Emigration Hotspots: A Comparative Analysis of Economic and Socio-demographic Factors in Old and New Migration Systems in Colombia and Brazil

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Abstract

Latin America is a vibrant region of origin, destination and transit for international migration. The last census round suggests that the region's migration pattern is characterised by some long-term continuities, as well as changes in the volume and direction of flows, and in the composition and characteristics of migrants. Also, demographic studies indicate that rapid demographic changes in Latin America, especially the process of population aging in the coming decades, will have repercussions in multiple spheres, such as in the rates of economic dependence and pressures in the education, health and social security systems, as well as in the spatial distribution and mobility of the population. However, much remains to be understood in relation to migrants' changing sociodemographic characteristics, their transnational practices and their potential broader impact on socioeconomic development at the micro, meso and macro levels in the region. In addition, there is a shortage of interdisciplinary and comparative studies of these impacts in migrants' societies of origin and destination.

This paper aims to contribute to filling this lacuna through a comparative analysis of economic and socio-demographic factors in old and new migration systems in the Coffee Region of Colombia and Governador Valadares, Brazil, the main hotspots of international emigration in these countries. The analysis centres around comparing and contrasting migration flows, patterns and the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of migrant and non-migrant households in these key locations. It also develops a historical characterisation of the contexts of origin in Colombia and Brazil as well as the main countries of destination, reconstructing their socioeconomic, political and demographic conditions at a multi-scalar level – meso/regional and macro/national. This will allow us to make explicit the social construction of the conditions of push and pull of individuals and their relation with broader processes of international labour mobility.

Methodologically, the paper employs a quantitative approach that includes analysis of data from the 2005 Colombian Census and the 2010 Brazilian Census, both of which added specific questions about international emigration for the first time, and which have been hardly explored in the literature. It also draws on other quanti-qualitative secondary data in order to qualify the complexity of migration processes at the regional and national levels. This is the first systematic attempt to compare these data in these emigration hotspots.

Introduction

Latin America is a vibrant region of origin, destination and transit for international migration. The last census round suggests that the region's migration pattern is characterised by some long-term continuities, as well as changes in the volume and direction of flows, and in the composition and characteristics of migrants. In 2016, 18% of all international migrants originated in the region – 33 million people or about 5% of the region's population –, which received around 16% of global remittances flows – US\$ 73.1 billion (IFAD, 2017). Also, demographic studies indicate that rapid demographic changes in Latin America, especially the process of population aging in the coming decades, will have repercussions in multiple spheres, such as in the rates of economic dependence and pressures in the education, health and social security systems, as well as in the spatial distribution and mobility of the population. However, much remains to be understood in relation to migrants' changing socio-demographic characteristics, their transnational practices and their potential broader impact on socioeconomic development at the micro, meso and macro levels in the region (CEPAL, 2016). In addition, there is a shortage of interdisciplinary and comparative studies (among countries, groups of migrants, etc.) of these impacts in migrants' societies of origin and destination (Brettell & Hollifield, 2000; Castles, 2010; de Haas, 2012).

This paper aims to contribute to filling this lacuna through a comparative analysis of economic and socio-demographic factors in old and new migration systems in the Coffee Region of Colombia and Governador Valadares, Brazil, the main hotspots of international emigration in these countries. The analysis centres around comparing and contrasting migration flows, patterns and the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of migrant and non-migrant households in these key locations. It also develops a historical characterisation of the contexts of origin in Colombia and Brazil as well as the main countries of destination, reconstructing their socioeconomic, political and demographic conditions at a multi-scalar level – meso/regional and macro/national. This will allow us to make explicit the social construction of the conditions of push and pull of individuals and their relation with broader processes of international labour mobility. As will be shown, comparing these two migration regions is important because there are parallels in the historical evolution of socioeconomic processes and migration patterns in Colombia and Brazil.

Methodologically, the paper employs a quantitative approach that includes analysis of data from the 2005 Colombian Census and the 2010 Brazilian Census, both of which added specific questions about international emigration for the first time, and which have been hardly explored in the literature. It also draws on other quanti-qualitative secondary data in order to qualify the complexity of migration processes at the regional and national levels. This is the first systematic attempt to compare these data in these emigration hotspots¹.

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¹ This paper is part of a bigger research agenda that aims to understand the role that migrants may play in the maintenance and transnational reproduction, development and livelihoods of their families from afar (direct effect) and their potential broader implications on the socio-spatial and economic spectrum, in the context of

The paper is divided as follows: the first section provides a multi-scalar historical characterisation of the socioeconomic and political contexts of origin in Colombia and Brazil, with the aim to make explicit the social construction of the conditions of emigration and their relationship with broader processes of international labour mobility. It also provides a brief history of the evolution of international migration flows in Colombia and Brazil. The second section looks at the dynamics of migration stocks, patterns and the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of migrant and non-migrant households at the national (Colombia and Brazil) and regional (Coffee Region and Governador Valadares) levels. The paper concludes with a reflection on the similarities and differences of migration processes and systems and their socioeconomic and political implications at the micro, meso and macro levels in these regions.

Data and research methods

Comparing the emigration hotspots of Colombia (Coffee Region) and Brazil (Governador Valadares) is important for a number of reasons: i) historically, Colombia and Brazil have been among the countries with the worst income distributions in Latin America (PNUD, 2010); where rigid social stratifications may lead large segments of the population to see spatial mobility (migration) as key to achieving social mobility (Brito, 2002); ii) there are parallels in the historical evolution of migration patterns in both countries; iii) Colombia and Brazil experienced crises and socioeconomic restructuring in the 1980s and 1990s and subsequently, saw a significant increase and diversification of emigration flows; iv) migration flows are primarily urban and regionally concentrated in both countries with the Coffee Region (Colombia) and Governador Valadares (Brazil) as the main hotspots of international migration (Campos & Macedo, 2014; Khoudour-Castéras, 2007a); v) in these key regions, international migration and remittances have produced significant impacts in the social, economic, political and cultural spheres (Garay & Rodriguez, 2005b; Gomez et al., 2005; Khoudour-Castéras, 2007; Martes & Soares, 2006; Mejía, 2012; Sales, 1999; Siqueira, 2006; Soares, 2002); vi) there is evidence that social networks play an important role in the direction of migration flows and that the transnational links that migrants maintain with their countries of origin are of a personal rather than an institutional nature (Martes, 2000; Zapata, 2013); vii) the United States and Europe/Japan are, respectively, the main sources of remittances to Colombia and Brazil (Banco de la República, 2015; Martes & Soares, 2006) and viii) comparing these two emigration hotspots may provide us insights with respect to the diversity of the constituent elements of migration processes in places with similar economic characteristics but different socio-spatial dynamics, especially in the

Latin America's rapid demographic changes (indirect effect). This will be achieved by combining the kind of quantitative analysis presented in this paper with in-depth semi-structured interviews with migrant families and other key actors in these migration hotspots.

current context of major socio-political and economic transformations in the 'North' as well as in the 'South'.

