

## VENEZUELAN MIGRATION TO TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF CRIME, GANGS AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM

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**Abstract.** The issue of migration has gained greater importance on the political agendas of many source and destination countries. Various efforts have been taken to monitor migratory movements at the national and international level. However, based on the dearth of literature on the topic of immigration as opposed to emigration it is clear that more needs to be done to assess the specific causes for and the implications of migration and immigration. Migration has been shown to have tremendous influence on receiving nations and existing literature has demonstrated that immigration has a significant impact on the lives of the receiving country's national population, both positively and negatively.

This paper provides an analysis of the existing evidence on the relationships between the migration of Venezuelans into Trinidad and Tobago, (T&T) crime, gang violence and violent extremism. It argues that there is a direct link between migration and crime, including gang violence. It also shows that unlike what happens in many other migrant receiving states, there is no visible nexus between Venezuelan migration and violent extremism.

Additionally, this paper further examines the reasons for the migration of Venezuelans and the impact this migration has on Trinidad and Tobago over the period 2015-2020. It then looks at the nexus between Venezuelan migrants and crime, gang violence and extremism. It reviews the broad range of policy responses to migration and then extracts the themes that emerged from interviews with actors in-country. It then offers some recommendations for community NGOs, security officials, and decision makers.

**Key words:** migration, violent extremism, radicalization, gang violence

### Basic provisions

Towards the end of the second decade in the 21<sup>st</sup> century an unprecedented humanitarian crisis has resulted in the largest displacement of people in the Americas in modern history. Between January 2014 and June 2019, 1.7<sup>1</sup> million Venezuelans – roughly 10% of the population – have fled their homes to avoid political repression, severe food and medicine shortages, significantly diminished social services, and general economic collapse. Of these, over 80% of them have settled in Latin American and Caribbean nations (Kennedy 2019). According to United Nations (UN) figures, Trinidad and Tobago received more than 40,000 Venezuelans by May 2019. Because of visa requirements, Venezuelan

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<sup>1</sup> In August 2020, U.N. agencies estimated 5.2 million Venezuelans had left the country.

migrants in Trinidad and Tobago were unable to register for the migrant registration process in 2019. Venezuelan nationals required a visa to enter Trinidad and Tobago since June 17, 2019. This requirement became a barrier to admission, and it may have potentially driven migrants to choose dangerous, unofficial paths into the nation (ACAPS view on Trinidad and Tobago Venezuelan refugees). Thus, an unaccounted number remains unregistered and among this group, mainly, criminal elements are ostensibly found (Wilkinson 2020).

Facing international pressure and amidst local domestic agitations, the government of Trinidad and Tobago only in April 2019 acknowledged Venezuelans' presence domestically. Currently, the government of Trinidad and Tobago avoids formal asylum legislation. Asylum-seekers can only receive refugee status through the Living Waters Community, the United Nations Refugee Agency's local implementing chapter in Trinidad, which coordinates the application and approval of asylum status.

This process has resulted in a discrepancy between both parties (Trinidad and Tobago and the United Nations) because of the United Nations' approval of asylum status in a country that does not comprehensively address refugee concern. The side effects have led to reports of unlawful detention by the police and the deportation in 2019 of close to 100 refugees, actions which were condemned by the UN as illegal (Hamilton 2019).

In June 2019, the government commenced an exercise called the 'Migrant Registration Framework', a work permit exemption policy for all Venezuelan immigrants in Trinidad to register with authorities during 2 weeks. Touted as a humanitarian outreach that provided for Venezuelans to work legally in T&T for one year, this policy was a short-term measure that served as a rudimentary counting and surveillance mechanism incognizant of migrants' daily precarities and the indeterminate situation in Venezuela (Mohan 2019).

Speaking in the Senate on June 25, 2019, the National Security Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, acknowledged the UNHCR's estimate of 40,000 Venezuelans and confirmed 16,523 Venezuelans registered in the process. He acknowledged there may still be some who did not register and promised that immigration laws would apply to them. He denied claims of thousands of Venezuelans living illegally in the country (Haynes 2019).

### **Introduction**

The influx of Venezuelans caught the government by surprise, as they were without a comprehensive migration policy to deal with this unprecedented phenomenon. In this sense, the government's response has been reactive and structured around a patchwork of emergency measures and decrees. Per Mohan (2019) the state is attempting to shift the focus and tone of the Venezuela-T&T

migration discourse by removing the term “refugee” from the larger discussion. Despite several official and unofficial pledges that the government is working on developing a local refugee law, T&T has yet to establish domestic legislation to operationalize the protections and guarantees offered by the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. The Migrant Registration Framework focuses entirely on labour permit exemptions for Venezuelans, implying that the state views Venezuelan immigrants as economic migrants.

This however, shows no indication of complexities of migration flows and the different motivational factors for Venezuelans’ migration but instead places migrants into an orderly and manageable category. The Minister of National Security confirmed this stance, stating that ‘refugees’ is simply a ‘buzz word’; furthermore, we are dealing with migrants’ in the context of Venezuelan inflows to T&T.” ¶2<sup>2</sup> ¶ (Senate Deb. 24 June 2019). The one-year policy also justified the government’s assertion on the Venezuela question that T&T is ‘not a refugee camp’ (Bridglal 2018 & Christopher 2019).

The state’s shift from a position of non-acknowledgment of a crisis in Venezuela and migration at home to a one-year policy (now with an additional year to July 2021) brings to light changing political agendas. As a percentage of its population, Trinidad is the recipient of more Venezuelans than almost any other country. Currently, there are grave concerns about xenophobia against Venezuelans in Trinidad. ¶3<sup>3</sup>

### **Outline of Paper**

The paper develops as follows. First, it explores the reasons for the migration of Venezuelans and its impact on Trinidad and Tobago over 2015-2020. It then looks at the nexus between Venezuelan migrants and crime, gang violence and extremism. It then reviews the broad range of policy responses to migration, classifying them as normal, different, and radical. Lastly, it moves into the themes emerging from interviews with actors in-country and drawing from the themes. It concludes with broader lessons for community NGOs, security officials, and decision makers.

### **Reasons for the migration of Venezuelans to Trinidad in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.**

The escalating political, economic, and humanitarian calamity in Venezuela has forced at least 4 million people to flee the country, most of them since 2015(UNCHR 2020). ¶4<sup>4</sup> Evidence indicates that Trinidad and Tobago's highest

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<sup>2</sup> (Senate Debates 24 June 2019) as cited by Mohan.

