

Immigration Shocks and Politicians' Rhetoric

Valentina González-Rostani, José Incio and Guillermo Lezama

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Political Effects of Immigration

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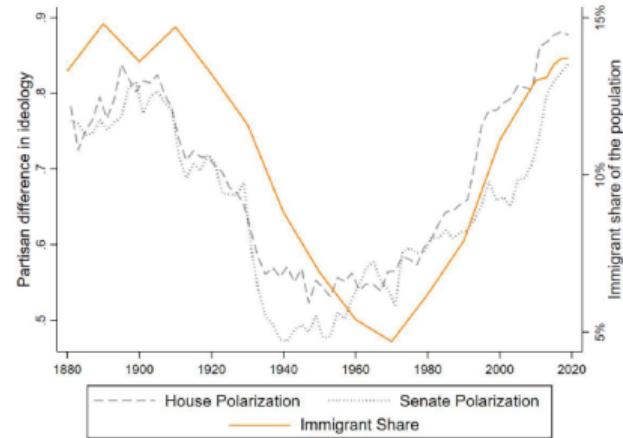
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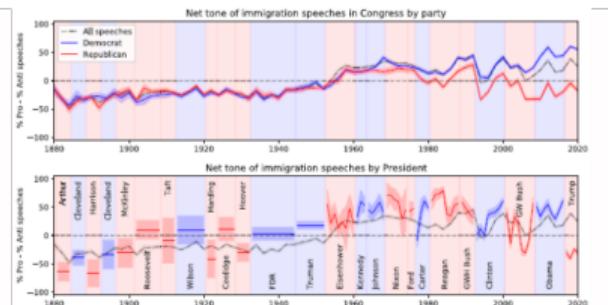
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Polarization and Immigration

Figure 1. Immigration and Political Polarization in US History



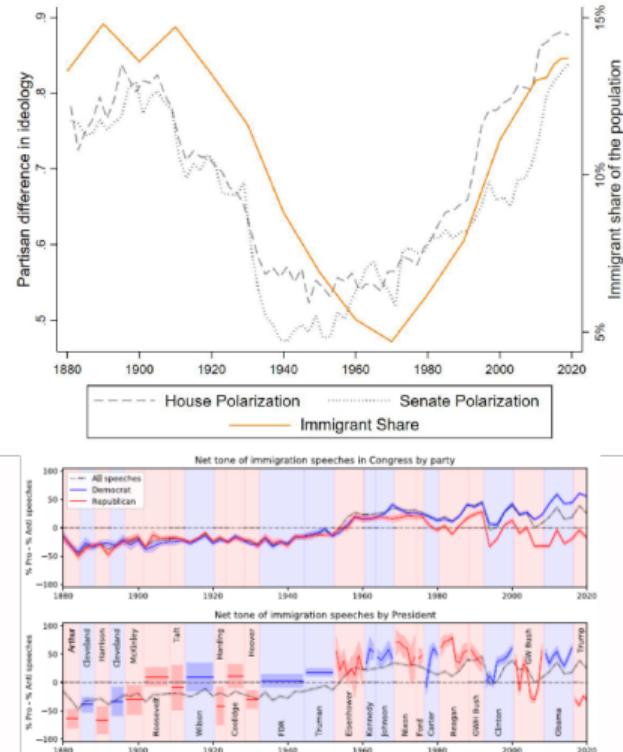
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How does an immigration shock shape politicians' rhetoric?

Immigration in Developing Countries

Recently, this has been mostly studied in Europe and the US.

1. Recent history of immigration.
2. Developed Economies

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- 6th largest refugee crisis: Venezuelan Refugee Crisis.
- Utilizing OpenAI's API to classify tweets.

This Paper



This Paper



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Overview of our Findings:

- Salience increase, but neither ideology or electoral district matters
- Left-wing is more pro-immigration, particularly in places with more immigrants
- Others mention more *Socialism* when talking about immigrants.

Background

- 7.7 million Venezuelans have flown out of their country during the last years

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(© Ariana Cubillos/AP Images)

