personal reference (Venezuela Migrante, 2021). According to a study by the World Council of Credit Unions, only 18 percent of Venezuelan migrants in Ecuador have access to a bank account (WCCU, 2020). Helen, a Venezuelan migrant in Ecuador, is paid in cash as a veterinary assistant (although she is a veterinarian) because she does not have a valid visa and therefore could not get an account. To overcome this issue, a respondent from World Vision Ecuador reported that the organization has managed to issue cash transfers for migrants without an ID by partnering with a local bank, Banco Pichincha. The bank generates a code upon World Vision's request, which the migrants are able to use at ATMs to obtain the cash transfer.

Venezuelan migrants reported mostly being paid in cash, as informal employers wanted to avoid any liabilities by not hiring them formally on their payroll.

In Peru, migrants can only open a bank account at one bank, and only with a valid passport, PTP, or CE. With an expired document, or with an ID from their home country, they are unable to open a bank account. Respondents from Peru mentioned that one particular branch in Miraflores, Lima, was particularly migrant-friendly. Most respondents in Peru opened a bank account soon after their arrival, before their tourist visa expired, yet financial inclusion on the whole is reported as problematic for Venezuelan migrants in Peru, made worse by the pandemic and lack of financial relief (El Comercio [Peru], 2021). Regardless of the relative ease of opening an account, at least for those with a passport, Venezuelan migrants reported mostly being paid in cash, as informal employers wanted to avoid any liabilities by not hiring them formally on their payroll. None of the migrants interviewed reported owning, or being paid in, a digital wallet. The World Council of Credit Unions reports that, in Peru, only 14 percent of Venezuelan migrants have access to a bank account (WCCU, 2020), although 50 percent of Venezuelan migrants would like to access credit, whether long-term loans or a credit card. However, the ID requirements are too stringent for Venezuelans to obtain loans (Rostros Venezolanos, 2021).

All interviews reported challenges obtaining credit even with ID. Azul, a Venezuelan migrant in Peru who works with gender programs for migrants, reported that financial institutions in Peru are reluctant to lend to migrants because of the perceived risk of non-repayment. She suggests fostering programs supporting middle-class, established, employed Venezuelans who want to take out a loan to start their own businesses or obtain a mortgage but who are currently excluded from obtaining credit because of their status as migrants.

Another concern for many was the ability to send remittances back to home countries safely and inexpensively without ID. Some respondents use informal channels, while others use Western Union, which requires ID. One respondent asked if we could pay the compensation for the respondent into his family's account in Venezuela, but later stated he knew an easier way. Deisy, a Venezuelan migrant in Peru, said that, because she had a bank account in soles and in US dollars in Peru and a bank account in bolívars in Venezuela, she was able to offer currency exchange and remittance services to fellow migrants for a small fee. However, these informal networks can be risky and carry unregulated service fees and exchange rates.

Employment and Workplace Safety

Finding a job to support oneself is the next ID-related challenge. Many of the respondents reported challenges obtaining work, acknowledging they were being underpaid or working for free while waiting for permanent residency. In addition, employers can use their undocumented status as a bargaining chip to pay them less or not be accountable to the employee.

In Chile, one respondent from Cuba, Fausto, was able to obtain a formal job at a municipality through his Refugee Application Visa (Visa de Solicitud de Refugio), which granted him a Chilean ID. However, the municipality eventually passed a decree banning the hiring of workers with temporary visas, so he had to quit.¹² Other private sector companies were willing to hire him with a temporary visa, but the pay was not enough to even cover his rent. He decided to find work in welding and construction instead. Similarly, while Ivan in Chile is applying for his permanent residency, he knows that he is expected to stay with the same employer and says that from experience they can abuse this vulnerability (though he did not report any himself).

In Ecuador, Maria, who arrived from Venezuela in August 2019, stated her goal was to find a good job in Ecuador and save enough money to bring her children, but it has not been easy for her. She arrived with a tourist visa and had 180 days to legalize her status. However, she did not have enough money to pay for visa-related fees and preferred to keep working cleaning houses, as a manicurist, and selling candies on the streets. All these jobs were paid in cash and were good enough to save the money that she needed. Due to the pandemic, she stayed longer than expected and is now undocumented, limiting her employment options. Currently, she is selling candies on the streets. Diana Herrera, from Open Global Rights, echoes this finding in Ecuador, stating that with high unemployment and saturated education and health services in the country, migrants face challenges similar to those they faced in their own countries (Herrera, 2020). The journalist reports that 87.8 percent of foreigners work in the informal sector and face discrimination to find better employment. She stated that “Latin American

¹² According to Article 13 of the Constitution of the Republic of Chile, only citizens can work in the municipal sector. <https://www.dt.gob.cl/portal/1628/w3-article-61457.html>.

Latin American migrants and refugees not only face the hard path of starting a new life in a foreign country, but they also may not have opportunities to improve their quality of life. Worse still, their only options may be nomadism or returning to their country of origin, involving even more risks than when they left.

migrants and refugees not only face the hard path of starting a new life in a foreign country, but they also may not have opportunities to improve their quality of life. Worse still, their only options may be nomadism or returning to their country of origin, involving even more risks than when they left” (Herrera, 2020).

In Peru, Luciano and his mother arrived from Venezuela with their passports but found it hard to find work. His mother found work in a bakery and was paid poorly and in cash. She reports that every time she complained, the owner’s response was “if you don’t like it, see if you can get another job... you will not be able to because you are Venezuelan.”

Luciano currently works at a food delivery company, where he gets paid between US\$0.40 and \$2.00 an hour, depending on the distance driven. He was able to obtain this freelance job with his PTP card, and mentioned that some of his colleagues have signed up to work at the same company with a Venezuelan ID. However, he does not recommend working there because of the additional vulnerability of this type of work for migrants, specifically, the lack of technical support or recourse to address grievance (e.g., not getting support if they file a claim or complaint or getting charged even if the client cancels the order, which can be 10–15 times what they earn for the trip).