In terms of methodology, this paper employs a quantitative approach centred on the analysis of data from the 2005 Colombian Census and the 2010 Brazilian Census, both of which added specific questions about international emigration for the first time. With the exception of a few of publications in Colombia (see Khoudour-Castéras, 2007a) and Brazil (see Campos, 2014; Oliveira, 2013), these data have been hardly explored in the literature. Specifically, the paper develops a comparative analysis of economic and socio-demographic factors in old and new migration systems in the Coffee Region of Colombia and Governador Valadares, Brazil, the main hotspots of international emigration in these countries. The analysis centres around comparing and contrasting migration flows, patterns and the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of migrant and non-migrant households in these locations. It also develops a historical characterisation of the contexts of origin in Colombia and Brazil as well as the main countries of destination, reconstructing their socioeconomic, political and demographic conditions at a multi-scalar level – meso/regional and macro/national.

The questions about emigration introduced in the 2005 Colombian and 2010 Brazilian censuses were different to the ones used in other Latin American countries, which employed the approaches proposed by Somoza (1977) and Hill (1979)². Particularly, the censuses in these countries did not include a question on the relationship between the head of the household and/or informant and the emigrant, and so their use for measuring directly the total number of international emigrants is quite limited³. However, the potential of the questions introduced in the Colombian and Brazilian censuses lies not so much in providing us an exact estimation of the total number of international migrants. Rather, they help us to qualify the migration process by providing us with information about the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the households they belonged to prior to migration. This is especially important given that our knowledge on the scale and nature of international migration is limited, among other things, by existing deficiencies in terms of the availability and quality of data regarding key migrant characteristics (IOM, 2017).

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² These are the two most commonly used approaches to estimate the number of individuals residing abroad – international emigrants – in a given community/country. The method proposed by Somosa (1977) is based on asking mothers about the place of residence of their children; while the method proposed by Hill (1979) is based on asking individuals about the place of residence of their siblings.

³ In particular, this may lead to the double counting of migrants, if the household split or disintegrated and/or to the undercounting of migrants, if all members of the household emigrated and there was no one left to provide the information (Bilsborrow *et al.*, 1997).

Socioeconomic and Political Context in Colombia and the Coffee Region: Historical Characterisation

Geographically, the greater coffee region of Colombia or Ecoregion, henceforth Coffee Region, is located in the central-western region of the country and is composed by the states (*departamentos*) of Caldas, Risaralda, Quindío, the northern region of the state of Valle del Cauca and the northwestern part of Tolima⁴. This region has a population of 6.562.000 (about 15% of the country's total population) and has a sex ratio of 95.03 (DANE, 2005). Since the turn of the new century, the Coffee Region has shown persistently higher rates of unemployment than the national average, 14% vs. 11%, respectively (DANE, 2017) This region also had an average life expectancy of 70.3 years (one year below the national average). However, the region's poverty rate has consistently been below the national average and it has a high Human Development Index – 0.801 – (PNUD, 2000; UNDP, 2010). As detailed below, historically coffee played a central role in the economy of the region and provided the necessary funds for investment in basic infrastructure projects in health, education, housing, etc., which allowed the region to enjoy one of the highest levels of economic and human development in Colombia.

After the Latin American debt crisis of the 1980s, the Colombian government implemented a series of neoliberal economic policies that sought to integrate the country into the global capitalist system. César Gaviria's "Peaceful Revolution" (1990-1994) liberalised trade, eliminated all restrictions on foreign direct investment, reformed and flexibilised the labour code and the social security system, and privatised health, education, transportation and other basic services (Guarnizo, 2006). As a result of these changes, the economy's ability to generate jobs weakened, especially in the sectors that were exposed directly and rapidly to foreign competition such as agriculture and manufacturing⁵. The fall in employment rates in these sectors did not translate into increases in other sectors of the economy, leading to a sharp deterioration in the country's income distribution index (Gómez Ramírez *et al.*, 2006).

Although neoliberal structural adjustment reforms were implemented in other Latin American countries in the 1990s, the country's particular socio-political conditions, especially after Pablo Escobar's death in 1993, made the adverse effects of these reforms much more acute. External factors also played an important role in the deterioration of the overall situation of the country. The dissolution of the International Coffee Agreement in 1989 had a profound impact on the lives of thousands of coffee producers in Colombia⁶ and provoked one of the worst economic crises in Colombian history (Montenegro, 1993). Coffee was the backbone of the Colombian economy since

⁴ With the aim to facilitate the data analysis presented in this paper, the Coffee Region includes the whole state of Valle del Cauca and excludes the state of Tolima.

⁵ For example, the contribution of manufacturing to the country's GDP fell from an average of 21.2% before 1990 to about 13% at the end of the decade (Gómez Ramírez *et al.*, 2006).

⁶ Coffee production in Colombia is in the hands of small producers: about 62% of the cultivated area is owned by farmers with less than one hectare of land (Toro Zuluaga, 2005).

the beginning of the 19th century and played a fundamental role in the development of the country's infrastructure and domestic consumption market throughout the 20th century (Nieto Arteta, 1992). Thus, for many decades, the boom in coffee production and high prices in the international market allowed the Coffee Region, where about 50% of the grain is produced, to enjoy the highest levels of economic and human development in the country. The sudden collapse of the coffee economy⁷ and the earthquake that struck the region in 1999 revealed many of the socio-economic problems that had been developing under the surface during the boom years: deterioration in the standard of living of some sectors of the population, high levels of violence and delinquency (mainly linked to drug trafficking, guerrillas and paramilitaries) and the displacement and migration of people to (internally displaced persons⁸) and from the region (Toro Zuluaga, 2005).