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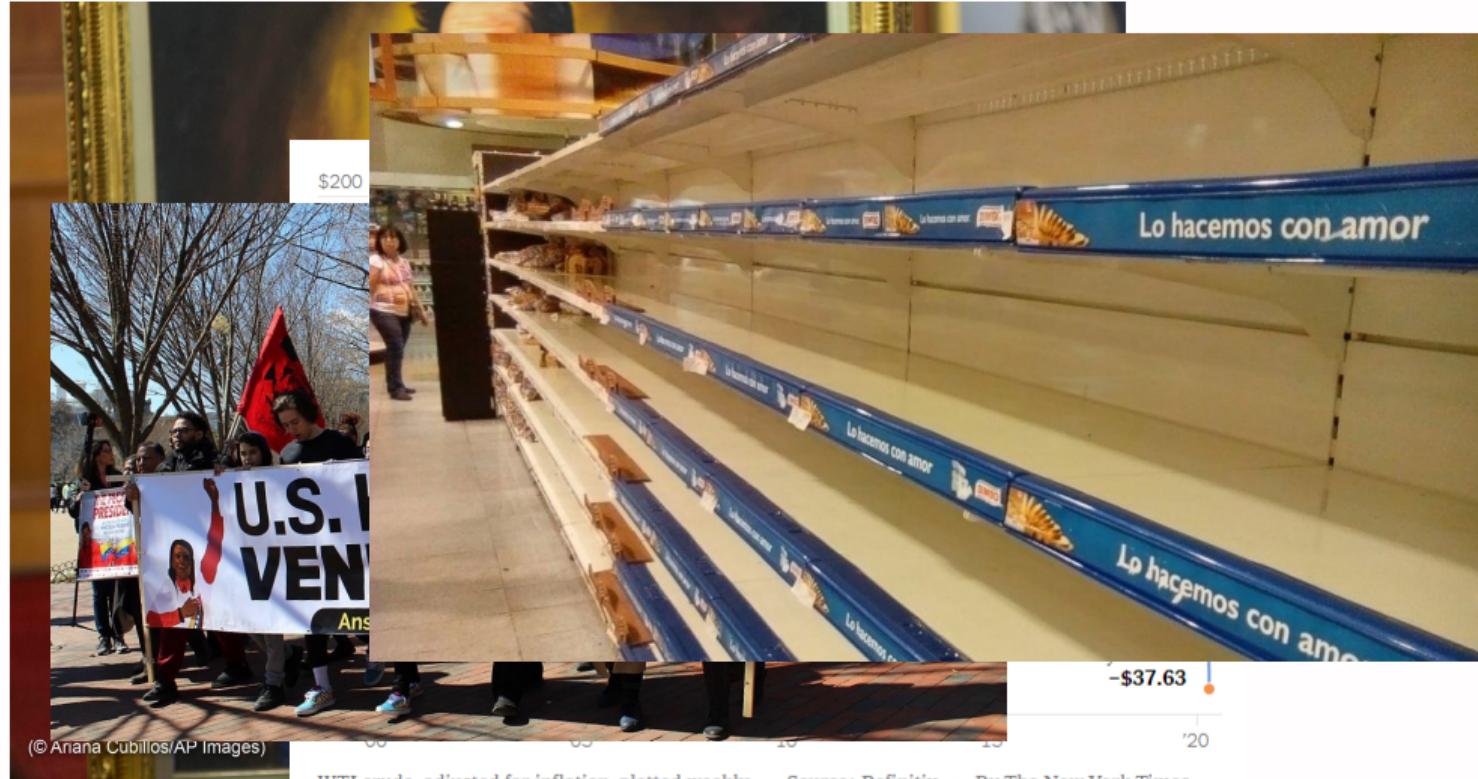
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WTI crude, adjusted for inflation, plotted weekly • Source: Refinitiv • By The New York Times

