

BROTHERS OR INVADERS? HOW CRISES-DRIVEN MIGRANTS SHAPE VOTING BEHAVIOR*

Sandra V. Rozo[†]

Juan F. Vargas[‡]

Abstract

Can voter's negative attitudes toward immigration be explained by *self-interest* or *sociotropic* motives? *Self-interested* voters care about their socioeconomic well-being. *Sociotropic* voters display in-group bias. We study the voting effects of forced internal and international migration in Colombia and exploit the disproportionate flows of migrants to municipalities with early settlements of individuals from their origin locations. We find that all migration inflows reduce political participation, but larger international migration shifts votes from left- to right-wing ideologies. These results are not accounted for by the observed changes caused by migrants in socioeconomic variables including violent crime, government behavior, or population outflows.

JEL Classification: D72, F2, O15, R23

Keywords: Migration, Electoral Outcomes, Political Economy, Colombia

*We thank participants of the conferences on the Impacts of Refugees in Hosting Economies, Pacific Development Meeting, and applied economic seminars at the Inter-American Development Bank, University of Southern California, Universidad del Rosario, and Universidad de los Andes for thoughtful suggestions. We would also like to thank Ana Maria Mayda, Jean-Francois Maystadt, Katherine Casey, Ana Maria Ibáñez, Leopoldo Ferguson, Isabel Ruiz, Dorothy Kronick, John Matsusaka, and Odilon Camara for useful suggestions. We are also grateful to thank Maria José Urbina for her excellent job as a research assistant.

[†]University of Southern California, Marshall School of Business, Finance and Business Economics Department. 3670 Trousdale Pkwy, Los Angeles, CA 90089. Phone: 213-7409931. E-mail (corresponding author): sandra.rozo@marshall.usc.edu.

[‡]Universidad del Rosario, School of Economics. E-mail: juan.vargas@urosario.edu.co

“The fear of immigration is poisoning Western politics. Donald Trump owes his job to it. Brexit would not be happening without it. Strident nationalists wield power in Italy, Hungary, Poland, and Austria, and have gained influence elsewhere.” The Economist¹

I Introduction

A growing stream of economics literature has documented the existence of a strong correlation between migration inflows and political support for right-wing ideologies and voter resentment toward incumbent politicians (examples include [Gerdes and Wadensjö, 2008](#); [Otto and Steinhardt, 2014](#); [Barone et al., 2016](#); [Harmon, 2017](#); [Halla et al., 2017](#)).² Little evidence has been gathered, however, about the driving mechanisms of these effects. On the one hand, a group of studies grounded in political economy suggests that local voters penalize politicians who are more welcoming to migrants if, for instance, the latter displace local labor, depress wages, or engage in criminal behavior, and thus threaten the socioeconomic well-being of the host communities ([Scheve and Slaughter, 2001](#); [Mayda, 2006](#); [Hanson et al., 2007](#); [Facchini and Mayda, 2009](#); [Malhotra et al., 2013](#)).³ This is the so-called *self-interest* motive hypothesis, as defined by [Hainmueller and Hopkins \(2014\)](#).

In contrast, another branch of the literature, grounded in political social-psychology, documents that negative political attitudes toward immigration are mainly driven by group-related concerns about the cultural impacts of migrants, due to factors such as race, religion, language, nationality, or social norms ([Citrin et al., 1997](#); [Sniderman et al., 2004](#); [Card et al., 2012](#); [Tingley, 2012](#)). This is the so-called *sociotropic* motive hypothesis ([Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2014](#)).

¹Last accessed August 30, 2018, from: <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2018/08/25/the-way-forward-on-immigration-to-the-west?cid1=cust/ednew/n/bl/n/2018/08/23n/owned/n/n/nwl/n/n/LA/146317/n>.

²Current examples include the rise in support for the anti-immigration *Swedish Democrats*, which increased their vote share in the parliamentary elections of September 2018 by 5 percentage points relative to the 2014 elections, giving them 18% of the seats in the Riksdag. Over the past few years, right-wing parties have also seen their vote share increase significantly in other parts of Europe, including Italy, Poland, and Germany.

³It is also possible for local voters to *support* migration-friendly political parties if migration inflows are associated with material benefits. This can happen, for example, when public resources are targeted to migration-receiving communities to facilitate relocation, or if the specific skills of migrants enhance the productivity of local businesses.

In principle, these hypotheses need not be mutually exclusive, and they can complement each other. A migration shock that depresses local conditions can further upset voters if migrants are perceived as “different.” On the other hand, a migration shock that stimulates local material conditions may not translate into higher electoral support for the incumbent if migrants cannot easily mingle with the host population. This suggests that empirically disentangling the relative contribution of each of these mechanisms is extremely challenging.

