

CZECH UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES PRAGUE

Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences



**The reasons and causes for the mass migration of
Venezuelan population abroad**

BACHELOR'S THESIS

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Declaration

I hereby declare that I have done this thesis entitled The reasons and causes for the mass migration of the Venezuelan population abroad independently, all texts in this thesis are original, and all the sources have been quoted and acknowledged by means of complete references and according to Citation rules of the FTA.

In Prague 16.4.2021

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Abstract

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as a part of South America experienced the biggest migration wave in last 50 years. Millions of citizens fled to neighboring states to ameliorate their life. Venezuela faced a great misfortune that caused a high rate of migration and became a burden to a country. Even though the country was rich in mineral resources, it was no longer able to make profit and missing essential foods, needs and medical resources. The country had a severe trade imbalance that was partly compensated by foreign aid from the United States and remittances from Venezuelan citizens living abroad. Venezuelans relied on that money sent from family members working outside the country to buy food, schooling fees, essential medicines and to cover expenses. However, Venezuelans were stricken with new rules, currency problems, tighter controls of remittances. The objective of the thesis was to analyse the reasons and causes for the mass migration of Venezuelan population abroad and to analyse the opinion of the local Venezuelan people on the contribution of remittances on social development with suggesting the solution to prevent large-scale migration from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The study used both primary and secondary data. Questionnaire survey found out the most important factors when migrants choose their destination country. It is therefore inevitable that the government increase work opportunities and capacity to curb the trend of people fleeing the country.

Key words: The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, migration, socio-economic situation, remittances, poverty

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List of the abbreviations used in the thesis

UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
HDI	Human Development Index
FAO	Food Agriculture Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
WB	World Bank
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
GDP	Gross Domestic Product (purchasing power parity)
PDVSA	Petróleos de Venezuela, S.A.
EIA	Energy Information Administration
OVV	Venezuelan Violence Observatory
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation

1. Introduction

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is struggling with many affairs and mass migration is one of them. Despite the positive aspects of migration such as remittances, experiences of migrants abroad, migration negatively influences many significant aspects of human life. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela was one of the richest countries in Latin America, however, nowadays, people face acute shortages of food, medicines, water, and massive power outages. Currently, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is one of the poorest countries in South America, and with a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.711, it is ranked at 111th place out of the whole states' rankings (UNHCR, 2020). Due to extreme poverty, dysfunctional health care, the injustice, and brutality of the Venezuelan regime, countless Venezuelans are fleeing the country. In the worst and unfortunate case, inhabitants die in the country or behind the borders. It is expected that the number of refugees and migrants from Venezuela had increased rapidly from 3,929,560 by mid-2019 to almost 6,000,000, by 2020 which accounts for about 20 percent of the population (UNHCR, 2020).

Therefore, consideration of choosing the country to which migrants want to travel, and the specific steps that need to be taken to improve the situation in the future are vital. This study is significant as the issue of migration is a global problem with limiting some rights of migrants from different countries legally or illegally. Migration in Venezuela significantly affects the entire Western world mainly due to the massive emigration of millions of desperate Venezuelans to surrounding countries (Larmer, 2018). Therefore, this thesis discusses the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and raises awareness of this crisis.

2. Literature Review

2.1. General information

The Republic of Venezuela (officially Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) is situated in Northern South America, bordering the Caribbean Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean, between Colombia and Guyana. The total land area of the Republic of Venezuela is 91,205,000 ha (CIA, 2020). In Venezuela, we can find almost all climatic zones, from the extremely warm cities in the northwest in the valleys such as Caracas or Mérida to the cold climate (tundra). More than 38°C was measured in the warmest part of Venezuela in North-Western city Maracaibo. In contrast, the lowest temperatures were - 2°C in the highest areas of the Cordillera de Mérida (Haggerty, 2010). Land surfaces are tropical steppe and semi-arid areas in the central part accompanied by table-top mountains of the western Guiana highlands. They tend to be isolated and thus support endemic plant and animal species. In the Guiana Highlands can be found one of the worlds' highest waterfall (979 m) – Angel falls that drops off the Caroní River. Most of the waterfalls are created by highlands sheer cliffsides. The soils of the Republic of Venezuela are very fertile, one-quarter of the land is covered with chernozem, on which grains, cotton, and oilseed crops are grown. Forest coverage was 52.1% in 2019 (FAO, 2020) with a total area of 45,602,500 ha (FAO, 2020).

The administrative division of Venezuela is 23 states with 1 capital district, which includes the capital city Caracas; Federal dependencies that consist of 11 federally controlled island groups with a total of 72 individual islands (Stevens, 2009). **Figure 1** illustrates the map of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.



Figure 1. Map of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Source: CIA, 2021

2.2. Demography

It is estimated 28,644,603 people live in the Republic of Venezuela (WB, 2019). Venezuela's government reduced poverty from nearly 50% in 1999 to about 27% in 2011, increased school enrolment, and improved access to potable water and sanitation through social investment (Vacaflores, 2019). The sustainability of these social programs depends on the prosperity of Venezuela's oil industry. However, since 2014, falling oil prices have driven a major economic crisis that has pushed Venezuelans from all aspects of life to migrate or to seek asylum abroad. In November 2019, it was estimated 4.6 million Venezuelans were refugees or migrants worldwide (Vacaflores, 2019). **Table 1** below indicates population structure.

Table 1. Population by age group in 2019

Age	Male	Female	Total	Percent
0-14	4,379,866	4,189,835	8,569,701	28.42%
15-64	9,841,508	9,842,312	19,683,820	65.27%
65 and above	881,159	1,020,672	1,901,831	6.31%

Source: World Bank, 2019

Life expectancy is ranged from 73.2 years for men and 79.3 years for women (Vacaflares, 2019). Venezuela is a multi-ethnic country, with Spaniards making up the largest group (64.5%), followed by Italians (5.5%) and Portuguese (1.4%), most of whom live in urban areas. In 1998, the urban population accounted for 54.63% of the total population. In 2017, the urban population accounted for 75.75% of the total population. By 2019, there was a percentage reduction in the urban population to 61.24% of the total population (UN, 2017). Other minority ethnic groups include Arabs (5%) living in the Southwest of the country. Regarding religion, 98% of the believers are Orthodox, 1.5% are Jewish and 0.5% are Baptists and others (CIA, 2020).