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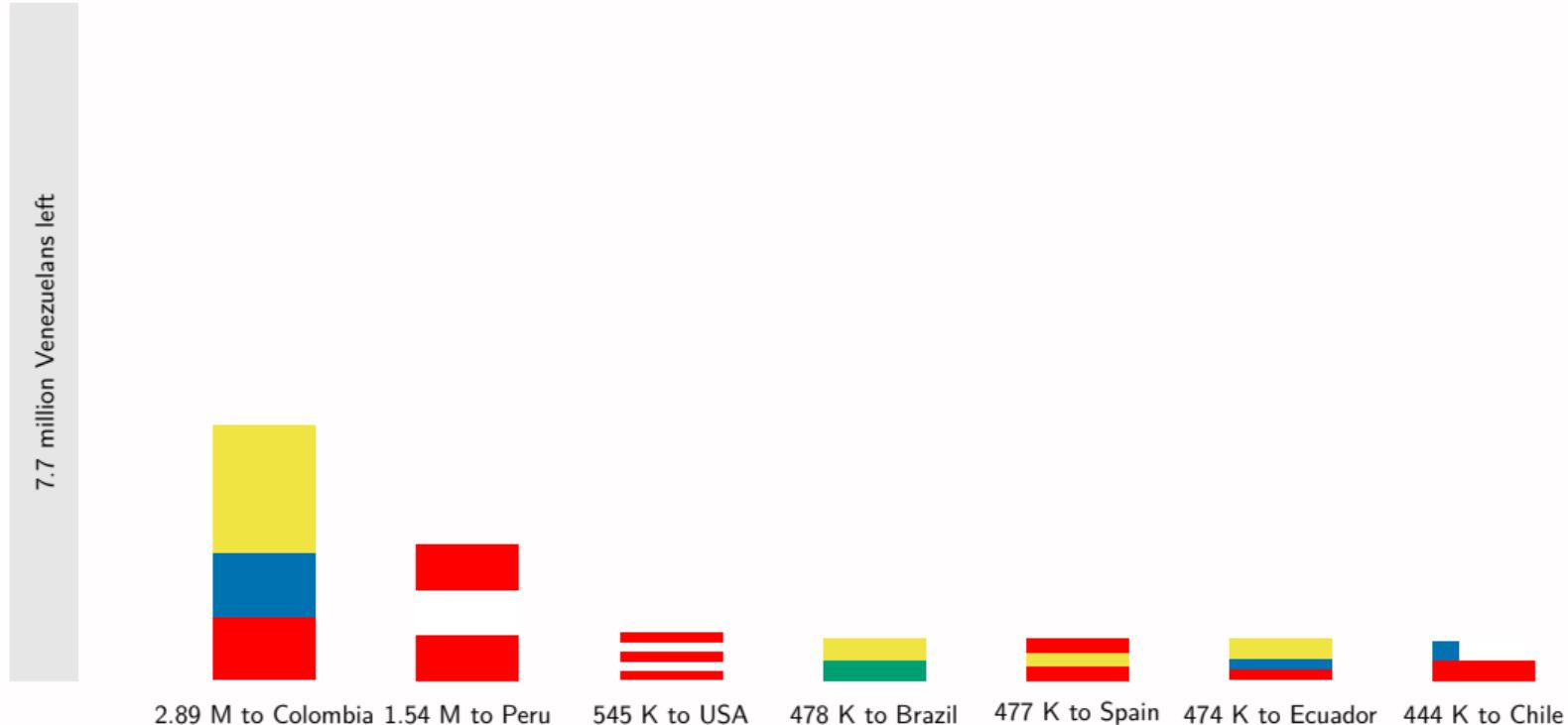


