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**ANALYSIS OF MIGRATORY POLICIES OF
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DURING THE PERIOD 2019-2021 AND THEIR
IMPACT ON THE ECUADORIAN
MIGRATORY FLOW.**

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my dear parents who always supported me, to my sisters, for their unconditional help, and finally to myself for achieving this goal.

INDEX OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	1
1.1 Objectives	1
1.2 Theoretical Framework	2
1.2.1 Concept of migration	2
1.2.2. Types of migration	2
1.2.3. Causes of migration	3
1.2.4. International migration in international law and human rights	4
1.2.5. Migratory history of Ecuador	4
2. Literature review	6
2.1. Immigration policies of the United States 2019-2021 period	6
2.1.1. Donald Trump and immigration policies	6
2.1.2. Joe Biden and his immigration policies 2021	8
2.2. The migratory context in Latin America and Ecuador	8
2.2.1. Ecuador	9
3. Methods	10
4. Discussion	11
5. Conclusion	12
6. References	13

INDEX OF FIGURES, TABLES AND ANNEXES

Index of figures

Figura 1. <i>Evolution of the migratory balance from 1977 to 2021</i>	6
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Index of tables

Tabla 1. <i>Net migration flows 2019-2021</i>	9
Tabla 2. <i>International entries and exits of Ecuadorians in 2019 to 2021</i>	10
Tabla 3. <i>Migratory movement women and men 2019-2021</i>	10

Index of annexes

Annex 1.	17
Annex 2.	18
Annex 3.	21

Analysis of the migratory policies of the United States of America during the period 2019-2021 and their impact on the Ecuadorian migratory flow.

Abstract

This research aims to analyze the migratory policies of the United States of America during the 2019-2021 period and their influence on the Ecuadorian migratory flow. The research has a qualitative methodology that uses data collection as a strategy through bibliographic review and interviews with three officials from public institutions of the Government of Ecuador. The investigation has the immigration policies implemented by the Government of Donald Trump and those of Joe Biden in his first year of Government, such as the "Stay in Mexico" Project, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), Border Wall, Title 42, among others. Likewise, the investigation presents statistical data on Ecuadorian migration during this period and the main aspects of the analysis. Finally, among the most relevant results are that political discourses are a factor that influences Ecuadorian migration, characterized by migrants from the Ecuadorian highlands and the diversification of migratory routes

Key words: Migration policies, migration flow, United States, Ecuador, Political discourse.

Reviewed by

M Lourdes Moscoso

Analysis of the migratory policies of the United States of America during the period 2019-2021 and their impact on the Ecuadorian migratory flow.

1. Introduction

Covid-19, one of the most important events of the XXI century, ceased to be a factor that influenced the health of humanity, to be one of the biggest causes that led to the decay in the economic, political, and commercial systems.

The world was so affected by the virus that the lifestyle of many people changed radically. For many people, this was positive because this presented new opportunities, while for others, these were closed to them. People losing their jobs, and others looking for some opportunity to get their family ahead, were some of the situations that arose daily around the world. Ecuador was no exception, as the net unemployment rate decreased by 11.1 percentage points between 2019-2020, which led its citizens to decide to migrate (Esteves, 2020).

With regard to migration within Ecuador is not a new topic to be treated because, in the not too distant past, this same factor was the salvation for the country's economy to recover through its remittances. That is why Ecuadorians took it as a reference to prosperity and a good omen to travel to developed countries such as the United States and Spain in order to obtain long-awaited economic stability.

Thus, due to these migratory antecedents, the Covid-19 situation, and the increase in unemployment in the country, a considerable amount of Ecuadorians were registered to leave the territory in search of economic stability, as in many cases, in the United States. However, considering that the majority of Ecuadorians moved in an undocumented or irregular way to the northern country.

Therefore, the situation lies not just in Ecuadorians looking for a better style of life but also in how the United States handled undocumented migration situation in times of Covid-19, taking into account the two different governments of the period. On the one hand, Donald Trump and his demanding and rigorous measures regarding irregular migration, before and during the pandemic, and on the other hand, Joe Biden with provisions that change the migration landscape with less drastic measures towards migrants.

This paper will seek to analyze the impact that the measures adopted by the two United States governments had on the irregular migration situation, with emphasis on the case of Ecuadorian citizens during the 2019-2021 period. The importance of this work is to analyze the efficiency of the policies and how they influence above the Ecuadorian migrant population.

Therefore, the investigation will seek:

a) to analyze US immigration legislation during the 2019-2021 period; b) to analyze the influence of US legislation on the migratory flow of Ecuadorians; and c) to determine the socio-economic and legal status of Ecuadorian migrants, in particular from Azuay and Cañar during this period.

1.1 Objectives

Main Objective:

To analyze the variation of the migratory policies of the United States of America during the period 2019 - 2021 and its influence on the migratory flows in Ecuador, particularly in the provinces of Azuay and Cañar.

Specific objectives:

- To analyze US immigration legislation during the 2019-2021 period.
- To analyze the influence of US immigration legislation on the migratory flow of Ecuadorians.
- To determine the socio-economic and legal status of Ecuadorian migrants, mainly from Azuay and Cañar during this period.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

1.2.1 Concept of migration

There are several concepts for the term migration, but among the best known are: Migrations are displacements or changes of residence at a certain distance - which must be significant – and with a relatively permanent character or with a certain willingness to stay (Arango, 1985). The one given by Laura Oso (1997), from a demographic perspective in which she says:

“Migration is the displacement that brings the change of residence of the individual, from a place of origin to one of reception, and entails the transfer of administrative geographical divisions, either within a country (regions, provinces, municipalities) or between countries. It implies stays of not less than one year. However, each country determines the length of the stay.”

Finally, in a more general way, Carlos Giménez Romero (2003), summarizes both conceptions before referred to migration, as: “The displacement of a person or group of people from their place of usual residence to another, to stay in it for more or less time, to satisfy a need or achieve a particular improvement.”

1.2.2. Types of migration

According to Amparo Micolta (2005), migration is qualified into different categories, either by time, professional needs and demands, lifestyle, age, or degree of freedom. Moreover, these could be divided into other aspects that give us more specific points about them.

Regarding time:

- Seasonal: they refer to people who move during certain seasons of the year for collection or other jobs.
- Repeated temporary: these are workers who renewed their employment contract for another work season.
- Several years: it is the most frequent among modern migrants, who generally have the mentality of spending a few years outside the country of origin to return in a certain period.
- Indefinite: those who depart from their places of origin to remain indefinitely in the place of destination.

Regarding professional demands and needs:

- Stable professional status: it consists on workers in search of a better job opportunity.
- Requirement of professional activity: this category includes different workers such as civil servants, diplomats, and others.
- Search for higher development: those where professionals from different areas seek to improve their skills, either by academics or professional means.