2.3. Economic overview

According to the World Bank (2020), Venezuela is a country with a lower gross domestic product (GDP; purchasing power parity) in South America, and despite constant economic growth, the value of GDP for 2020 is 269,068 billion US dollars. Venezuela remains highly dependent on oil revenues, which account for all export revenues and almost half of the government revenues. Due to the lack of statistical data, foreign experts estimate that GDP in 2019 decreased by 12% and inflation exceeded 1,000,000% and this trend will continue to grow exponentially (Chi-WeiSu, Khan, & Umar, 2020). **Figure 2** below shows the extreme rise in inflation.

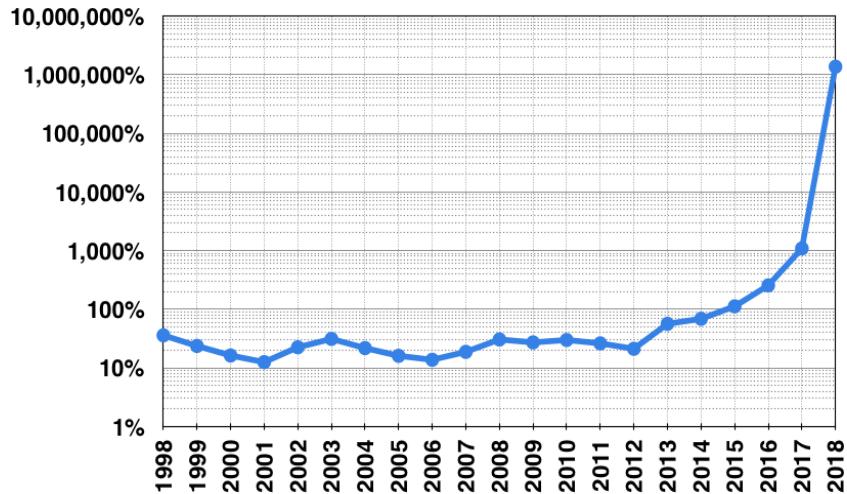


Figure 2. Inflation rate (average consumer prices)

Source: International Monetary Fund, 2017

2.4. Migration

Over the years, several theories, divisions, and definitions of migration have been evolved. Migration is the process of crossing either within an international border or within a single state. It is a movement of population, which includes any movement of people regardless of its length, composition, or causes and includes the migration of refugees, displaced or expelled people, and economic migrants (IOM, 2018).

2.4.1. Division of migration

According to OECD statistics and UN recommendations, migrants can be divided into four groups. Namely, long-term migrants, short-term migrants, residents returning while working abroad, and nomads. A long-term migrant is a person who moves to another country than his or her habitual residence is for at least one year so that his new residence becomes habitual residence (UN, 1998). A short-term migrant is a person who moves to another country than his or her habitual residence is for at least three months but less than one year, except the cases where the migration is beyond the purpose of recreation, holidays, visits friends and relatives, business trips, medical purposes or for religious pilgrimages (OECD, not dated).

Migration can also be classified according to four principles: internal versus international, temporary versus permanent, forced versus voluntary, legal versus illegal (Bailey, 2001). Petersen (1970) divided the migration into primitive, forced, violent, voluntary, and mass, as Drbohlav and Uherek (2007) state, can hardly cover the diversity of migration that is often seen in practice. According to Drbohlav & Uherek (2007), for example, Demuth (2000) further divides voluntary migration into labour and chain migration (for family reunification), non-migratory migration (temporary, for study or research), and innovative (to improve living conditions). Drbohlav and Uherek (2007) also mention that Demuth (2000) divided violent migration into migration caused by interpersonal relationships and is further subdivided into migration caused by human rights violations or as a result of civil wars (Demuth, 2000).

2.4.2. Selected theories of migration

The understanding of international migration requires a multidisciplinary, multilevel, holistic view (Massey et al., 1993). According to Borjas (1989), a comprehensive migration model should be able to predict the size and direction of migration flows, consider the influence of migrants on the host economy and consider the assimilation process of migrants. According to Massey et al. (1993), there was no single, coherent theory of international migration, but only fragmented theories that developed separately from each other. Zlotnik et al. (1998) propose an overview of migration theories. The division of migration theory based on the works of Zlotnik (1998) and Bijak (2006) is described in the following subchapters.

2.4.2.1. Sociological theory of migration

Stouffer (1940) proposes that the number of people traveling a certain distance is directly proportional to the number of opportunities to apply - the so-called theory of intervening opportunities. According to Lee (1966), the theory of push-pull factors, migration can occur therefore action of push factors (expelling from the given area) and pull factors (attracting to the given area) and the predominant factor.

It is characterized by population migration. Taylor (1986) states the presence of an interpersonal network in the host country is a very important factor. Informal networks take the form of kinship or relationships within a community. These networks mitigate costs and risks (Massey et al., 1993). Network theory was more generalized within the theory of transnational social spaces (Priess, 1999).

2.4.2.2. Socio-economic theories of migration

The institutional theory of migration, founded by Massey et al. (1993), relates to both, regular and irregular population flows; institutions play important role in supporting the migration process. This theory forms a transition between sociological and economic theories. The theory of cumulative causality was defined by Massey (1990) and is based on a proposal that migration is an evolutionary process that contributes to socio-economic and institutional change at both the place of origin and the destination through feedback mechanisms. Representatives of theory World-systems take migration from a global perspective; this theory emphasizes the interactions between companies (international trade) as an important factor in social change in society (Chase-Dunn & Hall, 1994). The founder of this theory was Wallerstein (1974). Economic theories of migration, like all economic theories in general, proceed according to macro or micro levels perspective (Bijak, 2006).

2.4.2.3. Macro-economic theory of migration

Neoclassical macro theory is probably the oldest and best-known theory of international migration (Massey et al., 1993). This theory was originally developed to explain migration in the process of economic development (Lewis, 1954).