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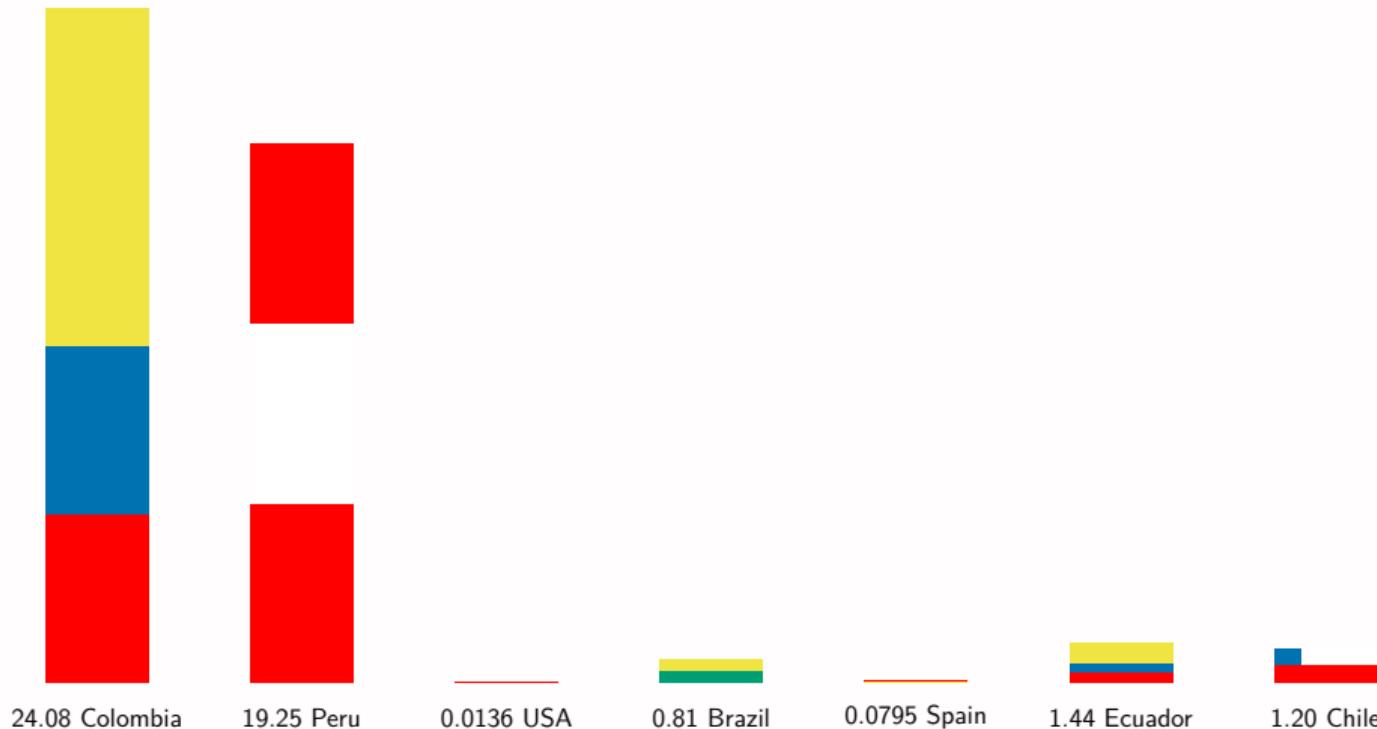
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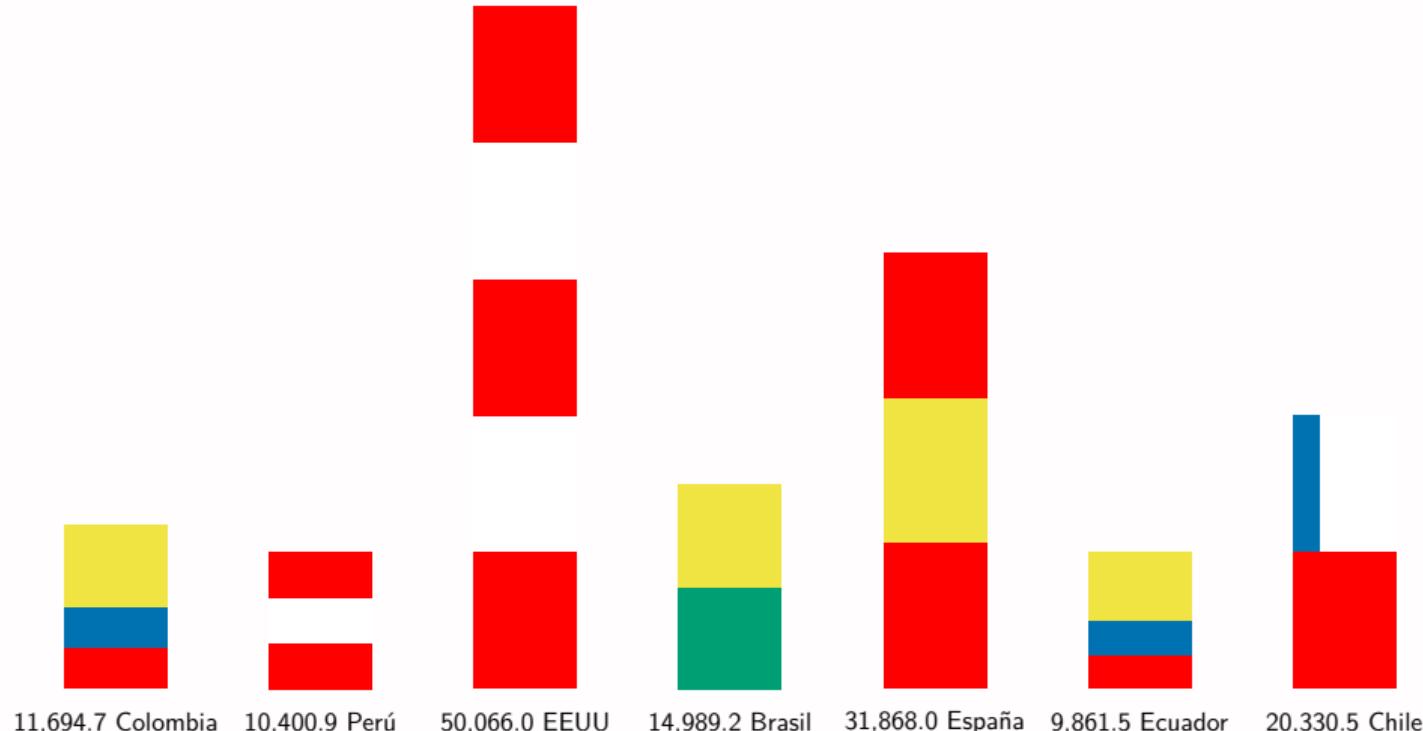
Venezuelan Immigration Statistics



Relative to Immigrant Population (2010) (ratio)



GDP per Capita (2010)



What Do We Know?

Political Effects of Immigration Inflows

- Boosts right-wing support, especially with unskilled immigrants (Dustmann, Vasiljeva, & Piil Damm, 2019; Halla, Wagner, & Zweimüller, 2017).
- Triggers anti-immigrant attitudes (Hangartner, Dinas, Marbach, Matakos, & Xeferis, 2019; Tabellini, 2020).
- In developed countries: right-wing leads on immigration, left-wing accommodates (Abou-Chadi & Krause, 2020; Gessler & Hunger, 2022; Hutter & Gessler, 2019).