Regarding age:

- Children: in this category, as a rule, at the time of migration, they are accompanied by their parents, either simultaneously or after them.
- Adults: It is due to needs presented by the person in which they include different responsibilities such as attention, care, and maintenance of others.

- Elderly: in this case, the elderly sometimes are forced to leave their hometowns: either to seek a better enjoyment or quality of life after retirement, among others. Of course, these migrations entail psychosocial or psychopathological difficulties.

Regarding the degree of freedom:

- Voluntary: it is the one in which the main reason for migration is economic or search of a better quality of life.
- Forced: within this are also subdivisions, which are:
 - Slaves: it occurred in the colony, when people from other continents were exploited by others, specially by with people.
 - Deportees: these are those who are returned to their place of origin due to the legal status they have in the destination country.
 - Exiled: these individuals who were forced to leave their country or region because their land was taken from them. So, sometimes they descend in their social status and get helped by various social or political institutions.
 - Refugees: individuals who leave their country due to causes that threaten their immediate livelihood or even their very life. Those can be political, social, racial, ethnic, among others.

Regarding the way of life:

This category refers to the style of life due to the activities that they produce, so sometimes they are faced with the need to migrate from a rural to an urban point.

1.2.3. Causes of migration

In the same way, according to Alberto Gómez (2010), the reasons why people leave their place of origin can be for natural or socio-economic, political, psychological, cultural reasons, or typical of the human condition.

Among the natural:

- Physical-chemical origin: it occurs due to meteorological and climatic changes such as droughts, fires, hurricanes, tsunamis, floods, earthquakes, tidal waves, thunderstorms, and volcanic eruptions.
- Biological origin: pests, diseases, phytosanitary and zoo sanitary problems.
- Inappropriate practices in exploitation activities: activities can be mining, agricultural, livestock, industrial, energy generating, or hydraulic dams. The explosions of this type make human life impossible to its surroundings.
- For adequacy and improvement of environmental conditions: which is due to the different changes or betterment in infrastructures, besides there are areas considered uninhabitable so that populations can be established.

On the part of the socio-economic, political, psychological, cultural, and proper causes of the human condition:

- Economic: this is due to the unequal exchange between countries and wage differences, asymmetries of credit, and information, increasing the demand for jobs, especially services, in developed countries. Living costs for pensioners or retirees between countries with higher to lower incomes.
- Political and legal: They refer to conflicts that develop internally, regionally, and internationally, which influence legislation and legal regulations.
- Demographic factors: some of them are overpopulation, the fall in the birth rate, and the aging of its population.
- Ethnological: the racial cause and interrelationships between peoples.
- Geographic: geographic features and border proximity.
- Historical: it is because of population settlements of ancestors that influence culture, language, familiarity, and religion.
- Sociological: family descendants in the destination countries, adoptions, or reunification among migrants.
- Psychological and medical: Cases in which there is a reason for not having the necessary environment for a health improvement, such as the weather. For instance, it can be given because of stress or motivation that drives the individual to move.

- Cultural, educational, scientific, and technological: Need to find a better academic or professional development, which causes qualified people to decide to leave their country to achieve this goal.
- Missions: in this case, the reasons are diplomatic or consular, religious, military, business, and commercial missions, among others.

1.2.4. International migration in international law and human rights

Nowadays, international migration is a situation that occurs daily because of the different means of transport, and the easy mobility between various countries around the world. However, although the freedom of choice of housing and mobility is established within international law, there is no single regulation worldwide that controls the mobility of people. Thus, this responsibility falls on each of the States in its foreign policy, therefore they can manage the flow of individuals within their territory, and all this through the migration policies they implement. These can be addressed to people who enter on a regular or documented basis, besides those in an undocumented or irregular situation.

Considering that this prerogative is within the obligations in the field of human rights and international standards, as well as any other agreement or convention that make limitations on sovereignty on the subject of human mobility (Velasco, 2006). It is regulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, which states that all members of human families are subjects of inalienable and equal rights, in the same way, that describes the principle of equality as a basis for the maintenance of peace, freedom, and justice in the world. What is illustrated in the 2013 report on the human rights of migrants by the statement:

All migrants, without discrimination, are protected by international human rights standards. The exceptions are very few and precisely defined, namely the right to vote and be elected and the right to enter and stay in a country. Even in the case of such exceptions, procedural guarantees must be respected, as well as obligations regarding non-refoulement, the best interests of the child, and family unity (UN, 2013).

Another convention that focuses on this discipline is the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (ICRMW), approved by the United Nations General Assembly in 1990. Which is based on the rights proclaimed in other instruments of international law such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In 2019, the Global Compact on Migration was adopted in Morocco and ratified by 164 UN members. This international agreement has as purpose to respond to the refugee crisis in Europe and the caravans of Latin American migrants to the United States. Among the agreements reached are the improvement of legal migration routes, recognizing the right to health and education of irregular migrants in destination countries, and avoiding the separation of families (UN, 2018).

1.2.5. Migratory history of Ecuador

Migration within the Ecuadorian environment is not a new issue to be addressed because it has been taking place for several decades. The beginning of the migratory movements of the Ecuadorian population is recorded in the mid-twentieth century, and the United States was the main destination. The migrant movement is because of the export crisis of the toquilla straw hat, one of the main lucrative activities of some areas of the country (Serrano, 2008). The first migratory wave was achieved, which was developed in the following decades, although of lesser magnitude (Cortez & Ortega, 2008). But during that period, it was possible to evidence a greater flow of migrants who came from the provinces of Azuay and Cañar.

At the end of the XX century, Ecuador suffered a hard economic and financial crisis in which the country's GDP was reduced to 30%, causing an accelerated expansion of poverty (Serrano, 2008). In addition to other factors such as the fall in oil prices, the continued adjustment to the fund monetarist, the mainly external debt, and the rescue banking worsened the situation inside the country (Cortez and Ortega, 2008). Consequently, the departure of migrants being massive caused one of the largest migratory waves in the history of the country, also known as “the stampede”.

In this same period, "the stampede" presented itself with certain differences, among which are: the destinations, the gender of the migrants, and the origin of each one, among others. On the one hand, the main destinations were the United States, Spain, and Italy; thus, in the census conducted in 2011, it is recorded that 49.9% of migrants headed to Spain, 25.7% to the United States, and 9.9% to Italy, respectively (Ramirez, 2021). That indicates that migratory flows were not only concentrated in a single destination, but also varied in the time of choice for residence. However, in 2003 the flow changed due to the Schengen visa¹ requirement, which led to the United States again becoming the main destination.