Massey et al. (1993) state that migration goes from less developed countries, where there are a labour surplus and low wages, to developed countries with labour shortages and high wages (until the imbalance is balanced). This approach is considerably simplistic and does not capture, for example, the phenomenon of return migration or population flows without the difference in wages in the given areas (Stark, 2003).

Jenninssen (2004) points to the existence of Keynesian perspective on migration triggered by a change in the market towards economic equilibrium by eliminating differences in unemployment - not wages (Hart, 1975).

Piore (1979) developed a dual market theory, where migration is determined by the demand for migrants in the destination country, and the main cause of migration stems from the structural needs of the recipient of the economy, which solves labour shortages in selected sectors.

2.4.2.4. Micro-economic theory of migration

This theory includes the individual level of migration decisions and is explained, for example, in the neoclassical microeconomic theory of migration.

Sjaastad (1962) defined migration as a form of gaining the benefits of investing in human capital according to rational cost-benefit analysis. A generalization of the micro-economic decision-making framework is the concept of Dejong & Fawcett (1981) Expected Values presented by Faist (2000). According to Stark & Bloom (1985) and Taylor (1989), the decision is whether to migrate on households rather than individuals, so decisions are made within larger social units. Also, according to Mincer (1978), the decision of whether to migrate is not on individuals, but within the families.

2.4.2.5. Geographical theory of migration

Within geography, migration theories focus on explaining the role of distance in explaining spatial motion (Bijak, 2006). The oldest migration models include gravity models, which mathematically express the migration intensity (Isard, 1960).

Furthermore, there have been further attempts to use more advanced mathematical tools to find patterns of spatial interactions, and theories of entropy and disaster concepts and bifurcation theories have been developed (Wilson, 1981).

Another theory belonging to the geographical theories of migration was the theory of the transition from mobility (Zelinsky, 1971), which was proposed as a comprehensive framework describing human mobility (Bijak, 2006).

2.4.2.6. Unified theories

In addition to individual-specific theories of migration, there have been several attempts to propose a uniform explanation for migration of population. These theories include the theory of systems, defined by Kritz (1992) following Zlotnik (1998) and multidisciplinary theories (Massey et al., 1993).

2.4.2.7. Theory of push and pull factors

To determine the reasons influencing the decision - making process of the citizens of the Republic of Venezuela, whether to migrate or not, a method of push and pull factors was used to determine the existing forces that push a person from the area where he lives and, on the contrary, they pull to the places where he is heading (Uherek, 2005).

Economic instability, changing living standards, rapid demographic growth, war, religious and ethnic conflicts, environmental degradation are referred to as so-called "push" factors. On the contrary, "pull" factors are, for example, political stability, economic prosperity, high quality of life, freedom, and the possibility of self-realization (Uherek, 2005).

2.4.3. Causes of migration

Migration is a decision that affects the well-being of the household, the community, and ultimately the whole economy in many various ways (Gubert, 2006). The consequences of international migration can be both positive and negative for both the host country and the sending country (country of emigration). One of the very serious effects of mass migration is increased crime, which is often the result of illegal migration. These are most often trafficking in drugs (mainly cocaine), weapons, and the trade-in white meat (so-called trafficking in human beings), as well as other forms of crime. In the capital of Venezuela, the homicide rate is still among the highest in the world nevertheless according to the Venezuelan Violence Observatory Venezuela's murder rate decreased from 92 per capita in 2016 to 81.4 in 2018. Violence is mainly associated with drugs, which is also given by the location of the country (Antillano, 2019).

Armed robberies are common in the city, even in areas that are considered safe and frequented by tourists. The problem is still the rapid abduction of people in exchange for cash. Even worse is the fact that the police themselves are involved in the abductions. Migration is a stressful factor for migrants and their families, brain-drain, leading to a loss of public funds invested in education can be described as one of the push factors. The positive side is the transfer of information and business ties (through the diaspora and returning migrants) and stuffing for local people to jobs which they are not so interested in, for example, work in social services (Antillano, 2019).

2.4.4. Reasons for poverty and migration in The Republic of Venezuela

Widespread poverty and lack of job opportunities have caused many Venezuelans to flee the country. Therefore, the following **Table 2** shows the events leading to poverty, which significantly contributed to the mass migration of the Venezuelan population abroad, and the events that affected petroleum production, which significantly contributes to the GDP of the Republic of Venezuela as shown in **Table 3**.

Table 2. An overview of the events leading to poverty in Venezuela

Year	Event	Brief Description	Consequences
1985	Oil price crash	Oil prices crashed, and exporting countries came under economic strain.	Mass inflation, unemployment
1989	Armed conflict connected to Carlos Andres Perez election	The president amid an economic depression launches an austerity programme with IMF loans. Riots, martial law, and general strike follow.	Hundreds killed in street violence
1992	Coup Attempts	Weakened Perez; Colonel Hugo Chavez and supporters make two coup attempts.	120 people killed in the suppression of coups
1993-1995	Banking crisis	President Perez was accused of corruption and impeached for embezzling from a presidential discretionary fund.	The domestic banking crisis hammered the economy
1998	Oil prices crash again	Oil prices tumbled in the wake of the Asian financial crisis	Drop of GDP Low investment values
1998	President Chavez Elected	He won with 56 % of the vote and began his term with a strong mandate for change.	Chavez uses enabling act to pass laws aimed at redistributing land and wealth.
2002	Revolving Door Coup	Armed forces rebel over a violent stand-off between the government and state oil monopoly after the appointment of a new board.	Demonstrations
2005	Political persecution	Signed decree on land reform to eliminate Venezuela's large estates and benefit rural poor.	Attack on private property
2006	Russian Alliance	President Chavez signs a \$3bn arms deal with Russia, including an agreement to buy fighter jets and helicopters	Russia steps up military ties Marking a re-orientation away from US arms supplies
2008	Global financial crisis	Delayed acceptance of anti-crisis measures	Decline in GDP Low investment values The economy shrank 5.8%
2010	Extreme Drought	Increased power outages in the capital and other major cities	Significantly smaller yield from the biggest nation's hydroelectric dam
2010	Energy crisis	Massive power cut within the capital city	Closed workplaces and schools
2013	President Chavez dies, Maduro president elected	Anti-government protests	28 people die in suppression of anti-government protests
2016	Political instability, Hyperinflation	Caracas calling for the removal of President Maduro	Demonstrations: Hundreds of thousands of people take part in a protest
2018	Heavy floods	Floods on the river Orinoco and Caroní	Damage to private property and crops
2019	National power outages	Decreasing Venezuela's crude oil production	Negatively affect western Venezuela's oil production

