The role of non-governmental organizations in the integration and non-discrimination of refugees in the Brazilian labor market

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Abstract

Since 2010, Brazil has been receiving an increase in the numbers of refugees. It is presumed that the protagonist in assisting the integration of refugees are the NGOs and not the state. NGOs are known for providing aid, social services and advocacy for groups and minorities that are marginalized. Currently, there are approximately 100 NGOs supporting and representing refugees in Brazil; it is the largest refugee support network in Latin America. This study seeks to answer the question with respect to which measures have NGOs adopted to assist the integration and non-discrimination of refugees in the Brazilian labor market and whether such measures reach beyond NGOs role as a support structure by replacing the role of the state and its responsibility to provide refugees of their (human) rights. To answer this research question, eight NGOs and three professionals in the area were interviewed during a field research that took place between July and November 2020. The research shows that the NGOs have taken two categories of measures as a means to address both the refugees, and the host society and private sector with the purpose of enhancing the effect and reachability of their role in the integration and non-discrimination of refugees in the Brazilian labor market. This research found that the NGOs and the public intuitions have a vast network in respect of refugees; however, it can also vary between states. It further found that there are two different opinions among the NGOs regarding their relationship with the state.

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Introduction

Since 2010, Brazil has been receiving an increase in the numbers of refugees. There are three waves of immigration that have gained more attention in the last decade: Haitians in 2010, Syrians in 2017 and, more recently, Venezuelans (Pastorelli, 2019). These are considered to be South-South migration flows which are most likely conflict related and consists mainly by working-age migrants (De Lombarde, 2014; Hujo, 2007).

The Brazilian government is seen as a pioneer in the international protection of refugees. It has ratified international treaties on the protection of refugees, made exceptions, such as the humanitarian visa for Haitians, and adopted national law in order to offer better support to the refugee population (Lima, 2018; Machado, 2019; Pastorelli, 2019; Tinker, 2016). Nevertheless, many argue that the state still needs to improve its policies and active participation regarding refugees' long-term integration, including tackling xenophobia and discrimination, and further guaranteeing support in their inclusion in the society and labor market (Jubilut, 2006; Machado, 2019; Pastorelli, 2019; Segatto, 2019). In this context, it is presumed that the protagonist in assisting the integration of refugees are the NGOs and not the state. NGOs are known for providing aid, social services and advocacy for groups and minorities that are marginalized (Fernandes, 2017; Lima, 2018). Currently, there are approximately 100 NGOs supporting and representing refugees in Brazil; it is the largest refugee support network in Latin America (Pastorelli, 2019). Most scholars argue that although NGOs fulfil the gap between the state and civil society, where the state is unable or unwilling to assist, they should not replace the role of the state in areas the state has an obligation to act (Dvorakova, 2008; Sorj, 2007).

Refugees are marked by their social and economic vulnerability. For the local integration of refugees to have a positive result, it is necessary to obtain employment, housing, education, among others (Donato, 2020, Miller, 2018). Although refugees in Brazil have guaranteed permanence and access to the labor market, there is no guarantee of job opportunities. The language barrier; the lack of knowledge of Brazilian culture and legislation; the bureaucracy of the credential evaluation process; xenophobia and racism; and inadequate public service make it difficult to integrate refugees in the labor market and contribute to the increase of prejudice in the

workplace (Angelico, 2019; Da Silva, 2017; Machado, 2019; Pastorelli, 2019; Segatto, 2019). In many cases, being unable to find a formal job, refugees end up opting for informal jobs where violations of human rights and labor law are frequent (Annoni, 2015).

This study focusses on the integration and non-discrimination of refugees in the labor market because it is intertwined with other areas, such as social and cultural integration. The reason thereof is that, according to scholars, integration occurs as soon as a refugee enters the labor market, resulting not only in economic independence, material gain and skills development, but also in a higher self-esteem, social network, cultural adaptation, sense of usefulness and other positive feelings (Donato, 2020; Pastorelli, 2019; Seidelsohn, 2019). Thus, it is important to research the role of NGOs in the refugees' integration and non-discrimination process in the labor market, considering that being inserted in the labor market is essential for integration of other areas within society and that the flow of refugees is a current event with prediction of growth in the future.

The research question relates to which measures have NGOs adopted to assist the integration and non-discrimination of refugees in the Brazilian labor market and whether such measures reach beyond NGOs role as a support structure by replacing the role of the state and its responsibility to provide refugees of their (human) rights. To answer this research question, eight NGOs and three professionals in the area were interviewed during a field research that took place between July and November 2020.

This paper is structured into three chapters. The first chapter concerns literature review on civil society, the role NGOs play within civil society and its relationship with the state. It further discusses literature on South-South migration flows and the different definitions of groups that fall under the migration umbrella, including immigrant, refugee, asylum seeker and humanitarian visa. Lastly, refugee integration, and xenophobia and discrimination in the labor market is reviewed. The second chapter reviews literature on the refugee population in Brazil, the international and national laws Brazil has adopted and the role and influence of NGOs therein. In addition, the obstacle refugees have to face in the Brazilian labor market are discussed. The third chapter analyzes the results of the interviews of NGOs and other professionals as a means to answer the research question. Lastly, a conclusion is reached together with suggestions for future research.

1. NGOs and the state in the integration and non-discrimination of refugees in the society and the labor market

This chapter first addresses the relationship between the state and civil society, particularly NGOs, and discusses the role NGOs play within civil society and the public sphere. The chapter further discusses the South-South migration flows and the definitions of different types of migrants focusing on refugees and their protection under international law. The integration of refugees in the society and the labor market is also discussed together with the role NGOs play in it; the difference between integration and assimilation is also addressed. Lastly, the chapter analyzes the concept of xenophobia and racial discrimination against refugees within the host society and labor market.

1.1. The state and civil society

The end of the military regimes in the 1980s in Latin America is considered a critical point to the reinvention and rise of civil society in the region (Brysk, 2000; Dvorakova, 2008). During the 1980s and 1990s, civil society's aim and role was to democratize the political regimes and the society, considering that many countries in the region had just transition from a military regime to a democratic regime (Alvarez, 2017; Lavalle, 2011; Sorj, 2007). In this period, civil society was perceived as independent from or antagonistic to the state (Englehart, 2011; Sorj, 2007). Moreover, due to the rising of neoliberalism in Latin America in the 1990s and consequently, the shift in the role of the state in the economy and in society, civil society has since taken the responsibility of providing social services which the state could no longer provide and also it started to be perceived as a tool for political action (Alvarez, 2017; Oxhorn, 2011). During this period there was an active promotion by neoliberal governments as well, in particular the United States of America, intergovernmental organizations and international financial institutions to increase civil participation in Latin America (Alvarez, 2017). In other words, civil society has had to be able to provide the social demands of the population which are no longer provided by the state as a consequence of neoliberalism (Dvorakova, 2008).

In the case of Brazil, civil society organizations have been recognized by the redesigned Brazilian state as being of public interest (Baqueiro, 2015). Such recognition allows civil society organizations to address the necessity of public welfare and assert their role as service providers contracted by the state and in the design of public policies (Baqueiro, 2015).

The concept of civil society has no universal definition. Nevertheless, it can be agreed that since the 20th century, it includes the demand for political, personal and human rights, autonomy, self-organization, participation and representation of the society (Dvorakova, 2008; Hall, 2017; Sorj, 2007). Civil society includes non-governmental organizations (NGOs), trade unions, social movements, charities, community groups, coalitions, advocacy groups, faith-based organizations and professional associations. This paper focuses on NGOs because their numbers have dramatically increased since the 1980s and their role as a social provider and a political actor stands out (Holmén, 2009).

1.1.1 The role of NGOs in civil society

A prevalent definition of NGOs does not exist, nor is there an agreement on its role. Nonetheless, the Commonwealth Foundation in its 1995 publication *Non-Governmental Organizations: Guidelines for Good Policy and Practice* describes five characteristics that distinguish NGOs: (1) voluntary, (2) independent, (3) not-for-profit and (4) not self-serving in aims and related values. Therefore, this paper defines non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as non-profitable organizations that act outside the state and the market, endorse social causes for those in need and promote social justice for minorities groups (Brysk, 2000; Hall, 2017). Furthermore, NGOs can also be named a (1) nonprofit or not-for-profit organization, (2) private voluntary organization and voluntary sector, (3) independent sector or third sector, (4) social sector, (5) community-based organization, or (6) civil society organization. The names reflect on one of the distinguishing characteristics of the group (Peace Corps, n.a.).

Many agree that NGOs' role in civil society is to fill the accountability vacuum left by the state over the past 40 years due to the emergence of neoliberalism. Thus, it can be said that NGOs occupy the gap between civil society and the state. (Brysk, 2000; Hall, 2017; Lehman, 2007; Pastorelli, 2019). Activities that include aiding the poor,

promoting the interests of minorities, protecting the environment and providing basic social services were taken over by NGOs. At the same time, enforcing democracy, participating in the formulation of public policies and setting the public agenda are considered by numerous scholars as the role of NGOs as well (Dvorakova, 2008; Fifka, 2016; Hall, 2017; Holmén, 2009; Lavalle, 2015; Lehman, 2007; Mercer, 2012; Oxhorn, 2011; Sorj, 2007). Finally, NGOs promote tolerance, diversity and pluralism, whilst protecting and enforcing cultural, linguistic, ethnic, religious, and other identities (Peace Corps, n.a.). Several scholars argue that NGOs are a liberal product in such manner that they solely reproduce the basic freedoms and social liberties of the population (Baqueiro, 2015). Such basic social rights imply that the state has the legal and moral obligation to take action and establish public policies and programs to carry them out. Public policies particularly relevant to NGOs which represent social causes related to minority groups (Baqueiro, 2015; Oxhorn, 2011).

Some scholars also argue that the presence of NGOs in Latin America advances and consolidates democracy in the region and creates a contrast between the democratic discourse and the neoliberal discourse (Baqueiro, 2015). After all, plurality and citizens' participation in political matters is fundamental to approach an ideal democracy instead of only an electoral one (Baqueiro, 2015). NGOs seek to defend the rights of minorities and marginalized populations, thereby strengthening judicial security, social peace and public security (Baqueiro, 2015). They further seek to cooperate in the public sphere by mediating between the state and the society they represent and consequently deepening the democratic discourse (Baqueiro, 2015; Lavalle, 2015; Oxhorn, 2011).

NGOs are part of the third sector and maintain a separate space from the state and the economic market. Nevertheless, they share the public sphere for dialogue among these actors in order for social action to be eventually carried out (Baqueiro, 2015). The concept of public sphere is referred as the space in which multiple actors enjoy freedom of expression and association in debates and activities that affect and are related to the members of society without external intervention (Sorj, 2007). NGOs do not have the obligation to carry out governmental actions. Yet, they influence the public sphere by means of appeals and discussions with the state's institutions (Baqueiro, 2015). NGOs also influence the state by promoting cultural and social values of the

society they represent, and its ultimate goal is to influence the public agenda (Baqueiro, 2015; Brysk, 2000).

Nowadays, NGOs are not considered an adversary of the state, rather as fundamental actors in the designing and evaluation of public policy (Baqueiro, 2015). It is important to acknowledge that the participation of NGOs in the making of public policies is essential due to experience, specific knowledge, techno-scientific skills, ability to identify problems within the society, and their close involvement with citizens (Baqueiro, 2015; Dvorakova, 2008). The public sphere must be a space in which citizens can influence the conditions of the society in which they live (Dvorakova, 2008). Thus, the right of citizen participation in policymaking is essentially democratic, since public policies concerns the citizens themselves. Especially, when it involves marginalized groups which need to have a voice in the public sphere (Baqueiro, 2015; Holmén, 2009). NGOs frequently engage in advocacy and lobbying activities with the state and international organizations to influence policies regarding their target group or cause. It is common for NGOs to form alliances with political parties and participate in national delegations as well (Holmén, 2009). However, it needs to be stated that to gain legitimacy within the public sphere, NGOs need to have autonomy, the capability to organize and be able to represent the interests of the society they stand for (Baqueiro, 2015; Brysk, 2000; Mercer, 2012).