This article addresses this gap in the research regarding the driving mechanisms of voter antipathy toward immigration by exploiting a unique natural experiment that took place in Colombia between 1994 and 2018. During this period, Colombia experienced two different large migration waves. On the one hand, the intensification of the armed conflict following the dismantling of the drug cartels in the early 1990s and the formation of an umbrella organization of paramilitary militias in 1997 resulted in nearly 10 percent of the country’s population being forcefully displaced within the country (Dube and Vargas, 2013; Rozo, 2018). On the other hand, economic and political turmoil, as well as a surge of criminal violence in neighboring Venezuela induced a large migration wave to Colombia and, by 2018, the number of *registered* Venezuelans in Colombia was over 1.3 million (Revista Semana, 2018).⁴ Because they are driven by crises, both migration shocks disproportionately feature poor, vulnerable, and poorly educated households that flee conflict or political turmoil without much previous planning or preparation.⁵

If the *self-interest* hypothesis is empirically valid, we should observe that the electoral response to migration shocks is (at least partially) explained by how migrants impact the socioeconomic conditions of the receiving community. If the *sociotropic* hypothesis has empirical leverage, for a given change in the local material conditions we should see voters responding to international migration more than to internal migration, assuming that foreigners are perceived as part of an out-group relative to co-nationals from other municipalities (Chen and Li, 2009). This is valid if

⁴The actual figure is likely higher as registration is not enforced and a large share of migrants may actively avoid it and work in the informal sector.

⁵This does not preclude the existence of relatively wealthy migrants, who flee from crisis-origin locations to save their assets. But this type of migrant does not constitute a majority.

internal migrants are likely to be perceived more positively by local voters as they share common characteristics such as nationality and culture. In contrast, international migrants may be more easily perceived as potential threats to local social norms.⁶

We assess the relative empirical support for these hypotheses using longitudinal data on voting behavior and migration inflows at the municipal level in Colombia.⁷ Since migration inflows are not random, we cannot simply compare differences in voting behavior across municipalities with higher and lower shares of migration inflows. Our empirical strategy, consequently, exploits two sources of exogenous variation in crisis-driven migration inflows at the municipality-year level. Cross-sectional municipal variation comes from the share of population within each receiving municipality that was born in expulsion regions (in both Colombia and Venezuela) and arrived before the crisis began. Annual variation comes from the number of individuals leaving each municipality (or country, in the case of Venezuela) each year, as the crises worsened. The interaction of these two sources of variation corresponds to our *predicted migrant inflow* measure.

Our identification strategy thus exploits the fact that crisis-induced migrants tend to move disproportionately to municipalities where they have preexisting networks (formed before the beginning of the crisis). Our identification assumption is that predicted migrant inflows are correlated with actual migration but do not affect electoral behavior independently or through any other channel. Importantly, because our estimates include fixed effects by municipality and year, they are confounded neither by time-invariant differences across municipalities nor by annual aggregate shocks. Further, to make sure that migrants do not settle disproportionately in places with characteristics that explain future electoral behavior, we include full interactions between the year dummies and several pre-migration shock municipal covariates, including conflict and intensity, criminal violence, local and national public expenditures, the number of public institutions, poverty, inequality, labor market conditions, and economic growth. Additionally, we control

⁶This is a relative statement. Colombia and Venezuela share a language as well as a number of other traits due, among other reasons, to their common colonial heritage. All we need to make our argument, however, is that local voters perceive Venezuelan migrants as an out-group, relative to how they perceive other Colombians.

⁷Colombia's roughly 1,100 municipalities are equivalent to U.S. counties.

for full interactions between department and year trends in all our estimates. Our identification strategy thus, relies on our measure of predicted migration inflows affecting voting behavior only through actual migration and not through any other time-varying covariates after controlling for flexible municipal-specific trends, parametrized by a large set of pre-determined characteristics.

Our analysis is structured in two parts. First, we examine the effects of migration inflows on political participation and right-, center-, and left-wing support during the presidential (first- and second-round) and the mayoral elections. The electoral support support for candidates representing different stances in the ideological spectrum, is coded replicating the methodology proposed by [Fergusson et al. \(2017\)](#), who analyzed the statutes of over 500 local parties in Colombia.

We find that larger inflows of IDP and Venezuelan migration result in lower political participation in the first and second round presidential elections. These effects are economically meaningful and suggest that when Venezuelan (IDP) municipal predicted inflows increase by one standard deviation the number of votes falls by approximately 0.81 (2.5) percent in the first presidential elections.

We also find, however, that larger inflows of international migration affect the composition of presidential votes from left- to right-wing political ideologies. Particularly, we find that a one-standard-deviation increase in the predicted inflow of Venezuelan migrants reduces the share of votes for left-wing political ideologies by 0.6 percentage points and increase the share of votes for right-wing ideologies by exactly the same amount in the first round elections. Considering that the mean support for left-wing ideologies was approximately 10 percent during the first round presidential elections, a reduction of 0.6 percentage points represents a substantial impact.