Secondly, this wave was characterized by the feminization of migration. It is caused by the increase of women in mobility flows, as in the constitution of the heads of migratory chains and self-employed migrants. Evidenced in the censuses carried out in Ecuador, indicated that 47% of the migrant population was female, mainly from the Province of Guayas. As a third aspect, this phenomenon was carried out throughout the territory and not only in a single specific area (Southern zones). Consequently, there was no distinction between the origin of the people, whether they came from rural or urban areas, considering that in some social classes, it occurred even more than in others. Moreover, migration became important in the political field. For this reason, different governments implemented new reforms to manage the situation, among which were the implementation of the right to vote abroad in the 1998 Constitution, the creation of the Undersecretariat of the National Plan for Ecuadorians Abroad (2001), and the foundation of the Undersecretariat of Consular and Migratory Affairs (2003), among others (Ramirez, 2021). However, at the end of the first decade of the 21st century, Ecuadorian migration decreased for the first time in history, with a higher number of migrants returning to the country (Figure 1).

Among the reasons why Ecuadorian migrants return to the country are the international financial crisis of 2008 and the arrival of the Government of the Citizen Revolution. Firstly, the financial crisis of 2008 originated from the mortgage crisis in the United States, which later affected Europe and Asia, was a reason why migrants residing in those countries needed to consider returning to their country or to other locations where the situation had not been affected to a greater extent. The case of Ecuadorian migrants was similar since they were also affected by the crisis, they required help from their relatives in Ecuador or looking for multiple jobs, while those with dual nationality sought new destinations to migrate. On the other hand, the government of Rafael Correa, also known as the Citizen's Revolution, established a stronger relationship with the emigrants. Therefore, they were included in the country's political life, such as the imposition of policies and programs to defend the rights of Ecuadorians abroad. In addition, during the 2007-2014 period, Ecuador experienced economic, political, and social stability, a reason why a call for migrants to return to the country was pertinent. Given the government's request, compared to the departure of 1,137,875 people, the results were positive, given that in 2014 the return of 1,143,116 Ecuadorians to the country was recorded (Usiña, 2022). It is worth mentioning that during this period, Ecuador became one of the attractive destinations for retired U.S. foreigners or professionals from Europe, among others (Ramirez, 2021). Thus, the country not only managed to get its citizens to return but also foreigners to take it as an option for residence.

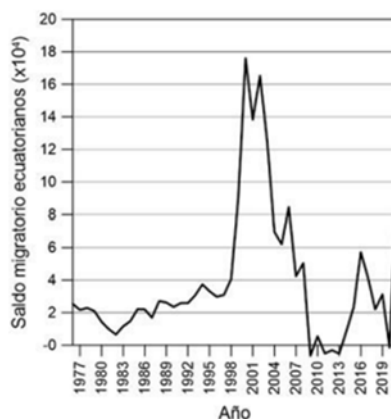
However, when Lenin Moreno assumed the presidency, the neoliberal model returned, and questioning about security and control in the context of the increase in arrivals of Venezuelan migrants, produced the conditions of life within the country were affected (Ramírez, 2020). Projects such as the "Prosperity Plan"² led to budget cuts and adjustments that provoked increased unemployment and poverty. Therefore, between the years 2016 to 2019, approximately 541 million people fell into poverty, causing the number of people leaving the country to increase. In the case of 2019, it was reported that 1,513,513 Ecuadorians entered the country, but 1,544,78 Ecuadorians left it, which shows that the migratory flow was negative (INEC, 2019). Hence, Ecuador experienced a high degree of migration within the country in seasons such as "the stampede", dates when many Ecuadorians have left in search of a better standard of living. But Correa's government paused it because of the political, economic, and social stability in which Ecuador found itself; however, it did not last long due to the government of Lenin Moreno.

Figure 1.

¹ Given the migratory stampede between 1999 and 2003, the number of Ecuadorians in Europe increased because there was no Schengen visa requirement, so by 2004, this was already a requirement (Ramirez, 2014).

² Prosperity Plan is a project aimed at having a dynamic economy with a responsible, transparent, and disciplined management of resources and finances for all. To guarantee the development of all Ecuadorians, returning prosperity and hope to the country (Finanzas Gobierno Ecuador, 2017).

Evolution of the migratory balance from 1977 to 2021



Source: Ramirez, 2021

2. Literature review

2.1. Immigration policies of the United States 2019-2021 period

The United States immigration policies have presented modifications from the 2019 to 2021 period of time. As a result of the opposing ideologies during the administrations of Donald Trump and Joe Biden. Both with different idiosyncrasies regarding migration, so the measures adopted in these governments differ. Therefore, we will analyze Donald Trump's policies before and during the Covid-19 pandemic and continue with those adopted during Joe Biden's administration.

2.1.1. Donald Trump and immigration policies

In 2017, Trump began his administration with strength and determination to make significant changes in the United States. He believed that the country should be free and clear of the dangers brought by foreigners, i.e., migrants entering the country's southern border daily. Thus, his nationalistic and, as many commentators consider them, xenophobic thinking led him to implement strict and severe immigration policies, whether for individuals who were irregular immigrants within the territory or those who were about to enter. The statement that he not only made very clear through his reforms but also in his press conferences, so comments such as: "When Mexico sends its people, it doesn't send us the best... They bring us drugs... They bring us crime... They are rapists... And some, I assume, are good people... You wouldn't believe how bad those people are. Those are not people. Those are animals" (Hamlin, 2021) were phrases said by Trump during his administration, which made clear the position he takes regarding irregular migrants and why migration was an important issue to address for the United States to "flourish." In Addition, from his campaign period, themes such as the border wall made it clear that his interest was to reduce as much as possible the entry of migrants, which is the reason why this speech and his projects in this area allowed him to reach the presidency.

The main focus of his administration's immigration policies included: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and its temporary protected status, the border wall, asylum, criminal prosecutions and separation of minors, persecution protocols, the "Stay in Mexico" program, and Title 42.

The DACA program, also known as "Dreamers", was created in 2012 by the government of Barack Obama to allow the stay of people who entered as minors and grant them residency as state protection. However, this program was one of the first projects on which Trump focused because the funds destined for this project might be used for the construction of the border wall that he had so much proposed in his election campaign. Although this idea could not be achieved due to the opposition of Congress and given this scenario, the activity that Trump adopted for this program had repercussions in 2017, thus, as a measure against this obstacle, Trump supposed the activities of the DACA program, causing several cases of deported undocumented migrants, as well as protests against it. Although the legality of this law was still under discussion, there was still the danger of being deported (Migration Policy Institute, 2017).