<sup>3</sup> This information was revealed in an interview conducted on 9 January, 2020 with a Senior Immigration Officer.

<sup>4</sup> In August 2020, U.N. agencies estimated 5.2 million Venezuelans had left the country; most have relocated to other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Migrants face obstacles maintaining employment and accessing health care, as neighbouring countries have implemented quarantines and border closures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

numbers of Venezuelans going to Trinidad were during the period January 2018 to June 2019. It has also been estimated that for the period June 2019 to June 2020, no less than 10,000 Venezuelans entered into Trinidad illegally. 15<sup>5</sup>

The circumstances that are driving Venezuelans to flee their country en masse include a profound economic crisis marked by deteriorating scarcity of basic goods (ENCOVI 2018) and a serious health crisis stemming from both a lack of medicine, decline of health services coupled with limited capacity and capability of health institutions (Derecha Al Salud 2017) which has resulted in a rise in diseases within the Venezuelan population (Nebhay 2018). 16<sup>6</sup>

Venezuela's present health crisis is rooted in the country's fundamental political crisis. The Maduro administration has been hesitant to pursue measures that could reverse the country's economic trajectory, instead blaming domestic troubles on an ill-defined "economic war." As evidenced by a recent G7 declaration on Venezuela, there is still widespread international agreement on the urgency of finding a "peaceful, negotiated, democratic solution to the crisis" (European Council Council of the European Union 2018).

Another reason why many Venezuelans are fleeing are due the exorbitant levels of violence and insecurity. According to the Venezuelan Observatory of Violence (OVV), there were 81.4 violent deaths per 100,000 people in 2018, the highest rate in Latin America. That means Venezuela is the most violent country in the region. Violence is "epidemic" in 88 percent of Venezuelan municipalities, based on WHO standards, given that the number of violent deaths exceeds 10 per 100,000 citizens due to homicides. Also, citizens are often subjected to armed robbery and kidnapping. It is difficult to find reliable data on these crimes, which are usually not reported to the authorities, but estimates suggest that Venezuela has one of the highest kidnapping rates in the region.

The rise in extrajudicial executions is particularly worrying. During 2017, the government created a rapid-response unit to combat organized crime and drug trafficking, known as the Special Action Forces (FAES). The group has carried out numerous extrajudicial executions in the context of security operations in poor neighbourhoods (OHCHR) (Venezuela Investigative Unit 2020).

### **Description of materials and methods**

The research applied a mixed method design, specifically naturalistic inquiry, qualitative data, and statistical analysis including fieldwork, comprising 25 interviews with key sources, 80 migrant surveys, and eight focus group discussions with

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<sup>5</sup>This information was divulged in an interview conducted on 9 January, 2020 with a Senior Immigration Officer.

<sup>6</sup> Shortages in food and medicine, declines in purchasing power, and a collapse of social services have created a humanitarian crisis. According to a 2019-2020 household survey, the percentage of Venezuelans living in poverty increased to 96% in 2019 (80% in extreme poverty).

Venezuelan migrants which were carried out by this researcher. This researcher conducted secondary research exploring literature on existing evidence about migration, crime violent extremism and gang violence to identify risk factors to develop a framework for analysis. To gather primary data for this research, this researcher conducted eight focus group discussions and key informant interviews. Focus group discussions conducted for the purpose of this research included Venezuelans in San Fernando, (Duncan Village and Diamond Village) Princes Town, (St Charles Village and Borde Narve) Siparia (San Francique and Quarry Village) and Chaguanas (Montrose and Charlieville). Practitioners were selected for key informant interviews based their ability to provide informed commentary or insights into gang involvement, crime and violent extremism in Trinidad. These included religious leaders, local authorities, civil society workers, journalists, and academics with related expertise, officers of the Immigration Department, the Police Service, the Coast Guard, fishermen from Erin, villagers of Mayaro, Cedros and Palo Seco and one new reporter. Collection, systematizations, and analyses of the data for this research were conducted between September of 2019 and February of 2020.

### **Impact of Venezuelan Migration to Trinidad and Tobago**

The impact of the increasing numbers of Venezuelans migrants in Trinidad and Tobago has been substantial, given its limited size and absorption capacity. The process of regularization implied that many of the Venezuelans who crossed the border with proper documentation would have been able to stay in Trinidad and Tobago legally and be able to work for one year, beginning June 2019.

There has now been an extension for another year ending June 2021. Confronted with concerns that the aforementioned extension of the process of regularization potentially places a large burden on Trinidad, analysis of who these newly regularized migrants are and what impact, if any, they might have on the Trinidad and Tobago economy was performed. Those eligible for regularization were migrants who voluntarily registered in 2019 with the Ministry of National Security. A key challenge for Trinidad's policymakers is how to manage the transition when the economy has slowed, and needs to reduce its fiscal deficits.

The large inflow of migrants from Venezuela presents economic and social challenges for Trinidad. At the end of June 2020, there were more than 60,000 Venezuelan immigrants with an intention to stay in Trinidad. Migrant integration requires appropriate short-term integration policies, a feature which the Trinidad and Tobago government has been resisting.

In open-ended interviews with Venezuelans living in Trinidad, 85% were working. Many of them who were working, (at least 44%) were doing so for the minimum wage (TT17.50 per hour). They identified as being employed in areas in

the agricultural, building and construction sectors (mostly men). Close to 80 % of the females indicated that they found employment in supermarkets, bars and restaurants, night clubs and as maids or house servants. Of the total number of Venezuelans interviewed as of February 2020, only 15% indicated that they were unemployed.

In the medium-term, a particular and fundamental challenge will be to integrate migrants in the formal labour market which is still characterized by high levels of informality, adversely weighing on well-being and productivity. The integration of migrants to formal jobs would require a comprehensive strategy with actions ranging in several policy areas such as education, taxes, pensions, business regulations and labour market policies (OECD 2019).

In the survey done in four main areas: San Fernando, Princes Town, Siparia and Chaguanas between September 2019 and February 2020 to count, identify and gather information on Venezuelan migrants who had entered Trinidad, it was disclosed that almost 65% of current wave of migrants are young, (18-35) coming with a moderate level of education, indicating the propensity to contribute to the economy. No doubt, the increase in skilled labour supply could boost the growth potential of the Trinidad economy which has seen a decline in recent years (OCHR 2018).

A notable social impact of Venezuelan migration to Trinidad is that Trinidad men are establishing relationships with Venezuelan women. This has caused some domestic issues including break up in marriages and divorces but there is still a dearth of evidence to pronounce conclusively on this.