Upon analyzing social media comments, SocialTic found that the word “RUC” appeared frequently in Peru. “RUC,” or Registro Único de Contribuyente, is a taxpayer ID which self-employed people must have in order to sign contracts and generate invoices. RUC is especially important for those working in the gig economy. Migrant respondents like Luciano mentioned that getting their RUC had been a very smooth process.

In Peru, a number of Venezuelan migrant workers moved to areas south of Lima (Chincha, Pisco, and Ica) where the booming agricultural industry needed manual labor. Data on their income is hard to find because most laborers are paid in cash. However, the agricultural protests in Peru toward the end of 2020 shed light on the stark differences in income. Venezuelan workers can earn as little as \$2.70 a day while Peruvians can earn up to \$8.60 a day (RPP Noticias, 2021).

An official of a Peruvian NGO reported that the Peruvian Tax Agency (SUNAT) has two regulations that prevent migrants from accessing formal employment. The first is a 30 percent tax deduction for any formal employee who has spent more than 183 days outside Peru (Government of Peru, undated, “Concepto”), regardless of their nationality or immigration status. This is a high percentage compared to the 8 percent and 14 percent paid by low- and middle-income Peruvians in the formal sector (Government of Peru, undated, “Concepto”). The second is a 20 percent cap on the number of foreign employees that any formal business can hire (ProInversión, undated). For migrants, this implies that formal jobs are very competitive, because they have to compete with existing foreigners within formal companies to stay within the 20 percent cap. Further, the 30 percent tax deduction makes formal jobs less desirable, because the potential health, stability, and retirement benefits are offset by the high tax penalty.

It is not just poor pay that is a concern for migrants. Workplace safety is also an issue that emerged in interviews. Jose arrived in Peru from Venezuela when he was 18. He entered with his Venezuelan ID and was given a 90-day tourist visa, but when that lapsed, he stayed on undocumented. He worked in agriculture in the south of Peru and was paid in cash. He had a tragic accident where his arm was trapped in a machine and his hand was completely burnt. He had been working 16 hours without rest. The company refused to be held responsible and did not cover any medical costs (his in-laws paid this). During his medical absence, the company fired him. He says he is lucky he found work in a restaurant as an undocumented migrant and paid in cash.

Recommendations for ID, migrants, and employment are complex. On the one hand, as stated by some migrants and echoed by a sociologist from Universidad Antonio Ruiz de Montoya in Peru, migrants reported that they do not have economic incentives to obtain a legal immigration status. Doing so does not guarantee higher pay because it is very hard for them to obtain a formal job. However, our interviews suggest that not having legal immigration status in any of the three countries analyzed makes migrants vulnerable to labor abuse and lower pay.

Overall, the primary recommendation is to facilitate access to formal ID to reduce vulnerability. However, stronger labor protection policies need to be enacted to take into account the added vulnerabilities of migrants.

“Even after I got my PTP, it didn’t help me get a job. I do casual work, like helping out in food stalls at fairs. One of the benefits of the PTP is you can get the RUC and invoice independently. I also have a service helping Venezuelans send money back to the country. No one asks about documents in these jobs.”

Deisy, Venezuelan in Peru who arrived in March 2018

In all three countries, degree validation for migrants is restricted to migrants with a CE or passport.

Validation of Academic Degrees

Many employers and higher education institutions require validation for assurance that degrees are legitimate. In all three countries, degree validation for migrants is restricted to migrants with a CE or passport. They need to present the original diploma with either an apostille or a legal consular stamp from the Ministry of Foreign Relations and a Consulate in their home country and the local Ministry of Foreign Relations. In Ecuador and Chile, migrants have to present their transcripts (Government of Ecuador, undated), and in Chile, migrants need to present a legalized or apostilled proof of the existence of their university or college (ChileAtiende, undated). In Peru, migrants must present their diploma with either an apostille or a link to an online, official database that lists the candidate as a graduate from the institution (SUNEDU, undated).

Still, in Chile, the respondents mentioned that validating their degrees would not help them find a job in their area of expertise. Omar and Ivan, both with bachelor’s degrees and work permits, had worked as waiters, delivery drivers, and stock clerks, leaving their professional experiences on the side. Westin, a Haitian migrant in Chile, was able to validate his Haitian high school diploma but not his bachelor’s degree because of additional complications. He enrolled in a Chilean university to study law in the hope of better returns with such a degree.

In Ecuador, some migrants who traveled with all their academic records validated their degree. The process was easy with no cost. In the case where respondents had university degrees, not all validated their degrees,

because work was not available in their area.¹³ Helen, a veterinarian, was one of the few respondents who had her degrees and certificates validated, as did David, both Venezuelan immigrants to Ecuador. However, Helen had to ask her mother in Venezuela to send a legalized copy of her diploma, which her mother did by DHL. She said there was no cost for validating the diploma. David was able to get certified as a social worker with his qualification. He went to job fairs and applied to several companies, but nobody called him for an interview.

“I faced several challenges finding a job. My résumé was always seen as inflated, overqualified. I had already worked in several companies, even with my visual disability, but here [in Ecuador], employers did not believe that I had worked for so long in Venezuelan organizations with my visual disability...my visa and my credentials are in order. I should be able to find a job... it was a shock for me to end up selling cigarettes.”

David, Venezuelan in Ecuador who arrived in March 2018

Similarly, in Peru, not all migrants validated their degrees, as they felt it would make no difference. Denis stated that while he had a degree in tourism, and worked in a travel agency and hotels, after arriving in Peru, he had worked in bars, cafes, a wine delivery service, and a bookshop and did not see a need to validate his degree. Accordingly, SocialTic found that most jobs advertised on migrant Facebook groups are informal, and they predominantly seek young women, which has the potential of putting them at risk.

13 In an interview with Prof. Jose Koechlin, a sociologist at Universidad Antonio Ruiz de Montoya in Peru, he confirmed that there was no incentive for Venezuelans to formalize either their ID or their educational status as they mostly still ended up working in non-formal sectors. He believes only 50,000 Venezuelans out of the approximately 1 million in the country have obtained formal employment in Peru.