Source: BBC News, 2019

Table 3. Selected problems in the Republic of Venezuela

Agriculture	Environment	Economic Situation
Collapsing oil industry	Soil degradation (erosion)	Hyperinflation
Low investments	Soil contamination (pesticides)	Unemployment
No access to world trade	Water contamination (nitrates)	Insufficient infrastructure
Lack of storage capacity	Extreme weather (reduction in yield)	Financial crises - 1985, 1998, 2008
Political Situation	Migration	Social Situation
Government's full control of the economy	Changes in social structure	Food and water shortage
Censorship	Negative population growth	Medical shortages
Government split	Remittances	Lack of education Criminality

Source: BBC News, 2019

To give a better insight into how the events leading to poverty may have contributed to the poverty and migration rate of the population of the Republic of Venezuela, several figures show the effects of selected events on poverty and the Venezuelan economy. **Figure 3** illustrates the most significant importers of crude oil. In January 2020, Venezuela had 303 billion barrels of proved oil reserves, the largest in the world (Conglin, 2020). In 2019, Venezuela's average crude oil production was 877,000 barrels per day and since 2017 it is still decreasing as shown in **Figure 4**. Several factors have contributed to this decline in oil production. Particularly lack of workforce and maintenance, national power outages in 2019, sanctions imposed by the US government against PDVSA have reduced foreign investments and markets for Venezuelan oil. Also, the lack of knowledgeable and capable managers and staff reduced the number of active rigs as is illustrated in **Figure 5**.

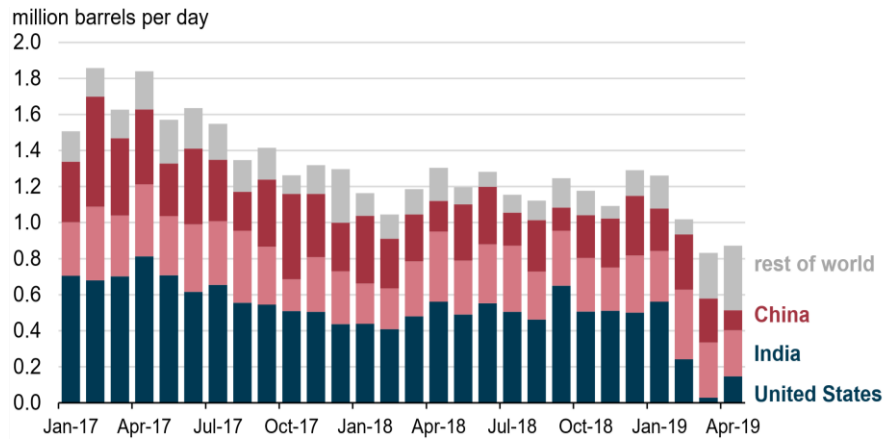


Figure 3. Share of individual countries in petroleum crude oil exports in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (Jan 2017 – April 2019)

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, Short-Term Energy Outlook, and Clipper Data Inc., 2019

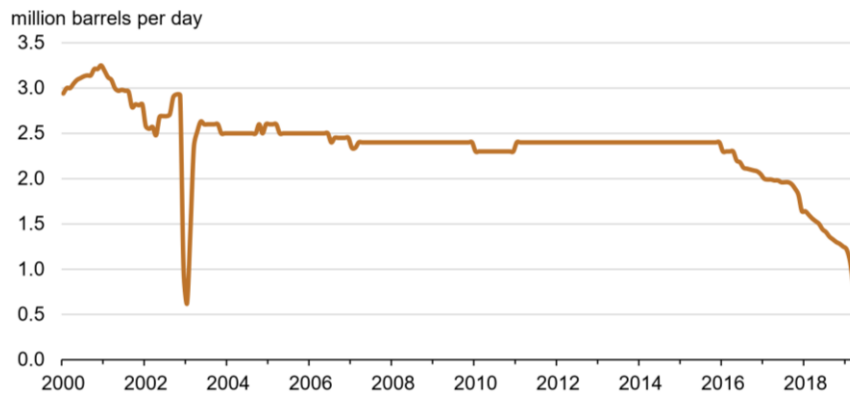


Figure 4. Venezuela crude oil production (2000 – 2019)

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, Short-Term Energy Outlook, and Clipper Data Inc., 2019

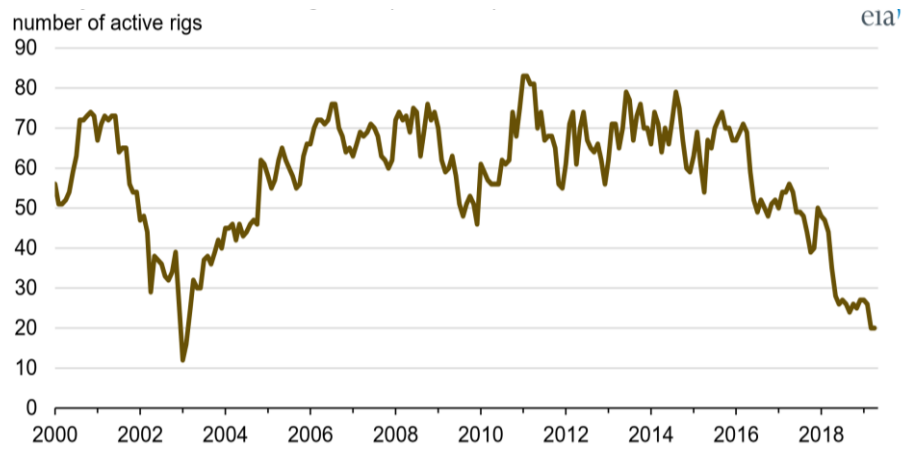


Figure 5. Venezuela crude oil rig count (2000 – 2019)

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, Short-Term Energy Outlook, and Clipper Data Inc., 2019

3. Aims of the Thesis

3.1. Main objectives

The main goal of the bachelor thesis is to assess the reasons for the mass migration of the population of the Republic of Venezuela abroad.