In summary, the harsh economic reality and the deterioration of the socio-political situation of the country in the 1990s led millions of Colombians from all socioeconomic strata to seek social, political and economic refuge abroad. The collapse of the coffee economy meant that the adverse effects of these multiple crises were felt more acutely in the Coffee Region. In this region, as in much of the national territory, the armed conflict, high levels of poverty, marginalisation and social and economic exclusion are interwoven in such a way that it is particularly difficult to frame migrants in the classic 'voluntary' / 'forced' dichotomy.

International migration and remittances in Colombia: a brief history

Unlike many Latin American countries, historically, Colombia did not consolidate itself as an attractive country of immigration. Conversely, Colombia has one of the highest rates of emigration in the world (Guarnizo, 2008). Official statistics suggest that approximately 10% of Colombia's population, over four million people, live and work abroad⁹ (Mejía, 2012; MRE, 2008). Colombians began to emigrate in significant numbers in the 1960s in the context of the end of 'La Violencia¹⁰', the subsequent socio-political instability that ensued – and has prevailed over more than 50 years of internal conflict – and the relatively weak performance of the Import Substitution Industrialisation (ISI) Model that had been implemented in the post war period. In the decades of the 1960s and 1970s, Colombians – mostly from the professional middle class – emigrated to the United States, while Venezuela attracted workers of all types and from all socioeconomic strata. In the 1980s, the adverse effects of Latin America's Lost Decade (huge public debt, inflation and political instability),

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⁷ By way of illustration, the share of the 'agriculture, livestock, hunting, forestry and fishing' sector fell from 21.44% of the region's GDP in 1999 to 8.02% in 2000 (DANE, 2016).

⁸ It is estimated that about 7 million people – close to 15% of the total population – have been internally displaced by Colombia's 50+ years of internal conflict (IDMC, 2016).

⁹ Estimates vary according to the source: data from the World Bank (2011) suggests that the stock of Colombians abroad is 2.122.100, while Mejía (2012), based on data from the 2010 census round and considering underreporting levels of around 15%, places the figure at 2.700.0000.

¹⁰ La Violencia' was a 10-year period of bi-partisan civil conflict that ended in 1958 with a power sharing agreement between the Liberal and Conservative parties, known as the 'Frente Nacional' or 'National Front'.

discouraged intra-regional migration but provoked a sizable migration to the US (Guarnizo, 2006; Pellegrino, 2004).

These 'pioneers' would lay the foundation for the unprecedented waves of transnational migration that took place beginning in the 1990s, when Colombians not only began searching for new destinations, but also became more heterogeneous in terms of their social composition and regions of origin. These developments have been associated with general (macro) circumstances affecting the micro and meso levels. In particular, the adverse impacts of the implementation of neoliberal structural reforms in the 1990s – high unemployment and low wages –, few avenues for social mobility – a consequence of the historically unequal distribution of wealth –, and the intensification and encroachment of the socio-political conflict throughout the country (Garay & Rodriguez, 2005; Khoudour-Castéras, 2007a; Mejía, 2012). Although the reasons for emigrating cited by Colombian households with members residing abroad are fundamentally of an economic nature (Mejía, 2012), it is clear that there is a tenuous line between forced and voluntary migration in Colombia, due to the multiple social, economic and political impacts that the internal conflict has had at the micro, meso e macro levels.

According to official data, 46% of all emigrants left the country in the 2001-2005 period, while 26% of emigrants left in the 1996-2000 period and close to 28% abandoned the country before 1996. Nowadays, the main countries of destination for Colombians are the United States, Spain and Venezuela, with 35%, 23% and 20% of the total stock, respectively. Before 1996, most migrants moved to the United States and Venezuela. Since then, these traditional destinations have been losing ground to countries such as Spain, Ecuador, Canada, Panama, Costa Rica and 'other countries', which currently account for approximately 12% of all migrants (DANE, 2005). Although the census failed to capture these new destinations, data from the Colombian Foreign Ministry suggests that the Colombian presence in Europe has grown rapidly since the 1990s, with 11% of all Colombian emigrants living and working in the continent (MRE, 2008).

Official data also indicates that the places with the highest proportion of international emigrants are Bogotá (16%), the state of Antioquia (13%), the Caribbean state of Atlántico (6.4%) and the Coffee Region, with 36% of all emigrants. Most migration flows from this region took place from the mid-1990s: around 30% of the total in the 1996-2000 period and nearly 50% in the 2001-2005 period (DANE, 2005). There is evidence that social networks play an important role in the direction of migration flows and that the transnational links that migrants maintain with their countries of origin are of a personal rather than an institutional nature (Zapata, 2011). An important feature of Colombian migration is that it is primarily urban: international emigrants come mostly from the capital cities or metropolitan areas of these localities. Although the census did not capture the gender composition of emigrants, data from 2003 suggests that women represent, on average, 53% of

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¹¹ Colombia has the fourth most unequal society in Latin America, only after Bolivia, Haiti and Brazil (PNUD, 2010).

all migrants – 65% of Colombians in Europe, 57% of those residing in North American and 44% of emigrants living in South America – (Guarnizo, 2006).