When looking at the mayoral elections, nonetheless, we only find evidence supporting the fact that larger inflows of Venezuelan immigration result in lower political participation. This however may be explained by the fact that the last mayoral elections took place in 2015, before the large migration on Venezuelans began to arrive in Colombia.

In a second stage, we test the necessary conditions for the *self-interest* mechanism to account

for these findings. We do so by exploring whether the observed effects of migration inflows in political outcomes become null when including controls for variables that may have been affected by the migration flows such as violent crime, local and central government expenditures and income, population outflows, and transfers to IDP. These variables correspond to all the observable covariates available for all the municipalities of our sample during our period of analysis. When we examine whether our baseline analysis of the effects of forced migration on voting behavior changes with the inclusion of these variables as controls, we do not see any changes in our core results. Consequently, we do not find evidence supporting the validity of the self-interest hypothesis.

Although we acknowledge that other unobservable effects that we have not accounted for could still support the validity of the self-interest hypothesis, if migration inflows are inducing strong effects in other unaccounted socioeconomic dimensions, then local and central governments and individuals themselves will have reacted to these changes. Consequently, including controls for local and central governmental income and expenditures and population changes should offset these concerns.

Overall, we find that all types of forced migration induce voter antipathy through a reduction of political participation. Only international migration, however, seems to affect the composition of votes, and as such, has a more profound effect on the ideologies that end up in power and on the public policies implemented by local and central governments. As such the impacts of international migration on voting behavior seem more profound. Considering that international migrants may be perceived as outsiders relative to IDP (who are Colombian), and that we do not find support for the validity of the self-interest hypothesis, our results strongly support the validity of the socio-tropic hypothesis.

It also remains possible that the effects of Venezuelan migration on voting composition is driven by the fact that voters may be associating left-ideologies with Maduro's regime in Venezuela. Although there is no data available on voters perceptions during our period of study to test this mechanism formally, recent perception surveys support the validity of both of these mechanisms.

Our article contributes to two strands of literature. First, it contributes to the study of the effects of migration on political outcomes. Most of the work in this area has been focused on studying the effects of voluntary migrants in developed countries (see [Gerdes and Wadensjö, 2008](#); [Otto and Steinhardt, 2014](#); [Barone et al., 2016](#); [Mayda et al., 2016](#); [Dustmann et al., 2016](#); [Harmon, 2017](#); [Halla et al., 2017](#)). We contribute to this literature by contrasting the validity of the *self-interest* and *sociotropic* motive hypotheses for the case of forced, crisis-induced migrants within a developing country. Forced migrants arrive in large numbers and are often traumatized by conflict, economic turmoil, crime victimization, or political persecution. They typically arrive with little economic means, and face large levels of uncertainty regarding the duration of their stay. As such, their impact on host economies may be vastly different than that of economic migrants arriving in developed countries. Additionally, developing countries host the bulk of forced migration in the world ([UNHCR, 2017](#)), and thus, the effects of forced migration are likely a function of the size of the migrant population.

Second, our study contributes to the literature that examines the effects of forced displacement on host economies (see, for example, [Del Carpio and Wagner, 2015](#) and [Altindag et al., 2018](#)). The article that comes closest to our study is [Altindag and Kaushal \(2017\)](#), which examines the effects of Syrian refugees on political outcomes in the national elections in Turkey. The authors do not identify any effects on incumbency support in provinces that received a higher share of migrants. We contribute to this group of studies by contrasting the effects of internal and international migration on voting behavior and by exploring the possible mechanisms driving these effects.

The rest of the article proceeds as follows. Section **II** provides some context on the two migration shocks that we analyze. Section **III** describes the sources of information we use to test the effect of different migration shocks on electoral outcomes and the mechanisms that may potentially explain them. Section **IV** discusses our measures of *Predicted Migration*, used to identify the causal effect of migration shocks on voting behavior. Section **V** summarizes the main results, robustness and the empirical identification of the underlying mechanisms. Section **VI** explores the validity of the mechanisms driving our results. Finally, the last section concludes.

II Forced Migrants in Colombia

We study the political effects of internal forced migration as well as those of international migration originating in Venezuela and caused by that country's economic and political turmoil. Because both migration waves were induced by crises, they are characterized by large inflows of poorly educated and young individuals whose primary destinations are the major urban areas in Colombia.