3.2. Specific objectives

- a) To analyse available resources to summarize the main events and outline the main causes that led to the mass migration of the Venezuelan population.
- b) To analyse available resources to give a brief overview of migration theories and thus point out the issue of migration.
- c) To analyse the factors (so-called pull factors) that affect migrants in choosing their destination country.
- d) To analyse the opinion of the local Venezuelan people on the contribution of remittances to social development and what needs to be done in the future to reduce the number of migrants.

4. Methodology

4.1. Survey area

The quality of life in rural areas has been steadily declining over the last decade. Lack of job opportunities and inability to find a job in the local labour market causes mass migration of people of working age for work abroad, which has serious social consequences. Although World Bank studies show that poverty in Venezuela between 2004 and 2014 decreased significantly, this decline has not been stabilized with other events (PIN, 2020). For this reason, a questionnaire survey was conducted in the town El Junquito in the Caracas district. **Figure 6** illustrates the survey area.

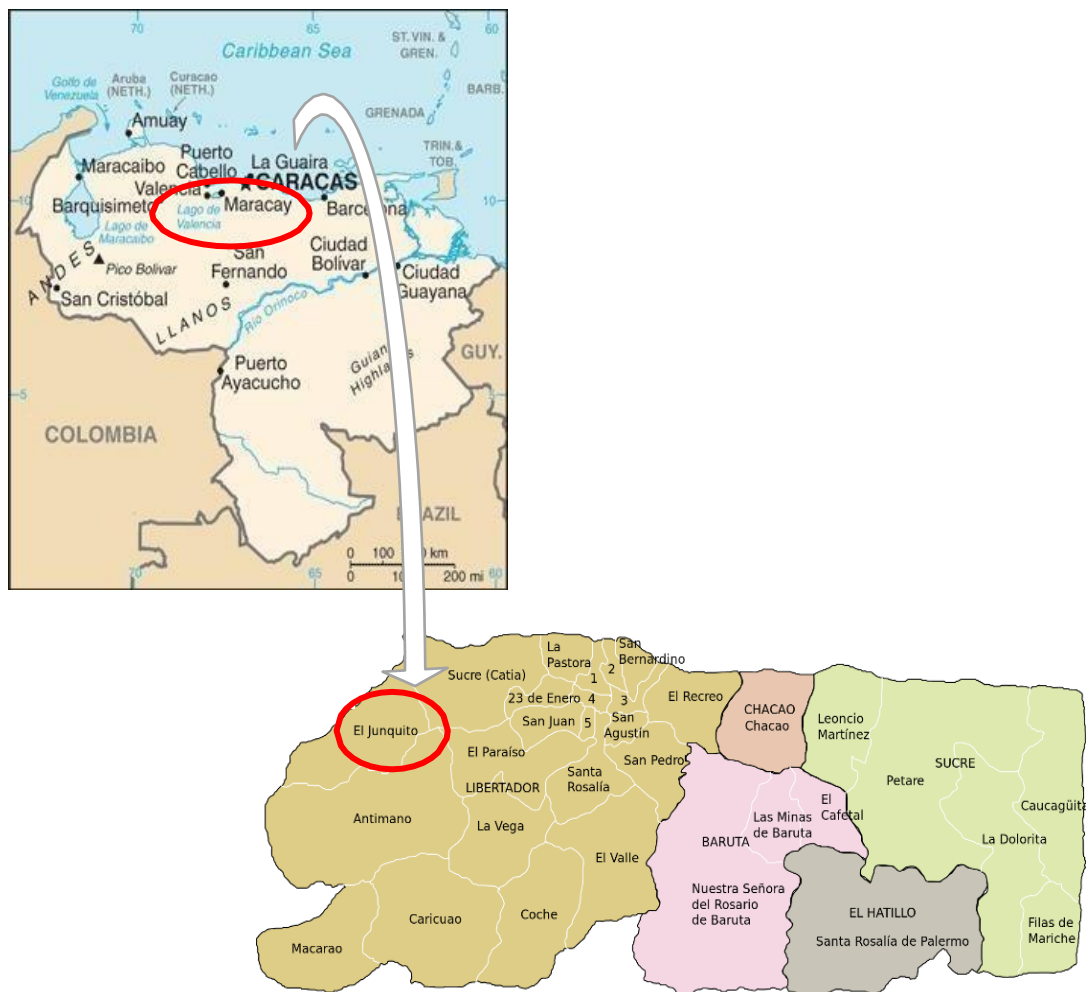


Figure 6. El Junquito region

Source: CIA, 2020

4.2. Study area

Caracas is the capital city of Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and it is situated between several valleys in Northern part of South America. Caracas has a very convenient location for both travel and business reasons. The total area of the district is 2,050 km², from which is 56.0 km² of the town El Junquito; of which: 4% belong to agricultural land, 34% to forests and other forest land and 20% of meadows another 40% belongs to water resources (FAO, 2020). According to the (Vacaflores, 2019), 5,174,034 inhabitants live in Caracas, the average population density is 1,496 inhabitants/km² (Vacaflores, 2019). Agricultural activities focus on the cultivation of cereals, potatoes, cassava, sugar cane, vegetables, coconuts and cattle, pig, and poultry farming. There is very high-quality soil in the area (FAO, 2020).

The city El Junquito is located on the federal circuit of the capital Caracas at an altitude of 900 m above sea level. Mayor is Helen Fernández. The direct distance of the city of El Junquito is 30 km from the capital Caracas (PIN, 2020). According to the Census (2019), a total of 63,800 people live there. Most of them are Venezuelans, Colombians, and a small representation of Italians.

4.3. Data and data sources

The study used both primary and secondary data. The primary data were the results of the questionnaire survey, which were collected through the humanitarian non-profit organization People in Need in mid-February 2021 from random respondents in the selected city where People in Need operates.