Baqueiro (2005) further argues that a democratic state should integrate and promote moral values such as equality, liberty, social justice, pluralism, tolerance and all other values related to universal human rights. Nonetheless, it has to be taken into account that sometimes the demands by NGOs for social benefit activities cannot be provided by the state due to lack of resources or inconsistency of public funding. One could argue that the lack or inconsistency of public funding is one of the greatest challenges which NGOs, particularly in Latin America, face (Baqueiro, 2015). In fact, NGOs in a capitalistic democracy depends partly on the capacity of the state to provide resources (Sorj, 2007). A dependency that when not met, may often lead NGOs to rely on other economic resources outside the state creating mistrust, as this paper further elaborates bellow (Oxhorn, 2011).

Other scholars argue that there is still a lack of democracy, or the consolidation thereof, in Latin American countries due to the weakness of democracy within NGOs in the region (Brysk, 2000; Dvorakova, 2008; Holmén, 2009; Lehman, 2007; Oxhorn, 2011;

Sorj, 2007). Such argument is based on the connection between neoliberal elites and NGOs in the period of their emergence which makes some scholars doubt whether or not the role of NGOs is simply to impose Western hegemony and neoliberal principles (Dvorakova, 2008). They believe that NGOs in Latin America will always deal with social hierarchies; clientelist relations; and external influence from the private sector, developed countries, international organizations and the church; consequently, creating the conditions for control by bureaucrats and elites (Lehman, 2007; Sorj, 2007). These concerns with the role of NGOs relates to whether NGOs meet the goals set by civil society. The scholars declare that if NGOs cannot meet the purposes which originally exist for them to fulfil, there is no point for their existence (Lehman, 2007).

These scholars further argue that the search for financial support from these actors mentioned above is concerning; the influence of private sector and international actors may reflect in the ideologies and *modus operandi* of NGOs, consequently imposing a certain point of view into the society they are supposed to represent (Lehman, 2007; Oxhorn, 2011; Sorj, 2007). Not only does this economical factor damages NGOs' accountability, but it also hampers their effectiveness in executing their social purpose (Lehman, 2007). Recently, this point of view is also shared by Mexico's current president, Andres Manuel López Obrador, who claims that civil society is linked to conservatism and "big business" (Graham, 2020). Such criticism raises the question whether NGOs are able to fulfil their role in civil society which is to solve some of the problems resulting from the free-market reforms (Lehman, 2007). The lack of legitimacy, accountability and autonomy of many NGOs may jeopardize the process of policy making (Brysk, 2000). NGOs which are unrepresentative or unaccountable of their members run the risk of losing their legitimacy in the public sphere and consequently fail to change political circumstances. Thus, democratizing NGOs is crucial in the advocacy of social policies because these political and economic factors are partially the reason why there is still no common agreement on the definition and the role of NGOs in civil society (Banks, 2015; Brysk, 2000; Lehman, 2007).

Other scholars attempt to contrast these arguments by affirming that NGOs respond to this deficit of democracy by doing research and publishing works that are critical to the creation of more space and debate in the public sphere; therefore, contributing to the achievement of their goals (Lehman, 2007). Lehman (2007) argues that "the structures of capitalism make it difficult for NGOs to escape the existing social

structures" (p. 656). Moreover, a state's insertion in the international economy is also crucial to the development of civil society and the extension of resources for the social services provided by NGOs (Oxhorn, 2011). Additionally, the relationship between NGOs and the state is mutually reinforcing because both actors shape the public sphere; NGOs cannot act on their own because they are part of a public sphere where the rules are publicly agreed (Lehman, 2007). In other words, accountability and autonomy do not mean isolation (Oxhorn, 2011). The autonomy of NGOs does not come from a barrier between them and the state, but it comes from their ability to define and protect their own interests in interactions with the state and other actors, such as private actors (Oxhorn, 2011).

The majority of scholars do agree that NGOs cannot and should not reach beyond its role as a support structure for existing democracy at the state level (Dvorakova, 2008). It entails that despite the significant role NGOs have in answering social demands and strengthening democracy, it should not replace the role of the state and its responsibility to provide its citizens with fundamental human rights (Sorj, 2007).

In conclusion, NGOs' role in civil society is presently perceived as filling the gap between civil society and the state as a result of the emergence of neoliberalism in the previous century (Brysk, 2000; Hall, 2017; Lehman, 2007; Pastorelli, 2019). Furthermore, NGOs are fundamental actors in the public sphere and in the formulation and evaluation of public policies (Baqueiro, 2015). However, due to the lack of resources or inconsistency of public funding, NGOs run the risk of being capture by the same system (neoliberalism) that they aim to reform (Lehman, 2007). Nonetheless, the role of NGOs cannot be separated from the political and economic influences of neoliberalism and a pluralist society; after all, they often implement public policies which the state fails to implement (Lehman, 2007). In regions where social inequalities are extreme, such as in Latin America, the importance of combining social services and the demand of inclusion in policymaking and the implementation of policies is pivotal in establishing an ideal democratic political regime (Oxhorn, 2011).

1.2. South-South migration

According to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, *North* and *South* is the division "used to refer to the social, economic and political differences that exist between developed countries (North) and developing countries (South) (UN News, 2019). Existing research on migration mainly focus on South-North migration (De Ferrari, 2016; Biavaschi, 2017; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2020; Hujo, 2007). Yet, a study by the World Bank concluded that almost half of the migrants from developing countries migrate to other developing countries (Biavaschi, 2017; Pinto, 2020). Some scholars argue that the expression "South-South migration" contributes to changing the common assumption that migrants are "invading" northern countries, such as the United States or European countries (De Ferrari, 2016; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2020). Since developed countries end up imposing stricter rules for the entry of refugees, an unequal movement of refugees' flow emerges, mostly to the South, resulting in only ten countries hosting more than 56 percent of the total refugees, and almost 80 percent of the South-South migration takes place between neighboring countries (Hujo, 2007). However, little is known on how developing countries deal with the effects of immigration, how it impacts their economies, and what policies they have establish regarding protection and integration of migrants (Biavaschi, 2017; Hujo, 2007).

Hujo (2007) explains that there are several reasons for the high flow of South-South migration: (1) shorter distance, thus reduced costs; (2) networks based on ethnic, community and family ties; (3) middle-income countries attract migrants from low-income countries; (4) some countries in the South are transit countries to northern countries; and (5) refugees often go to nearby countries. In regard to Latin America and the Caribbean, the cultural, linguistic and geographic proximity are the main reasons many migrants from Latin American and Caribbean countries migrate to other countries in the region. Furthermore, inequality and natural disaster are also strong causes for the migration flows in the region (De Lombaerde, 2014; Pinto, 2020). Another common South-South migration flow that has been on the rise since the last decade is the flow between Africa and Latin America (De Ferrari, 2016; De Lombarde, 2014).

South-South migration flows are either conflict related or consist mostly of temporary contract workers, unskilled or semi-skilled, who rarely seek long-term residential rights and the right to family reunification, unlike highly skilled migrants who are commonly present in North-South or North-North migration flows (De Lombarde, 2014; Hujo, 2007). For the most part, migrants contribute to socioeconomic aspects of the destination country and the origin country as well by acquiring new skills, knowledge and experience from these migrants who add up to the countries' human capital (Hujo, 2007). However, there are situations in which migrants have specific vulnerabilities and necessities that are required to be addressed by the government of the host country (Fiddian-Quasmiyeh, 2020; Hujo, 2007). Such situations highlight how important migration policies and social policies are in a country (regardless of the status or nationality of individuals), because migrant workers, in particular those who work in the informal economy, are vulnerable to violations of their labor rights or discrimination (Hujo, 2007). This is mostly the case in developing countries in which migration, labor and social policies are weak or non-existent (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2020). Migrant workers are often not able to find a job matching their skills or sometimes have to submit themselves to exploiting work environments (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2020). The reason thereof is that in the South-South migration flows, migrants are for the most part individuals who come from places torn by war or environmental instability and with social and economic conditions that does not allow them to stay or return to their origin country. Some migrants are also in fear of political persecution (Hujo, 2007). Although, this may be the case in many developing countries, it is important to note that labor rights are part of human rights which are legally binding on states, such as the ILO Conventions 97 and 143 and the 1990 International Convention of Migrant Workers' Rights (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2020).

Migration involves all areas related to human rights, welfare and socioeconomic needs. Therefore, states face challenges in finding new ways or in strengthening policies that can meet these needs (Hujo, 2007). South-South migration flows can be a greater challenge to the countries involved, since these flows are driven by conflicts, natural disasters, and inequality (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2020). De Ferrari (2016) states that Latin American countries are progressively becoming more liberal and promoting and expanding migrants' rights. Liberal in the sense of promoting free trade but also enhancing its commitment and respect for fundamental human rights. There is still

variation in the quality of migration policies among countries in the region; nonetheless, new approaches to migration management, such as the extension of social rights to immigrants, are being adopted in various countries (De Ferrari, 2016).

Research also indicates that civil society activism that works transitionally and nationally educating and advocating on human rights relating to migrant workers play a significant role in voicing migrants' grievances (Fifka, 2016; Hujo, 2007).These NGOs provide migrants of their basic social needs and often generate public pressure in order for states and companies to reconsider their conduct (Fifka, 2016). NGOs and their role on the integration of refugees in the labor market is further elaborated bellow.

1.3. Definition matters: Immigrant, refugee, asylum seeker and humanitarian visa

The term migrants encompass all individuals who move from one place to the other, either within a country or by crossing international borders. People have different reasons for migrating, may it be economic, cultural, political, environmental, social, violent conflicts or natural disasters. Since the majority of immigrants are not asylum seekers or refugees, countries may decide whether the migration is legal or not (McBrien, 2017).Thus, it is crucial to distinguish between migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and those eligible for humanitarian visa due to the different definitions and protections these individuals receive in international and national law. For example, immigrants, who are not asylum seekers or refugees, are not subject to the same rights and protections as the former two, such as the principle of non-refoulement that forbids a country receiving asylum seekers or refugees from returning them to a country in which they would be in danger (Cherem, 2015; McBrien, 2017). Some immigrants make dangerous journeys to arrive in their destination country, mostly because they are searching for a higher quality of life, escaping from poverty or they are often fearing for their lives in their origin country. However, they are not eligible for refugee status because they are not suffering from the kind of persecution stated in the United Nations 1951 Refugee Convention (Cherem, 2015; McBrien, 2017).

Refugees have a distinct definition and protection in international law. The UN 1951 Refugee Convention defines a refugee as any person who:

owning to well-founded fear of being
persecuted for reasons of race, religion,
nationality, membership of a particular social
group or political opinion, is outside the
country of his nationality and is unable or,
owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail
himself of the protection of that country; or
who, not having a nationality and being
outside the country of his former habitual
residence as a result of such events, is unable
or, owning to such fear, is unwilling to return
to it. (Article 1.A.2)

Customary international law also asserts the right of protection which includes the right of non-refoulement that, as seen above, forbids a country from returning asylum seekers and refugees to a country in which there is a high probability they will persecuted on the bases included in the 1951 Refugee Convention (Cherem, 2015).

The Convention was first created with the intention of addressing those affected by the Second World War who were forced to flee their countries. In consequence of following wars in other parts of the world, the 1967 Protocol was added to the 1951 Refugee Convention in order to expand the geographical and temporal aspects of the Convention (McBrien, 2017).

Refugees fall under the protection of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) which is an UN agency mandated to aid and protect refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people. The UNHCR has three goals: (1) repatriation, in case a refugee's origin country becomes sufficiently secure; (2) local integration, the refugee can fully integrate in the society of the host country; and (3) resettlement, in which a refugee is replaced to a third country in which they can start a new life (McBrien, 2017).