Additionally, the recent influx of Venezuelan migrants also have raised security concerns in this state. Both the unprecedented size of the migration flow and the speed of the increase imply substantial challenges for Trinidad's central and local governments. Considerable resources are being used to police the porous borders of Trinidad. Many Venezuelans who are caught without documents are placed in the Detention Centres in Trinidad where they must be fed and kept safely. One of the fears of the security services is that is that many Venezuelan immigrants are being recruited by criminal gangs operating in different areas throughout the country, and consequently, increasing insecurity.

### **Venezuelan migration and Crime in Trinidad.**

Many studies have proven two simple yet significant facts concerning the relationship between migration and crime. Firstly, migrants are less likely than native locals to commit severe crimes or be imprisoned. Secondly, large rates of migration are associated with lower rates of violent crime and property crime. To put it another way, the vast majority of migrants are not 'criminals. 'For this

reason, harsh immigration policies are not effective in fighting crime. By utilizing the criminal justice system in managing mass mobility in the form of the regularization process intended at curbing/managing the sizeable influx of Venezuelan migrants into Trinidad and Tobago has resulted in the ‘criminalization’ of migrants. Consequently, migrants have the stigma of ‘criminality’ ascribed to them. In short, migrants themselves are being criminalized (Ewing, Martínez & Rumbaut 2015). Sociologists Michael Light and Ty Miller found that a higher illegal migrant population does not increase violent crime rates (Nowrasteh 2019).

Several sociological theories, on the other hand, suggest that larger levels of migration into an area may raise crime rates. According to one argument, immigration promotes crime by increasing the proportion of the population with a criminal demographic profile, such as teenagers and young adults. Another hypothesis, based on social disorganization theory, contends that immigration is a powerful source of change that disturbs community social control of crime. Immigration, in particular, contributes to high rates of both residential instability and demographic heterogeneity by increasing ethnic diversity in a community. In turn, insecurity and heterogeneity impede the creation of social bonds and shared values, both of which are required for successful informal social control of crime.

Another school of thought contends that higher crime rates develop as a result of increased economic deprivation and competitiveness in local labour markets caused by immigration. For example, if immigration increases the proportion of low-skilled employees in Trinidad, it may increase competition for few positions and raise unemployment and poverty rates for both migrants and natives. These economic pressures can exacerbate intergroup conflict, alienate people from mainstream society, and raise criminal impulses (Nowrasteh 2019).

Another argument is that immigration is connected with a proliferation of illegal drug market activity, which may increase other forms of criminality, including violence. Although a significant portion of the immigration–drug market association appears to be driven by stereotyping, immigrants with lower levels of human capital could be easily pushed or pulled into illegal market opportunities, such as the drug trade, for economic reasons (Venezuela Investigative Unit 2019).

Whether the hypothesized relationship is positive or negative the fact is that previous theories on the immigration–crime nexus is yet to be sufficiently empirically evaluated (Ousey & Kubrin 2018).

Recently, there have been numerous newspapers articles in Trinidad and Tobago citing a nexus between Venezuelan migrants and crime. The following are a few examples:

Four Venezuelans murdered, believed by other Venezuelans, (Jan 10, 2019); Two Chinese men, one Venezuelan woman and one Guyanese man charged in sex-ring bust. (February 4, 2019); Nineteen female non-national minors rescued from human trafficking ring. (March 1, 2019); Nine Venezuelans arrested for possession of narcotics. (March 2, 2019); Five Venezuelans detainees escaped the Immigration Detention Centre. (April 15, 2019); Fifty-six Venezuelans arrested and charged for illegal entry (April 17, 2019); Six Venezuelan women attack police. (April 21, 2019) and Venezuelan National charged with Narcotics Possession. (August 4, 2020) (Ousey & Kubrin 2018).

For other examples see **Table 1** below.

Table 1. Sections of Articles on Venezuelan Migrants and Crime

Sections of Articles on Venezuelan Migrants and Crime	Source
<p>According to Attorney General Faris Al-Rawi, T&amp;T is grappling with economic migrants since</p> <p>Venezuelans began to seek refuge here and it is a fact that the country has seen an uptick in “certain</p> <p>of the crimes” as result of some of the migrant issues.</p>	<p>Trinidad Guardian, June 11, 2019.</p>
<p>In piloting debate on the Bail (Amendment) Bill in the Senate on Tuesday, June 11,2019 the AG argued</p> <p>that “It is a fact, having spoken with the Commissioner of Police today (Tuesday) that we have had a serious uptick in certain types of the crime as a result of immigrant issues. The Commissioner can speak to that for himself. But suffice it to say that the numbers of murders have been noticed to have risen as a result of some our migration issues. I am not talking only about Venezuela, I am talking about other positions”</p>	<p>Trinidad Newsday June 11, 2019</p>
<p>Venezuela’s most murderous federal state, Delta Amacuro, the area linked with major drug trafficking, a proliferation of gangs and other illicit activities, is also one of that country’s closest points to T&amp;T. This fact is causing major concern as recent intelligence reports indicate the presence of notorious Venezuelan gang Evander in this country. Their members have reportedly formed alliances with local gangs and are fingered in illegal activities here which have contributed to a spike in homicides over the last few weeks.</p>	<p>Trinidad Guardian, April 21, 2019.</p>
<p>The TT Police Service (TTPS) is monitoring the connections between Venezuelan criminals who have been identified in T&amp;T and the local gangs and the TTPS and other security agencies are also monitoring the movements of Venezuelans entering Trinidad &amp; Tobago legally as well as illegally.</p>	<p>Trinidad Guardian, April 23, 2019.</p>
<p>Despite the trauma of having his friend murdered before his own eyes, a friend of murdered Chinese businessman Xiangrong Pang does not resent TT.</p>	<p>Trinidad Newsday, August 26, 2019.</p>



Pang, 41, died from chop wounds he received during a robbery at a house above his business-place Happiness Supermarket, Sixth Avenue, Barataria early on Sunday morning. Eight people, including two Venezuelans, were arrested after the murder and robbery	2020.
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Sources: Trinidad Guardian

Trinidad Newsday

Undoubtedly, these kinds of reporting would have created some panic and concerns among the populace and even generated resentment against Venezuelan migrants. Based on information received from Immigration officials in August 2020, some of these concerns seemed to be justified. However, on closer examination it will be seen that the criminal element among the Venezuelan migrants is less than 15% with just 5% involved in serious crimes.