Effects of Immigration Shocks in South America

- Crime (mis)perception (Ajzenman, Dominguez, & Undurraga, 2023; Severino & Visconti, 2024).
- Labor market: ↓ informal wages, ↑ poverty (Caruso, Canon, & Mueller, 2021; Lebow, 2022).
- Public service shortages (Argote & Perelló, 2024; Martínez & Martínez Heredia, 2023).
- Party fragmentation (Woldemikael, 2022), right-wing gains (Rozo & Vargas, 2021), and immigrant misperception (Holland, Peters, & Zhou, 2024).
- No significant rise in anti-immigration sentiment among voters (Lebow, Moreno Medina, & Coral, 2020; Zhou, Peters, & Rojas, 2022).

Data: Tweets

Collected all legislators' tweets from **2018-2020** for the Chilean 2018 Congress and Peruvian 2016 congress.

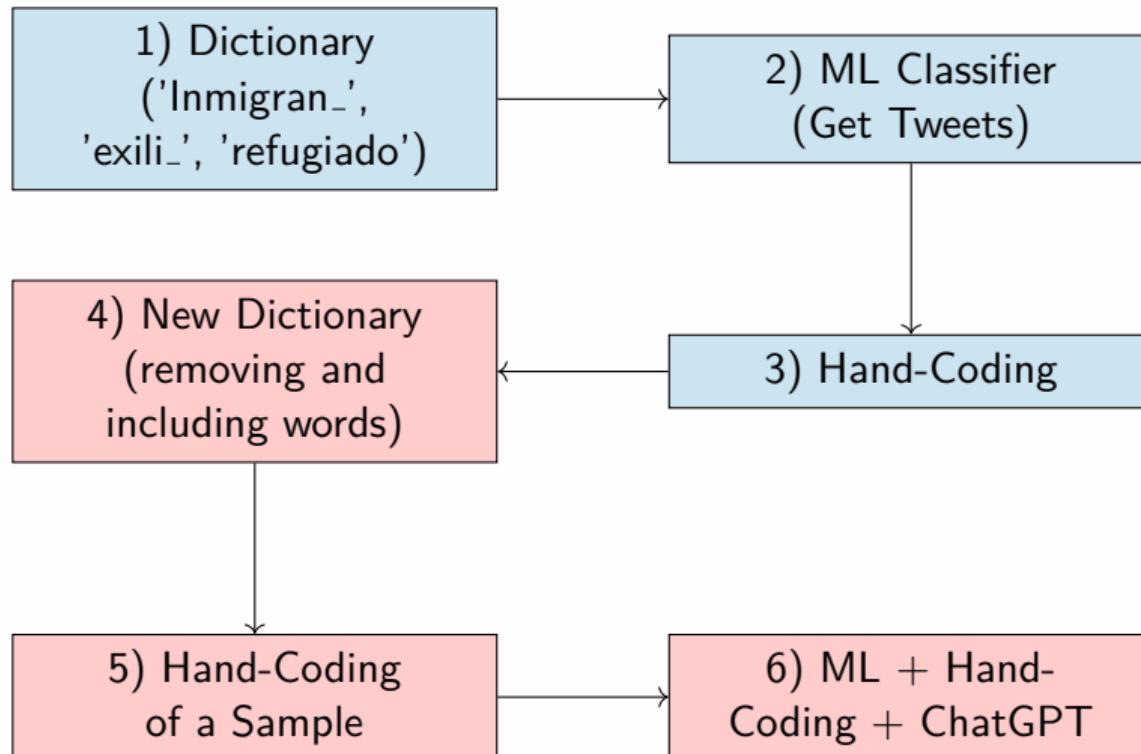
Data: Tweets

Collected all legislators' tweets from **2018-2020** for the Chilean 2018 Congress and Peruvian 2016 congress.

133 (out of 155) and **110** (out of 130) tweeted in 2018-2020.

	457.294
	319.998
Total	777.292

Immigration Analysis Workflow



Blue blocks:

Red blocks: &

Pro-Immigration, Anti-Immigration, Socialism and Venezuela

- Pro and Anti-Immigration
 - We asked OpenAI's API (Chat GPT 3.5) to classify tweets as pro and anti-immigration.
 - We used 3 RA's to check 1,376 tweets about immigration.
 - Accuracy: 84%
- Socialism and Venezuela
 - Dictionaries
 - 'socialis', 'comunis', 'cuba', 'nicaragua', 'hugo chavez', 'fidel castro', 'evo morales', 'daniel ortega'

Tweets' Descriptives

Country	Tweets	Imm. (% of Tweets)	Immigration Tweets (% of Imm.)			
			Pro-Imm.	Anti-Imm.	Venezuela	Socialism
	457294	0.47	74.93	12.72	13.41	1.90
	319998	0.21	63.07	21.17	46.86	4.23
Total	777292	0.37	72.15	14.73	21.40	2.45

Data: Immigration per District

Goal 1: Share of immigrants per electoral district.