Frequently, refugees have to leave their country in a hurry unable to plan their departure, sometimes leaving without any documents. Usually, refugees flee to a refugee camp in a neighbor country and register themselves for refugee status (McBrien, 2017). It is common for refugees to stay stuck in refugee camps, many of

them located in poor and unstable regions of Africa, Middle East and Asia. Consequently, refugees become dependent on the UNHCR and NGOs. Nevertheless, the UNHCR and NGOs cannot give refugees new membership or compel states to such action (Cherem, 2015; Hieronymi, 2005). The perception of refugees as a "foreigner in need for protection" may be problematic because many countries may interpret it as a charity, rather than an obligation under international law and in many cases also domestic law. Such interpretation places refugees in a position of being left to the mercy of states and their goodwill, rather than claiming their rights provided to them by the 1951 Convention. Furthermore, politicians often use this perception in order to promote among their citizens hostility to "needy foreigners" (Cherem, 2015; D'Amico, 2018; Seidelsohn, 2019).

In invoking their rights, refugees can affirm their self-respect and dignity, and have normative control over the state's duty under international law, rather than being perceived as just a foreigner in sheer need. The fact that refugees lose their national protection differentiates them from individuals that are simply in need of humanitarian assistance (Cherem, 2015). Moreover, contrary to what many believe, individuals fleeing their origin country due to destitution can be considered refugees since a persecution can also be socio-economic (Cherem, 2015). The only difference between socio-economic refugees and economic immigrants is that the former cannot be helped at home (loss of national protection) and are being persecuted. Yet, many scholars claim that refugees' definition should cover refugee-like migrants (Cherem, 2015).

Asylum seekers flee their home countries for the same reason of refugees; fear of torture, starvation, persecution and death cause people to seek asylum in other countries. However, instead of applying to refugee status through the UN, asylum seekers migrate to the country in which they seek to receive resettlement (McBrien, 2017). There, they can apply for asylum and to the status of refugee. Nonetheless, the risk asylum seekers take is being placed in a detention in the country of destination whilst waiting on a decision from the government. If they are rejected, they are deported to their home country, where they are likely to be persecuted (McBrien, 2017).

The numbers of forced migrants, who are not eligible for refugee status, are increasing also due to climate change and natural disasters. The question remains as to how these forced migrants should be supported and protected (McBrien, 2017). There

are many complimentary protections by states, such as the Subsidiary Protection in the EU, Temporary Protected Status in the United States and the Humanitarian Visa in Brazil (Cherem, 2015). The humanitarian visa in Brazil was created as a response to the large immigration flows of Haitians following the earthquake which demolish the country in 2010 (Fernandes, 2017). Affected by famine, diseases, and political and economic instability, Haitian immigrants immigrated to Brazil in search of a future in the country that was leading the UN peacekeeping operations in Haiti at the time (Lima, 2018). The creation of this new instrument was also a response to the definition of refugee by the 1951 Refugee Convention which does not include natural disaster, or other types of persecution or violation of human rights as in the case of the Haitians immigrants who are considered by most as *environmental refugees*, a term coined by Essam El-Hinnawi and that is being heavily discussed in the UN (Lima, 2018). Environmental refugees are forced to leave their origin country temporarily or permanently because of an environmental disruption (Lima, 2018). Lima (2018) states that the definition by the 1951 Refugee Convention and even its 1967 protocol have a "time limitation" and a Eurocentric character, because it does not take into consideration new events, the advance of globalization, climate change and issues that are unique to the Global South.

Following the discussion of these definitions, this paper focuses on the case of refugees. It also takes into consideration the Brazilian humanitarian visa for Haitians, since these immigrants are considered by many to fall under the scope of refugees.

1.4 Refugee integration and the labor market

The flows of refugees in the last decades have resulted in defensive reactions in the host countries which as a consequence results in the difficulty of refugees in integrating in their host countries (Hieronymi, 2005; McBrien, 2017). An even greater challenge for the integration of refugees is the poor physical and mental health of the refugees as a result of the traumatic experiences of forced migration (Auer, 2018; Donato, 2020). Some scholars argue that the poor physical and mental health of refugees has a significant impact on their success in the labor market and partially explains the difference in employment between the refugees, other immigrants and natives besides the lack of language proficiency, education, qualification, networks,

labor skills and experience (Donato, 2020). An example of a failed integration is of the guest workers in Europe during the 20th century where it was believed that it was only a temporary immigration, thus the governments did not adopt any fitting policy related to the integration of these workers who ended up staying in the host countries resulting in a divided society (D'Amico, 2018; Hieronymi, 2005).

Therefore, not only are settlement policies of importance but also integration policies. Particularly, in the case of refugees since the majority cannot return to their home countries and in many cases need to integrate in the society of the host country. This paper focuses primarily on labor market integration since it plays a central role in all other areas of integration, such as social and cultural integration (Seidelsohn, 2019).

Integration is a dynamic process which involves all areas of life, namely employment, education, health, language proficiency and other socioeconomic areas (Donato, 2020). It is a way to remove obstacles to the inclusion and interaction between refugees and natives. It is worth noting that integration is a process that requires the effort and inclusion of both parties: the refugee population and the host society. In other words, the host society needs to have the knowledge of how integration works and how their actions either positively or negatively affect it. Otherwise, the refugee population cannot be successfully integrated in the host society (Miller, 2018). Furthermore, integration is an exchange of benefits also between refugees and state, since the conditions in which refugees find themselves influence the ability of states to progress in education, employment, health and other areas (Donato, 2020). Such exchange is particularly economically beneficial for a country's labor market because refugees introduce new skills, languages, cultural and other intercommunity aspects to it. However, it is still a sensitive political and social issue (International Labour Office et al, 2001).

Studies have concluded that language proficiency, education, social networks, labor market information and labor market conditions help refugees in their socioeconomic integration (Donato, 2020; Salamonska, 2019). According to Seidelsohn (2019) "gainful employment plays a central role in economic, social and cultural integration and participation" (p. 216). Seidelsohn (2019) further argues that "successful employment integration is the primary source for obtaining personal recognition and a nonmarginal status" (p. 216). Thus, it can be said that economic integration is intertangled with social and cultural integration, because employment

also enhances the refugee's social network and interaction with the host society (Donato, 2020; Seidelsohn, 2019).

As seen above, labor market integration depends on specific circumstances such as language proficiency, education, qualification and labor market skills and experiences which directly influence a refugee's accessibility to the labor market (Auer, 2018; Bevelander, 2014; Seidelsohn, 2019). As a result, refugees who do not master the language of the host country, lack human capital, and have low-level education and training, run the risk of an undercutting of the labor market (Auer, 2018; Bredgaard, 2018; Seidelsohn, 2019).

Another issue is the lack of recognition or the bureaucracy to recognize refugees' certificates and work experiences from their origin country is also an obstacle for refugees in the host country labor market, at times, forcing refugees to accept jobs for which they are overqualified (Bredgaard, 2018). Furthermore, Colic-Peisker (2007) argues that "being trapped in a low-skilled job means that networking with peers, crucial for keeping one's professional skills up to date, as well as for learning about better job opportunities, is almost impossible" (p. 14). On the other hand, research has shown that refugees who master the local language and possess some kind of qualification or training are more likely to find employment (Auer, 2018; Bredgaard, 2018).

As mentioned above, NGOs play a vast role in integration of refugees in a society which includes specifically labor market integration. They are involved in the language learning, education and training, and the referral of refugees to companies with the objective of making refugees qualified, motivated and employable (Bredgaard, 2018; Seidelsohn, 2019). The personal contacts and networks NGOs provide to refugees facilitates their access to jobs and motivates refugees (Bredgaard, 2018; Williams, 2017). The motives of NGOs related to refugees may be political, moral, economic, or philanthropic (Van Ewijk, 2016). The inadequacy of the state in integrating refugees in the labor market is also one of the reasons NGOs' role is indispensable and has the highest impact in refugees' integration (Mayblin, 2018; Salamonska, 2019). Not only do NGOs provide the necessary tools for a successful integration, but they also point out failures in the state's provision and policies and have an impact on states' and businesses' policies (Mayblin, 2018; Salamonska, 2019). After all, refugees in the labor market should not have the same treatment as other (economic) immigrants because

refugees have a special status under international law enforcing the obligation states have to provide (Bredgaard, 2018; Cherem, 2015).

Ultimately, whilst being a refugee may require giving up certain aspects of one's identity and culture, it does not mean that the protection and freedom of keeping other aspects of one's identity and culture should not be respected by the host country and its society. Otherwise, refugees would feel threaten in the host country for the same reasons they fled the origin country (Hieronymi, 2005). There is no (successful) integration if the so-called integration is being created under fear and oppression. This leads to the concept of assimilation (Hieronymi, 2005; Salamonska, 2019). Although, assimilation is perceived as having mainly a negative connotation, the positive aspect of assimilation is that it means that the immigrant is welcome to become a full member of the host society, eventually viewing the host society as his own (Hieronymi, 2005). Such full membership requires immigrants to adopt fundamental political, moral and cultural values of the host society, including the language of the host country. The negative connotation of assimilation is that in the process of adopting the fundamental political, moral and cultural values and language, immigrants (especially those of minorities) are forced assimilation mainly by eradicating their own identity and culture (Donato, 2020; Hieronymi, 2005). Consequently, assimilation places an obligation on the refugee towards the host society and may enhance or lead xenophobia and discrimination if the refugee does not meet the expectations of the host society and state, whilst integration is a process that is reciprocal (D'Amico, 2018).

In many cases, refugees face discriminatory patterns and are frequently addressed as a minority or "them" whilst the host society is addressed as "we" (Auer, 2018; Seidelsohn, 2019). Such polarization results in a difficult or one-sided integration (Seidelsohn, 2019). Another barrier refugees have to deal regarding their integration is the discriminatory practices and the lack of information and incentives of businesses and employers. Additionally, racial and ethnic discrimination are present in some cases (Bredgaard, 2018). The next section will discuss xenophobia and discrimination against refugees.

1.4.1. Xenophobia and discrimination

Xenophobia can be defined as "attitudes, prejudices and behavior that reject, exclude and often vilify persons, based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identify" (Miller, 2018, p. 2). O. Yakushko (2009) states that presently xenophobia can be described as being "linked with ethnocentrism, which is characterized by the attitude that one's own group or culture is superior to others" and she further argues that "xenophobia targets specifically those individuals who are foreigners in a particular community, often regardless of their visible characteristics or visible differences with the native individuals" (p. 44).

The rise of populist nationalist governments has influenced the increase of xenophobia and discriminatory cases since their rhetoric and policies are frequently anti-migration. Therefore, xenophobic statements by nationalist politicians may shape the public opinion and instigate xenophobic acts by individuals or groups within society (D'Amico, 2018; Miller, 2018). Xenophobic acts can be manifested both physically and psychologically, including verbal and physical assaults, intimidation, destruction of property and vandalism of foreign-owned businesses (Miller, 2018).

In countries with a high refugee inflow, the population tends to be concern about how these influxes might impact crime rates and the labor market (D'Amico, 2018). Not surprisingly, xenophobia is often connected to political and economic instability in a country during which immigrants are often seen as one of the causes. This is due to the competition for the access to limited resources that rise in times of such instability (D'Amico, 2018; Miller, 2018).

Xenophobia can vary between countries; countries with a high GDP per capita are more likely to be acceptable of refugees than countries with a low GDP per capita (D'Amico, 2018). It also varies within a country; Miller (2018) argues that "while one municipality may welcome migrants, a neighboring municipality may violently oppose that arrival and integration of migrants" (p. 3). Difference in treatment depends on various factors, such as culture, race and ethnic makeup and social and economic situations. As mentioned above, the competition for the access to limited resources is one of the reason xenophobia increases. Thus, xenophobia is more likely to occur in places where resources are already scarce, and the population feels isolated and

neglected by the state. Consequently, it become difficult to share the responsibility for refugees' settlement and integration nationwide and worldwide (Miller, 2018).

In relation to racial discrimination, it is defined in the Article 1 of The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination as:

> [...] any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, color, descent or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose of effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.