Regarding the border wall, this project aimed to stop irregular migrants on the border with Mexico, which according to his intentions, was to be paid for by the Mexican state; however, it did not turn out that way. Although there were already parts of it on the border, an investment of billions of dollars was needed, the same that he did not get, but a fraction of them by Congress in 2019, where he was granted 1.38 billion dollars for the construction of additional fencing (Hines, 2019). Therefore, Trump, in such desperation, decided to use the emergency reserve funds to complete his goal but was unable to do so due to opposition from entire cities, border states, environmentalists, and military members, among others.

On the other hand, the destruction of the asylum system for immigrants was another shocking change made by Donald Trump. It was one of the most inhumane and heartbreaking reforms because it went against national and international policies (Hines, 2019). In the first instance, this policy was implemented in the years 2018-2019 as a consequence of the approximately 100,000 Central American migrants, who requested asylum in the United States due to the factors that stalked their countries, such as organized gangs, and climate change, and others. Therefore, of being an uncontrollable amount heading to the U.S. borders, border patrols launched rubber bullets and tear gas against them to stop in the city of Tijuana, Mexico (Petrich, 2018). Further, adding that this was not the only violation that existed, considering that in the wait for asylum proceedings, several families were separated, even in the knowledge that the families could remain together during the process. Consequently, children, separated from their families, were sent to centers, which some commentators considered concentration camps due to the lack of human rights for children (Arango, 2019).

Nevertheless, despite the daily situations occurring at the border with Mexico, the number of detentions increased to 144,116 in May 2019. Hence former President Donald Trump toughened the immigration policy to the extent that he seriously considered imposing tariff regulations on Mexico to control migration (Gutiérrez González, 2021). As a result, in July 2019, through a joint declaration by the United States and Mexico, the Program of Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) was announced, also known as the "Stay in Mexico" which consisted in remaining in the Mexican state until their request for asylum could be resolved. In this same agreement, the governments stated that those who cross the southern border of the United States to request asylum would be sent immediately to Mexico, where the resolution of their asylum request would take place. Likewise, the Mexican state would provide job opportunities, health care, and education to migrants and their families while remaining in its territory (Homeland Security, 2021).

Therefore, in September of the same year, Minister of Foreign Affairs Marcelo Ebrard indicated that the rate of migration flow decreased by 58%, a result achieved through the measures previously taken by Mexico (Pineda and Fernández, 2019). It is important to note that after obtaining good results from this program, it was closed at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic when a new provision, Title 42, came into force.

With the presence of Covid-19 since March 2020, most countries around the world felt obliged to implement new human mobility reforms to safeguard the health of their citizens. Although, this health emergency was also considered advantageous by some governments for the application of measures aimed at refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers (Vega Macías, 2021). Additionally, the United States was not left behind in the face of this assumption since, at that time, the presidency was still in the hands of Donald Trump hence he did not hesitate to activate new reforms in migratory matters. These included the suspension of the issuance of work visas for foreigners, and visas in technology sectors, such as seasonal workers in the hotel industry, and others were even suspended (Vega Macías, 2021).

Likewise, in response to the health situation, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released an order under Title 42, which stated that it would prohibit entry into the country of persons without authorization, including asylum seekers. Hence, a policy of immediate expulsion was declared for persons who irregularly cross the southern border of the United States, based on the mentioned Title 42 (Gutiérrez González, 2021). Thus, this means that this measure violates the rights of migrants because they are not allowed a legal process of deportation, in which the U.S. state only took advantage of the pandemic.

However, in the pre-pandemic period, the population most affected by the policies adopted by the United States was Central America, but as a result of COVID-19, the number of migrants from most Latin American countries increased. Thus, the percentage of people apprehended at the southern border increased by 137% between March and July 2020 (Semple, 2020).

2.1.2. Joe Biden and his immigration policies 2021

In January 2021, with the entry of Biden to the presidency, the vision toward a foreign policy on immigration changed to a more humanistic and less restrictive one than the one presented during the four years of the Trump administration, with a lower level of nationalism and anti-immigrant sentiment. From the beginning of his candidacy for the presidency, Joe Biden promised to reverse the reforms previously carried out by Donald Trump, so he promised a thorough and ambitious agenda for the renewal of the immigration system and border policies (Verea, 2022). Thus, when he came to power, one of his first actions was to focus on the immigration situation and rape in Central America (Ayuso, 2021).

These included the termination of border policies that violated the rights of migrants, with particular emphasis on asylum seekers and minors. As well included in these policies were the MPP program, also known as "Stay in Mexico", and the border wall. But it also reactivated the DACA project, the Temporary Protected Status (TPS), to provide them with permanent status for their stability within the country (Gutiérrez González, 202). However, although Biden's purpose was to renew immigration policies, it was not entirely possible because some reform policies had to be maintained, as was the case with Title 42 on deportations.

Consequently, given the flexibility and maintenance of other immigration policies, there was an increase in the flow of irregular entry at the beginning of the year, which was considered a "call effect" for foreign migrants to try to enter the United States again in an irregular manner. Hence, the problem reappeared, bringing consequences for migrant citizens and the U.S. State (Ayuso, 2021).

Therefore, it is evident that although the Biden administration maintains a pro-migration discourse, he still favors measures that allow reducing the irregular entry of migrants.

2.2. The migratory context in Latin America and Ecuador

Migrations at the international level have been a constant within the different regions of the world, though these did not suffer very drastic changes, some events have caused certain variations in them. Considering that due to globalization, the effects of migration influence family ties, economic exchanges, and cultural connections (IOM, 2018).

In the Latin American context, the migratory flow has been increasing respect over the last 30 years thanks to the fact that citizens from Latin America and the Caribbean constantly migrate to different areas of the world. Thus, in 2019, the United Nations (UN) counted that the number of migrants amounted to 271.6 million people, a number that represented 3.5% of the total world population. Of which 8.2 million migrants belonged to Latin America and the Caribbean, representing 1.9% of the region's total population (Bogado, 2021). The same statistics have remained unchanged in recent years, as have some characteristics of the migratory flow.

The aspects that have not changed for the last three years are the countries with the higher number of emigrants, the destinations, and some other circumstances found in Latin America. In the first place, Mexico is the major country with the higher number of emigrants in the region and second place worldwide, followed by Colombia and Venezuela. Second, the destination to which most migrants go is the United States, other countries in the region, and Europe. Finally, among the causes that provoke the continuous displacement of citizens is due to the food crises and the political instability that exist in the region, with greater emphasis on countries such as Venezuela, Central American states such as El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala (Ferrick & NERO, 2019).