The secondary data were articles, books, documents, statistical and other databases, which were categorized, processed, and interpreted in order to outline the current situation of migration and poverty in the Republic of Venezuela giving a brief overview of migration theories.

4.4. Data collection

A structured questionnaire was created for data collection in the Republic of Venezuela (see Annex 1) in which there were both open and closed questions, that helped to find out the reason for mass migration of Venezuelan people, preferences of target countries, and their recommendations of what needs to be done to reduce the number of migrants. A qualitative-quantitative type of questionnaire was chosen for the questionnaire survey and the total number of respondents was 53. There were 36 men and 17 women in total. Provided that People in Need works at a local school in El Junquito, the respondents were mainly teachers but also people from the ranks of students and other school employees.

4.5. Time schedule

The total time for data preparation and collection in the Republic of Venezuela was two and a half months. Prior to that, theoretical preparation for data collection took place, which began in December 2020. The selection of the most suitable area for data collection was also made during December 2020. Questionnaires were completed in January 2021 and the subsequent translation and evaluation of the questionnaire survey took place in early March 2021.

4.6. Structured questionnaire

Structured questionnaires were selected as the main tool for data collection and as the simplest and most appropriate method for verifying previous surveys of migrants conducted in the Republic of Venezuela.

The questionnaire was prepared in English and Spanish in a combination of both closed and opened questions. When collecting data in the Republic of Venezuela, with help of a consultant from the non-profit organization People in Need, there was finished distribution and discussion with the locals. There was a total of 15 questions in the questionnaire for the Republic of Venezuela.

4.7. Data analysis

All data obtained from 53 respondents were rewritten into the web application freeonlinesurveys.com, which allowed partial evaluation of questionnaire and summary of open questions into one file, closed questions were processed using graphs in Microsoft Office Excel.

5. Results and Discussion

A total of 53 respondents took part in the questionnaire survey. The arithmetic mean age of respondents is 35.1 years, the youngest respondents were 18 years old at the time of the survey, the oldest was 58 years old. From the graphical representation of the first question (see **Figure 7**), whether the respondents or any of their relatives have personal experience of working abroad the results show that 32 of respondents have this experience, the remaining 21 respondents do not.

Personal experience of working abroad

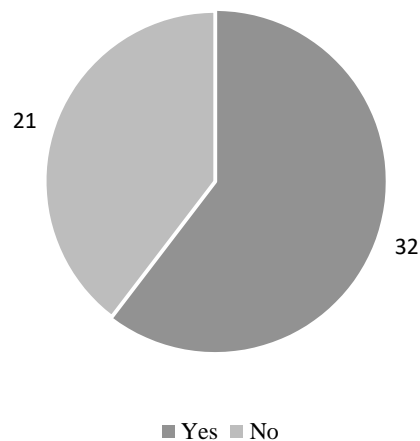


Figure 7. Personal experience of working abroad

Latin America has a long history of migration, but today an unprecedented exodus is unfolding. Between 2016 and November 2020, over 5 million men, women, and children (16 % of the population) have left Venezuela in search of a better future (UNHCR, 2020). The top destination worldwide for Venezuelan refugees and migrants is Colombia. For about 36 percent of the 5.1 million Venezuelans living outside of Venezuela, according to estimations from April 2020 published by the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela – Response for Venezuelans (R4V). Other common destination countries have significantly smaller shares of Venezuelan refugees and migrants, including Peru (17 %), Chile (9 %), and the United States (7 %).

From the target countries, Colombia was usually firstly mentioned in the questionnaire survey in the Republic of Venezuela. Twelve respondents out of 32 stated that they have experience working in Colombia.

The average length of stay in this destination country was 5 years, with the shortest length of stay 2 years, and the longest 9 years. The second place was the USA, which was mentioned by five respondents, for whom the average length of stay was 4.25 years. Three respondents also stated that they have experienced working in Brazil, where the average length of stay was 3 years. The remaining respondents have experience working in Spain (8 years), Aruba (4 years and 1.5 years), Peru (5 years), Chile (2 years). From the questionnaire survey, this trend (despite the small number of respondents) was confirmed, with respondents mentioning Colombia, Brazil, and the USA as the target country. **Table 4** below shows the top 10 destination countries including the number of migrants.

Table 4. Top 10 destinations of migrants

Destination country	Number of migrants
Columbia	1,048,714
Peru	602,595
United States	255,141
Spain	202,859
Chile	109,798
Argentina	91,315
Italy	53,007
Portugal	24,584
Canada	22,130
Mexico	17,254

Source: IOM, 2020

Figure 8 shows the factors that are decisive in choosing a destination country. Respondents were able to identify several factors in this question that were decisive for them in their decision-making. For 53 of respondents, the specification of the jobs offered in the destination country was important, followed by the economic situation 45, language 32, and the distance of the destination country from Venezuela 28 respondents. The political situation was a key factor for 40 of respondents, culture 8, and unemployment rate in the target country for 12 of the respondents.