A study by Colic-Peisker and Tilbury (2007) on refugees and employment in Australia shows that ex-Yugoslavs refugees who are white European refugees experience less discrimination in the labor market compared to the Middle Eastern and Asian refugees. The authors believe that this is due to their being perceived as more similar by employers unlike the Middle Eastern and Asian refugees. The study further provides evidence that discrimination is likely to have a high negative impact on a refugee's successful integration in the labor market, because refugees, although skilled, experience high rates of unemployment or employment below their level of qualification due to structural disadvantage and discrimination.

The difference between xenophobia and racial discrimination is that whilst the latter distinguishes an individual based on skin color, hair type and facial features, the first is based on the perception that an individual is foreign to the community or nation. Nevertheless, they do often overlap (International Migration, Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia, 2001). Lastly, the difficulties in finding a job where xenophobia and or discrimination is perceived has a double negative effect because it not only affects their socioeconomic lives but also their self-esteem (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2007).

States can address the issue of xenophobia and discrimination by means of adopting and strengthening sufficient and appropriate integration policies that

incorporate antidiscrimination measures and public services, as for instance public education and healthcare (D'Amico, 2018; Miller, 2018). Furthermore, there have been a number of approaches by world leaders and the UN in the combat against xenophobia and racism, such as the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in 2001. It urges for a "firm commitment of the international community to tackle racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance at the national, regional and international level" (World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, 2001). International and national NGOs and other civil society actors have been promoting awareness and programs to tackle the issue of xenophobia and racism as well (Miller, 2018).

Studies have also found that meaningful interaction, including acknowledging shared histories, between the host society and the refugee population can diminish prejudices and misconceptions and eventually enhance double integration (Miller, 2018). Therefore, states alone cannot overcome xenophobia and discrimination, but should rather collectively work with local NGOs that have a closer relationship with the local authorities and population (Miller, 2018).

All things considered, xenophobia is less likely to take place in a society where the refugee population is successfully integrated (along with the host society), able to work, socially and economically independent and where the access to public services is not a problem (Miller, 2018). Regarding racial discrimination, it is not an issue only refugees face but the host society as well. This is a more complex problem in which the state has to be responsible for the enforcement of non-discriminatory laws, the adoption of public policies, such as affirmative action policies, and creating of awareness programs in conjunction with NGOs. As declared in the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (2001), "addressing the reality of increased diversity means finding political, legal, social and economic mechanisms to ensure mutual respect and to mediate relations across differences."

2. Refugees in Brazil: The state, NGOs and the labor market

This chapter discusses how Brazil addresses the protection of refugees and which measures the state has taken to ensure the settlement and integration of refugees in the society and labor market. It further demonstrates the most recent characteristics of the refugees residing in Brazil and how the recent migration flows may have influenced legislation and public policy. The chapter also discusses the influence NGOs have had on Brazilian legislation and policymaking, and the integration of refugees in the labor market. Finally, the remaining obstacles refugees have regarding their integration and non-discrimination in the Brazilian labor market will be addressed.

2.1. Brazil and the protection of refugees

Brazil is perceived as a pioneering country in regard to the international protection of refugees. The country was the first in the Sothern Cone to ratify the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees in 1960 and its 1967 protocol, and the country is also one of the first countries to be part of the UNHCR Executive Committee (Machado, 2019; Pastorelli, 2019; Segatto, 2019). The UNHCR works to protect refugees and promote durable solutions for the matter, therefore, the Brazilian government together with the UNHCR in Brazil protect refugees and provide them with documents, education, labor market access, and other rights as any legalized foreign citizen in the country (Machado, 2019; Pastorelli, 2019).

Besides the 1951 Refugee Convention, Brazil also ratified the Declaration of Cartagena on Refugees of 1984. The Cartagena Declaration emerged during the conflicts in Central America in the 1980s and early 1990s when people had to be displaced by force (Pastorelli, 2019; Tinker, 2016). It is considered a milestone in the refugee issue in Latin America because it granted protection to individuals who did not fall under the definition of the 1951 Refugee Convention by extending the definition of refugees as:

> ...persons who have fled their countries because their life, security or freedom have been threatened by widespread violence, foreign aggression, internal strife, massive violation of human rights or other circumstances that have

seriously disturbed public order (UN, 1984, Conclusions and Recommendations, Subsection III).

In 2004, the Mexico Plan of Action (MAP) was also approved by twenty Latin American countries, including Brazil, in order to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Cartagena Declaration. The plan aims to strengthen the solidarity and cooperation on durable solutions among Latin American countries regarding refugees and humanitarian issues in the region (Pastorelli, 2019; Tinker, 2016). In 2010, the Brasília Declaration on the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons in the Americas encouraged states to "adopt mechanisms to deal with new situations of displacement that are not provided for in the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol." Eight years later in 2012, Interior Ministers of Mercosur and its Associated States further agreed to cooperate and strengthen public policy for asylum seekers and refugees in the Declaration of Principles of Mercosur on International Protection of Refugees. This declaration emphasized the need for Latin American countries to adopt non-restrictive migration policies, taking into consideration family reunification, age, gender, sexual orientation and the principle of non-refoulment (Pastorelli, 2019; Tinker, 2016).

In order to modify the countries' international image and gain credibility after the military dictatorship, Brazil had already adopted a national legislation known as the Refugee Act of 1997, which also facilitated the entry of refugees from the Baltic states, Ukraine and Poland at the time (Jubilut, 2006; Segatto, 2019). The 1997 Refugee Act expanded the definition of refugees to include refugees from outside Europe as well; it included the definition of both the 1951 Convention and the Cartagena Declaration (Ahlert, 2016; Segatto, 2019; Tinker, 2016). Article 1 of the Refugee Act states that:

> Will be recognized as a refugee every individual who:
> I – due to well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, social group or political opinion find themselves outside their country of nationality and cannot or will not rely on the protection of that country;
> II – not having a nationality and being outside the country where once had his habitual residence, is unable or

> unwilling to return to it, under the circumstances described in the preceding item;
>
> III – due to serious and widespread violations of human rights, is obliged to leave their country of nationality to seek refuge in another country.

As a result of the Refugee Act of 1997, Brazil became the second country in Latin America to include serious and widespread violations of human rights in its international legislation, Bolivia being the first (Supreme Decree 19640 of July 1983) (Jubilut, 2006).

The 1997 Refugee Act also created the Brazilian National Committee for Refugees (CONARE) which an organ that is responsible for determining refugee status and making legislation and policies regarding the settlement and integration of refugees in Brazil (Ahlert, 2016; Jubilut, 2006; Segatto, 2019). CONARE is composed of representatives from the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministries of Health, Work and Labor and Education and Sports. The Federal Police, the UNHCR and the ONG Cáritas São Paulo (representing civil society) are also members. However, it was not until 2001 that the state started to provide governmental assistance to refugees. In the meantime, the settlement and integration assistance were solely provided by the UNHCR and NGOs. After 2001, other groups of refugees arrived in Brazil, yet, studies show that a number of issues remain, such as linguistic and cultural barriers, and xenophobia and discrimination. Other refugees also report unsatisfactory living and working conditions, difficult access to education and healthcare services and lack of knowledge on refugee rights by the state (Segatto, 2019).

The insufficient role of CONARE led regional and local states to formulate their own policies as well. The state of São Paulo created the state committee for refugees (Comitê Estadual para Refugiados) in 2007 that is composed of representatives from the state departments and NGOs (Segatto, 2019).The Committee designs policies for refugees in the state of São Paulo, for example, the immigration support center (Centro de Integração da Cidadania do Imigrante) was launched in 2014. Working groups that aim to improve the health care of immigrants and refugees were also created in 2017.

By improving public services in the state, São Paulo expects to assist not only Brazilian citizens but also immigrants (Segatto, 2019).

The city of São Paulo developed its own initiatives as well; the first municipal conference for immigrant policy (1ª Conferência Municipal de Políticas para Imigrantes) in the city took place in 2013. In 2014, the center of reference and assistance to immigrants (Centro de Referência e Atendimento a Imigrantes), also known as CRAI, was launched by the municipality as a reference center in which immigrants can find assistance and receive information on how to access public services, including shelter and legal assistance. The CRAI is financially supported by the federal government (Angelo, 2019; Segatto, 2019). In 2016, the municipality of São Paulo approved a legislation that establishes the role of each municipal department in the immigration matter and in addition, a department responsible for settlement and integration policy in the city (Coordenação de Políticas para Migrantes) was created (Segatto, 2019). This department elaborates projects for the integration and non-discrimination of refugees; organizes cultural events and job fairs; and offers space for dialogues between refugees, civil society and public servants (Angelico, 2019).

In 2017, due to the vast flow of Venezuelan migrants, the New Brazilian Migration Act (Nova Lei de Migração) was approved establishing the rights and duties of immigrants, emphasizing the equality of opportunities for both Brazilians and immigrants, and institutionalizing and expanding the possibility of the humanitarian visa to immigrants of all nationalities who find themselves in the same vulnerable situation as Haitians immigrants but who also are not eligible for refugee status. The New Migration Act also explicitly proscribe xenophobia and racism (Da Silva, 2017; Machado, 2019).

Venezuelans migrants were not recognized as refugees at first because the Venezuelan government did not admit to having a humanitarian crisis in the country, consequently, preventing other states to recognize these Venezuelan migrants as refugees. Moreover, the majority of the Venezuelans leaving the country did not leave for the reasons defined by the 1951 Refugee Convention. Nonetheless, in June 2019, CONARE declared that from that moment on Brazil shall recognize the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, therefore, also recognizing these Venezuelan migrants as refugees under the Declaration of Cartagena and national law (Aguiar, 2020; Machado, 2019; Silva, 2019). This decision could be explained by the advocacy of NGOs for the

recognition of Venezuelans as refugees or perhaps because it was taken as a form of a political message by Bolsonaro's administration which does not recognize the government of Nicolás Maduro.

Previously in 2018, the Brazilian government set up a humanitarian task force in the state of Roraima for the reception of Venezuelan refugees and to superintend operations in the area. The operation, known as Operation Shelter (Operação Acolhida) is led by the Brazilian military and is executed and coordinated together with the law enforcement; UN agencies, in particular with the UNHCR; the International Organization for Migration and several NGOs. The operation consists of reception posts, shelters and information and data exchange systems (Aguiar, 2020). Furthermore, the operation provides the access to documentation, food and healthcare (including vaccinations). Finally, the refugees can voluntarily opt to be displaced to other states in Brazil with the assistance of NGOs. The operation is ongoing since February 2018 (Aguiar, 2020).

2.2. Characteristics of the refugees in Brazil

CONARE stated that by the end of 2017, Brazil has recognized 10,145 refugees of different nationalities, of which 52% live in São Paulo, 17% in Rio de Janeiro and 8% in Paraná. Nationwide, there were 33,865 applications booked in 2017 and other 86,000 cases are still pending, which is triple the number of applications registered in 2016 (CONARE, 2017; Pastorelli, 2019). There are three main reasons Brazil is facing a growing number of refuge requests: the earthquake in Haiti in 2010, the internal wars in the Middle East and North Africa and the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela (Pastorelli, 2019). The profile of these refugees between 2011 and 2017 varies considerably: 14% are children (0-12 years old); 6% are adolescents (13-17 years old); 33% are young adults (18-29 years old); 44% are adults (30-59 years old); and 3% are elders (60+ years old). Regarding gender, 29% are women and 71% are men (CONARE, 2017; Pastorelli, 2019).

As seen above, there are three main migration flow to Brazil in the last decade: Haitians, Syrians and Venezuelans. Besides Brazil being perceived as a pioneering country in the international protection of refugees, each of these refugees' groups have their own motives to seek refuge in Brazil (Pastorelli, 2019).

In Haiti's case, Brazil has led MINUSTAH (United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in Haiti) created in 2004 to restore peace and security in the country after several episodes of political violence. This mission created a link between these two countries, but until the earthquake in Haiti in 2010 that Brazil started receiving an influx of Haitian migrants. Although, the Refugee Act of 1997 expanded the definition of refugee, Haitians are not recognized as refugees by CONARE under the statute. Instead, Brazil granted Haitians immigrants a humanitarian visa through the National Immigration Council (Lima, 2018).