In May and June, 2019, the Government opened the registration exercise, receiving 16, 523 applications from Venezuelan migrants. Just before the exercise, a large number of Venezuelans "swarmed" to T&T—many illegally—to apply. Applicants were required to fill out forms which sought detailed information on them, including whether they had criminal records, health issues, if they had military training or served in army/police sectors, their educational and employment/skill background, how they arrived in Trinidad whether illegally, and other information. Registration cards were processed upon verification of identity and background checks from Interpol.

Of all the applicants, 5,148 applications in total had been verified by January 2020 by the Venezuelan authorities, Interpol and local authorities and had been recommended for ministerial approval. In July 2020 information made available about the other 11, 375 who applied indicated that at least 15 % of them had criminal records, with 5 % of them being involved in serious crime. In February of 2020, 3,091 cards had been processed and printed and relevant applicants have been contacted to collect them." By the end of 2019, 112 Venezuelan migrants in TT were refused regularization, as they were found to have criminal records for serious offences. They were then sent back home.<sup>7</sup>

Based on the group discussions and interviews and from information received from Immigration Officials, **Table 2** illustrates the number of Venezuelan charged (not convicted) for different offences in the four focused areas for the period April 2018-March 2020.

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<sup>7</sup> These details were revealed during an interview with an Immigration Official On 20 June, 2020 in Port of Spain.

Table 2. Offences for which Venezuelans were charged during the period April 2018-March 2020 in focused areas

2. (a) San Fernando

Offence	Males	Females
Breach of Immigration Regulations	11	7
Possession of Firearms	02	00
Armed Robbery	02	01
Drug Trafficking (Marijuana)	01	00
Drug Trafficking (cocaine)	02	00
Intent to Defraud,	01	00
Escape Lawful custody	02	00
Possession of ammo	03	00
Prostitution	00	12

The major offences identified in the four groups were breach of immigration rules, meaning mostly entering Trinidad illegally and in other cases, not reporting to the Immigration personnel as required. Other crimes included prostitution, possession of firearms and drug trafficking. Of the four focused areas, Chaguanas and San Fernando housed the majority of criminal elements with Siparia and Princes Town having lower levels of criminality. In further discussions it was identified that it was easier to get work, especially in the agricultural and construction sectors in Princes Town and Siparia. By all accounts at least 60% of these migrants were working to send back money to their families back in Venezuela and thus they could not afford to get arrested or sent back home. The other 40% indicated that they had their families with them in Trinidad and were trying their best to earn money legally to pay rent and take care of themselves.

In data provided by Immigration authorities re-convicted male and female Venezuelans for the period January 12, 2018 to June 27, 2019, (See **Table 3**) the following were the specific offences: Breach of Immigration Regulations, Possession of Firearms, Armed Robbery, Drug Trafficking (Marijuana), Drug Trafficking (Cocaine), Intent to Defraud, Escape Lawful custody and Possession of ammunition. All convicted Venezuelan females in prison in Trinidad during the same period were there for the offence of failing to report to the respective Immigration Officer.

Table 3. Convicted Venezuelan Males and Females in Prison in Trinidad for the period 12 January 2018 to 27 June 2019

(a) Convicted Venezuelan Males in Prison in Trinidad for the period 12 January 2018 to 27 June 2019

Offence	Number of Persons
Breach of Immigration Regulations	30
Possession of Firearms	11
Armed Robbery	04
Drug Trafficking (Marijuana)	03
Drug Trafficking (Cocaine)	01
Intent to Defraud	01
Escape Lawful custody	02
Possession of ammo	01
Total number of convicted Male Venezuelans	53

In interviews with Immigration and Intelligence officers, close to 95% of the Venezuelans held at the detention centres and in prison were charged with the lesser crimes of illegal entry into Trinidad, having false passports, prostitution and domestic violence. The other 5% of Venezuelans, held for drug and human trafficking, possession of firearms and in two cases for murder. It was noted that of this 5% none of them registered in Trinidad and more than likely there were not in Trinidad to settle but rather to conduct their illegal business, work and return to Venezuela. The majority of convictions were from the Port of Spain and Point Fortin Areas.

There appears to be a direct link to Venezuelan migration and crime in Trinidad. The fact is some migrants committed crimes and were either imprisoned or fined. When taken as a percentage of the entire population of migrants in Trinidad using the 40,000 figures, it is less than 15% of migrants involved in crime. Of this 15%, close to 10% of migrants committed offences related to immigration regulations and prostitution i.e. nonviolent crime. The other 5 % are the ones involved in serious crime (drug trafficking, possession of firearms etc). More so, except for a few cases in San Fernando the majority of crimes committed by Venezuelans in Trinidad (at least 80% of violent crime including drug trafficking and possession of firearms) were committed by those living in the Port of Spain and Point Fortin areas.

## **Venezuelan migrants and Gangs Gang Violence in Trinidad and Tobago**

According to the UNDP (2012), a gang is any long-lasting, street-oriented group that engages in illicit behavior as part of their group identity. In this paper, a gang is defined as a collection of people, young or elderly, who do illegal acts for intrinsic or extrinsic gain.

The Trinidad police has argued that gang members are responsible for the majority of violent crimes occurring in Trinidad and Tobago, that the largest number of gangs are in various police divisions namely Port of Spain Division, Western Division and Northern Division and that the most reported crimes occur within the urbanite areas of Port of Spain and San Fernando.

In early May 2019, a Venezuelan criminal gang migrated to Trinidad and Tobago and on May 18, 2019 Trinidadian authorities arrested a leader of the large Venezuelan gang known as “Evander”. The gang leader, identified as “El Culon”, was detained with seven other Venezuelans. Intelligence officials suggested that the members of the gang were in Trinidad illegally, looking for jobs in construction while at the same time engaging in drug and arms traffic. 187<sup>8</sup> It must also be noted that military conscription is mandatory in Venezuela (since 1978) and this would contribute to a well-trained Venezuelan criminal network.

Trinidad’s main appeal to the group was its prime location as a transit point for drugs to the rest of the Caribbean, as well as to markets in the United States and Europe. Such dynamics were not only attractive for the Evander gang, but also for local drug trafficking networks in Trinidad looking for new allies.

In addition, it was argued that the workforce in Trinidad was in recent times saturated with desperate Venezuelans, representing an opportunity for local gangs to recruit them. Law enforcement officers stated that several hundred members of Evander, which reportedly has more than 650 members, were in Trinidad illegally and were responsible for several violent crimes in Venezuela, including high profile kidnappings and murders.