II.1 Internal forced displacement

Colombia's internal armed conflict originated with the formation of the left-wing guerrilla organizations FARC and ELN in the mid-1960s. The conflict was a Cold War proxy war until the end of the 1980s, but escalated during the 1990s, fueled by the involvement of the guerrillas in illegal drug trafficking and the consolidation of right-wing paramilitary groups, who effectively became a third force in the conflict when splintered paramilitary armies colluded under an umbrella organization (the AUC). The escalation of the conflict was the main driver of the internal forced displacement witnessed in Colombia in the late 1990s and the early 2000s.⁸

Data from Colombia's Victims' Registry—which consolidates information on forced displacement and other forms of victimization obtained from local and national (public and private) institutions—suggests that the population of forced migrants is balanced in terms of gender (51 percent women) and disproportionately young. In particular, 39 percent of forcefully displaced individuals were 15 years old or younger at the time of displacement, an age group that represents 28 percent of Colombia's population. Survey-based evidence suggests that displaced individuals have low education levels (on average around 5 years of education) and that most of them are poor (Ibáñez and Moya, 2006; Garay, 2008; Carrillo, 2009). Moreover, because displacement originates mostly in rural areas, the main economic activity prior to the displacement of most victims is agriculture (Ibáñez and Moya, 2006; Carrillo, 2009).

⁸see Engel and Ibáñez, 2007; Dube and Vargas, 2013; Roza, 2018 for detailed descriptions of the Colombian conflict.

Importantly, for our identification strategy, it has been documented that forced migrants in Colombia largely move to areas where they have friends or relatives, and that are relatively close in distance to their municipalities of origin (Ibáñez and Moya, 2006; Carrillo, 2009; Lozano-Gracia et al., 2010).⁹ Internal migrants also value the provision of public goods when choosing their destination (Carrillo, 2009; Lozano-Gracia et al., 2010). Overall, there is an ample geographic variation in the inflow of forced displacement by municipality during the period of study (see Figure VII).

II.2 Venezuela's migrants

The beginning of the Venezuelan political crisis can be traced back to the election of Hugo Chávez as president on December 6, 1998. Chávez's socialist regime was characterized by constitutional amendments, land expropriations, the implementation of populist social programs, nationalizations, and restrictions on private businesses (Crašto and Álvarez, 2017). Chávez's policies were continued by Nicolás Maduro, who was elected president of Venezuela in 2013. Maduro's regime has dramatically worsened the economic and social crisis in Venezuela. Shortages of food and basic necessities became extremely common, and looting began to occur systematically throughout the country (Revista Semana, 2017). Moreover, insecurity became endemic, repression of the opposition became common, and systematic human rights violations by public authorities were repeatedly reported by the international media (see El Nuevo Herald, 2014; BBC News, 2017; BBC, 2016). This situation triggered large waves of out-migration by Venezuelans, who most often moved to neighboring Colombia.

Figure I shows the annual evolution of the total number of registered Venezuelan migrants entering Colombia between 1995 and 2018, as recorded at the different migration points established by the Colombian government. According to the official statistics, Venezuelan migration

⁹In regions facing extreme violence, however, individuals prefer to migrate to more distant locations and to relatively large cities. This is because of the sense of anonymity provided by urban areas located far from where the victimization episode occurred (Carrillo, 2009; Lozano-Gracia et al., 2010).

increased five-fold during this period, as the humanitarian crisis caused by Chávez and Maduro’s regimes worsened.

Initially, Venezuelan migrants consisted mainly of wealthy Venezuelans and entrepreneurs who came to invest in Colombia and fled to save their capital from expropriations and from high inflation ([Revista Semana, 2017](#); [Crašto and Álvarez, 2017](#)). As the crisis intensified, however, the core of Venezuelan migration shifted to the poorly educated population who report fleeing to Colombia to escape violent crime, political repression, and to look for basic necessities for survival ([NPR, 2018](#)). Indeed, according to recent characterizations of Venezuelan migrants based on the Colombian household surveys of 2015 and 2016, over 80 percent of registered migrants have not completed a high school education, at least half are 25 years old or less, and they are balanced in terms of gender (see [OLR, 2017](#)).

III Data

III.1 Crisis-driven displacement

We employ two sources of information on forced displacement. Data on internal forced displacement come from Colombia’s Victims’ Registry (known by its Spanish acronym, RUV), which registers the number of individuals displaced as a consequence of the armed conflict, including their municipalities of expulsion and arrival. The RUV includes information collected in the past by both private and public institutions, and the database is updated continuously with the aim of being a census of conflict victims who are eligible for reparations and assistance under Law 1448 of 2011 (known informally as the *Victims’ Law*). The RUV is thus the best source of information on the victims of Colombia’s armed conflict. While its coverage begins with 1985, in this article we focus on the period between 1994 and 2018 because of the availability of data on political outcomes during that period.