Brazil, seeking to play a greater role in international human rights and in the global stage in general, recognized that the humanitarian visa would have a direct impact on its humanitarian policies (Fernandes, 2017; Lima, 2018). Furthermore, due to the difficult and dangerous path Haitians would take to enter the Brazilian borders, the role of the government and NGOs became very important in the assistance to Haitians immigrants (Lima, 2018). It is worth noting that the UNHCR and national NGOs were key players in the initiative of the humanitarian visa by pressuring the government after research has shown the inhumane conditions Haitians had to experience as irregular immigrants attempting to arrive in Brazil (Fernandes, 2017; Lima, 2018; Ribeiro, 2015). Up to the present, NGOs are still largely responsible for the shelter and the socioeconomic integration, such as language lessons and job referral, of these immigrants (Fernandes, 2017; Lima, 2018).

The humanitarian visa became attractive to Haitians because after obtaining it, they receive residence and work documents (Lima, 2018). The humanitarian visa protects these immigrants from being sent back to their country, but it does not provide them the status of refugees, thus the protection is only legally binding and applicable within the Brazilian territory (Tinker, 2016). However, as refugees, they are allowed access to the labor market resulting in a search for legal jobs and socioeconomic stability (Lima, 2018). Not only did the humanitarian visa benefit Haitian immigrants, but it also has various benefits to the state, such as being able to regulate illegal immigration and keeping an excellent international image regarding humanitarian causes (Fernandes, 2017; Lima, 2018).

In Venezuela's case, the border of the Brazilian state Roraima with Venezuela facilitates the entry of Venezuelans in Brazil who are seeking refuge from the humanitarian crisis. According to a UN report in 2019, Brazil receives the largest

number of Venezuelan refugees after Colombia, Peru, Chile and Ecuador (Machado, 2019; Silva, 2019). The language proximity and the similar culture and historical factors contribute also to the large number of Venezuelan refugees in other Latin American countries, including Brazil (Pastorelli, 2019). Since 2014, Venezuelans are facing a humanitarian crisis in which necessity goods, access to healthcare, unemployment and other human rights are little to non-existent leaving Venezuelans no other alternative but migration (Machado, 2019; Silva, 2019). Some scholars argue that this is a migration of survival, where the state of the origin country is unable or unwilling to provide, assist and protect its citizens and there are no internal remedies available (Betts, 2010; Silva, 2019). As a result of the New Migration Act of 2017 and the recognition of Venezuelans as refugees in 2019, Venezuelans have been choosing Brazil as a host country (Machado, 2019). Brazil and Latin America share geographical, cultural, historical and linguistic characteristics which makes it easier for refugees from Latin America to integrate more than refugees arriving from the Middle East or other African countries beside Angola (Pastorelli, 2019).

In the case of the refugees from the Middle East and Africa, particularly from Syria, the facility of obtaining a humanitarian visa or a refugee status in Brazil has played a role in the decision to migrate to Brazil (Espinoza, 2018; Pastorelli, 2019). Furthermore, there is already an Arab migration tradition present in Brazil from former migration flows between 1871 and 1900 when Christian communities in countries as Syria, Egypt and Lebanon were being persecuted by their states and had to fled to Brazil (Pastorelli, 2019).

It can be argued that these flows of refugees in the last decade has forced Brazil to strengthen its legislation and develop public policies in relation to the protection of refugees. The next section addresses the role and the influence NGOs have had in the development and implementation of public policies related to the settlement and integration of refugees.

2.3. The role and influence of NGOs

In 2019, Brazil accounted 237,000 NGOs which the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) defines as: being private, non-profit, institutionalized, self-administered and voluntary (IBGE, 2019). The first NGO in Brazil, Fase, was created

in 1961 and works in six Brazilian states in the areas of: right to the city, environmental justice, women, and food sovereignty (Pastorelli, 2019). It was not until the 90s after the dictatorship that the numbers of NGOs have increased rapidly. However, Perez (2009) states that NGOs in Brazil had already started to consolidate in Brazil during the military dictatorship:

> the dictatorial regime closed several channels of communication between the population and the government, leading sectors of society to organize in parallel in the struggle for their rights. The so-called 'new social movements' were fighting for the expansion of citizens' actions in the conduct of government policies and in solving social needs. And NGOs helped social movements through support and advice. (p. 4)

However, in the 1990s, the relationship between NGOs and the state changed from antagonism into more of a collaboration where NGOs started providing social assistance to the population in partnership with the state (Pastorelli, 2019).

Currently, there are approximately 100 NGOs supporting and representing refugees in Brazil; it is the largest refugee support network in Latin America (Pastorelli, 2019). The recent refugee boom in Brazil has forced the state, NGOs and civil society to design and cooperate on policies and strategies to receive and aid this population. Although, Brazil is one of the leading countries regarding receptiveness of immigrants, refugees still find structural problems to integrate. (Pastorelli, 2019). It is required that the state, supported and aided by NGOs, adopt and implement public policies that comply with international obligations and provide refugees a life with dignity and peace (Pastorelli, 2019). The reason thereof is that NGOs have been occupying the gap between civil society and the state, where the state is unable or unwilling to take action due to its economic model. Moreover, NGOs are directly involved with the population and therefore, they know what is necessary in relation to the adaptation and

implementation of public policies (Brysk, 2000; Hall, 2017; Lehman, 2007; Machado, 2019).

When ratifying the 1951 Convention, Brazil adopted a geographical limitation, thus only recognizing Europeans as refugees. Although the Brazilian government did not recognize Latin American refugees, during the military dictatorships in the 1970s and 1980s in Latin America, the UNHCR and the NGOs Comissão Justiça e Paz, Cáritas São Paulo and Cáritas Rio de Janeiro hosted Latin American refugees who were being politically persecuted in their origin country. These organizations did not only host these refugees, but they also advocated for changes in the legal status of refugees and provided social and legal assistance (Jubilut, 2006; Sagatto, 2019). As a response, the Brazilian government granted these refugees a temporary (work) visa, but still did not recognize them as refugees. Therefore, the Commission of Justice and Peace hosted these refugees for an indefinite time until they could be accepted by a third country. Only after the end of the dictatorship mid the 1980s and the 1988 Federal Constitution did the Brazilian government remove the geographical restriction, declare that foreigners have the same fundamental rights as Brazilians, and improve significantly its policies regarding refugees, especially during the governments of Henrique Cardoso and Lula da Silva (Jubilut, 2006; Machado, 2019; Segatto, 2019).

The approval of the Refugee Act in 1997 was strongly influenced by the advocacy work of NGOs and the UNHCR that convinced Brazilian Congress members to expand the definition of refugees (Machado, 2019; Segatto, 2019). The 1997 Refugee Act created CONARE with the aim to determine legislation and policies on the settlement and integration of refugees. However, as said before, it was not until 2001 that the state started to provide governmental assistance to refugees. In the meantime, the settlement and integration assistance were solely provided by the UNHCR and NGOs (Segatto, 2019).

Thus far, NGOs are mostly funded by the UNHCR or donations and only occasionally receive a complemented funding from the government to provide settlement and integration services. For example, Cáritas São Paulo is able to provide settlement and integration services, such as shelter due to the funding the NGO receives from the UNHCR. Furthermore, when Brazil hosted a number of Afghan refugees in 2001, CONARE coordinated the process of settlement and integration. Nevertheless, it were the NGOs that implemented these policies with the funding of the UNHCR (Segatto,

2019). It became clear that the government was failing to fully participate in the implementation of policies and that NGOs were taking responsibility for it.

NGOs play a pivotal role in the implementation of the policies regarding the settlement and integration of refugees, but they also have a significant influence on refugees' policy's formulation and its implementation processes. For example, not only is the NGO Cáritas São Paulo (civil society's representative member in CONARE) present in the decision-making processes within CONARE, it also entitled to vote (Jubilut, 2006). In 2018, NGOs pressured the federal government to take action in the state of Roraima to receive Venezuelans refugees. As a result, the federal government set up the Operation Shelter, called by some as a "massive humanitarian infrastructure", that is being executed and coordinated together with NGOs (Aguiar, 2020). NGOs also participate in the formulation of refugees' policy in commissions and committees in regional states and municipalities, such as the state committee for refugees in the state of São Paulo and the CRAI in the city of São Paulo (Segatto, 2019). According to Machado (2019), public policy must be formulated mainly by the state, but the support and participation of NGOs and civil society is a prerequisite.

Yet, NGOs' role in assisting refugees with shelter, education, language and employment training and legal matters is still indispensable, and they are also the ones to refer refugees to the CRAI and other public services (Segatto, 2019). Since 2017, due to the Venezuelan migration, the number of NGOs increased in the state of Roraima as well as nationwide. For example, the NGO Fraternity Without Borders that offers shelter, language and cultural courses, and other types of assistance to Venezuelan refugees entering Brazil through Roraima. Furthermore, state institutions, NGOs, the UNHCR, and some actors of the private sector have been creating partnerships among themselves to be able to assist these refugees as well as possible (Machado, 2019).

According to Jubilut (2006), "the presence of civil society is extremely relevant as an international commitment by a country binds not only the government but also the society at large." NGOs' role in the protection, assistance and policy making is essential together with their role of exercising pressure on the government on refugee matters (Jubilut, 2006; Machado, 2019). Ultimately, similar to other countries, Brazil's public policies regarding refugees are undertaken by the state, the UNHCR and NGOs, but especially by the latter through its activities and partnerships (Pastorelli, 2019).

2.4. Brazilian labor market, xenophobia and discrimination

It is of significant importance that states not only work on refugees' settlement policies but also on their integration policies that include tackling xenophobia and discrimination. As mentioned above, refugees are a vulnerable group that face numerous challenges; however, a successful economic integration opens the path to all other forms of integration and personal fulfilment. As also discussed above, labor market integration is intertangled with social and cultural integration. The reason thereof is that integration occurs as soon as a refugee enters the labor market, resulting not only in economic independence, material gain, skills development, but also in a higher self-esteem, social network, cultural adaptation, sense of usefulness and other positive feelings (Donato, 2020; Pastorelli, 2019; Seidelsohn, 2019). An employed refugee is more likely to gain the sense of belonging and be socially accepted by the local population as well. The issue at hand is that refugees have difficulty in entering the labor market for several reasons. According to a study done by the Brazilian Ministry of Justice in 2015, the major difficulties for refugees in Brazil are (1) language; (2) lack of cultural and labor law knowledge, (3) bureaucratic credential evaluation, (4) xenophobia and discrimination, and (5) inadequate public service (Angelico, 2019; Da Silva, 2017; Machado, 2019; Pastorelli, 2019; Segatto, 2019).

Regarding (1) language, it was discussed in the previous chapter that language proficiency is essential to a refugee's integration in the host society and labor market (Auer, 2018; Bevelander, 2014; Seidelsohn, 2019). Yet, it remains one of the obstacles to integration, also in the Brazilian labor market. Particularly since the majority of the refugees in Brazil do not come from a Portuguese speaking country and the Portuguese language is for the largest part indispensable in the Brazilian labor market (Machado, 2019; Pastorelli, 2019).

The (2) lack of cultural and labor law knowledge hinders the refugee's adaptation, interaction with Brazilian nationals, access to public services and may lead refugees to lose a job opportunity or submit to ill-treatment in the labor market (Angelico, 2019; Machado, 2019).

The (3) bureaucratic credential evaluation in Brazil is an obstacle because it often forces refugees to accept jobs for which they are overqualified (Bredgaard, 2018).

The process of evaluation is expensive, lenghty and requires a large number of documents that in most cases refugees cannot provide due the fact that their migration is a forced one (Pastorelli, 2019).