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, Peru launched a degree-validation program for Venezuelan doctors, because of the high and urgent demand for medical care. This program, sponsored by USAID, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and the Association of Venezuelans in Peru (US Embassy in Peru, 2020), allowed 3,400 doctors to join the private and public medical sector by expediting the validation of their degrees (Diario Gestión, 2020). Although Venezuelan migrants expressed despair about finding a job with a validated degree, they stated that these massive revalidation programs should extend to other professions in addition to medicine.

Overall, Peru has made great strides at making degree revalidation more accessible for migrants, with a simplified online process that only requires a diploma and its apostille. Chile and Ecuador, on the other hand, have a more extensive list of requirements that make it much harder for migrants to validate their degrees. Countries benefit from skilled migration. Boosting the quality of their labor markets would be beneficial as they emerge from the COVID-19 recession. Therefore, making the requirements for validating degrees more flexible, as well as enabling validation to be completed online, is recommended.

Healthcare

Some experts worry that undocumented migrants will not seek medical care for fear of being caught and deported.

Access to healthcare depends on knowledge of the system, trust that it will not impact on their status, and the goodwill of others.

In Chile, undocumented migrants can only access the healthcare system in case of emergency. Westin reported that some public hospitals take undocumented migrants, while others do not. He added that documented migrants are cared for at public hospitals even if their ID is expired. However, if the migrant is not up to date in his or her pension retirement payments (AFP), the public hospital will charge the migrant for the health services provided. When the new Chilean Migration Law was enacted, public services had to inform the migration agency when offering services to an undocumented migrant. Therefore, some experts worry that undocumented migrants will not seek medical care for fear of being caught and deported.

In Ecuador, access to universal healthcare is granted for everybody regardless of immigration status. Maria, a Venezuelan in Ecuador, was admitted to the ER of a public hospital a few days after her arrival. She was suffering from gallbladder pain. All her lab tests, medicine, and admission at the hospital were covered. She was only requested to present her passport for identification purposes. Still, Diálogo Diverso, an LGBTQ+ NGO for migrants in Ecuador, believes that some communities may be missing access to healthcare because of the fear of being caught while undocumented.

David, a Venezuelan migrant in Ecuador with a visual impairment, applied for the CONADIS ID, a disability credential which requires authorization from a doctor, psychologist, and social worker. He received his disability credential within two months, which allowed him to obtain the UNASUR visa much more easily.

“The lack of access to healthcare is caused by the person’s undocumented immigration status.”

NGO head, Peru

In Peru, Jose, from Venezuela had a baby with his partner and had no access to healthcare. He is yet to apply for his PTP as he works long hours and has not been able to find the time. The landlord found a hospital where his partner could deliver the baby and where the child could be vaccinated. When Jose or his family need medical attention, they call a doctor who is a friend of the landlord who gives them advice over the phone. They have not been able to access state care. Andrea was able to access care for her baby’s birth after obtaining the PTP, including vitamins, medicines, ultrasound, and the birth itself. However, Andrea, like all migrant mothers, lost healthcare access 45 days after giving birth. Her baby will have healthcare for the first five years of her life. On the other hand, Luciano and his mother were able to access healthcare by paying out of pocket in a small private clinic, where they were not asked for any documentation.

In Peru until May 2020, migrants could not access the public health system (Sistema Integral de Salud, or SIS) unless they obtained a foreigner's ID (Carnet de Extranjería, or CE). However, pursuant to Presidential Decree 30885, migrants can now access the universal health system with their PTP (El Peruano, 2020).

Housing

In Chile, Fausto, who settled in the northern province of Arica, rented lodging four days after arriving and was able to sign the lease with his passport. Ivan was able to rent his current bedroom because his cousin, who has lived for a while in Chile, recommended him. In other words, his cousin was his informal guarantor. Omar also stated that “landlords don’t always ask for proof of income or status,” but there is an undertone of xenophobia, an assumption that migrants will not pay rent on time. For this reason, they are not usually welcome by landlords.

In Ecuador, on the other hand, Helen was asked for a guarantor on her lease, which was signed by her boss. David and Maria, also in Ecuador, are both living in shelters because they cannot afford rent without a steady income.

In Peru, most landlords do not require a Peruvian-issued foreigner's ID (PTP or CE) to sign a lease, and most migrants sign leases using their passports or national ID. However, some migrants have had different experiences. While Denis was able to get housing easily, Luciano and his mother were forced to give their original passports to the landlord, who kept them in custody and refused to let them live there otherwise. “It was scary to go around without a passport,” Luciano’s mother reported. After a few months, they moved somewhere with more flexible conditions.

Children’s Credentials

A joint study carried out by UNICEF, World Vision, Fundación Colunga, and Universidad Católica de Chile found that migrant children’s quality of life is mostly determined by the migratory status of their parents (UNICEF et al., 2020).

According to representatives of Chilean NGOs, the new Chilean migration law (2021) benefits migrant children, because it eases their access to a legal immigration status. This benefit is not extended to their parents and is only applicable for children with a passport. However, migrant children have fewer requirements to obtain a temporary resident visa. The visa is valid for a year and is renewable.¹⁴

Several NGO respondents mentioned that an increasing number of children are traveling alone, sometimes with no documentation, across South America. One respondent, a psychologist working in a shelter in Ecuador who traveled from Venezuela through unofficial crossings, said she was surprised to see so many pregnant teenage girls arriving alone with no documentation. Some reports mention that by 2019, 129,000 Venezuelan children arrived in Ecuador (47,000 through unofficial crossings). By November 2020, only 1.3 percent of them were able to obtain humanitarian visas (El Comercio [Ecuador], 2020b).