Data on the total number of Venezuelans arriving annually in Colombia is available through

the Colombian Statistics Department for the period 1994 to 2018. The data from 2003 onward comes from the information recorded at official migration points and thus it does not include any illegal or unregistered migration. To date, however, it remains the best (and only) data available. The information between 1994 and 2002 was constructed using the population censuses of 1993 and 2005 and corresponds to the Venezuelan nationals that arrive to Colombia each year. Figure I shows the aggregate IDP and Venezuelan migration inflows observed in Colombia during our period of analysis.

III.2 Voting behavior

Data on voting behavior for each municipality comes from Colombia's electoral agency. Specifically, we use data on municipal-level electoral results in presidential as well as mayoral elections and study the effects of migration on political participation, measured by the logarithm of total votes in each election, and support for left-, center-, or right-wing political ideologies. For each election, we classify all candidates according to their political party into left-, right-, and center-oriented ideologies, following the methodology proposed by [Fergusson et al. \(2017\)](#). Appendix I describes in detail the steps followed to classify each candidate.

III.2.1 Presidential elections

Our analysis of presidential elections focuses on the period 1994 and 2018, since for this period there is information available on the votes for all presidential candidates. Presidents are elected by half-plus-one of the total valid votes in a given election. If no candidate receives that share of the vote or more, then a run-off between the two candidates with the most votes in the first round takes place three weeks later. The winning candidate governs for a 4-year period. We use information on the 6 first-round and 5 second-round elections that occurred between 1994 and 2018.

III.2.2 Mayoral elections

Mayors are elected at the local level by the majority of the total valid votes obtained in the corresponding municipality in a single election (there is no run-off for local elections). Due to availability on votes received for all candidates, we focus on the six local elections that took place between 1997 and 2015.

Figure II, III, IV, and V show the geographic distribution of the electoral outcomes we analyze in the presidential and mayoral elections. In addition, Tables I and II present descriptive statistics for all the variables used in our analysis.

IV Empirical Strategy

As forced migrants do not choose their arrival municipalities randomly, we cannot use a mean comparison to identify their effects on host communities. Such a comparison would likely be biased. For example, if migrants go disproportionately to more prosperous municipalities and prosperity is positively associated with higher levels of support for incumbents, then the bias would be positive. More generally, it is reasonable to assume that the decision of where to locate is associated with municipal characteristics that, in turn, are correlated with voting behavior. Our empirical strategy, consequently, exploits the fact that, as political crises or conflicts intensify in their locations of origin, migrants tend to move disproportionately to municipalities where they have networks, family, or acquaintances. In particular, we estimate the following specification:

$$\text{Log}(Y_{mt}) = \theta_1 \text{Pr. IDP Inflows}_{mt} + \theta_2 \text{Pr. Ven Inflows}_{mt} + X_{mt} \Delta' + \gamma_t + \alpha_m + \epsilon_{mt} \quad (1)$$

where m represents the municipality, t the election year, Y is one of our dependent variables regarding electoral results, X is a vector of municipal time-varying controls, and α_m and γ_t represent

municipality and year fixed effects.

Our measures of predicted inflows of forced migrants follow the standard practice in the literature (see [Card, 2001](#) and [Altonji and Card, 1991](#) for the pioneer approaches and [Lewis and Peri, 2015](#) for a review of the literature on applications) and exploits the disproportionate levels of migrant inflows to areas with previous settlements of similar identity groups.¹⁰ Specifically, our measures of predicted inflows are constructed as:

$$\text{Pr Venezuelan Inflows}_{mt} = \left[\frac{1}{\text{Pop}_{mt}} \left(\text{Venezuelan Outflows}_t \times \text{Venezuelan Share}_m^{1993} \right) \right] \times 100 \quad (2)$$

$$\text{Predicted IDP Inflows}_{mt} = \left[\frac{1}{\text{Pop}_{mt}} \sum_{j \in J} \left(\text{IDP Outflows}_{jt} \times \text{Migrants Share}_{mj}^{1993} \right) \right] \times 100 \quad (3)$$

where *Venezuelan Share*₁₉₉₃^m is the ratio of Venezuelan nationals who lived in municipality *m* and the total population who lived in that municipality—but was not born in Colombia—in 1993 (according to that year’s population census);¹¹ *Migrants Share*_{mj}¹⁹⁹³ is the ratio of the number of individuals who lived in municipality *m* but who were born in municipality *j* and the total population living—but not born—in *m* in 1993; *Venezuelan Outflows*_t is the count of individuals leaving Venezuela and arriving in Colombia in year *t*; *IDP Outflows*_{jt} is the number of individuals who were internally displaced by conflict in municipality *j*—that belongs to the set *J* of all municipalities in Colombia—and year *t*; and *Pop*_{mt} is the municipal annual population.¹² Robust standard errors are clustered at the municipality level to account for potential

¹⁰A new criticism of the validity of this type of shift-share instrument was recently proposed by [Jaeger et al. \(2018\)](#). The authors suggest that using pre-settlements of migrants in countries where migration flows are stable and consistent in time confounds short- and long-term causal effects. Our identification strategy is not sensitive to their critique because the inflows of crisis-driven migrants were sudden and large in scale as a consequence of the intensification of the crises. Additionally, migration was drastically lower previous to the beginning of the crises.