In relation to (4) xenophobia and discrimination, the 1988 Brazilian Federal Constitution, more specifically Article 5, establishes that all individuals are equal before the law, without discrimination of any kind, assuring Brazilians and immigrants (thus, refugees included) the inviolability of the rights to life, freedom, equality, safety and property (Annoni, 2015; Jubilut, 2006). Moreover, Article 3, IV of the Constitution guarantees immigrants access to the labor market with the same rights, duties and renumeration as Brazilian citizens without discrimination of any kind. Brazil also ratified the Convention concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation (ILO Convention No.111 of 1958) in 1965. The Convention require states to ensure that all discrimination and exclusion on basis, such as race, nationality, sex, religion, are prohibited and to repeal any legislation that may jeopardize equal opportunities (Annoni, 2015). Nevertheless, the reality is different. There are several reports of severe violations of labor law; immigrants working in awful conditions and being exploited and mistreated by their employers (Annoni, 2015). Many of them submit to such treatment due to the lack of knowledge or because they do not have other job alternatives. Both refugees and the local population must be informed that a refugee has the same rights as a Brazilian citizen (Angelico, 2019; Pastorelli, 2019; Da Silva, 2017). NGOs (in cooperation with the Brazilian Public Ministry of Labor) have been spreading information and giving lectures to both refugees and employers on refugee status and the Brazilian labor market laws. Additionally, NGOs encourage and guide companies to hire refugees (Pastorelli, 2019). It is not always the employers' fault whenever there is a breach of labor law. Sometimes the delay in granting refugee status by CONARE or certain job position requirements, such as proving participation in the last election, may be the cause refugees opt for informal jobs (Annoni, 2015). However, Brazilian labor law is clear: from the moment there is an employer-employee relationship, the employee must be respected and renumerated accordingly regardless of possessing or not the required documents. Otherwise, refugees may and should pursue legal action (Annoni, 2015).

Moreover, there are social issues that refugees encounter in Brazil which Brazilian citizens have always experienced, such as institutional racism and patriarchy

(Pastorelli, 2019). The IBGE states that there is a salary relation with the issue of gender and ethnicity. It reports a ranking in salaries that goes from the highest salaries to the lowest in this order: white men, black men, white women, black women. Additionally, black women are more likely to be unemployed, followed by white women, black men, and finally white men (Pastorelli, 2019). According to the UN Chronicle *Racial Discrimination and Miscegenation: The Experience* in Brazil by Edward Telles (n.a.), "[…] racial inequality in Brazil is high and racial discrimination in the labor market and other spheres of Brazilian society is common" (para. 6). Telles (n.a.) further states that "on average, black and brown (mulatto or mixed race) Brazilians earn half of the income of the white population" and also that "[..] brown, and especially black Brazilians, earn about 20 to 25 per cent less than whites with the same background, when age, work experience, educational level, sex, region, class origin and labor market characteristics are considered" (para. 7). These are issues commonly shared by Brazilian nationals, but it also applies to refugees of color in addition to the xenophobia due to their status.

Regarding the (5) the inadequate public service, a study by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2009 stated that the migrant population also has difficulty in accessing public services in their host country. Especially in developing countries due to limited resources and poor infrastructure. For example, education and healthcare in Brazil are public and universal, legally speaking there are no obstacles to their accesses. However, the problem lies with their inadequacy and frailty (Angelico, 2019). In 2013, the International Migration Organization (IMO) published a report that also reinforced the difficulty migrants have in relation to public services, even greater than nationals; therefore, threatening their right to basic human rights (Angelico, 2019; Pastorelli, 2019).

Refugees and Brazilians are currently dealing with a social and financial crisis. Since 2016, Brazil has been struggling with a financial crisis leaving 11.8% of the population unemployed, and in the end of August 2020, unemployment in Brazil reached 14,4% of the population. Consequently, it limits the access to housing, education and public health services (Aguiar, 2020; Pastorelli, 2019). A country with recession creates more obstacles to the integration of refugees that require a high budged and participation of different national, regional and local actors. Meanwhile, these authorities still struggle to determine who is responsible for the settlement and integration of refugees (Aguiar, 2020; Angelico, 2019; Pastorelli, 2019).

Such a vast migration flow as the Venezuelan migration requires a fast and effective response by the government. Despite Brazil being a pioneering country with respect to the protection of refugees, the Venezuelan migration has shown that Brazil has much to improve. The Brazilian government and the state of Roraima were not adequately prepared in the beginning of the flow and as a result, the refugees slipped into extreme poverty, inhumane conditions and xenophobia took place (Machado, 2019; Silva, 2019). In the end of 2015, the Federal Police in the state of Roraima started deporting some Venezuelan refugees; this activity by the police took place several times. However, in 2017 a federal judge of the state of Roraima granted these refugees a Habeas Corpus. In the end of 2017 Roraima's governor declared state of emergency (Machado, 2019).

In 2018, the situation got out of control leading the state of Roraima to request the Brazilian Supreme Federal Court (Supremo Tribunal Federal, STF) to temporarily close the borders with Venezuela. The Supreme Court did not accept such request arguing that it would infringe Brazil's obligations under international law, such as the 1967 Protocol and the 1984 Declaration of Cartagena (Aguiar, 2020; Machado, 2019).

A large part of the population in the state of Roraima and in other regions in the country started to blame the refugees for the collapse of the public services and the inadequate response of the state. Some argue that the media and several political parties contributed to this prejudice (Pastorelli, 2019). A vast part of the society does not understand the severity of forced migration and the vulnerability of refugees; the lack of information or incorrect information are the main causes (Machado, 2019; Pastorelli, 2019). Consequently, a series of xenophobic attacks from Brazilian nationals against Venezuelans occurred between 2017 and 2019 (Aguiar, 2020).

Thus, Brazil is perceived as by some as a pioneering country in regard to the protection of refugees due to its ratification of the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 protocol and the 1960 Declaration of Cartagena together with its national legislation, such as the 1997 Refugee Act which expanded the definition of refugees to include refugees from outside Europe and created CONARE that is responsible for determining refugee status and formulating policies regarding refugees (Jubilut, 2006; Segatto, 2019). Furthermore, states and municipalities, in particular São Paulo state and municipality, have also been developing their own policies in relation to the settlement and integration of refugees (Segatto, 2019). Such progress has been largely influenced

by NGOs and their advocacy, and the three main flows of refugees to Brazil in the last decade: Haitians, Arabs and Venezuelans (Pastorelli, 2019). Nevertheless, there are remaining barriers for the integration of refugees in the labor market: (1) language; (2) lack of cultural and labor law knowledge, (3) bureaucratic credential evaluation, (4) xenophobia and discrimination, and (5) inadequate public service (Angelico, 2019; Da Silva, 2017; Machado, 2019; Pastorelli, 2019; Segatto, 2019). The next chapter will discuss how NGOs play a role in tackling these issues.

3. Integrating refugees in the Brazilian labor market: NGOs' adopted measures and their relationship with the state

As seen in previous chapters, there are remaining obstacles interfering with the effort of successfully integrating refugees in the labor market. Therefore, to better understand the role of NGOs in the integration and non-discrimination of refugees in the Brazilian labor market, this study resorted to interviews, bibliographic review and document analysis as forms of qualitative research method. The field research was planned to be carried out in June and July 2020, in the city of São Paulo, Brazil. However, due to the measures adopted worldwide to contain the progress of Covid-19, traveling was not possible. The interviews were carried out through e-mail or videocall.

Eight NGOs were interviewed; all of them are located in Brazil. Some of them emerged from an international network; these are (1) Fraternity Without Borders, (2) Cáritas Arqueodicesiana de São Paulo, (4) Missão Paz, and (5) Serviço Jesuita a Migrantes e Refugiados (SJMR). The national NGOs are: (6) Refúgio 343, (7) ONG Mungazi and (8) Instituto Venezuela.

Furthermore, the Programa de Apoio para a Recolocação dos Refugidos (PARR) by EMDOC (a company specializing in immigration proceedings); the platform Empresas com Refugiados by the UNHCR and the U.N. Global Compact; and the blog MigraMundo which discussed news, legislation and policies regarding refugees in and out of Brazil were also interviewed.

The interviews focused on measures and projects these NGOs have been developing and adopting to successfully integrate refugees in the Brazilian labor market and tackle xenophobia and discrimination. NGOs were further questioned about their relationship with the state and its effect on civil society. Thus, the aim of this chapter is to analyze these measures that have been adopted by these NGOs in order to determine if they address the existing issues mentioned above, and the effect and reachability of the work of NGOs.

This study has observed two categories of measures adopted by these NGOs: the first category aims on the reinforcement of refugees' position and progress in the labor market, and the second category aims on the education and awareness of the host society and employers on the refugee matter and their intercultural interaction. Another observation is the network and relationship between the NGOs and the state

with respect to the approach to the integration and non-discrimination of refugees. Accordingly, this chapter is separated into three sections in which two sections that analyzes one of the categories of measures adopted by the NGOs, and a last section that addresses the network and relationship between the NGOs and the state.

3.1. Measures targeting refugees

All of the NGOs that were interviewed have developed and adopted extensive measures focusing on refugees' position and progress in the labor market to enhance their chances of a successful integration in the labor market. The literature review shows that language proficiency, education and training, cultural knowledge, and labor market skills are some of the required competences that provide refugees a significant advance (Donato, 2020; Salamonska, 2019; Seidelsohn, 2019). Moreover, based on the interviews compiled by this study, NGOs appear to be well aware of the existing obstacles for the integration into the labor market mentioned above, and they are also assured of the measures necessary to overcome them.

In the interviews, language courses appeared as the primary measure NGOs have adopted as a means of improving a refugee's position in the labor market. R. Delfim (personal communication, September 6, 2020), editor of MigraMundo, argues that language proficiency in Brazil is the primary obstacle and therefore, also the primary measure NGOs have adopted due to the country being geographically isolated and having a strong bond with its native language along with a deficiency in foreign language proficiency of its citizens. As a result, the Brazilian private sector is not (sufficiently) prepared for a multilingual environment. Not surprisingly, all NGOs that were interviewed provide Portuguese language classes to refugees. However, whilst some are able to directly provide the course inside the NGO's physical space, such as Missão Paz and Instituto Adus, others have partnerships with Senac, SESC-SP or other educational institution. Some NGOs also refer refugees to the Portuguese classes available at the public universities. According to P. Zola (personal communication, September 9, 2020) coordinator of the project Training and Income Generation (Trabalho e Renda) at the Instituto Adus, the NGO tries to refer refugees to the federal universities whenever the NGO's Portuguese classes are filled to its capacity. P. Zola (personal communication, September 9, 2020) elaborates that this is necessary to avoid

leaving a refugee without the opportunity to attend a Portuguese course, which may eventually hinder the refugee's progress. NGOs acknowledge that language proficiency is the first step to a successful integration, and it facilitates all the following measures.

The second measure commonly adopted by the NGOs are classes or seminars that address and discuss Brazilian culture and (labor) legislation in social and professional settings with the purpose of facilitating refugees' lives in the society and the labor market, additionally enhancing their social network. Colic-Peisker & Tilbury (2007) found in their study that employers often perceived lack of cultural knowledge or "not fitting in with the group" as a reason for not hiring refugees. Thus, cultural knowledge is a crucial aspect in the labor market.

The third measure is the provision of certificate programs to refugees who are willing to attain new skills and increase their chances of finding a more qualified job. The NGOs interviewed have partnerships with educational institutions that provide certificate programs either free of charge or at a discount. NGOs are mostly in charge of informing refugees of the availability of these programs and subsequently assisting with registration and additional documents if necessary. Noteworthy, the NGO, Refúgio 343, provides various courses to refugees, such as cooking or computer courses. It is unclear if the refugees obtain a certification after completing the course. G. Sperandio (personal communication, August 13, 2020), operational manager of Refúgio 343, states that the NGO is currently planning to offer more courses, such as makeup artist courses. Nevertheless, the NGO relies on donations and has to consider the available resources.

The interviewed NGOs that assist Venezuelan refugees at the state of Roraima, Refúgio 343 and Fraternity Without Borders, state that most refugees have a low-level of education or have only previously worked in unskilled jobs in the origin country (D. Bednarczuk, personal communication, July 12, 2020). On the other hand, other NGOs, such as Instituto Adus (located in São Paulo), state that a significant number of refugees have already obtained a certificate or a degree in their origin country (P. Zola, personal communication, September 9, 2020). However, these diplomas can only be accepted in the Brazilian labor market if validated; this leads to the following measure discussed below. Here it seems that depending on the location, the educational level of the refugees may vary. It is not surprising if one analyzes that the refugees have to cross the border in the state of Roraima mainly by feet are more likely to have come from a low-

income and low-level of education than the ones that are able to travel and reside in São Paulo.