In addition to their own credentials, parents must be diligent about their children's credentials as they can fall between systems. In Ecuador, as Helen's 11-year-old son arrived in the country by himself by plane on his Italian passport, Ecuadorian authorities did not accept him as a Venezuelan resident. While Andrea's younger daughter (now one and a half years old) was automatically granted a Peruvian national ID because she was born in Peru, she has had more problems with her three-year-old, who was born in Venezuela. Andrea needs to have her older daughter's Venezuelan birth certificate notarized in the Venezuelan Embassy, which she has not been able to do because of the high cost. Further, migrant parents seem to prioritize their own ID so that they can work, and they obtain their children's credentials if money permits.

School Registration

According to a recent report published by World Vision, by June 2020, 63 percent of migrant children in South America are not currently enrolled in school (World Vision International, 2020b).

14 Departamento de Extranjería y Migración. "Visa Temporal." Accessed May 2021. [Razones humanitarias | Servicio Nacional de Migraciones \(serviciomigraciones.cl\)](https://razoneshumanitarias.serviciomigraciones.cl) (With the 2021 immigration law, the Departamento de Extranjería y Migración changed its name to Servicio Nacional de Migraciones.)

In Chile, 14 percent of migrant children cannot enroll at school because they lack identity documents.

In Chile, undocumented children are assigned a temporary identification number (Identificador Provisorio Escolar, or IPE). The IPE facilitates school registration in public schools and guarantees access to complementary services such as school lunch programs, a national student card, school insurance from the National Board of School Aid and Scholarships (JUNAEB), and the school certificate at the end of the year (UNESCO, 2020). Nevertheless, the rate of absenteeism is reported to be higher in undocumented children (57 percent) and some learning difficulties have been reported in migrants from Haiti and Bolivia (Hartung and Collage, 2020). Moreover, 14 percent of migrant children in Chile cannot enroll at school because they lack identity documents (UNICEF et al., 2020). Fausto's daughter, a 16-year-old Cuban migrant in Chile, was not allowed to enroll in school for lack of a national ID. Once she obtained her Visa de Solicitud de Refugio, and thus her national ID, she was accepted in school for the subsequent academic year. Fausto, however, reports that because of the increased arrival of undocumented migrants, some schools in Arica have enrolled undocumented children. These children can attend school, but they are unable to access any other benefits that Chilean students might receive. In terms of tertiary education in Chile, Westin was able to enroll in a local university with his temporary visa and has been studying there for the past three years. Although at one point his temporary visa expired, he was able to continue his studies.

Parents report a variety of experiences registering their children for school. In Ecuador, Helen presented her son's birth certificate, passport, and previous grades to the local public school and was accepted. However, Maria's son, Juan, who entered Ecuador with an ID, is being home schooled. Maria does not have any of his previous certificates or diplomas, and the local school indicated that without these documents, she will have to request a validation exam from the Ministry of Education in order to register him.

In Ecuador, the right to education for migrant girls, boys, and adolescents is established and guaranteed by the Constitution of 2008 and reiterated in the Organic Law on Intercultural Education (LOEI 2011), the Childhood and Adolescence Code, and the Organic Mobility Law. Parents need to present any form of identification and an educational certificate. In its absence, a general knowledge test will be requested. However, in 2019

the Government of Ecuador reported that 61 percent of Venezuelan immigrant children were not enrolled in school,¹⁵ leading to a change in some regulations. In 2020, the Ministry of Education eliminated administrative requirements related with school enrollment, such as ID documents or school records, facilitating access to education for children without ID (Government of Ecuador, 2020a). However, it appears that neither migrants nor schools officers are aware of these changes.

Currently, the Ministry of Education of Peru allows foreign children to enroll with PTP, CE, or a passport. Children without any of those documents can enroll in school and present a valid document any time before the end of the school year (Identicole, 2021). However, because of the expense of obtaining a legal ID for both parents and children, most families only invest in the legal ID of the parents.

Access to Justice

Migrants face two challenges in access to justice: they either explicitly face discrimination in trying to achieve justice, or they anticipate and fear discrimination, so they do not report crimes. Respondents from World Vision stated that young men were particularly at risk of being stigmatized and targeted (e.g., being picked up by police or robbed) as they tend to travel alone, while women and children are not regarded as suspicious. Some of the respondents had heard of ID thefts among friends who did not report it.

David, who works in a migrant shelter in Ecuador, said some migrants arrive with no credentials because they are lost or stolen. In Peru, Azul's husband was falsely accused of robbery in the resort where he was working as a construction worker. When he tried to file a police complaint, he was not allowed to do so because of his migrant status. However, Azul's employer intervened and filed the report. When he asked to see CCTV footage, he discovered it incriminated a Peruvian employee instead. Azul also volunteers for an NGO that works with women affected by gender-

¹⁵ By 2019, of the 88,320 Venezuelan immigrant children who were reported to be living in Ecuador, 54,000 were not enrolled in school. See De La Hoz Suárez and Panchi Castro (2020).

based violence and found that when women report violence, police are reluctant to get involved. The women are told to solve the problem within the family.

“Many people, mainly LGBTQ, who have suffered violence in Ecuador do not want to report their cases. They are terrified of accessing Ecuadorian justice, precisely because of their immigration (undocumented) status, in addition to their sexuality. In fact, some employers take advantage of their vulnerability and threaten to report them to the police.”

Diálogo Diverso, Ecuador

LGBTQ migrants in particular do not want to access the justice system when they require legal protection due to the fear of being deported or targeted as “undocumented migrants” or facing other issues due to their sexuality.

Diálogo Diverso in Ecuador stated that LGBTQ migrants in particular do not want to access the justice system when they require legal protection due to the fear of being deported or targeted as “undocumented migrants” or facing other issues due to their sexuality.

Helen, a Venezuelan military dissident in Ecuador, left Venezuela with only her migratory ID (which allows Venezuelans to cross the border into Colombia and shop in Cucuta). She crossed the border on foot and had no entry stamp. At the Ecuador-Colombia border, she showed her passport and was accepted as a tourist. However, she fears any criminal record checks, as they may find out that she is a dissident. In 2021, her Venezuelan passport and her tourist visa had expired, and she fears that renewing either would cause problems for her.