¹¹In 1993, the Colombian statistics agency collected the last population census before the start of the large waves of forced displacement (see section [II.1](#)). The raw data of the census is available at the processing center located in the headquarters of the Colombian statistics agency in Bogota.

¹²Considering that the different elections take place in different months of the year, and, in order to have enough variation in migration outflows, when constructing the predicted inflows of forced migrants we aggregate the migration

serial correlation within municipalities.¹³

Figure VII and VI illustrate the geographic distribution of our predicted migration inflows, averaged through the sample period. They also present the correlation between the predicted and observed measures of inflows. Although there is information available for all the period of analysis for observed IDP inflows, we were only able to recover observed inflows of Venezuelan migrants from the population censuses of 1993 and 2005. The figures confirm that the predicted and observed measures of migrant inflows have a strong correlation.

IV.1 Robustness

Because our identification strategy includes fixed effects by municipality and year, our estimates are not threatened by time-invariant differences across municipalities such as geographic variables, or by aggregate time shocks. Our empirical strategy is thus valid to the extent that there are no time-varying omitted municipal characteristics that both are correlated with our predicted migration inflows measures and affect municipal electoral outcomes.

One important threat to our identification strategy may be caused by differences in socioeconomic characteristics across municipalities that are correlated with the settlement of different migrant communities (arriving from other municipalities within Colombia or from Venezuela) prior to the large migration shocks. This may be the case to the extent that the post-shock evolution of such characteristics affects electoral outcomes. For instance, areas with a higher share of migrants in 1993 may have also had lower levels of conflict or violence, better institutions, more economic growth, more public investment relative to the rest of the country, less poverty or inequality, or lower levels of informality. If these characteristics affected electoral outcomes (through their effect on municipalities' economic performance, for instance), then our results would be biased.

outflows of years t and $t-1$.

¹³One alternative to computing our measure of *Predicted Venezuelan Inflows* using the interaction of the aggregate *Venezuelan Outflows* and the municipal share of Venezuelan nationals in 1993 is to interact *Venezuelan Outflows* with the time-invariant average distance from every municipality to each one of the border-crossing sites between Colombia and Venezuela. Our results are robust of using this alternative measure, which by and large picks up the same variation as our baseline measure. Indeed, the correlation between the average distance to the bilateral border-crossing sites and the share of Venezuelan population in 1993 is 0.64.

To flexibly account for these potential threats, we control for the interaction of a large number of pre-shock municipal-level characteristics and the full set of year fixed effects. Our pre-shock controls include indicators of conflict intensity, violent crime, government intervention, institutional development, economic growth, poverty and inequality, and labor outcomes. In particular, we add to the empirical model of equation 1 interactions of year dummies with all the static variables listed in Table II. Additionally, we add interactions of department and year fixed effects to account for regional trends that may be biasing our results.

Another possible threat to our identification strategy is that most of the variation that we use is driven by Colombian municipalities that share a border with Venezuela where there are larger pre-settlements of the Venezuelan population. These municipalities may be affected by the Venezuelan crisis not only through migration shocks, but for instance also through lower trade with Venezuela. These additional shocks may also be affecting voting behavior. To test for this possibility, we restrict our sample to all Colombian municipalities outside of La Guajira and Norte de Santander. These correspond to the two departments that have the highest economic interactions with Venezuela, which comprise 55 municipalities. Our results are robust to this sample restriction.¹⁴

As an additional robustness check, we use our *Predicted IDP inflows* measure to instrument the observed yearly IDP inflows to each municipality. The identification assumption is that the predicted flows do not influence electoral outcomes through any channel other than the actual forced migration. The results for the first stage regression are reassuring across elections as they suggest that our predicted migration inflows measure has a strong correlation with the actual observed number of individuals arriving in each municipality (see panel D of Tables III, IV, and V).

Unfortunately, the lack of available data on yearly arrivals of Venezuelans to each municipality prevents us from estimating an equivalent instrumental variables specification for the case of the effects of the Venezuelan migration shock on electoral results.

¹⁴They are available upon request. We did not include them due to space considerations.