The fourth measure is the credential evaluation. Since this is an expensive, lengthy and bureaucratic process in, the NGOs do not have all the resources to directly aid refugees in this matter. Nonetheless, the main task of NGOs is to contact or refer refugees to federal universities or the NGO Compassiva, which was mentioned by several of the NGOs that were interviewed, for a credential evaluation. Credential evaluation by Compassiva is funded by the UNHCR. The NGO Compassiva has been contacted for an interview; however, the NGO affirmed that it does not collaborate with academic research nor does it have sufficient volunteers available to meet this type of request.

According to V. Derminio (personal communication, August 6, 2020), social responsibility assistant of PARR, what further hinders the revalidation of diploma in Brazil is the absence of a public organ which unifies the process of diploma revalidation. Furthermore, C. Sombra (personal communication, September 9, 2020), durable solutions associate at the UNHCR, states that a large number of refugees have a higher level of qualification than the average Brazilian citizen. Yet, due to the country's laborious process of credential evaluation, refugees commonly opt to take a lower-level position merely to enter the labor market.

Other measures such as legal assistance is provided by some of the NGOs: Missão Paz, Cáritas São Paulo, Instituto Adus, SJMR, and ONG Mungazi. Most of them offer legal assistance through partners. For instance, Cáritas São Paulo has a partnership with the law firm Mattos Filho and SJMR has a partnership with the law school Dom Helder Câmara in the city of Belo Horizonte.

Regarding measures targeting refugees' position and progress in the labor market with the interest of successfully integrating them into the Brazilian labor market, it appears these NGOs coincide in their approach and the measures meet the challenges discussed in the literature review. These measures have been adopted by all of the NGOs that were interviewed. As expected, the measures only differ in some respects, such as direct provision or extra courses, depending on the NGO's available resources and partnerships. Nonetheless, according to the NGOs, the effect of the measures and perhaps the most important: their reachability, as P. Zola (personal communication, September 9, 2020) mentioned, have been working properly.

3.2. Projects towards employers and host society

As seen in the literature review, the integration process is a reciprocal commitment between the refugee population and the host population (Miller, 2018). The NGOs that were interviewed recognize this factor and take measures to spread knowledge and awareness to the host society and private sector resulting in an intercultural interaction between the two and the prevention and reduction of xenophobia and discrimination against refugees. Nevertheless, the results of the field research reveal that the NGOs do differ in that all of them have adopted measures aiming at the employers, but not all have measures aiming at the host society. Therefore, this section is divided into two parts: the first on measures adopted in relation to employers (private sector) and the second on measures adopted in relation to the host society.

3.2.1. Measures adopted in relation to employers

All the NGOs that were interviewed have projects and lectures offered to the private sector, as for example, lectures for companies provided by Instituto Adus through its project Training and Income Generation. These lectures share information and knowledge on refugees, how the companies can hire them, and the economical, linguistic and cultural benefits refugees provide within a company. Thus, not only are refugees educated on Brazilian culture and labor law as seen above, but also the employers are educated on the topic of refugees, their value to the private sector and the laws that protect them.

Few NGOs, such as Instituto Adus and Missão Paz, enable employers that are willing to work with refugees to register through the NGOs websites. Furthermore, Missão Paz together with The Tent Partnership for Refugees, a non-profit organization that mobilizes the global business community to include refugees, created a guide for employers on why and how to hire refugees and asylum seekers.

Some of the NGOs, such as Instituto Venezuela, work with programs such as PARR which has a partnership with Cáritas São Paulo and the UNHCR. PARR is a refugee relocation support program founded in 2011 together with EMDOC (a company

specializing in immigration proceedings). Since 2011, PARR works with an online registration databank where refugees and companies that want to hire a refugee can be registered. PARR refers and links up refugee with employers and is completely free for asylum seekers, refugees and companies. In 2019, PARR assisted 881 refugees and immigrants; 309 were interviewed, 106 were hired, 104 were referred to other projects and 594 were registered (source). Additionally, PARR is engaged in the project by the UNHCR called Empoderando Refugiadas which focus on the integration of refugee women in the labor market (V. Derminio, personal communication, August 6, 2020).

Another interesting project is the platform Empresas com Refugiados by the UNHCR together with the U.N. Global Compact. The platform has the objective of promoting human rights through sustainable development in corporate and business practices. It is utilized as an online repository of information on the subject-matter of refugees for the private sector. The platform provides detailed information on how companies can engage on the topic of refugee integration in the labor market, be it through recruitment, training courses or awareness activities. According to C. Sombra (personal communication, September 9, 2020), it is a manner of creating visibility of refugees who are attempting to enter the labor market and providing information to the private sector on why and how to hire a refugee. She further argues that before the platform, all this information was available. However, the information was diffused and perhaps incomprehensible which made it difficult for the private sector to find.

Both the PARR and the platform Empresas com Refugiados are interesting tools NGOs are using together with their own projects to spread awareness regarding refugees and the benefits they provide to the private sector because they take advantage of modern technology which provides a higher reachability and facilitates the recruitment of refugees in the private sector.

3.2.2. Measures adopted in relation to the host society

Unlike measures towards the private sector, not all NGOs interviewed have adopted measures directly targeting the host society. Perhaps, such measures take more effort and also the eagerness of the host society itself. Nonetheless, these measures are not less important. On the contrary, they are crucial to a successful integration which as discussed in the literature review, it is a double integration. In other words, both the

refugees and the host society need to be involved in the process of integration (Miller, 2018). During the field research, it has been observed that there are NGOs that have adopted small-scaled measures and other NGOs that have adopted large-scaled measures as means to reach out to the public and promote intercultural exchange between refugees and Brazilian citizens.

Small-scaled measures reach out to the host society in a localized and accessible manner. The NGOs that have small-scaled measures are the Instituto Adus and ONG Mungazi. Instituto Adus has a project called "Project Unno" in which refugees teach English, Spanish and French to Brazilian citizens. The NGO further allows Brazilian citizens to voluntarily provide refugees with courses, such as computer courses.

Similarly, ONG Mungazi offers Brazilian citizens language courses in English, French and Swahili given by refugees. The NGO, founded by Professor Omana Petench Ngandu who came as a Congolese refugee to Brazil in 2013, further promotes intercommunity ties and exchanges by offering the host society African culture and African cuisine courses. In return, there are a large number of Brazilian citizens who voluntarily provide Portuguese language and Brazilian culture courses to refugees.

As a consequence of these small-scaled measures, refugees and Brazilian nationals are able to interact with each other, exchange culture and experience, and in addition, refugees acquire new skills and are able to expand their social network.

The large-scaled measures are different from the small-scaled ones in two ways: it is country-wide, and it entails a more complex process. Two of the NGOs that were interviewed, Refúgio 343 and SJMR, have adopted a large-scaled measure known as interiorization. The process of interiorization is executed by these NGOs in partnership with Operation Shelter by the federal government and the UNHCR. According to G. Sperandio (personal communication, August 13, 2020), interiorization is the planned displacement of refugees from the border of Roraima into other states in Brazil in order to socioeconomically integrate these refugees into the society. These NGOs reach out to the host society searching for Brazilian families in other states of Brazil that are willing and able to host and assist Venezuelan refugee families. The process of interiorization starts with the matching of families, subsequently moves to the integration process with the assistance of the host family, and it continues until the family of refugees becomes autonomous and independent. Refúgio 343 provide numbers on its website. According to its numbers, 933 Venezuelan refugees were rescued, and 297 families have been

interiorized in 100 cities in fifteen different states. From this 297 families, 69% are employed and 32% of the children are in school.

According to another study by the UNHCR, more than 27.000 Venezuelan refugees have been voluntarily interiorized from April 2018 to December 2019:
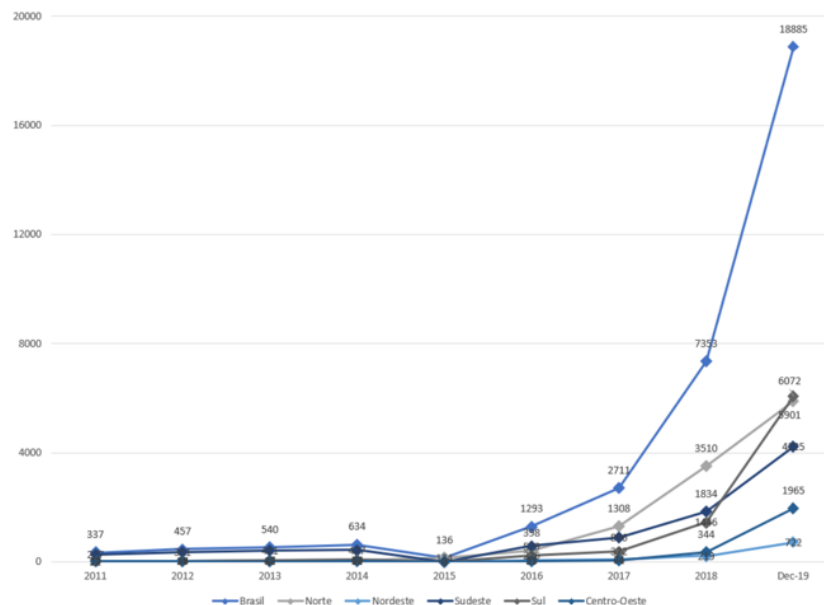
Figure 1.

Total of Venezuelans monthly relocated by the process of interiorization
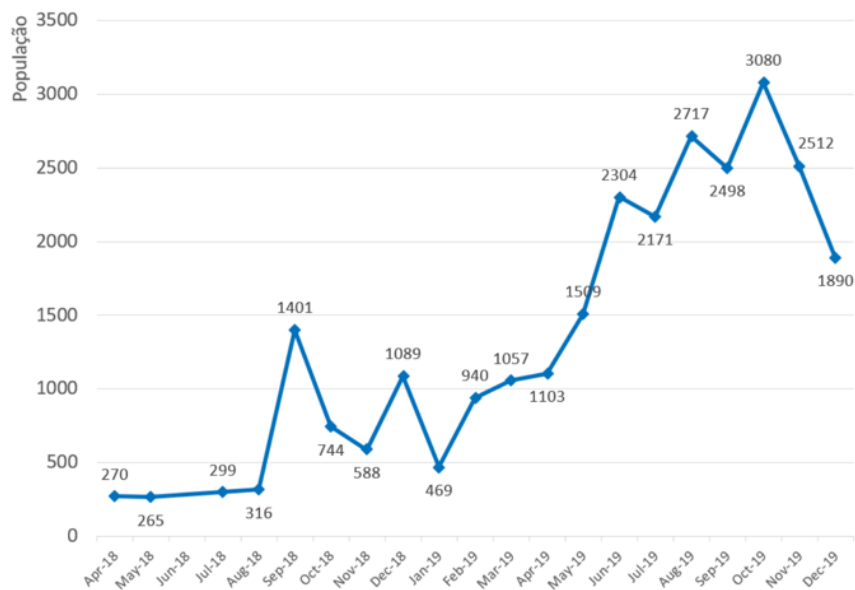
Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2020). *Venezuelans in Brazil: Integration in the labor market and access to social services.*

According to the NGOs, the experience of refugees who are able to live with Brazilian host families and participate in their lives and the lives of others around them, such as family and friends, is unmatching and contributes considerably to the speed of an individual's integration. Most importantly, it requires the host society to be constantly active and substantially involved in the integration of the refugees. Lastly, it contributes to the spreading of awareness and the development of intercommunity that prevents xenophobia and discrimination against refugees. The same study by the UNHCR shows that in December 2019, 18.885 of 185.000 (10 percent) Venezuelan refugees between the age 18-64 were formally employed in the Brazilian labor market:

Figure 2.