Evander members in Trinidad also embedded themselves with local gangs and have also sought jobs on construction sites across the country. In interviews with both police and immigration personnel, it was indicated that Venezuelan gang members as well as unemployed Venezuelan migrants were affiliating themselves with gangs in Port of Spain, especially with two main ones that cite Islam as their religion as well as in Point Fortin and to a certain extent in Chaguanas. The

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<sup>8</sup> The Evander gang, or the Deltano Liberation Front, hails from the state of Delta Amacuro, where it controls a portion of the criminal markets at one of Venezuela’s main ports for both illegal and legal goods. The gang’s activities have caught the attention of Venezuelan authorities. In March 2019, the group’s leader, Evander Barrada, was killed by the armed forces and members of the criminal investigation unit (Cuerpo de Investigaciones Científicas, Penales y Criminalísticas – CICPC) of Venezuela’s national police. However, this has not stopped the Evander gang from continuing to operate and spread. See Venezuela Gang Muscles Into Trinidad and Tobago, Others May Follow. Analysis written by Venezuela Investigative Unit (May 20, 2019).

officers also pointed to the gang's involvement in the trafficking of narcotics and firearms in Trinidad.

Venezuelan gangs have established organized crime activities in Trinidad & Tobago. They are 'prostituting' on the orders and under the authority of Venezuela's organized crime. According to Criminologist Darius Figueira, these Venezuelan gangs make alliances with local gangs and are not scared to die. ¶9¶<sup>9</sup>

Intelligence sources revealed recently that at least three Venezuelan nationals shot and killed in March 2019 in T&T were in some way connected to the Evander gang. ¶10¶<sup>10</sup>

There appears to be a direct link between some of the Venezuelan migrants and gang membership and activity. Aside from the Evander gang, it appears that other small gangs have found their way to Trinidad and have been able to provide local gangs with firearms, drugs, and ammunition. These gangs have been able to attract some of the migrants who have been unable to find decent employment and those searching for quick money. However, there appears to be considerable confrontation between Venezuelan gangs and local gangs. This has emerged in particular because the Trinidadian "middlemen" who would have gone to Venezuela and been responsible for transporting and selling firearms and drugs to local gangs and other recognized persons are now being side-lined, and their tasks are now being done by Venezuelans. Thereby resulting in local gangs attacking and killing some Venezuelan gang members.

### **Venezuelan Migration and Violent Extremism Framework for Analysis**

The Trinidad and Tobago government has consistently refused to accept Venezuelans under the category of refugee. A migrant is a person who chooses to move, and a refugee is someone who has been forced from their home. It has been established that the most common intersection between migrants and violent extremism is that migrants are fleeing from it.

### **Results**

The threat of violent extremism by Venezuelans in Trinidad and Tobago is low. This low threat emerges from the genuine disdain expressed by them for extremists and for the radical policies under the current Venezuelan government who caused their

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<sup>9</sup> Trinidad Guardian, April 17, 2019.

<sup>10</sup> The Evander gang began its criminal history at La Pica prison in northern Monagas state near Venezuela's Caribbean coast. The gang still has influence in that area and may be linked to "pranes," or prison crime bosses, operating there, according to local sources. From Monagas, the gang expanded into the nearby state of Delta Amacuro, where it took control of the canals that connect it to the Caribbean Sea, from which boats can cross into Trinidad and Tobago. The group formerly led by Barrada extorts boats that carry desperate Venezuelan migrants to the neighbouring island, and is involved in ferrying drugs and arms as well. The group also rustles cattle in Delta Amacuro.

displacement and exposed them to brutal violence. In any case, the few extremist groups in Trinidad have either not been successful in recruiting Venezuelan migrants or they have not reached out to them significantly.

Also, in Trinidad, the identified extremists mostly belong to the Islamic faith, one in which the migrants have no interest in as indicated during the interviews. Venezuelan migrants in Trinidad have a strong interest in cooperating against a shared threat and aspire to a sense of security they did not have in their country. That this desire is shared among many persons in the local community, combined with common religious beliefs (mostly Roman Catholicism and Pentecostalism), contribute to a strong bond between many Trinidadians and migrants.

Venezuelans who came from the Tucupita region spoke about not only economic deprivation, illnesses and unemployment but also of police brutality and home invasions by Venezuelan gangs. Instead of becoming radicalized and violent in their home country these migrants chose to leave their homes for Trinidad.

While the threat is low, applying the findings against the factors identified in the framework for analysis does reveal some concerns with respect to gang membership and violence but hardly any concerns with violent extremism

#### 1. Trinidad's administrative and legal policies:

While not willing to consider the Venezuelans, who have fled their country as refugees, Trinidad's expressed commitment towards integrating refugees into society will be a key step in achieving development, humanitarian and security objectives alike. The refugees' ability to live, work and register life events directly influence all aspects of refugee life, including how Trinidad perceive and receive them. The one-year extension of all registered migrants to June 2021 is quite promising. In the survey over 85% of the migrants indicated they accepted and had no problems with Trinidad's administrative and legal policies. The other 15% main grievance was their inability to register as refugees but indicated they were glad for being able to register as migrants and be able to work. 90% of them also stated that they trusted the justice system in Trinidad.

#### 2. Political and militant organizing:

Close to 100% of Venezuelan migrants surveyed indicated they have no interest in political and militant organizing in Trinidad. While around 40% said that they will be willing to join any march against President Maduro, even so, some were hesitant claiming that if they protested in Trinidad, they were still afraid for their family lives in Venezuela. Only 10% indicated they had any interest with the local and national politics.

#### 3. Security:

Many respondents (95%) expressed satisfaction with the state of security in Trinidad and indicated that as long as they operated within the law, they had nothing to worry about. 80% agreed that many of the women were stigmatized as prostitutes and some of them were also treated harshly by Trinidadians but they all acknowledged that Trinidad was much safer for them than Venezuela.

#### 4. Shelter:

While respondents indicated that they had access to basic necessities including shelter, food, water and health for children, concerns about living conditions were varied. 30% of the respondents in San Fernando said their rents were quite high; 22% in Chaguanas said their rents were high; another 20% in Siparia said their rents were high and just 12 % in Princes Town saw their rent as high. Overall, 88% indicated that they were comfortable or were planning to move to other locations where they would be comfortable. Issues of overcrowded apartments and houses were identified by 12% of them in two areas (San Fernando and Chaguanas) but were not seen as a major problem. (See Table 4 below)

Table 4. The focus group discussions with refugees and key informant interviews that occurred  
4. (a) Focus group discussions in Princes Town.