As a consequence of increased migration, remittances to Colombia have grown at a steady pace since the 1990s. The official amount of remittances sent to Colombia increased from US\$106 million in 1980 to US\$495 million in 1990, grew exponentially in the decade of the 1990s, reaching US\$1.3 billion in 1999, and peaked at US\$4.8 billion in 2008 (Banco de la República, 2015; World Bank, 2017). Remittances provided the second largest source of foreign currency to the Colombian economy (after oil exports), and almost three times the income from coffee exports in 2006 (Khoudour-Castéras, 2007). Despite the considerable size of these resources, they have yet to amount to more than 3% of Colombia's GDP (MPI, 2017). Nowadays, the main sources of remittances to Colombia are, in order of importance: the United States, Spain, Panama, Chile, the United Kingdom and Italy (Banco de la República, 2015). Since the beginning of this century, the average monthly remittance sent to Colombia stood at US\$350 (Banco de la República, 2015b). Since this amount is greater than the national minimum monthly wage (US\$248), these monies have become a lifeline for an estimated three million households, about a third of the total population (Guarnizo, 2006). In addition, 76% of the individuals receiving remittances are women, who, for the most part, receive these resources from their close relatives living abroad (siblings, children, parents or spouse). A big proportion of remittances (62%), is used to cover basic living expenses such as food, clothing and basic services; while 33% is spent on education and 18% is used to pay for housing (mortgage or rent) (Garay & Rodriguez, 2005). The geographical distribution of remittances reflects the regional concentration of migration flows, with the Coffee Region receiving about 45% of total flows (Banco de la República, 2015b).

Socioeconomic and Political Context in Brazil and the Governador Valadares Microregion: Historical Characterisation

The microregion of Governador Valadares, in the state of Minas Gerais, is composed by 25 municipalities¹². In 2010, this region had a population of 415.696 – about 0,22% of the total population – and a sex ratio of 92.97 (PNUD, 2013). In the last 40 years, the microregion has consistently shown poverty rates substantially greater than the national average – respectively, 24 and 15% in 2010 – and low rates of employment generation –the unemployment rate stood at 9,21% while the national average was 6,53% in 2010. The microregion has also displayed a consistently lower Municipal Human Development Index (IDHM) than the country average: 0.367 vs. 0.493 in 1991 and 0.633 vs. 0.727 in 2010 (PNUD, 2013).

¹² Alpercata, Campanário, Capitão Andrade, Coroaci, Divino das Laranjeiras, Engenheiro Caldas, Fernandes Tourinho, Frei Inocêncio, Galileia, Governador Valadares, Itambacuri, Itanhomi, Jampruca, Marilac, Mathias Lobato, Nacip Raydan, Nova Módica, Pescador, São Geraldo da Piedade, São Geraldo do Baixio, São José da Safira, São José do Divino, Sobrália, Tumiritinga, Virgolândia.

As the rest of Latin America, Brazil experienced a deep economic crisis in the 1980s that had profound social and economic consequences. After abandoning the Industrialisation by Import Substitution Model that had been implemented in the context of the Great Depression, and which had produced significant advances in the modernisation of some economic sectors (Fonseca, 2009), Brazil embraced a series of structural adjustment reforms that sought to open up and deregulate the economy. The failure of these adjustment measures led, in the 1990s, to the formulation of even more orthodox policies of fiscal discipline and commercial and financial liberalisation, as established by the Washington Consensus (Furtado, 2007; Guillén, 2008). The result was a deterioration of real wages and labour conditions, a sharp increase in unemployment – from 3.62% in 1991 to 13.4% in 2000, an increase in poverty and the worsening of the country's income distribution index (IBGE, 1991, 2010; PNUD, 2013).

In the context of a process of local and global economic restructuring, and after decades of being a net importer of population, Brazil experienced a reversal of migration flows and joined in the global international migration architecture in the 1980s (Martes, 2000). Since then, international migration has become a structural feature of Brazilian society, a process in which recurrent financial crises, sluggish socioeconomic development, a growing surplus of labour, as the country advances in the demographic transition, and the absence of perspectives for social mobility, among other causes, have been pointed as the root of these new population movements (Brito, 1995, 2002; Patarra, 2005; Sales, 1999). In the Governador Valadares Microregion, these dynamics were accentuated by the region's low level of industrial and technological development, low incomes and employment opportunities and a shortage of capital, resulting in low rates of attraction and retention of migrants and high rates of population loss (Espindola, 1995; Espindola & Oosterbeek, 2008; Martes & Soares, 2006).

International migration dynamics and remittances in Brazil: a brief history

In contrast with Colombia, the history of Brazil is one marked by international migration. Beginning with the arrival of the Portuguese in the XVI century, the country was a net importer of people, mainly Europeans, until the 1930s. These migration flows were attracted by high labour demand in agriculture and industry after the abolition of slavery at the end of the XIX century. They were also attracted by a combination of policies to incentivise the migration of Europeans, in an effort to 'whiten the national race', and subsidies for the occupation (and defence) of large swathes of the national territory. In the aftermath of the Great Depression, Brazil experienced a progressive decline of international migration flows and the issue lost significance in the demographic, social and political agenda of the country. In the context of a military dictatorship and a deep economic crisis, there was a reversal of migration flows and significant numbers of Brazilians began to emigrate, primarily to the United States, in the 1980s (Patarra, 2005, 2012). The first (indirect) estimation of this phenomenon

indicated that, in the decade of the 1980s, there was a net migration loss of about 1.8 million people¹³ (Carvalho, 1996) and a loss of 550.000 people in the decade of the 1990s (Carvalho & Campos, 2006). Estimations of the total number of Brazilians residing abroad were subsequently documented by the Ministry of Foreign Relations: around 1.4 million in 1996, 2 million in 2002, 1.8 million in 2003 and 3 million in 2008 (OIM, 2010; Patarra, 2005). Data from the 2010 Census indicates that around 60% of the Brazilian emigrants left the country in the 2006-2010 period, almost 24% did so in the 2001-2005 period, close to 9% left between 1996 and 2000 and only 6% abandoned the country before 1996¹⁴ (IBGE, 2010). These population losses occurred concomitantly with the re-emergence of Brazil as an attractive destination for migrants from neighbouring countries such as Paraguay, Bolivia, Peru, Argentina and Colombia, as well as distant places such as Haiti and Senegal (OIT, 2016). Thus, the issue of international migration has gained so much traction in the national political agenda, that bi-partisan efforts to replace the dictatorship-era *Estatuto do Estrangeiro* recently culminated in the sanction of an integrated migration policy in 2017.