Azul, a home care worker in Peru, was assaulted by the son of the elderly lady she was caring for but did not file a report, believing it would not be a credible case. An NGO lead in Peru shared that in Peru, local police officers do not take police reports from people who lack legal documentation. However, Deisy shared that she tried filing a police report when her cellphone was stolen, and even though she had a valid PTP card, the policemen refused to file the report.



COVID Testing, Vaccination, and Impact

In Chile, the government announced that it would vaccinate foreigners regardless of their legal migratory status. Since this caused those people in neighboring countries where vaccines were scarce to consider vaccine tourism, the Chilean government rescinded the policy and announced that it would only vaccinate those with a legal migration document (El Comercio [Ecuador], 2021). However, Chilean officials interviewed stated that it is the intent of the Chilean government to vaccinate undocumented migrants living in Chile, yet to communicate this in a way that does not encourage vaccine tourism.¹⁶

In Ecuador, the government declared that migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers are included in the National COVID-19 Vaccination Plan (Government of Ecuador, 2021). However, there are concerns about how migrants will register in the system, primarily because one of the requirements is the unique ID number given only to legal residents when obtaining the national identification card.

16 Anonymous interview with Chilean government officials.

In Peru, the government stated its intention to vaccinate migrants, regardless of their status.¹⁷ Further, it has already published several lists of citizens age 85+ who are eligible and scheduled for a vaccination appointment. There are many people on the list with a foreigner's ID. Other reports state that COVID-19 has brought additional pressures on Venezuelan migrants: 65 percent of their sample feared not having access to medical care should they contract COVID-19. Many were denied testing without a foreigner's ID. Many work in informal positions affected by COVID-19 (as seen in our research as well as that of SocialTic) and 10 percent report going hungry.^{18,19} One policy recommendation during COVID-19 by the World Bank was to make emergency cash transfer more readily available to Venezuelan migrants, especially recent arrivals (World Bank Group, undated).

Identity as Dignity

Identity credentials also play a psychological role. The connection between an ID (or lack thereof) to a sense of emotional attachment also came through for many respondents. An ID confers a sense of belonging. Many of the respondents spoke of how they *wanted* to work, they wanted to join the formal sector, yet felt unable to do so without a credential.

Lucia, a Peruvian migrant in Chile who received a deportation letter upon an incomplete temporary visa renewal process, stated she felt anxious and ashamed. She had tried her best, she had paid what was asked, and she had attempted all possible channels to inform herself of the status of her temporary visa application, without success. Knowing that she was no longer wanted in Chile made her feel like a criminal, despite the enormous effort she had put into having a legal immigration status.

¹⁷ For more information, see: <https://gestion.pe/Peru/gobierno-vacunara-contr-el-covid-19-a-extranjeros-indocumentados-en-Peru-nndc-noticia/>.

¹⁸ For more information, see: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/pandemic-border/what-fate-venezuelan-migrants-stranded-peru/>.

¹⁹ For more information, see: <https://www.radiofevalegrianoticias.com/venezolana-con-sintomas-de-coronavirus-en-peru-denuncia-que-fue-discriminada/>.

An ID gives peace of mind for others as well as the person holding the ID.

Denis, the Venezuelan immigrant to Peru, enjoyed volunteering in the Pan-American Games because it gave him a sense of identity, but unfortunately it did not lead to any employment. Luciano stated that companies prefer to hire those with a CE because such documentation shows that he/she is legitimate (“es una persona bien”). An ID gives peace of mind for others as well as the person holding the ID. Deisy stated that “once I got the CE, it gave me a sense of peace, security that I wouldn’t be deported.” On the other hand, those without ID felt lost and discriminated against. There may be intersectional elements to this, for example disability (for David who arrived from Venezuela to Ecuador) and race (as for Ana, who describes herself as an Afro-Colombian and escaped to Ecuador by boat from internal conflict in Colombia).

“I am undocumented. I feel like I am living in the shadows.”

Maria, Venezuelan in Ecuador

“With an expired identity document, you are nobody.”

Ivan, Venezuelan in Chile

“People see you differently when you have a CE. They see you as more careful, as if you are diligent, like things done right. They see you as more responsible.”

Deisy, Venezuelan in Peru

The three tables below summarize the ID-based access to services in Chile, Ecuador, and Peru respectively.

TABLE 8.

ID-BASED ACCESS TO SERVICES IN CHILE

	UNDOCUMENTED - NO VISA OR PERMANENT RESIDENCY	DEMOCRATIC RESPONSIBILITY VISA	TEMPORARY WORK VISA
SIM card	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bank account	No	Limited to government-owned Chilean bank unless proof of income	Limited to government-owned Chilean bank unless proof of income
Housing	It is possible but a lease guarantor could be requested	It is possible but a lease guarantor could be requested	It is possible but a lease guarantor could be requested
Degree validation	Yes - but limited to passport ownership	Yes, but requires apostille of transcript and of college's proof of existence statement	Yes, but requires apostille of transcript and of college's proof of existence statement
Employment	Limited - migrants may work in the informal sector	Yes	Yes
Healthcare	Yes - but often only if paid	Yes	Yes
Schooling for children	Yes - through IPE ^a	Yes	Yes
Police assistance and access to justice	No ^b	Yes	Yes
Driver's licence	No	Yes, but limited - requires presenting a high school diploma	Yes, but limited - requires presenting a high school diploma
COVID assistance (requires two years of residency in country)	No	No	No

a IPE: Identificador Provisorio Escolar.

b To file a police report with PDI or Carabineros, a national ID is required. This is obtained after the approval of a visa. For more information, see: ChileAtiende, [Constancia ante Carabineros de Chile](#), March 21, 2021, and ChileAtiende, [Denunciar un Delito](#), January, 2021.