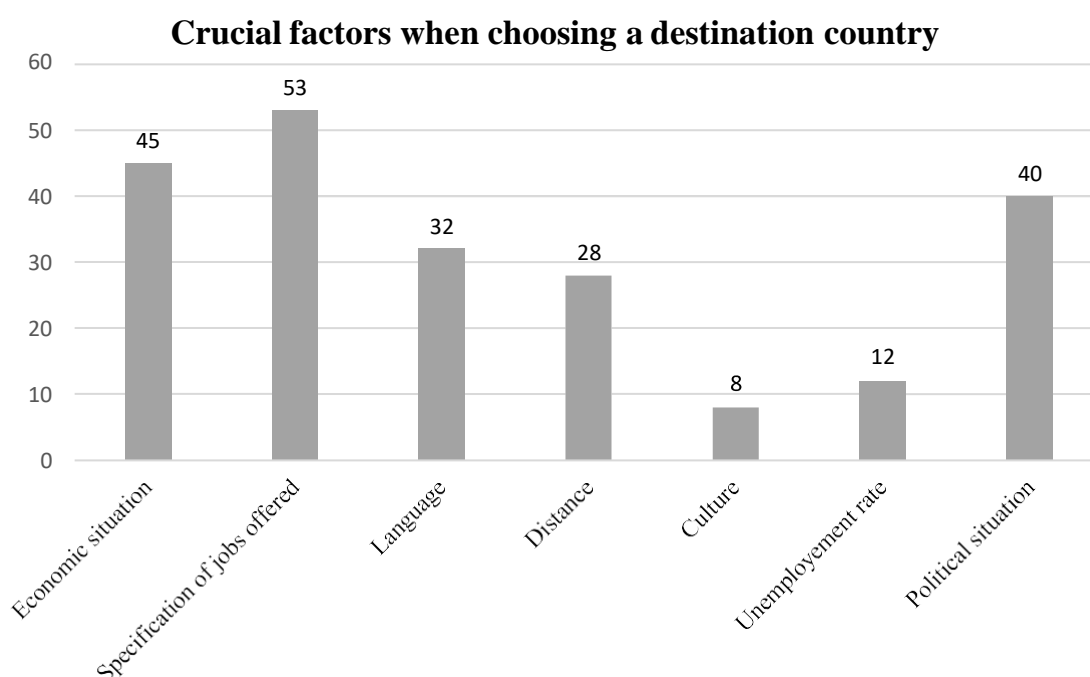


Figure 8. Crucial factors when choosing a destination country

For 20 of respondents, it was difficult to decide to travel abroad while for 33 of respondents it was not. The biggest obstacle for the respondents was the distance from home, family, friends, fear of an unknown environment and culture, as well as a foreign language in the target country. There was also an obstacle for the respondents to adapt to other conditions, or to work at a lower level than their educational qualifications.

Among the pull factors that motivate the Venezuelan population to leave the country are favourable migratory policies. Peru, for example, has this favourable migration policy.

It is offered The Temporary Permit of Permanence, a document issued by the National Superintendence of Migration that has a validity of one year with the possibility of extending. Thanks to this rule, Venezuelan migrants can develop certain activities, within the framework of Peruvian legislation, such as having access to education, health, justice, and more fundamental rights; as well as working formally within our territory (Cardenas, 2019). Another important pull factor is economic growth and stability. According to the UNHCR (2020), between 2002 and 2013, Peru was one of the fastest-growing countries in Latin America, with an average GDP growth rate of 6.1% annually. The Peruvian Ministry of Health recently stated that the supply of medicines increased by 30% in the last 5 years (Cardenas, 2019). This factor is also a critical one for Venezuelans to look at Peru as a country with a completely different economic situation, a country with a prosperous economy and financial stability in which they have greater chances to find jobs and favourable conditions to ameliorate their quality of life and that of their families (Cardenas, 2019). For the respondents to the questionnaire survey in the Republic of Venezuela, the most key was the specification of the jobs offered in the destination country, followed by the economic situation, language, and distance of the destination country from Venezuela. On the contrary, the culture and unemployment rate in the destination country was not decisive for them.

Figure 9 shows the answer to the question of whether respondents are sufficiently informed about job and education opportunities in their place of residence.

35 of respondents state that they are not informed, the remaining 17 have this information. Respondents show that the availability of education is not good in the Republic of Venezuela, and the subsequent employment and finding of appropriate work is very difficult for them.

Access to education and job opportunities

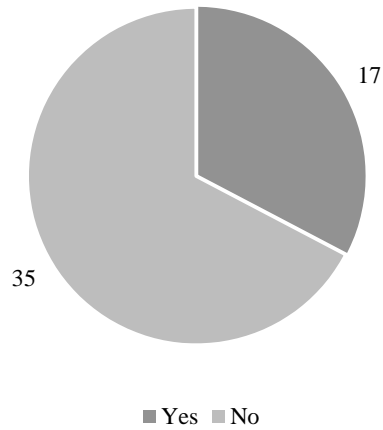


Figure 9. Access to education and job opportunities

A questionnaire survey from the Republic of Venezuela confirms that most of the population is migrating for work. Respondents agree that they migrate due to lack of jobs or due to low pay. Many respondents stated that if they did not leave for work, they would not feed their families. **Figure 10** below shows that 45 respondents think that migration is a serious problem, while 7 do not.

The severity of the problem of migration

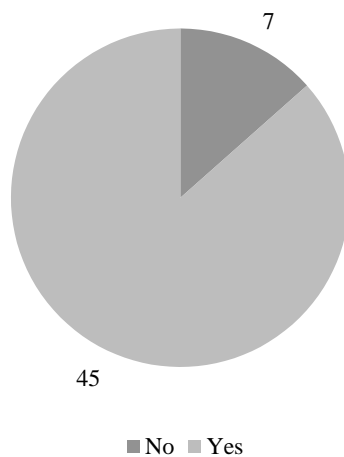


Figure 10. The severity of the problem of migration

Concerning the steps that should be taken to improve the situation, most respondents agreed that state-owned enterprises should be set up to provide new jobs, that it is very important to keep the young generation in Venezuela with new jobs. It was also mentioned that corruption (both in schools and in a job search) should be eliminated, investment in the agricultural and industrial sector, and support for local teachers. According to one of the respondents, the government should focus primarily on rural development, because the conditions in which people live there are undignified and thus lack the motivation to stay in the countryside. According to another of the respondents, the policy of the state should be changed, which does not solve the situation in the labour market. Another opinion is the improvement of infrastructure, better education (or preparation for subsequent employment of students), removal of obstacles from the government.

Regarding the economic situation, most of the respondents share the opinion that the situation in the Republic of Venezuela will not improve. The fact that a large part of the population works abroad, will harm the Venezuelan economy as shown in **Figure 11**. Most respondents agree that remittances make up a small contribution to Venezuela's economy because they are sent to bordering countries. They also agree that the so-called brain drain is a big problem. According to the respondents, if the young generation goes abroad to work, the economic situation cannot improve.

The negative impact of migration on the Venezuelan economy

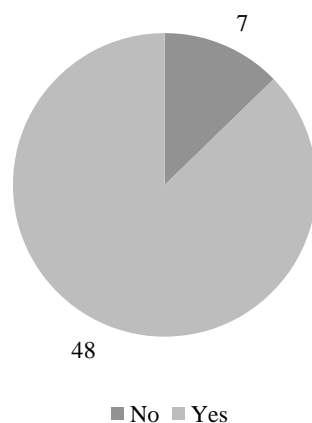


Figure 11. The negative impact of migration on the Venezuelan economy

Table 5 indicates the family remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean. It has experienced nearly 10% growth in 2018, one of the largest growth rates in the past 10 years (Vacaflores, 2019).