As in the case of Colombian migration, before 1996, most Brazilians settled in the United States but there has been a diversification of the countries of destination in the last 20 years¹⁵. In the mid 2000s, the main countries of destination for Brazilians were, in order of importance, the United States, Paraguay, Japan, the United Kingdom, Portugal, Italy and Spain, which together accounted for 85% of all emigrants (OIM, 2010). Flows to Europe were fuelled by poor economic performance at home and a combination of high labour demand and historical sociocultural connections with the old continent, while emigration to Japan was shaped by the government's programme to recruit temporary Brazilian workers with Japanese ancestry - dekasseguis - to fill labour shortages in certain occupations. The states (unidades da federação) with the highest proportion of international emigrants are: São Paulo, with 106.099 emigrants (21,6% of the total), Minas Gerais, with 82.749 (16,8%), Paraná, with 45.863 (9,3%); Goiás, with 35.572 (7,2%) and Rio de Janeiro, with 34.902 (7,1%) (IBGE, 2010). As in the case of Colombia, there is evidence that social networks play an important role in the direction of migration flows and that the transnational links that migrants maintain with their countries of origin are of a personal rather than an institutional nature (Martes, 2000). Furthermore, despite the emergence of a variety of Brazilian civil associations around the world and the recent intensification of transnational flows of resources and information, one cannot speak of consolidated Brazilian transnational communities (OIM, 2010).

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¹³ This corresponded to 1.050.000 men and 750.000 women, a sex ratio of 1.4 and represented 1.6% of the total Brazilian population with 10 or more years of age residing in the country (Carvalho & Campos, 2006).

¹⁴ As has been pointed out by Campos (2014), the question posed by the census seems to be better at capturing recent migration flows, given the potential memory problems associated with old events and/or the lack of definition in relation to the previous place of residence of the migrant.

¹⁵ Migration flows to 'other countries' (except the United States, Portugal and Spain) represented 36% of the total in the period between 2006 and 2010 (IBGE, 2010).

Brazilian migration to the USA has been widely documented (c.f. Fusco, 2005; Margolis, 1994, 2003; Sales, 1999; Siqueira, 2006; Soares, 2002). Most Brazilian migrants originated in the Southeast of the country and settled primarily in and around New Jersey, Massachusetts, South Florida, Texas, Arizona and California. Nowadays, Brazilians residing in the US come from all the corners of the country and from all socioeconomic strata (OIM, 2010).

The connections between the microregion of Governador Valadares to the United States go back to World War II. The economy of Valadares was driven by the production and commercialisation of Mica, a potent mineral used in heavy industries, and the construction of railroads and the Special Service of Public Health, which brought US companies to the region (Soares, 2002). Migration from Valadares to the US can be traced to the 1970s, when young middle class students began participating in exchange programmes facilitated by a newly established English academy in the region (Siqueira, 2003). The economic crisis of the 1980s and the social networks established in previous years, particularly between the Metropolitan Region of Boston, Queens (New York) and the Valadares Microregion, oiled a boom in labour migration flows in these corridors. Subsequently, an illegal migration industry, made up of agencies specialised in obtaining tourist visas, as well as brokers that facilitated irregular crossings via Mexico, emerged in the region (Assis, 1999; Fazito & Soares, 2014; Soares, 2002). These social networks have withstood the test of time and seem to be one of the key determinants of the microregion's migration patterns. In particular, there is evidence that even in the context of adverse conditions in the US – tightening of migration policies, the militarisation of the US-Mexico border and economic recession -, and a favourable scenario at home – a booming Brazilian economy –, migration continued to occur with considerable force in the region during the 2000s (Sousa & Fazito, 2016). Furthermore, several scholars have pointed out that a pervasive 'culture of migration' - assumed as a 'rite of passage' for younger cohorts -, has been forged in this microregion, one that determines migration patterns, and shapes migration systems, regardless of the socioeconomic conditions at home and abroad (Fazito & Soares, 2014; Margolis, 1994; Soares, 2002).

Increased emigration flows have translated into a significant increase in the flows of remittances to Brazil in recent years. Remittances increased from US\$111 million in 1980 to US\$573 in 1990, showed remarkable growth throughout the 1990s, reaching a peak of US\$3.3 billion in 1995, and stood at US\$3 billion in 2010 (World Bank, 2017). Despite the extraordinary size of these resources, they have consistently represented less than 0.5% of Brazil's GDP (MPI, 2017). Nonetheless, in 2004, these monies represented 175% of the total income received from tourism and 68% of the amount received from soy exports, one of Brazil's main agricultural products in international markets (OIM, 2010). Although the Brazilian Central Bank does not publish data about the geographical distribution of remittances, a study conducted in 2004 found that two cities from the Valadares Microregion (Governador Valadares and Pescador) were among the main recipients of remittances in the country (see OIM, 2010).

Exploring the census data: The dynamics of international migration in the Coffee Region (Colombia) and Governador Valadares (Brazil)

In 2005, the number of Colombians residing abroad was estimated in 462.697, 1,12% of the country's population (around 42 million); while the stock of Brazilian emigrants in 2010, was 491.645 people, which represented 0,26% of the total population (around 191 million). These migrants belonged to 296.063 Colombian households (2,8% of all households in the country) and 467.000 Brazilian households (0,81% of all households in the country) (DANE, 2005; IBGE, 2010)¹⁶.

In Colombia, 36% of the migrant stock originated in the Coffee Region (165.913 people), which represents 2,62% of the region's population. These migrants belonged to 107.325 households, so that 6.34% of all households in the region have one of more family members residing abroad (DANE, 2005)¹⁷. In Brazil, 2.79% of all emigrants originated in the Governador Valadares microregion (12.324 individuals), which represents almost 3% of the microregion's population. In 2010, the proportion of households in the microregion with one or more family members abroad stood at 8.02% [IBGE, 2010]. As shown in figures 1 and 2, migration from Colombia's Coffee Region follows the national trend with regards to the timing of flows with 47% of all emigrants leaving the region in the 2001-2005 period, 30% leaving in the 1996-2000 period and 22% abandoning the region before 1996 (DANE, 2005). Conversely, migration from the Valadares region deviates from the national trend: only 35% of migrants left the microregion in the 2006-2010 period (compared with 60% who did from the rest of the country), about 45% did so in the 2001-2005 period (almost twice as many emigrants leaving from other areas of the country), close to 10% left between 1996 and 2000 and about 9% abandoned the region before 1996 (IBGE, 2010). This suggests that a process of spatial diffusion, from Governador Valadares – a region with ties to the US that date back more than half a century – to the rest of the country, may have taken place.