TABLE 9.
ID-BASED ACCESS TO SERVICES IN ECUADOR

	UNDOCUMENTED	TOURIST VISA	HUMANITARIAN VISA
SIM card	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bank account	No	No	Yes
Housing	It is possible but a lease guarantor could be requested	It is possible but a lease guarantor could be requested	Yes
Degree validation	No	Yes	Yes
Employment	No	Limited - migrants may work in the informal sector	Yes, but it is challenging to find an offer
Healthcare	Yes	Yes	Yes
Schooling for children	Parents must present any form of documentation to identify themselves and the children	Parents must present any form of documentation to identify themselves and the children	Yes
Police assistance and access to justice	It is possible but migrant could be targeted as undocumented	Yes	Yes
COVID assistance	No	No	No
Driver's license	No	No ^a	Yes

^a With a tourist visa, the person can use his driver's license for 30 days after arriving in country.

TABLE 10.

ID-BASED ACCESS TO SERVICES IN ECUADOR

	UNDOCUMENTED	TOURIST VISA AND VALID PASSPORT	PTP	CE
SIM card	No - usually obtained through friends/family	No	Yes - prepaid	Yes - prepaid most of the time
Bank account	No	Yes, but only at one bank	Yes, only at one bank	Yes
RUC (Registro único de contribuyente, a tax ID number given to independent workers)	No	No	Yes	Yes
Housing (signing the rental agreement)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Degree validation	No	No	No	Yes, but costly in terms of time and money
Employment	Informal, yes	Yes, but limited to informal jobs	Yes, but limited in practice to the informal sector	Yes, but formal employment is hard because companies have a 20 percent cap on foreign employees on payroll
Healthcare	No	No	Yes	Yes
Schooling for children	Yes, with vaccine record or birth certificate	Yes, with vaccine record or birth certificate	Yes	Yes
Police assistance and access to justice	No	No	Not in practice	Not in practice
COVID assistance	No	No	No	No
COVID vaccine for eligible (elderly so far)	No	No	No	Yes
Driver's license	No	No	No	Yes

Summary and Recommendations

“We came to Chile looking for a dream.”

Westin, from Haiti

Summary Overview

Migrants report different experiences obtaining ID and proving their identity in Chile, Ecuador, and Peru. In Chile, migrants experience increased difficulty in entering the country or obtaining legal documents because of the requirements to obtain an ID and RUT. In contrast, the introduction of the PTP law in Peru has made it easier for migrants to access services and entitlements. In Ecuador the legal framework has its limitations for migrants to legalize their immigration status,²⁰ but there are more workarounds in accessing services. While obtaining an authorized ID may be a barrier for migrants in Chile due to the long processing time and requirements, the quality of benefits available to migrant children—mainly access to education and healthcare—is exemplary and offers a model for others to follow.

Methods Overview

WhatsApp and Zoom for interviews presented specific challenges. Some migrants were wary of speaking to researchers they did not know, and as researchers we were not able to speak to migrants in context. Moreover, being at home during lockdown meant that partners and spouses were present in all interviews, often adding to or hindering what respondents reported. However, the virtual method had some unexpected benefits. Among these, migrants were able to recommend other respondents, pass on contact details, share photos and social media links, and generally “flatten” the hierarchical dynamic between interviewer and respondents

20 The deadlines for the visa applications and the requirements about having an ID document were the main challenges reported by migrants.

that sometimes exists in face-to-face interviewing. Zoom for experts and WhatsApp for migrants worked well. In some cases, the respondent was interrupted by their partner, who added insights, but this can also occur with in-person interviews. Once face-to-face contact is safe post-COVID-19, a hybrid in-person/virtual approach is recommended to maximize the benefits of both.

Thematic Recommendations

SIM cards: The Peruvian government should work with private telecoms companies to lift ID requirements for obtaining pre-paid SIM cards or standardize what ID is acceptable for smaller businesses to approve the distribution of SIM cards.

Financial services: Financial sector authorities should operate tiered ID requirements for opening a bank account, such as that suggested by Level One and Mojaloop.²¹ That is, different levels of ID could open different levels of services. Governments should partner with smaller banks or deposit-taking microfinance institutions or fintech start-ups to create a specific “migrant” product to cater to the needs of this population, with caps on the amount of money deposited to address money-laundering concerns by the financial authorities for lax know-your-customer screening. Facilitating access to the financial system would open a number of opportunities to improve migrants’ economic lives.

Workplace and employment safety: Stronger labor protection policies should be enacted to ease access to formal ID for migrants in order to protect them from labor abuses, lower pay, lack of protection from occupational hazards and workplace accidents, inability to obtain formal employment, and other vulnerabilities.

Degree validation: A more flexible approach to degree validation requirements, as well as a speedier online process, is recommended to support migrants in overcoming the barriers associated with proving their credential and their eligibility for employment.

²¹ For more information, see Level One Project, https://www.leveloneproject.org/project_guide/gender-impact/.

Healthcare: Migrants should be allowed to access healthcare regardless of their status in order to guarantee the health of the entire population. Undocumented migrants can only resort to private clinics or phone consultations, which can be expensive relative to their low income and leave them vulnerable to disease, complications, and preventable deaths.

Housing: Programs should be developed to provide affordable housing to migrants. Although most migrants were able to access housing without an ID, some cited high costs and crowded conditions.

Children's credentials: Peru and Ecuador should follow the example of Chile in prioritizing access to legal ID by migrant children. A number of respondents migrated without their children, to avoid the extra costs of food and documentation. This led to family separation and later to a wave of migration of unaccompanied minors. To prevent this, governments should facilitate access to ID and provision of basic services for families, which would encourage families to migrate together.

School registration: To avoid further setbacks on migrant children's education, governments should pursue a non-ID requirement for accessing online classes, as Ecuador promoted through a ministerial agreement.