V Results

Our main results are presented in Tables III, IV, and V. We find consistent and strong negative effects of both types of migration on political participation for the presidential elections. We also find that larger inflows of Venezuelan migrants result in a re-composition of the number of votes from left- to right-wing political ideologies. These results are robust across the first- and second-round presidential elections (Tables III and IV, respectively) and to the inclusion of flexible trends parametrized in terms of pre-shock municipal characteristics. In the case of the internal displacement inflows, the results are also robust to the estimation strategy (shown in reduced form in panel C through F).¹⁵

The estimated effects of the migration shocks on electoral outcomes are economically meaningful. Focusing on Panel A and the specification that includes differential trends parametrized by pre-shock municipal characteristics (even columns), a one-standard-deviation increase in the predicted Venezuelan (IDP) migration inflow reduces political participation in the first round presidential elections by 0.81 (2.5) percent. In turn, a one-standard-deviation increase in the predicted inflow of Venezuelan migrants reduced the share of votes for left-wing political ideologies by 0.6 percentage points and increase the share of votes for right-wing ideologies by exactly the same amount in the first round elections. Since the mean support for left-wing ideologies was only 9.7 percent during the first round presidential elections, a reduction of 0.6 percentage points in the support for left-wing political ideologies is substantial.

When we look at mayoral elections (Table V), we only find evidence supporting the fact that larger inflows of Venezuelan immigration result in lower political participation (panel A). In particular, we observe that a one-standard-deviation increase in the predicted level of Venezuelan migration inflow causes a reduction of 1.9 percent in the number of votes. These results are robust to the inclusion of controls and the estimation procedure (2SLS, OLS, or reduced form), they are also not observed for IDP inflows. Although the estimated coefficients of the effects of Venezuelan inflows on the left-, center-, and right-wing support show similar signs relative to the presidential elections, it is plausible that they are not significant because there are no mayoral elections after 2015, when the Venezuelan migration showed the largest increment. As

¹⁵The effect of the internal migration shock on political participation is not affected by possible additional votes coming from the IDP. Although the IDP are Colombian nationals and as such are entitled to vote, they do not vote in practice as most IDP lack the formal identification documents required for voting. The issue of the lack of availability of formal identification for IDP has been so widespread that it was included among the benefits to be distributed under the *Victims' Law* by the Colombian government.

such, our mayoral elections sample has a lower variation on Venezuelan inflows than the one observed for the presidential elections.

VI Mechanisms

Our results point to similar effects of Venezuelan and internal migration on municipal electoral participation, but asymmetric effects on changes on support for different political ideologies. Particularly, only Venezuelan migration inflows result in a re-composition of votes from left- to right-wing ideologies. In this section we explore the validity of plausible mechanisms driving the asymmetric response to migration inflows.

VI.1 Self-interest Motives

First, it is possible that the effect of migration shocks on the electoral behavior of host communities can be explained by *self-interested* voters, who react to the way migration affects their material well-being. This mechanism can be tested by examining how the estimated effect of migration shocks on electoral outcomes changes when controlling for socio-economic variables. Large forced migration inflows, for example, may be associated with a disproportionate targeting of public resources to support these populations, or with larger business profits as wages fall due to an increased supply of labor (as documented by [Scheve and Slaughter, 2001](#); [Mayda, 2006](#); [Hanson et al., 2007](#); [Facchini and Mayda, 2009](#); [Malhotra et al., 2013](#); [Del Carpio and Wagner, 2015](#); [Altindag et al., 2018](#)). We test for these mechanism on Table VI by re-estimating the specification of equation 1 (including all the previous controls) and adding controls for the time-varying outcomes that may have changed in response to migration shocks. While we acknowledge that these are “bad controls,” we are purposefully interested in examining how the reduced-from effect of internal and international migration waves on electoral outcomes changes when controlling for the potential intermediate variables. These variables include homicide rate, municipal tax income, municipal public expenditure, central government transfers to municipalities, population, and IDP outflows. These variables include all the available observables for the municipalities in our sample throughout our period of study. All of our estimates are robust to the inclusion of these controls suggesting that none of the observed effects are driven by changes on these endogenous variables.

Another possible explanation for the asymmetric effects observed for Venezuelan and IDP migration inflows is that we have not accounted for the large response to IDP migration from the Colombian government. Beginning in 1997 the Colombian government started creating institutions and social programs (mainly in the form of transfers) to support the victims of conflict including IDP. For instance, Law 387 of 1997 created the *Fondo Nacional para La Atención Integral a la Población Desplazada* facilitating food security, health, education, and housing access and Law 1448 of 2011 provided resources to receiving areas, created job opportunities, and provided seed capital for productive projects. This was not the policy response to Venezuelan migration during the period of analysis (see Figure VIII). Using data from several Colombian government agencies¹⁶ we construct a municipal measure that approximates the amount of resources received by the municipalities hosting IDP during each election.¹⁷ We then re-estimated our main specification controlling for these municipal transfers. The results are presented in the even columns of Table VI and remain unchanged after the inclusion of these controls.