Category of respondents	Number of respondents and gender	Age Range
Agricultural workers/ farm labourers	10 (all males)	18-40
Domestic workers/waitresses/workers in pubs/ groceries	12 (10 females and 2 males)	22-50
Construction workers	8 (all males)	18-35
*Skilled workers and others	4 (3females and 1 male)	25-45

\*Some of the skilled personnel identified during the research included nurses, teachers, musicians and IT personnel

#### 4. (b): Focus group discussions in San Fernando

Category of respondents	Number of respondents and gender	Age Range
Agricultural workers/ farm labourers	6 (all males)	18-40
Domestic workers/waitresses/workers in pubs/ groceries	14 (13 females and 1 male)	22-50

Construction workers	5 (all males)	18-35
*Skilled workers and others	4 (3females and 1 male)	25-45

\*Some of the skilled personnel identified during the research included nurses, teachers, musicians and IT personnel

4. (c): Focus group discussions in Siparia.

Category of respondents	Number of respondents and gender	Age Range
Agricultural workers/ farm labourers	8 (2 females and 6males)	20-40
Domestic workers/waitresses/workers in pubs/ groceries	14 (10 females and 4 males)	22-50
Construction workers	10 (all males)	18-45
*Skilled workers and others	5 (3 females and 2 male)	25-45

\*Some of the skilled personnel identified during the research included nurses, teachers, musicians and IT personnel

The focus group discussions with refugees and key informant interviews occurred as follows:

Table 4 (d): Focus group discussions in Chaguanas

Category of respondents	Number of respondents and gender	Age Range
Agricultural workers/ farm laborers	8 (1 females and 7 males)	18-40
Domestic workers/waitresses/workers in pubs/ groceries	12 (10 females and 2 males)	22-50
Construction workers	8 (all males)	18-35
*Skilled workers and others	4 (3females and 1 male)	25-45

\*Some of the skilled personnel identified during the research included nurses, teachers, musicians and IT personnel

5. Local economic conditions and resilience:

85% of all Venezuelans interviewed responded that as long as they found work, they would be able to survive and another 40% stated that they were able to send back some money to Venezuela to help their families within four months. 15% of those interviewed said they were either unemployed or were working only part-time and



were not as comfortable as they would have liked. They acknowledged though that there were opportunities for them in Trinidad and were sure they would improve their conditions soon.

#### 6. Conditions for youth:

Children had no access to basic education. Concerns about quality and accessibility to primary levels were high. While 30% of youth indicated a frustration about lack of access to jobs or livelihood opportunities as they would have liked it, they also stated that they were willing to do some menial tasks in the meantime. 50% of them indicated they were able to get jobs soon after coming to Trinidad (within a month) and another 20% indicated they were at home only because they needed to take care of their other siblings. In two areas in particular, Princes Town and San Fernando some youths (close to 10%) affiliated themselves with churches and were recipients of sufficient aid including food, clothing and even part time jobs with the churches.

#### 7. Protracted displacement:

The UNHCR defines protracted displacement as displacement for five years or more. While there is no indication as to how early economic and socio-political conditions could improve in Venezuela, close to 90% of Venezuelans interviewed stated that they intend to return to Venezuela within five years, if not to stay, at least to spend time with family and then return to Trinidad. Owing to the distance between both countries and Trinidad's porous borders more than 50 % of respondents indicated as well they would be able to return to Venezuela without much difficulty if the need arises. At least 7% of the respondents had also been able to return to Venezuela at least once.

#### 8. P/CVE programming:

Successful P/CVE programs comprehensively address the 'root causes' of extremism as opposed to extremism as a standalone feature. Current programs in Trinidad are reportedly engaging civil society, youth, and religious leaders among others. While extremist groups have long demonstrated their ability to recruit or target people based on highly specific and adaptable practices, there is no evidence of any Venezuelan migrant joining extremist groups in Trinidad. The majority of the known extremists in Trinidad claim to be Muslims and in the interviews and discussions in all four focused areas, not once did this researcher find any Venezuelan Muslim or any Venezuelan who held extremist views i.e. anyone who was advocating, engaging in, preparing, or otherwise supporting ideologically motivated or justified violence to further social, economic or political objectives.

## **Discussions**

Research within the migrant Venezuelan population in Trinidad has not found any case of violent extremist views nor anyone with a history of violent extremism or even terrorist activity. Based on evidence on the ground, there are no mitigating factors to encourage migrants to become radicalized or extremist. The P/CVE efforts in Trinidad over the last few years seem to be by all accounts successful in that extremism has not been seen or displayed since the departure of several extremists to Syria and Iraq from 2012-2014. Interviews with intelligence sources also indicate that there has been a lull of activity by the few known extremists in Trinidad since early 2018.

### **Policy responses to Venezuelan Migration by the T&T government:**

The migration of Venezuelans into Trinidad is a reality for the government and people of Trinidad. Realizing the positive economic effect of migration in the medium-term requires putting in place in the short-term appropriate integration policies. Such policies carry with them economic costs, which accounts for additional expenditure in areas such as social programs, education, health, humanitarian aid, or housing assistance programs for the next three or five years. In the medium-term, higher output growth triggered by migration would imply higher economic revenues, gradually offsetting the initial negative fiscal impact.

Migration from Venezuela is likely to keep increasing, as international experience shows that, the arrival of first migrants is followed by a process of families' reunification. More than 70% of recent arrivals have left close relatives in Venezuela (Testa 2018). The intensifying economic crisis in Venezuela may therefore also imply greater migration towards Trinidad in the future.

Although the majority of Venezuelan migrants leave for economic reasons, the current inflow also indicates characteristics of a refugee crisis (World Bank 2018). This includes a quick acceleration in arrivals (traditional economic migration tends to be slower) and a relatively high proportion of people arriving in difficult socio-economic conditions.

Depending on how the government reacts and creates policies to deal with this influx of migrants would determine if the migrants are able to be better off or not; if more migrants would be willing to come to Trinidad in the future and if the country as a whole would benefit from this migration or not among other issues. In looking

at these responses, we categorized them under three headings, namely normal, different or radical.

Drawing on ongoing research on development led approaches to address migration, we then offer our preliminary thinking on key issues for managing the effects of the Venezuelan crisis as it impacts on Trinidad and Tobago. Initial priorities include regularizing the legal status of Venezuelans, forging a regional response, and improving and expanding local service delivery to meet their needs.

### ***Normal Policy Response***

A normal policy response to Venezuelan migrants was seen in three areas: regularization with minimal benefits, provision of health care and labour market access.