Total of Venezuelans in the formal labor market per region

Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2020). *Venezuelans in Brazil: Integration in the labor market and access to social services.*

Thus, conforming to these numbers, the measures taken by NGOs are having a positive effect and gradually creating a higher reachability on the process of integration and non-discrimination of refugees in the Brazilian labor market.

3.3. The NGOs' relationship with the state

This section analyses the relationship between the interviewed NGOs and the state in the approach to the integration and non-discrimination of refugees in the Brazilian society and labor market. It was discussed in previous chapters that NGOs occupy the gap between civil society and the state, particularly in areas where the state is unable or unwilling to take action, and how NGOs simultaneously reinforce democracy by influencing the public sphere, setting the public agenda and participating in policymaking (Brysk, 2000; Dvorakova, 2008; Fifka, 2016; Hall, 2017; Holmén, 2009; Lavalle, 2015; Lehman, 2007; Machado, 2019; Mercer, 2012; Oxhorn, 2011; Sorj, 2007).

This research found that the NGOs and the public intuitions have a vast network in respect of refugees; however, it can also vary between states. It further found that there are two different opinions among the NGOs regarding their relationship with the

state. Thus, this section first addresses the findings on the network between NGOs and the state in respect of refugees. Secondly, it addresses the NGOs' different opinions regarding their relationship with the state.

3.3.1. The network between NGOs and the state

The network between NGOs and the state largely consists of cooperation on social matters and referral. It starts when refugees first arrive in Brazil and are in need of documentation. For example, the NGO Fraternity Without Borders in the state of Roraima works together with the Operation Shelter by the federal government registering Venezuelan refugees and providing them with the necessary documents. In Belo Horizonte, T. Viana (personal communication, November 25, 2020), social analyst at SJMR, affirms that the NGO has a positive relationship with the Federal Police regarding documentation as well. Both NGOs state in their interviews that documentation is perhaps the most important aspect of integration since it enables refugees to legally reside, work and access public services in Brazil.

In regard to the public services, Brazil is considered to provide a wide range of public services to its citizens. These public services include for example: education, healthcare, vaccination campaigns, but also child protective services and social welfare programs as the Bolsa Família. Since Brazilian legislation establishes that immigrants are entitled to equal treatment and rights as Brazilian citizens, these public services are accessible to refugees as well (Annoni, 2015; Jubilut, 2006). Therefore, the NGOs assist the state with the execution of these services and assist refugees in accessing them. All the NGOs that were interviewed state that a large part of the work they do is the referral and collaboration with the institutions responsible for providing these services, such as the public universities which provide Portuguese courses, certificate programs and credential evaluation to refugees as seen above.

Not surprisingly, there are differences between the states and municipalities; whilst states like São Paulo have a vast network and a significant number of policies related to immigrants and refugees, other states like Roraima are still in the process of improving their public services, which might explain the inadequate response of the state in the beginning of the Venezuelan refugee flow, according to D. Bednarczuk (personal communication, July 12, 2020), protection officer at the NGO Fraternity

Without Borders. The city of São Paulo was perceived by all NGOs as exemplar with respect to policies and services. As seen in chapter two, the city of São Paulo developed its own initiatives such as the first municipal conference for immigrant policy, the center of reference and assistance to immigrants (CRAI) in which immigrants can find assistance and receive information on how to access public services, and the legislation that establishes the role of each municipal department in the immigration matter with the addition of a department responsible for settlement and integration policy in the city (Coordenação de Políticas para Migrantes) (Segatto, 2019).

In relation to the participation of NGOs in the public sphere, public agenda and policymaking, R. Delfim of MigraMundo (personal communication, September 6, 2020) states that NGOs frequently engage in advocacy and lobbying activities. As mentioned in the previous chapter, one of the NGOs that were interviewed, Cáritas São Paulo, is a member of CONARE and therefore, the NGO participates and is entitled to vote in the decision-making processes within the organ (Jubilut, 2006). Furthermore, according to Padre Paolo Parise (personal communication, August 6, 2020), director of Missão Paz, Brazilian legislation and policies are heavily influenced by the demand and pressure of NGOs. For instance, NGOs had since 2017 pressured the Brazilian government to recognize Venezuela as a country where massive violations of human rights are taking place, thereby recognizing Venezuelans as refugees. Ultimately, in 2019 during the Bolsonaro administration, CONARE started recognizing Venezuelans immigrants as refugees. Some argue that such decision may be of political interest: Bolsonaro has an anti-left rhetoric and does not recognize the government of Nicolás Maduro. Nevertheless, the pressure and influence from NGOs should not be dissociated.

Currently, the NGO Fraternity Without Borders is pursuing legal action for the recognition of the indigenous status for the Venezuelan indigenous children born in Brazil. In this way, these children can benefit from the same social programs the Brazilian indigenous population benefits, such as the quotas in the public universities (D. Bednarczuk, personal communication, July 12, 2020). According to D. Bednarczuk (personal communication, July 12, 2020), indigenous refugees do not receive the status of indigenous in the documents they receive from the Federal Police, nor do their children when born in Brazil. This case highlights once more the importance of NGOs' advocacy and the necessity of congruous coexistence of migration policies and social policies in a state (Hujo, 2007).

3.3.2. NGOs' different opinions on their relationship with the state

All of the NGOs that were interviewed agree that the relationship and cooperation between them and the state are indispensable. However, the majority of the NGOs argue that there is still insufficient policies and knowledge regarding refugees by the state. N. Carvalho (personal communication, July 13, 2020), communication adviser at Cáritas São Paulo, argues that there are no defined policies that include the active participation of refugees in social, cultural and political dimensions. D. Bednarczuk (personal communication, July 12, 2020) also argues the inadequate public services, particularly in some states, can lead to the neglect of refugees by the state and xenophobia in the society. Neither is there sufficient participation of the state in spreading awareness on the topic of refugees which could prevent xenophobia and discrimination against them in the society and labor market. Furthermore, both N. Carvalho (personal communication, July 13, 2020) and R. Delfim (September 6, 2020) argue that the mainstream media misinform the population reproducing clichés such as migration "waves" or condensing the integration process solely to the labor market when it is a more complex matter.

Moreover, as seen above, the NGOs state that the bureaucratic systems of CONARE regarding documentation and the lack of a non-unified public organ credential evaluation hinder their effort in integrating refugees. Lastly, the NGOs argue that there is a lack of fund by the state since most of them depend solely on donations or on the fund of partners, such as the UNHCR and the Brazilian Red Cross (O. Pentech, personal communication, July 20, 2020).

As Padre P. Parise (personal communication, August 6, 2020) and others argue, NGOs are executing most of the responsibilities the state has towards refugees due to insufficient or inadequate refugee policies, public services and active participation in the fight against xenophobia and discrimination.

On the other hand, the NGO Instituto Venezuela (personal communication, July 24, 2020) disagrees that there are not sufficient or adequate policies or actions by the state. The director of Instituto Venezuela, V. Villarreal (personal communication, July 24, 2020), refers to the Operation Shelter as an example of the appropriate response of the state to the Venezuelan refugee flow.

Regarding xenophobia and discrimination within the Brazilian society, the president and executive director of ONG Mungazi, O. Pentech (personal communication, July 24, 2020), states that despite there being some cases of xenophobia and discrimination, he perceives the host society as being welcoming. It is important to note here that ONG Mungazi has a close relationship with Brazilian volunteers who provide Portuguese language and Brazilian culture courses as seen above and this is perhaps his experience with them. V. Villarreal (personal communication, July 24, 2020) also agrees that the Brazilian society is welcoming and that it is perhaps Brazilians nationals who are self-critical as a society. Remarkably, both these NGOs are founded by immigrants whose experiences and integration may explain the different perspectives they have regarding the state and the host society than the other interviewers who were mainly Brazilian nationals.

In this chapter, it was observed how the NGOs adopt two categories of measures with the purpose of expanding the effect and reachability of their role regarding the integration and non-discrimination of refugees in the labor market. The results according to the NGOs and studies by the UNHCR are positive as discussed above. However, there are remaining issues which prevents NGOs to reach better results, such as the difficulty of the credential evaluation and the inadequacy of public services which also affect Brazilian nationals.

The network between NGOs and the state is vast, particularly in the city of São Paulo. Further, the NGOs are highly involved in advocacy and lobbying activities. Overall, the NGOs work together with the state in many areas whilst simultaneously having a critical relation towards the state. The difference of opinions is perhaps minor, and more NGOs would have to be interviewed to determine its impact on the role of NGOs.

Conclusion

This study attempted to understand the role of NGOs and their relationship with the state to answer the research question with respect to which measures have NGOs adopted to assist the integration and non-discrimination of refugees in the Brazilian labor market and whether such measures reach beyond NGOs role as a support structure by replacing the role of the state and its responsibility to provide refugees of their (human) rights. In the literature review, it was seen that scholars argue that the role of NGOs in the integration and non-discrimination of refugees in the labor market is indispensable due to the inadequacy of the state, especially because NGOs also point out failures in the state's provision and policies (Mayblin, 2018; Salamonska, 2019). However, the majority of scholars agree that NGOs cannot and should not reach beyond its role as a support structure, nor should it replace the role of the state and its responsibility to provide its citizens with fundamental human rights (Dvorakova, 2008; Sorj, 2007).

Chapter two shows that NGOs have been assisting and advocating for refugees in Brazil for years, including with their integration in the labor market (Segatto, 2019). Most recently, NGOs have influenced the approval of the 1997 Refugee Act, the creation of the humanitarian visa for Haitians, the recognition of Venezuelans as refugees, among others (Aguiar, 2020; Fernandes, 2017; Lima, 2018; Machado, 2019; Ribeiro, 2015). Chapter three further finds that the NGOs that were interviewed have a broad range of measures that are carefully designed and applied in order to address the remaining obstacles of language, lack of cultural and labor law knowledge, bureaucratic credential evaluation, and xenophobia and discrimination that refugees still have to overcome, as seen in chapter two. These measures address these issues and as a result, they facilitate refugee's integration and non-discrimination in the labor market. The research showed that the NGOs have taken two categories of measures as a means to address both the refugees, and the host society and private sector with the purpose of enhancing the effect and reachability of their role in the integration and non-discrimination of refugees in the Brazilian labor market. Such approach coincides with previous studies that shows that integration is a process that is reciprocal, thus requesting the involvement not only of the refugee but also of the host society and the private sector (D'Amico, 2018). In addition, it creates awareness and meaningful intercultural

interaction which prevents and diminish the occurrence of xenophobic attacks and discrimination. Ultimately, the findings of the research also coincide with the findings on chapter two regarding NGOs role and influence, such as the provision of language courses and employment training (Segatto, 2019). According to the NGOs and the study by the UNHCR, the measures have a positive result and high reachability. Nevertheless, the results could improve with a higher participation of the state.

It was further observed that two NGOs founded by immigrants are less critical and view their relationship with the state as positive. It can be assumed that their unique experience and process of integration may explain the different perspectives they have regarding the state and the host society. As previously mentioned, more research with a larger number of NGOs is needed to conclude if these different opinions affect the role of NGOs. Notwithstanding, most of the interviewed NGOs are more critical about their relationship with the state and the state's active participation. The reason thereof, as the research shows, is that there are some issues that cannot be completely solved solely by the NGOs, such as the certificate evaluation, the inadequacy of public services and xenophobia and discrimination. It was seen in the literature review that these issues are common among Brazilian nationals as well, and as the results show, they can only be addressed by the state by means of strengthening and investing in the public services, reinforcing non-discriminatory laws, and adopting public policies, such as affirmative action policies and awareness campaigns.

Ultimately, it can be concluded that the interviewed NGOs have a cooperative relationship with the state through network and partnership. Additionally, the majority are also critical regarding their relationship with the state. Such balance between cooperation and disapprobation is important to enhance the effect and reachability of NGOs, but also their role as representatives and advocates, the preservation of their independence and legitimacy, and to ensure that they do not reach beyond their role as a support structure. Further research with a larger number of NGOs is necessary to establish if and how NGOs' different opinions on their relationship with the state affect their functioning and the results of their work.

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