Countries that experienced higher growth rates in 2018 include Colombia, Ecuador, and Paraguay. Two factors are explaining such increases. The first is the migration from these countries and the second is Venezuelan migration.

With regards to the first factor, Colombians and Ecuadorians are among those who are migrating. In a survey Vacaflores (2019) carried out among Colombians in Bogota, for example, over 25% of respondents expressed their intention of emigrating in search of better economic opportunities. The second factor refers to Venezuelan migrants in transit or in temporary stay in those countries, who are receiving remittances. This is particularly the case of Venezuelan migrants who are receiving remittances in Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. Venezuela is the most striking example; It is estimated that Venezuelan migrants abroad are remitting about US\$2 billion from at least six countries (Orozco & Klaas, 2020).

Table 5. Family Remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean in 2018 (USD)

Countries	REMITTANCE GROWTH				GDP Growth	Remittances/ GDP
	2018 Remittances (Usd)	2016	2017	2018		
Brazil	2,666,000	9%	-3%	15.8%	1%	0%
Columbia	6,372,000	5%	15%	15.9%	3%	2%
Ecuador	3,030,000	9%	5%	6.7%	1%	3%
Haiti	3,324,000	7%	15%	17.2%	1%	39%
Mexico	33,455,000	9%	6%	10.4%	2%	3%
Peru	3,239,000	6%	6%	6.2%	2%	2%
Venezuela	2,000,000	-	-	-	-15%	1%

Source: The Dialogue (Central Bank Data and INEC data for Panama), 2019

6. Conclusion

The current economic situation of the Republic of Venezuela has its roots in the 1980s during the collapse of oil prices. A manufacturing zone was created from the current Republic of Venezuela, and mainly industrial production was moved to Caracas. The Venezuelan economy was failing with an unsuitable economic policy, but the turning point that caused the migration of up to 80% of all migrants was the collapse of oil prices and hyperinflation, which in 1999 was 99%. At that time, the situation of poverty in the country worsened and many locals decided to leave the country and go work abroad.

In this bachelor thesis, the possible causes of migration were summarized, however, the main goal was to analyse the main reasons for the migration of the Venezuelan population abroad and compare these reasons with previous surveys. A questionnaire survey in the Republic of Venezuela and previous surveys show that the lack of job opportunities and inability to apply in the local labour market is the main reason for migration. Most respondents who had experience with migration stated that insufficient labour capacity and poorly paid jobs are the main factors for migration. According to the questionnaire survey in the Republic of Venezuela, the most important factors in the selection of the target country were the economic situation of the target country and the specialization of the works offered. Less important factors for the respondents were language in the target country, culture, and distance of the target country from the Republic of Venezuela. The least important factors were the political situation and the unemployment rate in the destination country.

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Appendices

List of the Appendices:

Appendix 1: Questionnaire survey developed for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in Spanish

Appendix 2: Questionnaire survey developed for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in English

Appendix 1: El motivo de la migración masiva de Venezolanos al extranjero

cuestionario de la encuesta

Analizar la situación actual de la migración y la pobreza en la República Bolivariana de Venezuela

1 Por favor indique su género y nivel de educación

2 ¿Tiene usted o alguien de su familia experiencia personal con trabajar en el extranjero?

 Sí No

3 ¿Tiene usted o alguien de su familia experiencia personal con trabajar en el extranjero?

 Sí No

4 ¿Cuáles factores son cruciales para usted por elegir un país de destino?

 Situación económica Especificación de trabajos ofrecidos Idioma Distancia Cultura Tasa de desempleo

5 ¿Crees que la migración es un problema grave en tu zona?

 Sí No

6 ¿Tiene la migración un impacto negativo en la economía de su país?

 Sí No

7 ¿Tiene la migración un impacto negativo en la estructura social de los habitantes?

 Sí No

8 ¿Alguna vez ha intentado emigrar? Si es así, ¿a dónde?

9 ¿Cuál era el principal motivo de la migración?

Violencia

Para obtener trabajo

Nivel social bajo

Salario bajo

No se ofrece trabajo en su país

Para obtener educación

¿Otro? ¿Por favor especifica!

10 ¿Era difícil encontrar trabajo en el país de destino?

Sí

No

11 ¿Qué países cree que tienen una política migratoria favorable?

12 ¿Afecta La situación crítica en su país de alguna manera? ¿Cómo?

13 ¿Puede encontrar información sobre sus derechos en el país de destino?

Sí

No

14 ¿Fue una decisión difícil para su viajar al extranjero o no?

Sí

No

15 ¿Está pensando en volver a su país en caso de que aumente el nivel de vida?

SÍ

No

Appendix 2: The reason for the mass migration of Venezuelans abroad Survey Questionnaire

To analyse the current situation of migration and poverty in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

1 Please, indicate your gender.

2 Please indicate your level of education.

3 Do you or any of your relatives have personal experience with working abroad?

 Yes No

4 Which of the factors are crucial for you when choosing a destination country?

Economic situation

Specification of jobs offered

Language

Distance

Culture

Unemployment rate

5 Do you think migration is a serious problem in your area?

 Yes No

6 Does migration have a negative impact on your country's economy?

 Yes No

7 Does migration have a negative impact on the social structure of inhabitants?

 Yes No

8 Have you ever tried to emigrate, if yes where to?

9 Which was the main reason for migration?

 Violence Low salary Low social level No job offered in your country To gain education To gain job

Other? Please specify!

10 Was it difficult to find a job in the destination country?

 Yes No

11 Which countries do you think have a favorable migration policy?

12 Does the critical situation in your country affect you somehow? How!

13 Can you find out information about your rights in the destination country?

 Yes No

14 Was it a difficult decision for you whether to travel abroad or not?

Yes

No

15 Are you planning to go back to your country in case of increased living standard?

Yes

No