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¹⁶ As explained in the methodology section, we suspect that the number of international emigrants in both countries is underestimated, since all the people from the same household may have emigrated and/or the relatives who remained in the country may have died or may have chosen to withhold information.

¹⁷ This is almost 2.5 times the proportion of households in Colombia with relatives residing abroad (DANE, 2005).

¹⁸ This is almost 10 times the proportion of migrant households in Brazil. The state of Minas Gerais, where the Valadares microregion is located, is overrepresented in terms of its migrant population: while 10.3% of Brazilians reside in this state, almost 17% of the total emigrant stock originated in it (IBGE, 2010).

Figure 1: Emigrant's year of departure

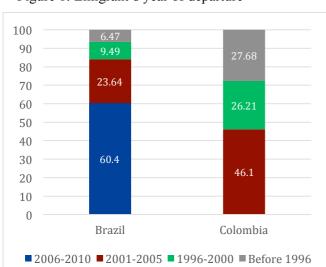
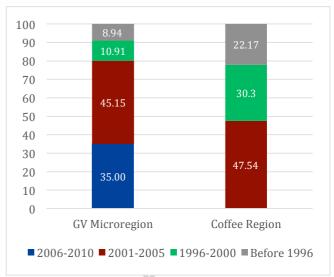


Figure 2: Emigrant's year of departure



Sources: DANE (2005) for Colombia and IBGE (2010) for Brazil

As was the case with emigration from Colombia, the Coffee Region also experienced a process of diversification of destinations at the turn of the new millennium. In the context of tightening migration policies in the United States¹⁹ and the militarisation of the US-Mexico border, Spain overtook the United States as the main country of destination for people from the region, accounting for almost 24% of the total flows in the 2001-2005 period (vs. 11% to the US and close to 2% to Venezuela). During this period, other countries such as Ecuador, Panama, Canada, Costa Rica and 'other' non-specified also gained ground, receiving around 10% of the flows in that period (DANE, 2005). Similar patterns were observed in the Governador Valadares region of Brazil. Although the United States continues to be the preferred country of destination for people from the region, in recent years, it has lost importance to other destinations, primarily in Europe. While the biggest outflow to the United States, a little over one third, occurred in the 2001-2005 period, the bulk of the outflow to Portugal took place in the following 5-year period. This occurred at the same time that other countries such as the United Kingdom, Italy and France began to gain ground (IBGE, $2010)^{20}$.

The Brazilian census also captured the age and gender composition of the migrant stock²¹: 86% of emigrants were between 20 and 49 years of age, 54% are women and 46% are men²². For the Valadares Region, while in the 5-year period between 2006 and 2010, the proportion of women was

¹⁹ Beginning in the 1990s, it became increasingly difficult for Colombians to obtain tourist visas to enter the United States, due to the intensification of the 'war on drugs'.

²⁰ A chi-square test was performed and an association between the migrant's year of departure and the country of destination was observed in Brazil and Colombia (p<0.05).

²¹ The 2005 Colombian census did not include a question about the age and gender of the emigrant.

²² Around 84% of people were between 20 and 49 years old at the time of emigration. Although in 2010, women represented 51% of the Brazilian population (IBGE, 2010).

only three percentage points lower than the proportion of men (16% vs. 19%, respectively), women were heavily underrepresented, by about 10 percentage points, in the flows that took place in the 2001-2005 period. Moreover, while there is a gender balance in the flows from Brazil to the United States, flows from the Valadares Region to the US are predominantly male, while migration to Portugal is more gender-balanced regionally and nationally (IBGE, 2010).

In terms of the gender composition, census data indicates that the proportion of women in migrant households is greater than in non-migrant households in the Coffee Region as well as in the Valadares microregion, around 55% in both localities. As can be observed in figures 3 and 4, migrant households tend to be older than the general population. The proportion of people over 50 years of age is significantly greater in migrant than in non-migrant households in the Coffee Region (31.3% vs. 18.1%, respectively), as well as in the Valadares region²³ (37.5% vs. 21.1%, respectively).

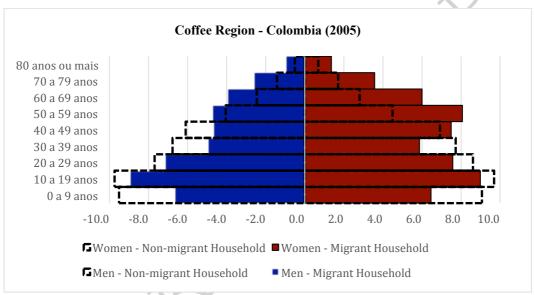


Figure 3: Age distribution, Coffee Region, Colombia (2005). Source: DANE (2005)

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²³ This is expected given the composition of the Brazilian migrant population: in 2010, 86% of emigrants were 20 to 49 years of age (IBGE, 2010).

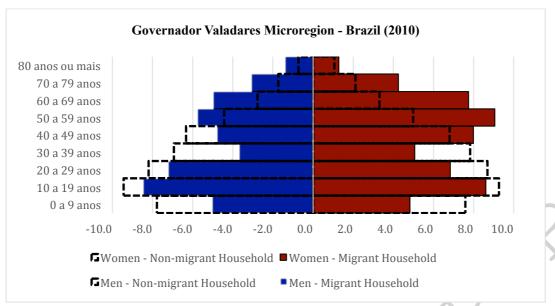


Figure 4: Age distribution, Governador Valadares Microregion, Brazil (2010). Source: IBGE (2010)

Furthermore, as shown in figure 5, the aged dependency ratio in migrant households was almost double the ratio in non-migrant households both in the Coffee Region (20.75 vs. 10.84, respectively) as well as in the Valadares microregion (23.76 vs. 12.62, respectively). At the same time, the child dependency ratio was lower in migrant households than in non-migrant households in the Coffee Region (33.09 vs. 44.26, respectively) as well as in the Valadares microregion (27.45 vs. 37.23, respectively) – figure 6 – (DANE, 2005; IBGE, 2010).