The most important events that occurred in 2019 is the continuation of the political and economic crisis in Venezuela and the Northern Triangle caravans. On the one hand, Venezuela, with its humanitarian crisis, produced 3 million emigrants at the end of 2018 and became 4 million just in the middle of 2019. Among the destinations of the majority were the neighbors to the south, these were, Colombia, Ecuador, Argentina, and Chile, among others, and to a lesser extent the neighbors to the north, including the United States (Ferrick & NERO, 2019). In the case of the Northern Triangle (El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala), the reason for migration was due to the economic situation, security and violence, family reunification, climate change, and environmental damage (EFE, 2021). Therefore, millions of people from this region traveled daily to the United States, which led to the implementation of a migration project known as the Migrant Protection Program, the same one mentioned above.

In 2020, due to the spread of Covid-19, Latin American countries imposed travel and movement restrictions, nationally and internationally. These international control measures were most prevalent between March and June 2020, while national quarantine measures remained in all region countries. However, with the presence of new variants of Covid-19, international restrictions were re-established to avoid the level of contagion in the region's countries. However, by the middle of the following year, the restriction, nationally and internationally, disappeared almost completely as a result of the vaccine against the virus (Bogado, 2021).

In this regard, it is important to emphasize that it had not revealed what happened to migrants in transit through the different countries in the region. Therefore, in the case of MERCOSUR granted some special residence permits as part of the migration facilitation policy or for reasons of humanitarian assistance. Similarly, the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) agreed to facilitate the return of its Andean citizens in the sub-region who, because of the pandemic, had been stranded in another country of the community. For which measures on cross-border transportation, virtual work technologies, among others, were also implemented. Note that the border closure measures were accompanied by the securitization of the borders, whereby the armed forces were involved in border control, as in the case of Colombia on its border with Venezuela (IOM, 2022).

2.2.1. Ecuador

The Ecuadorian context, in 2019- 2021, shows changes and similarities in the flow of international mobility. On the one hand, note that in 2019, the year before Covid-19, the gross migration flow decreased by 8% compared to the year before it. The number of international movements was in the average of previous years but still showed a little different from that of 2018 (Alban, 2019). In 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions issued, the international flow fell 71% compared to the previous year, one of the highest declines in Ecuadorian history (Cuzco, 2020). On the other hand, in 2021, due to the easing of pandemic restrictions, the migratory flow rises, which shows a growth of 84.5% (Cuzco, 2021) (*Table I*).

Table 1.
Net migration flows 2019-2021

Year	Net migration flows	Percent
2019	7.043.206	-8%
2020	2.021.476	-71%
2021	2.844.788	+84,6%

Sources: based on Registro Estadístico de Entradas y Salidas Internacionales 2019, Registro Estadístico de Entradas y Salidas Internacionales 2020; Registro Estadístico de Entradas y Salidas Internacionales 2021

Among the other aspects, the number of international departures and arrivals of Ecuadorian are different in the three years. In the year 2019, there was a total international movement of 3,058,221. However, in 2020, that number reduced to 1,017,694, and finally, in 2021 it grew to 1,654,188. Each year left a different migratory balance, -31,195; 1,504; and -81,758 respectively (*Table 2*).

Table 2.
International entries and exits of Ecuadorians in 2019 to 2021.

Year	2019	2020	2021
Total	3.058.221	1.017.694	1.654.188
Entries	1.513.513	509.599	786.215
Exits	1.544.708	508.095	867.973
Migratory balance	-31.195	1.504	-81.758

Sources: Registro Estadístico de Entradas y Salidas Internacionales 2019, Registro Estadístico de Entradas y Salidas Internacionales 2020; Registro Estadístico de Entradas y Salidas Internacionales 2021

Concerning the gender that had the highest number of international movements of Ecuadorians, shown that in 2019 and 2021, the female gender is the one with the highest number of international trips, with 777,691 and 405,177 respectively, compared to 735,822 and 381,038 for the male gender. However, in 2020, the male gender predominates with 259,105 compared to 250,494 for the female gender (*Table 3*).

Table 3.
Migratory movement women and men 2019-2021

Year	Men	Women
2019	735.822	777.691
2020	259.105	250.494
2021	381.038	405.177

Sources: Registro Estadístico de Entradas y Salidas Internacionales 2019, Registro Estadístico de Entradas y Salidas Internacionales 2020; Registro Estadístico de Entradas y Salidas Internacionales 2021

Ecuadorians' age groups vary equally during this period; in 2019, the predominant age group is 30 to 39 years old, followed by 20 to 29 years old (Alba, 2019). While in 2020, the age group with the highest attendance is 18 to 29 years old, followed by the 30 to 39 years old group (Cuzco, 2020). Finally, in 2021, the situation is the same as in 2019, with the age group 30 to 39 years old being the most popular, followed by the group 20 to 29 years old (Cuzco, 2021).

The similarities between the three years include the United States was the most frequented destination by Ecuadorians; in addition, the most frequently used means of transportation is by air. And finally, the most frequent reasons for travel were tourism, followed by residence.

Likewise, within the socioeconomic factors, in 2020, Ecuador presented a GDP decrease of 7.8%, and the poverty rate increased by 6.7% compared to the previous year. While in 2021, the extreme poverty rate was 14.7%, a very high value compared to the 5.2% recorded in 2019, and the unemployment rate reached 5.1%. These statistics allow us to observe the country's reality during this period, indicating what could be one of the reasons why Ecuadorians decided to migrate. However, the provinces with the highest number of emigrants are those of the Sierra, such as Azuay, Cañar, Cotopaxi, Chimborazo, and Tungurahua, which did not have a high rate of poverty or unsatisfied basic needs. Hence, economic reasons were not the only cause of migration but also other social and cultural factors, such as family reunification (Montalvo, 2021).

3. Methods

This paper sought to analyze the impact of the measures adopted by the two governments of the United States concerning the irregular migratory situation, emphasizing the case of Ecuadorian citizens during the period 2019-2021. In this way, the research implemented the qualitative methodology since it was produced with descriptive data, that is, the people's own words, spoken or written, and observable behavior. That allowed understanding and development of concepts based on data, and not collecting information to evaluate hypotheses or preconceived theories (Quecedo & Castaño, 2002).

In the first place, a systematic review was carried out on the modifications of the immigration policies of the United States by the two governments, Donald Trump and Joe Biden. Similarly, interviews were given with officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility and a consular officer from Ecuador in the United States so that they let us know the policies implemented by the United States.

Based on the information obtained from the investigation, an analysis was carried out regarding the influence that migration policies had on the flow of Ecuadorian migration, for which we accessed reliable sources to obtain this information. In addition, data were collected to get to know the socio-economic and legal situation of Ecuadorian migrants.

4. Discussion

In this section, the first part will analyze the migration policies of the United States in the period of Donald Trump and Joe Biden. Then an evaluation will follow regarding whether migration policies influenced the Ecuadorian migratory flow, and finally, it will mention some aspects of the migratory flow from 2019-2021.