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Goal 3: Flows of immigrants to other LAC countries (2010-2017)

- Data on bilateral flows of international migrants for 45 countries (UN Population Division migration)

Three Stylized Facts

Immigration Increased in 2017-18

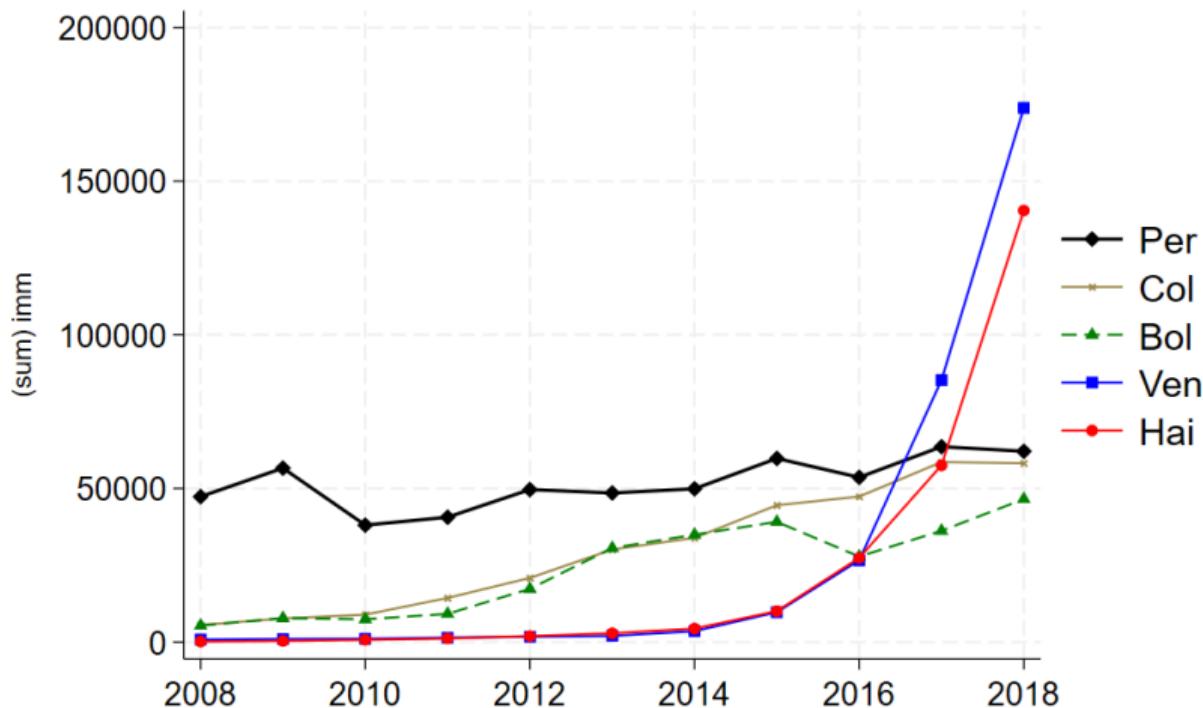


Figure: Number of Immigrants in Chile per Origin Country

Immigration-Related Tweets Increased in the Period 2018-19

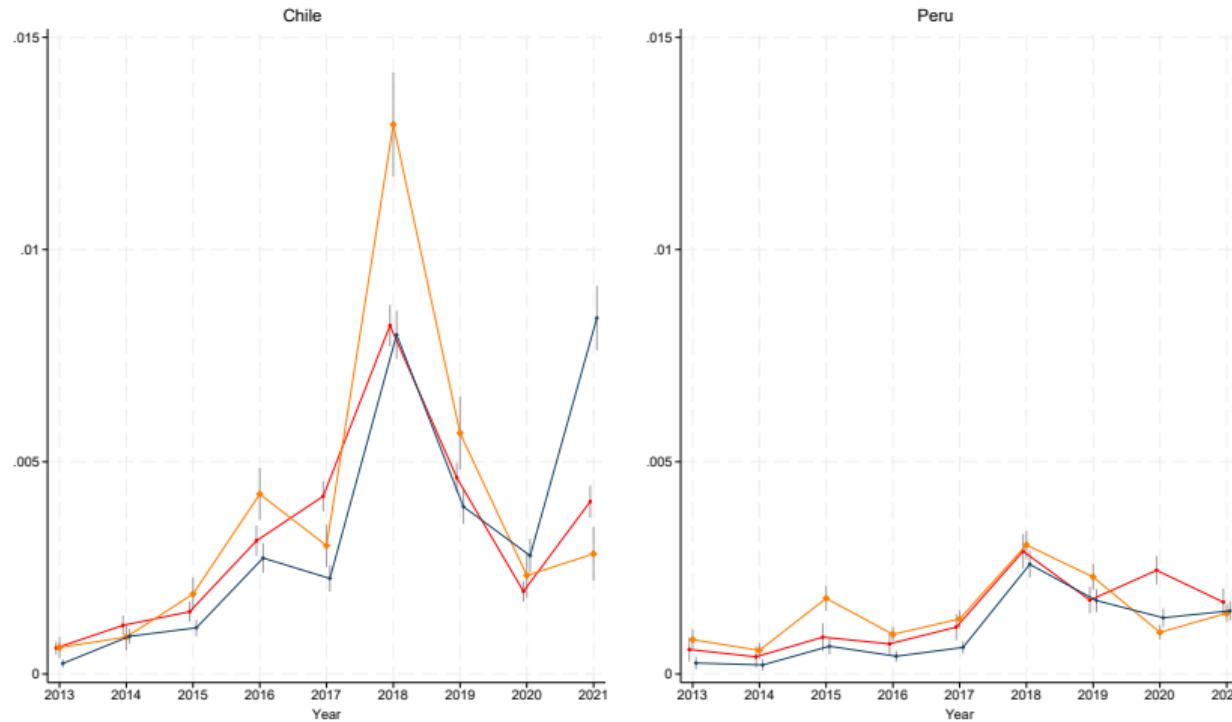
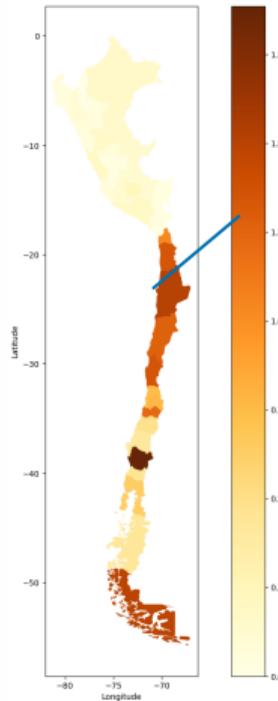
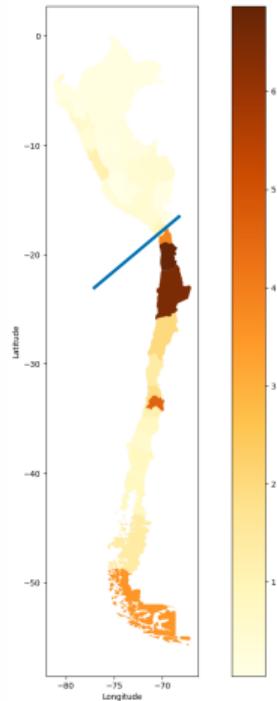


Figure: Tweets about Immigration (%). Red: Left, Orange: Center, Blue: Right

Immigration and Immigration-Related Tweets are Widespread

New immigrants
12-17



Share of tweets
discussing
immigration

mean: 1.48 ; median: 0.65; max=10.93; sd: 2.13

Empirical Strategy

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- The effect of the ideology

$$Y_p = \alpha + \beta left_p + \gamma X_p \quad (1)$$

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- The effect of the regional exposure

$$Y_{p,18-20} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \Delta imm_{p,12-17} + \gamma X_{pt} + \varepsilon_{pt} \quad (2)$$

- Control Vars: Parties, Gender, Number of Reps in that Electoral District, Total number of Tweets.

- Shift-Share instrument (*following Ajzenman et al. (2023)*)

$$Y_{p,18-20} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \Delta imm_{p,12-17} + \gamma X_{pt} + \varepsilon_{pt} \quad (3)$$

where $\Delta imm_p = \frac{\text{NewImmigrants}_p}{\text{Population}_p}$

$$\widehat{\Delta imm_{p,12-17}} = \sum_n \theta_{p,07}^n \times \Delta \log(imm)_{10-17}^n \quad (4)$$

where $\Delta \log(imm)_{10-17}^n$ is the flow of people from top sources ( ,  ,  ,  ,  ,  ,  ,  ,  ,  ,  and ) to other LAC countries.

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- Shares measure the differential exposure to the common shock (int. migration) \Rightarrow identification comes from 2007 shares.
- Threat: shares predict outcome through channels other than migration.
- To-do list: Compute Rotemberg weights following GPSS (2020) and complete graphical approaches.