Figure 5: Aged Dependency Ratios

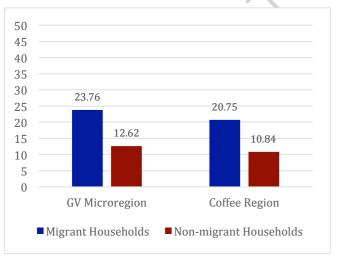
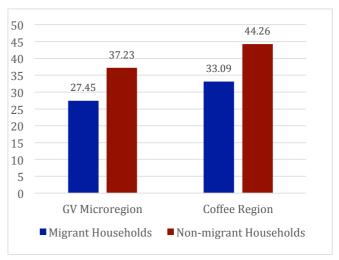


Figure 6: Child Dependency Ratios



Sources: DANE (2005) for Colombia and IBGE (2010) for Brazil

In terms of education, migrant households tend be slightly more educated than non-migrant households in Colombia while the opposite seems to be the case in Brazil. While 39.2% of people residing in non-migrant households in the Coffee Region of Colombia had no formal education or had not completed elementary school, this proportion falls to 33.59% for people residing in migrant households. In the Valadares microregion, 58.14% of people residing in migrant households had no formal education or had not completed elementary school; this proportion falls to 55.81% for people residing in non-migrant households. In the Coffee Region, the proportion of people with a university degree in migrant households was about 4 percentage points greater than in non-migrant households. Conversely, in the Valadares microregion, non-migrant households have a slightly higher proportion of people with a university degree²⁴ (see figures 7 and 8).

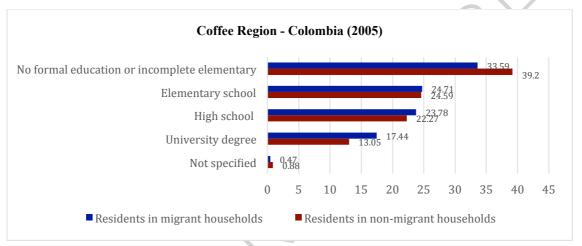


Figure 7: Level of schooling for people over 10 years of age in 2005 – Colombia's Coffee Region. Source: DANE (2005)

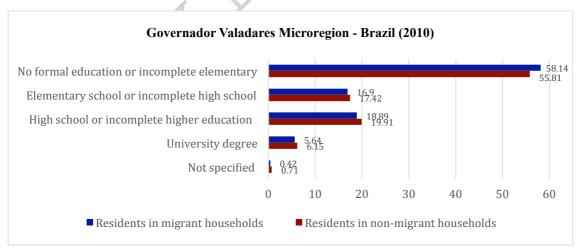


Figure 8: Level of schooling for people over 10 years of age in 2010 – Brazil's Valadares Microregion. Source: IBGE (2010)

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 $^{^{24}}$ A chi-square test was performed to test the relationship between the level of education and the type of household (migrant or non-migrant). In the Coffee Region, the odds of being part of a migrant household increase with the level of education (p<0.05), while no association between these variables was found in the Valadares microregion.

In terms of households' living arrangements, almost 50% of migrant households in the Coffee Region are composed by single people, while about one third are composed by people who are married and/or in a civil partnership. In the Valadares microregion, the proportion of couples with children is almost double among non-migrant households while the proportion of women with children without a husband/partner is almost double among migrant households (DANE, 2005; IBGE, 2010).

Comparing the employment status of people over 14 years of age living in migrant and nonmigrant households, both in the Coffee Region as well as in the Valadares microregion, the proportion of people declaring to be employed was, on average, about 9 percentage points lower in migrant households, 42,71% and 45.49%, respectively. The data also suggests that the employment participation of heads of migrant households tends to be significantly lower than the heads of nonmigrant households²⁵ (DANE, 2005; IBGE, 2010).

Lastly, the Brazilian census also collects information about households' income. As shown in figure 9, migrant households tend be better off than non-migrant households in the Valadares microregion, as well as in the rest of the country, although the bulk of migrant families still sit at the lower end of the socioeconomic scale. While in Brazil, around half of all non-migrant households subsist with an income per capita of less than one minimum salary²⁶, only about a third of migrant households do. Also, the proportion of migrant households living on incomes per capita between 2 and 4 minimum salaries is greater than non-migrant households, 19.02% vs. 12.59%, respectively. Moreover, migrant households are overrepresented, by about 10 percentage points, in the income bracket above 6 minimum salaries. Somewhat similar dynamics are found between migrant and nonmigrant households in the Valadares microregion, although the distance between these two groups is much smaller. In addition, migrant households are overrepresented in the income bracket between 1 and 2 minimum salaries (IBGE, 2010). Because the Colombian census does not directly enquiry about income, we used the auto reported 'ability to cover basic expenses' as a proxy. The results also suggest – figure 10 –, that migrant households tend be better off than non-migrant households in the Coffee Region, as well as in the rest of the country, although among the former more than half report not having enough income to cover their basic living expenses. At the national level, the proportion of migrant households reporting having enough income to cover their basic expenses is about 13percentage points higher than the proportion of non-migrant households doing so, although the distance between these two groups shrinks to about 9-percentage points in the Coffee Region (DANE, $2005)^{27}$.

²⁵ As previously noted, the censuses did not collect information about the relationship between the emigrant and the head of household.

The minimum salary in 2010 was BRL \$510,000, about US\$320.
 The chi-square tests suggest an association between the level of income and the type of household (migrant or non-migrants) in Valadares and the Coffee Region (p<0.05).