The government ran a two-week registration in May/June 2019. Successful applicants received six-month work permits that could be renewed once, at the discretion of the immigration office. Also, they were given permission to remain in Trinidad for a year. Permit holders have no pathway to permanent residency, though the government has extended them to another one year ending June 2021 (Haynes 2019).

It is recommended that the Trinidad and Tobago government undertakes another migrant registration and seriously consider working with the UN to establish a sound refugee policy so that many Venezuelans can be welcome as such with all due rights and privileges. [11]

### **Health Care**

Trinidad has given all Venezuelan migrants access to all health institutions and has health care systems that aim to guarantee care to anyone who needs it. However, universal access is not always a reality on the ground. Despite the legislation and regulations that make these systems universal, they are often under-resourced and overwhelmed, limiting their ability to offer care.

### **Labour Market Access**

The majority of employable Venezuelan adults in Trinidad and Tobago are already working. Unfortunately, in some cases work authorization does not always ensure access to the labour market as several cases were noted where Venezuelans'

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<sup>11</sup> IOM and UNHCR reduced their estimate from 40,000 to 21,000 Venezuelans living in Trinidad and Tobago following the census, as the government put out its first estimate of Venezuelans in the country, but other reliable sources confidentially suggested to the authors that there may be as many as 60,000 or 80,000 Venezuelans in the country. The lack of accurate information makes it impossible to even hazard an educated guess on the real number.

credentials were not recognized by Trinidad and Tobago employers and industry groups. As a result, these migrants have been unable to practice in the fields for which they have been trained. The resulting unemployment or underemployment is a loss for both Trinidad and Tobago and the migrants themselves.

### *Different Policy Responses*

#### **Education**

A different policy response from other countries has been seen in the field of education and in accepting migrants of another language. Trinidad and Tobago is the one country that requires a child to have a regular immigration status to enrol in school, which means that most Venezuelan migrant children in the country are not enrolled in school. Nonetheless, organizations in Trinidad and Tobago have come up with unique solutions in the face of this challenging situation. Living Water Community, has taken steps to provide educational alternatives for Venezuelan children.

In September 2019, a coalition of international organizations (UNHCR and the UN Children's Fund, UNICEF) and local NGOs (Living Water Community and TTV Solidarity Network) launched an online high school program, which is complemented by some in-person support, for Venezuelan migrants age 15 and over. Students who complete the program earn a high school diploma certified by Venezuela's Ministry of Education. The program is free, but in order to enrol, students must prove Venezuelan nationality by providing a birth certificate, identity document, and certified transcript.

There is an online option for younger students as well, which does not have any documentary requirements for enrolment. This program, for children ages 5 through 17, follows Trinidad and Tobago's education curriculum and results in a certification from the Caribbean Examinations Council. This program is offered in English only, though it does offer support for students whose first language is not English. By the end of October 2019, 888 children were enrolled in these two online platforms (Admin, United Nations Trinidad and Tobago, Aruba, Curaçao and Sint. Maarten 2019).

#### **Language Barriers**

Overcoming language barriers is a common struggle for many migrants around the world. In this sense, integration is somewhat easier for most Venezuelan migrants in Spanish-speaking countries. However, in Trinidad where English is the main language, these barriers are significant. Nonetheless, Trinidad has allowed these

migrants with a different language to come in almost unrestricted, at least up to July 2020.

## Radical Policy Response

Trinidad's radical policy is seen in the treatment of illegal migrants by the use of deportation and non- recognition of refugee status for many of them. Trinidad has taken the tougher and radical approach to address illegal immigrants and has deported considerable numbers of asylum seekers. As late as August 2020, close to eighty Venezuelans who had been registered with UNHCR and with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago have been informed of impending deportation. 12

Table 5. Key Informant Interviews

Organization	Mode of Interview
Immigration Division	Face-to-face
Immigration Division	Face-to-face
Coast Guard	Face-to-face
Coast Guard	Face-to-face
Trinidad and Tobago Police Service	Face-to-face
Trinidad and Tobago Police Service	Face-to-face
Trinidad and Tobago Police Service	Face-to-face
Academia -USC	Face-to-face
Academia -UT	Phone
Fisherman	Face-to-face
Fisherman	Face-to-face
Religious Leader	Face-to-face
Religious Leader	Face-to-face
Religious Leader	Face-to-face
News reporter. Trinidad Express	Phone
Lawyer	Face-to-face

## Emerging Themes and Recommendations for Trinidad

In the various interviews and group discussions with Venezuelan migrants and after a review of literature on Venezuelan migrants in Trinidad, several themes emerged. These themes centred around entry requirements, legislation for migrants

<sup>12</sup> Details revealed in an interview conducted with an Immigration Officer. September, 2020. Port of Spain.

and policy related matters, labour market integration, access to finances, access to health and educational institutions, and the role that the US and UN can play in assisting migrants.

1. Reviewing entry requirements. One option is to keep entry requirements low so migrants have an incentive to use legal entry channels. Another option is to impose more stringent requirements but create exceptions that allow those with family or work ties to the host country, and those in particularly vulnerable situations, to enter more easily. It is recommended that the Trinidad and Tobago government avoid knee-jerk reactions to Venezuelan migration and review both its immigration policies and its border controls with a humanitarian view of helping the migrants feel safe and secure in Trinidad.

2. Provision of Legal Status. Trinidad needs to find a way to provide legal status to its immigrants and can use the best practices of neighbouring countries to develop its policy.

3. Strengthening the asylum system, while maintaining other, more nimble legal pathways. Given the strong humanitarian dimension of recent flows, Trinidad could opt to strengthen its asylum system but without it having to serve as the principal path for recent arrivals to legalize their status.

4. Improving access to education through flexible enrolment practices and ongoing support. It is recommended that the Trinidad and Tobago government develop the necessary policy to ensure all children in Trinidad receive at least a primary school education.

5. Overcoming health-care barriers through clear policies on access and financing. It is recommended that Trinidad devote more resources to its health sector so that the health needs of the migrants there can be facilitated.

6. Unlocking migrants' skills to boost labour market integration and local economies. To effectively leverage this potential, Trinidad will need to create agile and transparent ways for immigrants to get professional and technical degrees earned in their home countries validated and recognized by employers. Creating expedited credential recognition pathways for applicants could also help fill labour market gaps.

7. Strengthen existing social services and local infrastructure. Venezuelan migrants require access to social services, including education and health care, and oftentimes cannot afford private institutions. To the extent possible, support from the international community should focus on improving the quality and capacity of existing national systems to serve both hosts and migrants.