Access to justice: In Chile, courts should consider recruiting or training interpreters in different languages, including ongoing monitoring of the quality of interpretation, especially because of the significant number of Haitian migrants arriving to the country. Further, it should allow migrants to file permit discrimination claims regardless of migratory status, to allow migrants who have suffered discrimination to pursue legal remedy for their protection. In Peru, policies should be enacted to allow migrants to access justice regardless of their credentials. Victims of domestic abuse who are migrants are at greater risk because of the inability to file a police report.

Country Recommendations

The following recommendations emerged from this research, interviews with key stakeholders, and analysis of the research team. They were drafted based on migrant's experiences in the countries studied and could be considered to apply more broadly to the region.

Chile

Under the new immigration law, migrants who entered Chile without passing through a border control must leave the country and come back in to be registered. This is nearly impossible for the most vulnerable migrants who cannot afford to travel or reapply from abroad. Migrants in Chile may also fear accessing public services. This is mainly true of undocumented migrants because they are afraid of being reported. Given the above, the government of Chile should consider allowing them to reapply without leaving the country.

A strategic approach to migration planning could maximize the benefits of migration. The following measures should be considered:

1. Migrants could get incentives to move to areas of lower population density, where they can increase the labor force and get easier access to public services. This would help foster social inclusion.
2. Planning should be ongoing and dynamic to respond to current and future shocks. For example, following the outbreak and spread of COVID-19, a larger wave of migration could be expected, and governments should prepare to respond properly to an increased demand for services. Governments should be proactive in regulation and policy development.

Peru

The government should offer a package of integrated benefits and services for Venezuelans and other migrants as an incentive for them to obtain an ID, which would offset the costs of obtaining the ID. In addition, the following recommendations should be considered.

1. **ID services:** Lower the costs of obtaining a legal ID and reduce the number of prerequisites for the ID.

2. **Access to jobs:** Encourage the private sector to hire migrants and end discrimination in hiring. Migrants would obtain a legal ID if there is a demand from the private sector to hire them. SUNAT, the tax collection entity, should waive the 43 percent tax deduction on the first paycheck received by foreigners working in the formal sector. The central government should consider eliminating the 20 percent cap on the percent of foreigners on the payroll of a formal business.
3. **Education:** Children should be allowed to attend school as long as either parent has a legal ID, even if the child only has a birth certificate.
4. **Health:** Social insurance should be made available to all pregnant women and children regardless of their immigration status. Financing should be sought from international donor agencies.
5. **Fines:** Waivers should be considered for undocumented migrants exempt from the fine they would have to pay for being in Peru on an expired tourist visa when they apply for CPP.

Information on all of these benefits should be disseminated through a comprehensive and targeted communication campaign, in partnership with key NGOs that have worked closely with foreign migrants in the past five years. These include Unión Venezolana, the Association for the Protection of Vulnerable Populations, World Vision, and Jesuit Migration Service, among others.

Ecuador

The government should improve the quality of the data gathered on undocumented migrants. More accurate data would enable programs to be planned and budgeted correctly. For example, while the government estimates that by the end of 2021 it will host 521,000 migrants, other sources state that by the end of 2020 there were already 520,000 undocumented migrants in Ecuador.

Additionally, the government should consider promoting strategic measures to regularize the migratory situation of undocumented migrants

or those who overstayed their permits due to the pandemic. Likewise, it should improve the dissemination and accessibility of up-to-date information and regularization procedures. Special cases, such as the request for refugee status, are not dealt with in a timely manner. Having clarity about the paperwork and procedures that migrants are required to submit will facilitate their regularization. It will also allow them to have a national credential to access to essential services. The government could consider including migrants as beneficiaries of its social protection and economic programs to improve the quality of life of migrants, their families, and their host communities.

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Appendix A: Terms of Reference

The objective of this consultancy is to identify problems facing migrants in Chile, Ecuador, and Peru in accessing basic services. Specifically, it addresses obstacles related to their legal immigration status and/or the documentation required to prove it. The consultancy assesses:

- The type and level of access to basic services given migrants' legal identity, status, and documentation.
- Challenges faced by migrants in accessing legal identity documents or regularizing their identity in the host country.

The firm should deliver a detailed analysis, via focus groups and interviews, to assess migrants' experience of identification systems of the countries mentioned above, and to identify the needs, challenges, and opportunities faced by migrants derived from their legal identity status in accessing basic services. The firm should identify and partner with key civil society organizations to provide further context to the challenges and vulnerabilities faced by migrants given their legal identity documentation.

To understand the different schemes adopted by Ecuador, Chile, and Peru to regularize migrants' identity, the following criteria will be used:

- A diverse representation of migrants in terms of (i) migration patterns with an emphasis on intra-regional migration and, if possible, migration from other regions in the world (Africa, Asia, and the Middle East); (ii) legal immigration status, which includes irregular and regular in all forms (refugee, temporary permit, residency, naturalization and any other); (iii) people with legal identity documents, documents not recognized, or in process of regularization; (iv) demographic diversity and representation, including age (minors [children and adolescents]²²

22 Minors will not be directly interviewed by the consulting firm. Instead, the team will interview their parents or legal guardians to get the needed information.

and adults), gender, racial identity, disability, and others defined by the context analysis of the country.

- In terms of identity documents: (i) information related to the identity document available (the type of document, issuer, type data collected, etc.); (ii) organization collecting such information; (iii) processed requirements, including documentation and additional data collected during the process, for example, biometric data (fingerprints, iris scans, facial images) if collected; and (iv) overall experience.
- In terms of access to services, the analysis should cover the following: health (basic and emergency), education (all levels), housing, utilities (electricity, water, gas, etc.), job opportunities (in any modality of work status), driver's license, legal protection services, financial services, business creation, among others. Identify barriers and/or systematic obstacles, including discrimination, whether the service is accessed formally or informally, and the actual process that migrants need to follow. The analysis should also include whether there are any changes derived from the legal status of the migrant (and their corresponding supporting identification).