The immigration policies of the United States during the 2019-2021 period, in the Donald Trump administration and in that of Joe Biden, had gone through certain variations that allow us to observe the different ways of handling the immigration situation.

On the one hand, Donald Trump, with his nationalist thinking and his not-so-favorable speech towards migration, managed to reduce the number of entries to the North American country, of course, accounting that it occurred more disperse during his government period. So perhaps, he imposed some fear on the immigrants so that they would reconsider traveling to the United States. In the case of Ecuador, there were comments about the risky situation at the border due to Trump's government, so not many Ecuadorians risked proceeding with the trip by undocumented way.

Nevertheless, when Joe Biden entered the presidency, the opposite happened because he presented a more humane discourse for the benefit of migrants, hence the opportunity to enter the United States would be simpler. Thus, due to the call effect at the beginning of his government, migrants from around the world sought entry to the North American country. Ecuadorians were not exempt from this, so, as observed in the table above, the migratory balance is very high compared to the past two years.

However, although their speeches were different on the migratory issue, some aspects reflect that both sought to reduce or at least control the migratory situation. On the one hand, Trump, when he received the presidency, faced numerous undocumented migrants seeking residency in his country. One of the people interviewed in the Foreign Ministry corroborates that information, saying that during Obama's presidency, they had more cases of migrants, people who died at the border in the years 2014-2015, the time before his presidency. Further, the situation that arose in 2019 due to the crises that the citizens of Central America were going through and 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic. These factors influenced the imposition of new policies to prevent the entry of undocumented immigrants. But on the other side, Biden faced a huge number of migrants in a short period, hence seeking to reduce the entry of migrants through the borders, but never tried to affect undocumented residents or asylum seekers through immigration policies. As one interviewee mentions, even with Trump's "anti-immigrant" policies, there were no deportations as in the opening to migrants in Biden. That indicates that both governments sought to reduce the entry of immigrants into the country.

Analyzing a little more the immigration policies during the period of Trump and Biden, we could not say which one has the best management of the immigration situation to date. One of the reasons why we could not compare their management would be because the Trump government period had already ended while Biden is still in office, so that would be counterproductive for any government. Not to mention that the events presented in both governments differ, even so in times of covid, Trump faced a smaller number of migrants due to international travel restrictions worldwide, so the Covid and the economic crisis did not affect it to a greater degree as in Biden's period. Thus, defining them as the best or worst management would be wrong.

Concerning the Ecuadorian migratory flow and its relation to the migratory policies of the United States, there is no major repercussion on it. As the second person interviewed in the Foreign Ministry mentions, no police have regulated the flow of Ecuadorians to the United States, like what happened with the visa to Mexico. The cause that most influenced migratory flow was the political discourse handled by both governments. But the existence of some policies such as title 42 had caused several Ecuadorian migrants to return to the country. That information verified in the risky migration report of 2021 which shows that in 2019, 4.52% of Ecuadorians were not admitted between the United States-Mexico border, likewise, in the year 2020 this number rose to 6.19%, and in 2021 to 16.18% (Zibell, 2021).

However, other factors that stand out in these years must be analyzed and evaluated according to the interviews performed. Among which are the transportation and migratory routes, the origin of the migrants, reasons for which they can migrate, and gender and age of the Ecuadorian migrants, among others. In the first place, Ecuadorian migration in the 2019-2021 period was mainly by air, of course, the trips were not always direct to the destination country, that is, within this context to the United States, but they went to

nearby countries to serve as a connection. As interviewees 1 and 2 mention, several migratory routes were formed, among the best-known was the route to Mexico, where international trips were even made from the Latacunga airport to Cancun, without a stopover, for several Ecuadorians who migrated from this area. Some acts of corruption within this context were frequent, for example some people paid migration agents to allow them to enter or evade checkpoints. This route ceased after Mexico required an entry visa for Ecuadorians. However, new routes appear not only by air or land but also by sea, such as the Bahamas, which, although riskier, prefers to reach the United States.

Likewise, the origin of the people who migrated was mainly from the provinces of the Sierra. That information corroborated by one person interviewed within the Foreign Ministry, who affirmed that almost 80% of the migrants were from Azuay and Cañar. But in the same way, it could not be confirmed if that number was already residing in the United States or not, since it is estimated based on the number of deported cases, considering that the same person can have several deportation cases. Further, according to the primary source within one of the consulates of Ecuador in the United States, the majority of people who requested help came from the province of Tungurahua, especially from the cantons of Ambato, Pelileo, and Píllaro, but also from other such as Pichincha, Guayas, among others. Although within their jurisdiction area, there were people from Azuay and Cañar who already reside, those who recently requested help were from the mentioned provinces. That is why the Andean provinces of Ecuador were the ones with the highest number of emigrants during this period.

Among other characteristics in this migratory flow are the age, gender of the travelers, and the reasons why they made the trip. According to data collected by the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC), the main age groups were between 20 to 29 and 30 to 39 years old. The interviewee within the consulate corroborated this information, who indicates that the people requesting documents were women with children, entire families, and young people within these age ranges, who in some cases commented that they were traveling for the first time or were returning due to the situation in Ecuador.

Within 2021, there is a group of Ecuadorians that had a great impact, which is children and adolescents. According to information collected at the Foreign Ministry, this group had a great impact because the children traveled unaccompanied, not only documented but also undocumented. Hence, sometimes they were victims of sexual violence and inhumane treatment during the trip, as in cases where they returned as deportees (Primicias, 2021). The reason for this group's migration was due to family reunification in the destination country, and according to information provided by the Consulate, until last year, the US government granted a pardon to families with minors, which allowed them to stay in the country. That means that the reasons for migrating were mainly the economic situation and family reunification. This number was reduced due to the imposition of the visa to Mexico so that parents did not risk sending their children by another more dangerous route.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, the information presented in the article on the migratory policies of the United States during the 2019-2021 period and its impact on the Ecuadorian migratory flow showed the following results:

Firstly, United States immigration policies in 2019-2021 suffered changes due to Donald Trump and Joe Biden administrations. On the one hand, Trump had an unfavorable discourse toward migrants, as evidenced in immigration policies such as the border wall with Mexico, the "Stay in Mexico" project, and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), separation of minors. On the other hand, Biden showed a more humane and supportive speech to migrants, reflected as an opportunity to enter the U.S. more easily in an undocumented manner. In addition, by eliminating some measures adopted by the previous government, he reinforced this discourse. However, the objective of both governments was to reduce the entry of immigrants into the territory, thus, remained policies such as Title 42 with this purpose in mind.