8. The United States and the UN can play a productive leadership role. The United States has stepped up its engagement and leadership during this crisis and is the largest donor to the humanitarian response. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has made available US\$1.6 million to the people of Trinidad and Tobago to assist Venezuelans fleeing their homeland (US Embassy in Trinidad & Tobago 2019).

In relation to the UN, it was the hope of many migrants that the UNHCR will continue and intensify their work with the Living Waters Community to assist them both with food and education as well as with helping some of them achieve refugee status.

## **Conclusion**

### **The Way Forward**

In latest figures received by Immigration Officials, 22,000 Venezuelans have applied for refugee status. Of the 16,523 persons who were registered under the Migrant Registration Framework information has now been received from Venezuela which indicate that close to 3,100 of these persons have criminal records with over four hundred of them involved in serious crimes like prostitution, drug trafficking, human trafficking, possession of illegal firearms and ammunition and kidnapping. The other 2700 were charged in Venezuela for minor offences including petty theft, property damage, child neglect, and even traffic violations. ¶137<sup>13</sup> The Trinidad and Tobago government has to decide how it will be dealing with these migrants to ensure they will not continue with their bad practices in Trinidad.

Currently, (August 2021) the national containment measures to reduce the transmission of COVID-19, including lockdowns and movement restrictions, are severely impacting on migrants' livelihood opportunities, especially in the informal sector. Vulnerable migrants who lost income are at risk of increased food insecurity and malnutrition, as household assets are depleted and households' purchasing power is reduced. There is the likelihood that price increases and supply chain disruptions will contribute to decreased access to food and dietary diversity. The Trinidad and Tobago government, in ensuring that they develop a vibrant migrant policy to deal with the migration influx in a humane way, must also develop policies and infrastructure to assist the migrants in this special time of need.

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<sup>13</sup> Details revealed in an interview conducted with an Immigration Officer on 5 September, 2020 in Port of Spain.

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## **ВЕНЕСУЭЛАЛЫҚТАРДЫҢ ТРИНИДАД ПЕН ТОБАГОҒА КӨШУІ. ҚЫЛМЫС, БАНДАЛАР ЖӘНЕ ЗОРЛЫҚ-ЗОМБЫЛЫҚ ЭКСТРЕМИЗМІН ТҮСІНУ**

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**Аңдатпа.** Көші-қон мәселесі шығу және тағайындалу жағынан көптеген елдердің саяси күн тәртібінде маңызды бола түсуде. Ұлттық және халықаралық деңгейлерде көші-қон ағындарын бақылау үшін түрлі күш-жігер жұмсалды. Алайда, иммиграция туралы әдебиеттің жетіспеушілігіне сүйене отырып, эмиграциядан айырмашылығы, көші-қон мен иммиграцияның нақты себептері мен салдарын бағалау үшін көп нәрсе жасау керек екені белгілі болды. Көші-қон қабылдаушы елдерге үлкен әсер ететіндігі дәлелденді және қолданыстағы әдебиеттер иммиграция қабылдаушы ел халқының өміріне жағымды да, жағымсыз да әсер ететіндігін көрсетеді.

Бұл құжатта венесуэлалықтардың Тринидад пен Тобагоға қоныс аударуы, қылмыс (Т&Т), бандитизм және зорлық-зомбылық экстремизмі арасындағы байланыс туралы қолда бар мәліметтерге талдау жасалған. Онда көші-қон мен қылмыс, оның ішінде бандалық зорлық-зомбылық арасында тікелей байланыс бар деп айтылады. Бұл сонымен қатар көптеген басқа мигранттарды қабылдайтын мемлекеттерден айырмашылығы, венесуэлалық көші-қон мен зорлық-зомбылық экстремизмі арасында ешқандай байланыс жоқ екенін көрсетеді.

Сонымен қатар, бұл құжат венесуэлалықтардың көші-қонының себептерін және 2015-2020 жылдардағы Тринидад пен Тобагоға осы көші-қонның әсерін одан әрі қарастырады. Содан кейін ол венесуэлалық мигранттар мен қылмыс, бандитизм және экстремизм арасындағы байланысты қарастырады. Онда көші-қонға қарсы көптеген саяси шаралар қарастырылады, содан кейін елдегі актерлермен әңгімелесу нәтижесінде туындаған тақырыптар анықталады. Содан кейін ол үкіметтік емес ұйымдарға, қауіпсіздік қызметкерлеріне және шешім қабылдаушыларға бірнеше ұсыныстар ұсынады.

**Тірек сөздер:** көші-қон, зорлық-зомбылық экстремизмі, радикалдану, бандитизм.

## **МИГРАЦИЯ ВЕНЕСУЭЛЬЦЕВ В ТРИНИДАД И ТОБАГО. К ПОНИМАНИЮ ПРЕСТУПНОСТИ, БАНД И НАСИЛЬСТВЕННОГО ЭКСТРЕМИЗМА**

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**Аннотация.** Проблема миграции приобретает все большее значение в политических повестках дня многих стран происхождения и назначения. Были предприняты различные усилия для мониторинга миграционных потоков на национальном и международном уровнях. Однако, исходя из недостатка литературы по теме иммиграции в отличие от эмиграции, становится ясно, что необходимо сделать больше для оценки конкретных причин и последствий миграции и иммиграции. Доказано, что миграция оказывает огромное влияние на принимающие страны, и существующая литература демонстрирует, что иммиграция оказывает значительное влияние на жизнь населения принимающей страны, как положительное, так и отрицательное.

В этом документе представлен анализ существующих данных о взаимосвязи между миграцией венесуэльцев в Тринидад и Тобаго, преступностью (Т&Т), бандитизмом и насильственным экстремизмом. В нем утверждается, что существует прямая связь между миграцией и преступностью, включая бандитское насилие. Это также показывает, что в отличие от того, что происходит во многих других принимающих мигрантов государствах, здесь нет видимой связи между венесуэльской миграцией и насильственным экстремизмом.

Кроме того, в этом документе дополнительно рассматриваются причины миграции венесуэльцев и влияние этой миграции на Тринидад и Тобаго в период 2015-2020 годов. Затем в нем рассматривается связь между венесуэльскими мигрантами и преступностью, бандитизмом и экстремизмом. В нем рассматривается широкий спектр политических мер по борьбе с миграцией, а затем выделяются темы, возникшие в результате бесед с действующими лицами в стране. Затем в нем предлагаются некоторые рекомендации для общественных НПО, сотрудников служб безопасности и лиц, принимающих решения.

**Ключевые слова:** миграция, насильственный экстремизм, радикализация, бандитизм.