Appendix B: End User Interview Script

We began by adopting the “Identity Artifact Lifecycle,” which explores the adoption and use of identity credentials over time, and then asks the following questions as relevant. We always ensured consent by having the respondents sign the consent form through WhatsApp and assured pseudonyms. End user interviews were scheduled around the respondents’ schedule and lasted 30-45 minutes.

TABLE 11.
END USER INTERVIEW SCRIPT

PREAMBLE	Explain project; all pseudonyms, no personal information passed on, research and policy only, hopefully provide better services to migrants
OPENING + RAPPORT	Introduce oneself with ID, explain history, identity (try to cover journey, family, education)? What if I was to ask you to do the same? What story would you tell me about yourself?
THE USER JOURNEY OF IDENTIFICATION	If additional ID questions are needed...how did you come to be where you are? When did you arrive in the country? How did you get here?
EXPERIENCES	
OBTAINING ID	Can you tell me about what IDs/visas were the easiest, and what were the hardest to get and what were the challenges? Could you describe the process a little?
OBTAINING ID, DETAILS	What ID document did you present/carry to cross the border? How long does it take to get an ID? How much does it cost? What types of jobs ask you for an ID and legal residence? Legal vs. non-legal status What are the services/jobs you are looking for and what is the link between the ID and the services?
HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO GET AN ID?	How do you feel about this? For how long would you be ok to stay undocumented? Do you mind being paid in cash?

USING ID	What about using the IDs? What was good and what was difficult in those interactions? Where do you use your ID?
CORRECTING ID/GRIEVANCE REDRESS/FOLLOW-UP/ LOSING ID	If there was a problem, e.g. you moved and needed to update your ID or if they spelt your name wrong, what did you do? Did you experience anything like this (e.g., mistakes mentioned by a food delivery company)? Has anything happened such as you losing an ID? What did it mean? How did you feel about it?
ASPIRATIONAL ASPECTS OF ID	What credentials do you wish you had? Why, and what can you not do because you don't have them, and what would you need to do to get those credentials?
ACCESS TO SERVICES	By using your current ID document (legal or not), do you have access to some benefits and or services? What credentials may you need to have access to them? Are there obstacles or barriers that you have faced by using your current (or national) ID document?
WRAP-UP	Ask the respondent to keep in touch if they have any other thoughts/photos/experiences they would like to share. Equally, inform them that we will share the research with them for their approval before publication.

Appendix C: Expert Questions

TABLE 12.
EXPERT PANEL SCRIPT

PREAMBLE	Explain the project, pseudonymity, that we want contextualization and explanation for migrants' challenges. We will have shared key insights from the interviews in advance, especially highlighting ones relevant to the respondents.
ABOUT THEIR ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In what ways does your organization work with migrants and refugees? - This research is on migrants, refugees, and how their access to services depends on ID—what have you seen in your work with your organization?
ABOUT OBTAINING AN ID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there a typical identity lifecycle or journey you see in Peru/Ecuador/Chile? What are the pain points or challenges at each stage? - Are there particular types of ID that enable particular types of services? In your opinion, how does this impact on migrants & refugees? - In your opinion, what kinds of IDs are most desired and why? (prompt for driver's license, SIM card, bank account, health, education, etc.)
FINAL QUESTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you think different demographic groups have different experiences? Could you expand on this? - Have you seen any change with laws and administration (in access to ID)? - What do you think the impact of COVID has been on ID for migrants/refugees in the past year?
SOLUTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do you think we should convey to IDB from this research?

Appendix D: Letter of Introduction



To whom it may concern

This is to confirm that the holders of this letter are conducting research for the Inter-American Development Bank and Caribou Digital on legal identity and access to basic services for migrants in Chile, Ecuador and Peru. The aim of this research project is to understand the challenges that migrants in Chile, Ecuador and Peru have in accessing basic services and the role of legal identity as an enabler.

We will be conducting focus groups and interviews between February-April 2021. All respondents will be kept confidential and anonymous. We will share a separate consent form for interviews and any photographs exchanged. For further questions, please contact any of the team below.

Yours faithfully

Legal Identity Research Team
Estefania Calderon, estefania@ideasforall.net
Maria Gabriela Coloma, mc4970@columbia.edu
Dr. Savita Bailur, savita@cariboudigital.net
Dr. Emrys Schoemaker, emrys@cariboudigital.net

(This letter was also shared in Spanish)

Appendix E: Consent Form



To whom it may concern

This consent form is for:

- Expert interviews
- End user interviews of migrants

We (Caribou Digital on behalf of the Inter-American Development Bank) are conducting research on the role of legal identity in accessing basic services in Peru, Ecuador and Chile. We would like to hear your experience and assure you we will keep all information confidential. Your name will appear as a pseudonym, and we will never use your real name.

For a more effective and precise information gathering, we would like to record the discussion and transcribe the audio. Please let us know if you would prefer us not to record. The recording and its transcription will be destroyed after the work is completed.

Finally, we would like to send you the summary of your story and ask for your permission before we publish our research. Please let us know if this is acceptable and how best to contact you.

If you are not happy with any aspect of this, please do say so. Participation is voluntary, there is no compulsion to join, and this project is only for research purposes. The data will not be used to identify you as an individual but rather as aggregated findings. Our aim is to share your voice and to build better identification systems for migrants.

Yours sincerely,

Estefania Calderon, Maria Gabriela Coloma,
Dr. Emrys Schoemaker, Dr. Savita Bailur

(This form was also shared in Spanish)



Participant's Agreement:

I am aware that my participation in this interview is voluntary. If, for any reason, at any time, I wish to stop the interview, I may do so. I understand the intent and purpose of this research.

I am aware the data will be used for a research report for international publication. I have the right to review, comment on, and/or withdraw information prior to the submission of the report. The data gathered in this study are confidential and anonymous with respect to my personal identity unless I specify/indicate otherwise. All data collected that is not included in the reports will be destroyed upon completion of the study.

I have understood the above form and I consent to participate in today's interview.

.....
Participant's signature

.....
Date

Contact details:
.....

(This letter was also shared in Spanish)