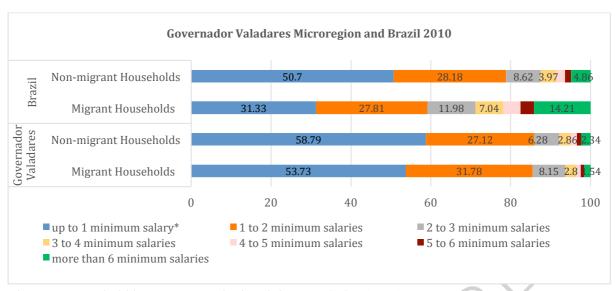


Figure 9: Household income per capita in minimum salaries (2010). Source: IBGE (2010)

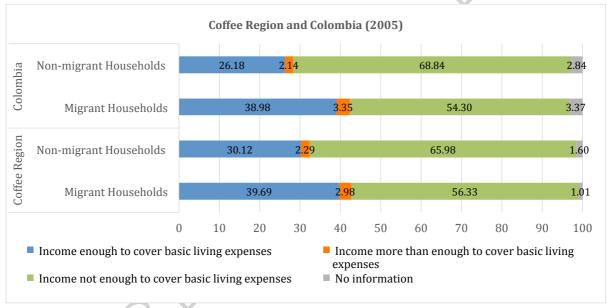


Figure 10: Ability to cover basic expenses (2010). Source: DANE (2005)

Concluding remarks

Migration, as a phenomenon of human population mobility across diverse spaces and frontiers and a strategy for the fulfilment of diverse economic, social, political and cultural needs, implies several processes of change and impacts on migrants' places of origin and destination.

In this vein, migration has been recognised as one of the main strategies that households employ for the production and reproduction of their livelihoods (King, 2011; Kothari, 2003; McDowell & de Haan, 1997; Sørensen & Olwig, 2002). As Sørensen and Olwig (2002, p. 1) remind us: people "do not necessarily migrate to start a new life elsewhere but rather to search out new opportunities that may allow them to enhance and diversify livelihoods practised and valued back home". In this sense, migration in Colombia and Brazil in recent years has largely been a function of (macro) economic and socio-political fluctuations and policy trends at home and abroad that have a

direct impact on individuals' and households socioeconomic condition.

Colombia and Brazil share a similar history of processes in relation to the macro-structural conditions that have been driving, more forcefully since the 1990s, the emigration of their citizens to the United States and Europe. In particular, the embracing of neoliberal Structural Adjustment Programmes led to a deterioration of real wages and labour conditions, a sharp increase in unemployment and poverty, recurrent crises and the worsening, of historically unequal, indexes of wealth distribution. In Colombia, this harsh economic reality, the deterioration of the socio-political situation of the country in the 1990s and the collapse of the coffee economy meant that the adverse effects of these multiple crises were felt more acutely in the country's Coffee Region. In Brazil, poor economic performance at home and a combination of pre-established (strong) social networks and the emergence of an illegal immigration industry – and other cumulative causation mechanisms –, fuelled the change in direction of the country's migration flows, especially from the Governador Valadares Microregion. In addition, economic liberalisation – labour market restructuring, segmentation and flexibilization – and high labour demand in the North, contributed to the acceleration and diversification of migration flows.

The evidence suggests that flows have been varying in tandem with regional, national and international social, economic and political dynamics. Before 1996, most Colombians and Brazilians settled in the United States. However, at the turn of the new millennium they began to search for new destinations in the context of tightening migration policies in the United States, increasing hurdles to obtain tourist visas and the militarisation of the US-Mexico border. Colombians began moving in significant numbers to Spain, Ecuador, Panama, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica the United Kingdom and Italy; while Brazilians went to Paraguay, Japan, the United Kingdom, Portugal, Italy and Spain.

In terms of gender composition, the data indicates that the proportion of women in migrant households is greater than in non-migrant households in the Coffee Region as well as in the Valadares microregion. Moreover, migrant households have significantly higher aged dependency ratios and lower child dependency ratios, in both regions. This household composition indicates that emigration from the Coffee Region and the Valadares microregion occurs primarily in the prime working years. Also, the bulk of migrant households in the Coffee Region are made up of single people or people who are married and/or in a civil partnership, while in the Valadares microregion, women with children without a husband/partner in the household predominate. The Brazilian census also captured the gender composition of the migrant stock: women from the Valadares microregion were heavily underrepresented in the emigrant stock that left the country before the turn of the new century. Moreover, while there is a gender balance in the flows from Brazil to the United States, flows from the Valadares Region to the US are predominantly male, while migration to Portugal is more gender-balanced.

Migrant households tend be slightly more educated than non-migrant households in Colombia while the opposite seems to be the case in Brazil. In addition, in both regions, migrant households

tend be better off than non-migrant households, although the bulk of migrant families still sit at the lower end of each country's socioeconomic scale. As some scholars have pointed out, rather than absolute poverty, a minimum level of social and economic development along with feelings of relative deprivation, may be at the root of these population movements (de Haas, 2010; Stark & Taylor, 1989). This is not surprising given that Colombia and Brazil's rigid social stratification system and the absence of perspectives for social mobility for ample sectors of the population have been pointed as conducive to migration. Moreover, in the age of globalisation, migration continues to be a highly selective process. As Bauman (2001) has rightly pointed out, freedom of movement is turning out to be one, if not the main, stratification factor of our time.

Although it is difficult to establish causality in terms of the socioeconomic and demographic composition of migrant households, there is evidence that social networks play an important role in the formation of particular migration systems. The high concentration of Colombian and Brazilian migrants in particular localities indicates that migration tends to be a strongly patterned process influenced by micro (personal/social networks), meso (family/household dynamics) and macrostructural (local, regional and national socioeconomic and political) factors, which determine the direction and composition of migration flows (Margolis, 1994; Martes, 2000; Zapata, 2011; Zapata, 2013, 2016).

In any case, it is clear that high rates of emigration from Colombia and Brazil have had broader economic, political and sociocultural implications. With different degrees of intensity and success, governments in these countries have attempted to establish and maintain a relationship with its diaspora through a variety of political, social, cultural and economic outreach initiatives such as incorporating migrants into national development plans, extending political rights to migrants, sponsoring migrant associations, creating cultural centres abroad, addressing the cost of remittance transfers and promoting programmes to channel remittances to development projects and 'productive' investment schemes.

Finally, recent research suggests that different migration regimes as well as households' resilience to socioeconomic shocks – which vary according to their socioeconomic position – may have an impact on migrant selectivity, the consolidation of existing migration systems, and the types of transnational family relationships that migrants are able to maintain from a distance (Guedes et.al., 2018; Jorgensen, 2017).

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