Results

Results: Salience

	Immigration Tweets (%)	Immigration Tweets (%)	Immigration Tweets (%)
Left	0.058 (0.091)		0.100 (0.141)
Share Imm		0.052 (0.033)	
Right*Share Imm			0.036 (0.026)
Left*Share Imm			0.001 (0.036)
Observations	243	242	243
R-squared	0.296	0.213	0.109
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
F-stat		20.93	21.87
Model	OLS	IV	IV

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

No effects of ideology or the immigrant-population size on salience

Results: Framing of the Issue & Ideology

VARIABLES	(1) Socialism	(2) Venezuela	(3) Pro-Imm	(4) Anti-Imm	(5) Net
Left	-3.287* (1.700)	-5.071 (4.388)	13.603** (5.304)	-14.286*** (3.919)	27.889*** (8.367)
Observations	189	189	189	189	189
R-squared	0.370	0.440	0.326	0.349	0.342
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Robust standard errors in parentheses

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- Left-wing and right-wing have different positions
- Use of mentions to socialism (Rozo & Vargas, 2021)
- Left/right differentiates themselves in their position towards immigration

Results: Framing of the Issue

VARIABLES	(1) Socialism	(2) Venezuela	(3) Pro-Imm	(4) Anti-Imm	(5) Net
Share Imm	-0.353 (0.283)	0.200 (1.414)	3.847*** (1.400)	-1.038 (1.314)	4.885* (2.576)
Observations	189	189	189	189	189
R-squared	0.240	0.345	0.244	0.203	0.240
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
F-Stat	64.82	64.82	64.82	64.82	64.82

Robust standard errors in parentheses

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- Size of the immigrant population makes politicians tweet pro-immigration

Results: Ideology & Immigration Shock

VARIABLES	(1) Socialism	(2) Venezuela	(3) Pro-Imm	(4) Anti-Imm	(5) Net
Right*share Imm	-0.197 (0.300)	0.386 (1.429)	1.748 (1.792)	0.367 (1.859)	1.381 (3.521)
Left*share Imm	0.104 (0.240)	-0.044 (1.901)	4.142** (1.819)	-1.139 (0.891)	5.280** (2.508)
Left	-2.950** (1.501)	-7.494 (5.239)	11.624 (7.469)	-11.920** (5.907)	23.544* (12.129)
Observations	189	189	189	189	189
R-squared	0.025	0.245	0.078	0.095	0.100
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
F-Stat	22.04	22.04	22.04	22.04	22.04

Robust standard errors in parentheses

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- Size of the immigrant population makes **left-wing** politicians tweet pro-immigration
- Left wing is less anti-immigration and talks less about Socialism.

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How does an immigration shock shape politicians' rhetoric?

- Immigration creates divisions
- Not in how much each politician talks about it.
- But representation of Shocked districts plays a role:
 - **Pro-immigration framing higher in exposed regions** driven by left-wing politicians
- **Right-wing ties to Venezuela's regime**; left-wing avoids this
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Thank you!

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Reactions



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Support for Immigration

According to an Ipsos and Espacio P blico poll in 2018:

- 53% agrees with “Migration is beneficial for the country because it contributes diversity and other benefits social” (62% L; 52% right)
- 43% agrees with “Migration is harmful to country because they increase social problems” (35% L; 46% right)

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- In March 2018:
 - Q: “Will you continue receiving Venezuelans in Chile?”
 - Pi era: “We are going to continue receiving Venezuelans in Chile because we have a duty of solidarity.”
 - In 2022 it was 30% pro, 67% anti.

Left v. Right

Chile				Peru				
Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4	
personas	pais	chile	antofagasta	maduro	migratoria	machismo	paises	
nuestro	contra	piñera	niños	como	sobre	campaña	derecho	
este	chilenos	expulsion	senador	esta	millones	todos	alemania	
inmigracion	millones	trump	esta	venezuela	miles	discriminacion	como	
derechos	refugiados	diputado	gobierno	migrantes	unidos	como	acnur	
como	dictadura	para	crisis	pais	estados	para	campo	
pais	maduro	sobre	nueva	para	politica	belmont	niños	
migracion	venezuela	pais	sobre	peruanos	donald	racismo	migrantes	
para	chile	ilegales	politica	peru	trump	contra	para	
migrantes	venezolanos	inmigrantes	migratoria	venezolanos	inmigrantes	xenofobia	refugiados	
%	48.5	17.7	14.6	19.2	60.9	12.8	12.9	13.3
Left (%)	50.0	18.8	12.7	18.5	53.6	13.0	15.4	18.0
Center (%)	48.5	20.1	17.9	13.5	53.4	16.1	16.7	13.9
Right (%)	46.0	14.9	15.8	23.2	78.1	8.3	5.8	7.8
Distance L-R	4.0	3.9	-3.1	-4.8	-24.4	4.6	9.6	10.2

Table 2: Topic Analysis - NMF 4 clusters regarding Immigration statements

Relative to their Population %