Concerning if migration policies have an impact on the Ecuadorian migration flow, we found there was no direct relationship. Instead, it was more due to the migratory discourse that the presidents of the time had or still have that caused a certain influence that caused Ecuadorians to find an opportunity or threat to migrate to the North American country. But among the policies that have come to affect Ecuadorians more, although not directly, was Title 42, since it caused several people to return, without achieving their goals.

Ultimately, we found aspects that differentiate this migratory flow compared to the previous ones in which it stands out that it occurred with greater concentration in the Ecuadorian highlands as opposed to other regions, precisely in the provinces of Azuay, Cañar, and Tungurahua. Likewise, this fact is notable

given that these provinces did not have high levels of poverty, so the main reason for migration was not assumed to be due to the crisis caused by Covid-9, but also to family regrouping among other social causes.

Another main factor is that the age ranges at the national level that was most present in this analyzed period are those from 20 to 29 years old and from 30 to 39 years old, although at the beginning of 2021, especially in the provinces of Azuay and Cañar, a higher migration by children and adolescents was observed, not only documented but also undocumented or irregular.

Finally, this migratory flow was affected due to the migratory routes to arrive in the United States. Given that the trip was mainly by air to the Mexican country, but due to the new provision on the visa requirement, it was reduced for some time. However, it restarted when new longer, and riskier routes were found, such as the example of the Bahamas. That supposes that it was an aspect that stopped child migration since, being of greater risk, the relatives did not dare to send the minors.

The period from 2019 to 2021 has shown different events that have allowed us to witness another Ecuadorian migratory flow with the aspects already exposed and how the speeches of the governments of two North American presidents influenced it.

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Appendix 1.

Interview questions for the degree project "United States immigration policies during the 2019-2021 period and their impact on the Ecuadorian migratory flow"

These questions will have the purpose of analyzing the variation of the migratory policies of the United States of America during the period 2019 - 2021 and its influence on migratory flows in Ecuador, in particular in the provinces of Azuay and Cañar.

- What was the biggest change witnessed in the transition from the presidency from Donald Trump to Joe Biden on immigration?
- What do you think was the best immigration policy implemented by the United States during the 2019-2021 period?
- What year was the most evidence of migratory movement towards the United States?

- How did Donald Trump's immigration policies influence the migratory flow of Ecuadorians before the pandemic, exactly in 2019?
- Was there variation in the mobilization of Ecuadorian citizens, specifically from Azuay and Cañar, to the US in this period?
- Which of the immigration policies implemented by the United States most affected the migrant population of Ecuador?
- What was the age range of the most significant Ecuadorian migrants during this period?
- How do you think the immigration policies of Donald Trump and Joe Biden have affected migrants in your area of responsibility?

Thank you for your cooperation.

Regards,
 Geomara Tapia Idrovo
 Student of International Studies major
 Universidad del Azuay.

Appendix 2.

Interview 1.

Officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, zone 6 Interviewees 1 and 2

Interviewee 1: It is not found that Biden has created a new law for Ecuadorians to enter (...)

Interviewee 2: Or to shelter them, he only commented that they were welcome, nothing more.

Interviewee 1: He depends a lot on the authorities, for example, judges, the refugee authorities are much more accommodating

Interviewee 2: in fact, we're not certain if they are accepting, we have no one.

Interviewee 1: but, see, one thing is that they accept them or they're in process of refuge, but another one is the increase of migration.

Interviewee 1: For example, there an increase of migration due to the pandemic, the context, for these facilities increased, but if we compare the number of deportations of the past years, we could see that there are more deportation in 2021. But it is because there is more

migrants. In 2021 there are more than 8000 Ecuadorians who migrates, but the control is still there. For example, if tomorrow, US analyzed and said we don't need more migrants, they forced the borders as they are doing now with the title 42, so everybody is arrested for deportation.

Interviewee 2: exactly, there's the problem. because the questions are for the consul (...)

Interviewee 2: What is the best immigration policy in the United States? What was the biggest change that you witnessed? Not so much in politics, but in discourse, from anti-immigrant Trump to Biden open to migration, that was the change that took place.

Interviewee 1: the laws do not influence because there was no new law more than 7 thousand cases of deportees in 2021.

Interviewee 2: we've never had a higher number like this (...)

Interviewee 2: Concerning the question 2, i could say that we evidenced an increase in migration of children.

Interviewee 1: there were cases of children accompanied by a father or mother, who have been deported, and we had visits from these cases.

Interviewee 2: I went and cried, how many barefoot children, deported, shields, I cried to see the situation of the poor children.

Interviewee 1:: now it is also the number, as it is a matter of number for example, we have had more than 7 thousand cases of deportees in 2021,

Interviewee 2: Yes, we have never had such a high number of people deported.

Interviewee 1: In the human mobility report, on the other hand, it says that more than 70,000 people have migrated in 2021 throughout Ecuador, but of those people, at least 80% have been from Azuay and Cañar. It is a fact that we do have.

Interviewee 2:: It is in the table report and all the documents that were delivered to the minister.

Interviewee 1: Now what happened at the time that Mexico required a visa, it automatically changed, which practically dropped to 0. But now we see that it has begun to grow and grow

Interviewee 2:: because now the routes are different.

Interviewee 1: Because migratory routes are like that, for example Mexico is already known and is in the press, there were direct flights from Latacunga to Cancun. Not even to Mexico City, so they traveled. Within that chain there were acts of corruption, immigration agents are paid for people to enter, or evade points, they know their ways. New routes are opened that began to have a high flow. They ask for the closure of the border and new routes begin to be generated. But obviously...

Interviewee 2: the Bahamas one,

Interviewee 1: but obviously, people don't risk sending a child.

Interviewee 2: the trip is so far.

Interviewee 1: he has to go to Nicaragua, the more so, so the migratory route changes. Of course, it is an immigration policy, not of the United States, but if it has to do with Mexico, now behind that the United States has found itself pressuring Mexico to put those laws, it is something

else, we cannot say or assert. But the key policy is, now of course, if they remove the title, 42 how many people are going to be deported,

Interviewee 2: It is that they are fighting for that in Congress. It is not that it is or it is not. There are people who are for or against.

Interviewee 1: Then why do you have to give them asylum, if they return them automatically. It is also the number that happened in 2020-2021, they caught a group of 70 migrants at the border passing through the US, let's consider how here Cuenca and Guayaquil are at the border, if they are caught in Cuenca or Guayaquil, they are deported. But what happens if they are caught in Cañar, put on a bus and sent back to Mexico.

Interviewee 2: that's why people tried to return like four or five times.

Interviewee 1: people tried to return

Interviewee 2: because they're near.

Interviewee 1: That is why I say that it is a more circumstantial issue, because the entity of action by the police. But they also put more people on the police, now they are trying to increase the wall, increase the number of guards and all that.

Interviewee 2: In fact, as I say, Trump's "anti-immigrant" policy, that there were no deportations like the opening, that there was no opening to migrants like Biden, we had 70,000 deportees.

Interviewee 1: But for example, this policy thing, you already have our perception.

(...)

Interviewee 2: The undocumented will always be undocumented, there has been no migratory policy of regularization or temporary protection like the Salvadorans.

Interviewee 1: Not as a policy that existed with the United States in the period of Lenin Moreno of the humanitarian visa of Venezuelan citizens, that we are going to have a new one. That is immigration policy. Regularize people even if they have an expired passport of up to 5 years.

Interviewee 2: And you could already say, we are going to leave everyone who entered up to that date and thus have violated the law, the wall; It doesn't matter, we are going to give them residency, even those who are undocumented, they are going to be undocumented. So, I have not known that there was an immigration policy, but rather the political discourse.

Interviewee 1: I can't say which presidency is better, because during Obama's presidency, Mexico required a visa and we had more cases of migrants, more cases of people who died at the border, more cases of deceased people, around 2014 -2015. For example, there were a lot of cases. Now how many migrated in 2015 I couldn't say, because I don't have data. Now in Trump's, does it stop that? It didn't stop, it continued, but then there was a decrease in migration, and then came Mexico, the pandemic happened, a bit of a crisis happened, that's true and not it is unknown how low, I would dare to say that, for example in 2000, there was a migratory boom, any number of people left and most of them went to Spain.

Interviewer: Spain, Italy and the United States

Interviewee 1: the majority to Spain, when dollarization occurred and to the United States to a lesser extent due to the issue of costs, as they say and again it has to do with the issue of migratory networks, as a relative is there, the cousin takes the cousin, and so the brother, the friend, the neighbor and the chain is made. No, of course, I don't want to say that there wasn't this migration to the United States, but that migration continued and grew a little, yes, now, from 2008 to 2009 due to the real estate bubble that occurred both in the United States and in Europe, people return and there begins to be a stagnation in the departure of people, but from 2012-2013 this number of migrations begins to increase again, and it is a cultural issue. Now in 2000 there was a problem that began with feminization, with migration that began to go to Spain that was much

easier for women, for the United States it also began to become a little more feminized and from 2013 it began to occur an idea of both men and women, always mostly and we can see that in the reports of deportees. (...)

Interviewee 1: But the main characteristic for the 2020 season so far was that facility, which people took advantage of, 1 to do family reunification, taking the children and the other is instead

Interviewee 1: But the main characteristic for the 2020 season so far was that facility, which people took advantage of, 1 to do family reunification, taking the children and the other is instead

Interviewee 2: it's because of the speech

Interviewee 1: entire families that migrate

Interviewee 2: Family reunification and the opening speech to migrants. Those are the three lines that identified him.

(...)

Interviewee 2: The bad thing about migration and the researchers who do this is that there is no accurate information. They say or many of them

Interviewee 1: they don't know about numbers.

Interviewee 2: In my time they said, Alberto Acosta said that more than 3 million Ecuadorians have migrated but based on what, based on what census or what (...).

Appendix 3.

Interview 2

Consul of Ecuador in Estados Unidos

Person 3:

Interviewee 1: I took office in February 2021, so I don't have much knowledge about the policies that were implemented in times of Trump or Joe Biden, so I couldn't comment on that topic.

But with respect to the immigration issue, I can comment that in the United States there are some consulates that have a project to deliver passports to undocumented Ecuadorians, in which it consists of granting a document, very similar to the identity card, and based on that document we issue passports, of course this applies only to people who do not have any identity document. Among the consulates that have this project, you can say that there is the consulate of New York, Queens and New Jersey. In Houston, they do not have this project.

Interviewer: How many Ecuadorians have arrived on average during this period?

Interviewee 1: In the first quarter of 2022, it can be seen that 940 Ecuadorians arrive to request help at the consulate compared to 400 migrants who were registered in 2020. What is seen is that the number doubles. Therefore, in relation to the previous document, it can be validated.

Interviewee 1: Regarding question three, I entered a year and a half ago more or less, so I do not have knowledge in which year there was more entry of migrants. Also, because of COVID-19, the number of appointments was reduced. Also, as to whether you can see if the number increased or decreased, it could not be indicated, since the system is based on appointments already scheduled by the system, where they already give us a number of specific appointments that we must meet. inside the consulate. So you can't see the difference. And even with the "Unique Identity Certificate" you cannot calculate the specific number given factors such as that they were lost, they just entered or the like, we are not allowed to calculate the number. Also, since I don't in the office, I don't have an approximate number of what this could be.

As I mentioned, because of the Covid, they asked us from the Foreign Ministry to reduce the number of appointments by 30%, for the well-being of the consulate officials. In addition to the lack of resources such as spaces or passports to better help Ecuadorians.

So I could say that there is no such statistic that shows the number of migrant arrivals. Although based on the number of passports, which is delivered individually, it does not show the number of undocumented immigrants, nor the passport certificate because it is even more complicated.

Interviewer: Was there variation in the mobilization of Ecuadorian citizens, specifically from Azuay and Cañar, towards the US in this period?

Interviewee: The type of migration that was witnessed in this consulate can indicate that they mostly came from the Sierra, especially from Ambato, Pillaron, Pelileo. They came in whole families, women with small children and young people. More or less from the age of 25 to 28 as the main group. In addition, people were also received from people from Quito, people already adults, as well as from Guayaquil.

As I mentioned, young people between 20 and 30 years old came, as well as a group of 30 to 50 years old who commented that they were returning to the United States due to the situation in Ecuador.

So I could not guarantee the number, since more or less about 60 passports are issued, in some cases it is known where they come from, but in others not. Like this process, it is not very agile since we do not have a printer that allows passports to be issued faster, so in general you have to wait about 15 days for them to reach their recipients.

Interviewer: In other words, there weren't a lot of people from Azuay or Cañar.

Interviewee: Of course not obviously, most of the people who are in this area are from those provinces, but what I can say, the people who arrived were more from those sectors that I mention. In short, there is a mix.

Now something I could tell you, which in turn has been told to me, is that before there was a pardon offered in the United States to undocumented migrants who came with children, but this is no longer happening.

In other words, this pardon was more focused on undocumented people, who were allowed to stay in the country, this more or less happened until the previous year.

What could be helpful is to investigate other consulates that have more knowledge about this, mainly in case of vulnerability, given that so far I have been presented with 3 cases of the same that pass more at the border as disappearances, among them was a 20-year-old girl, a 21-year-old man and a 45-year-old man.