Overall, our results do not support the validity of the self-interest motives. Although, we are only able to test whether the estimated effects are explained by a handful of variables including homicide rates, government behavior, and out-migration; these variables correspond all the observables available during the period of analysis for all the municipalities in the sample. Moreover, it is plausible that if migration inflows have strong effects in other unobserved covariates that we cannot control for, then local and national governments may have reacted to these effects, which should be accounted for by including controls for governmental behavior. This evidence suggests that the *self-interest* motive hypothesis is, at best, only partially relevant for explaining how voters react to migration flows.

VI.2 Sociotropic Motives

A couple of residual explanations consistent with our results are that voters response to forced migration inflows are explained by *sociotropic* motives or/and the association of left-wing ideologies to the Venezuelan regime.

¹⁶They include data for 1995 and 2001 from the *Sentencia T-025* of the Supreme Court and data for 2002 and 2018 from the Ministry of Finance and the National Planning Department.

¹⁷For this purpose we estimate the average national expenditures to support each displaced individual between 1997 and 2018 and then imputed the received transfers by each municipality according to the number of displaced individuals who entered each municipality during each t and $t-1$.

The sociotropic hypothesis suggests that voters simply dislike migrants as they see them as a threat to their status quo. Our results are consistent with these hypothesis as we see that although both types of migration reduce electoral participation only Venezuelan migration inflows cause a re-composition of the share of votes away from left- and towards anti-immigrant right-wing political ideologies. In addition, only Venezuelan migration creates a negative effect on political participation across presidential and mayoral elections. Despite the fact that both types of migrants could be equally perceived by locals as a threat to their economic status (i.e.g, their jobs, wages, taxes, or public service access), local voters seem to react more drastically towards international migrants. Our results, consequently, support the idea that negative political attitudes towards immigration are more related to concerns related to cultural rather than self-interest economic motives.

Another valid explanation, is that voters may be associating left-wing ideologies with the Venezuelan regime. In fact, during the last presidential elections right-wing political campaigns posed the argument that voting for the left was facilitating that Colombia became another Venezuela (see media articles by [El Espectador \(2018\)](#), [BBC \(2018\)](#), or [El País \(2018\)](#) for media evidence). For instance, during the last presidential campaigns billboards were posted with messages such as: “*Vote para que Colombia no sea otra Venezuela*” [Vote so Colombia will not become another Venezuela] (see [BBC \(2018\)](#)) or “*No quiero vivir como Venezolano*” [I do not want to leave like a Venezuelan] (see [Letras Libres \(2018\)](#)), publicity sponsored by right-wing presidential candidates, which in turn won the elections.

A formal test of the these two potential mechanisms is more difficult since Colombia lacks, for example, perception surveys covering our sample period that contain information for enough municipalities.¹⁸ We therefore test the *self-interest* mechanism and acknowledge that any support for the alternative explanations is only residual.

Existing perception surveys, however, support the validity of the *sociotropic* motives or/and the demonization of left-wing ideologies. For instance, a survey carried out to 1,200 potential voters representative of 96% of Colombian voters every two months between September of 2017 and March of 2018 (before the last presidential elections) in 57 municipalities including the 14 most populated Colombian cities, suggested that

¹⁸*Latinobarometer* surveys about 1,200 individuals in Colombia in 20 of the 33 departments the second administrative level, equivalent to US states with department samples ranging from 20 to 100 individuals (and 205 in Bogota). This provides neither representativeness nor the ability to directly test the effect of migration shocks on the perceptions of local communities.

at least 45% of voters thought Colombia could repeat Venezuelan history and 40% of voters disagreed with the Colombian government's decision to host Venezuelan forced migrants.¹⁹ In addition, another survey by the same firm directed to adults older than 18 years and representative at the national level carried out in February of 2019, found that 82% of individuals thought that Venezuelan migration was not positive for Colombia (see [Invamer \(2019\)](#)).

Overall, our findings imply that voters respond negatively to both internal and international migration inflows by reducing political participation (with a more consistent effects of Venezuelan migration across all types of elections). However, only international migration inflows have significant effects in the re-composition of votes. We do not find evidence supporting the idea that any of these effects are explained by *self-interested* motives. Moreover, we argue that these effects are explained by the fact that Venezuelan migrants trigger in-group bias and that left-wing ideologies are now associated to the Venezuelan crises.

VII Discussion

This article is part of a growing literature that examines the effects of migration inflows on voting behavior. Unlike previous literature, however, we examine the empirical validity of two potential mechanisms: the *self-interest* and the *sociotropic* hypotheses. Our focus on Colombia allows us to identify the relative empirical relevance of these mechanisms, because the country has experienced simultaneous shocks on crisis-driven internal displacement as well as international migration from neighboring Venezuela.

Our empirical strategy relies on *predicted* internal and external migration flows. These are obtained by multiplying the aggregate annual flow of internal refugees and Venezuelan migrants to Colombia, with the pre-shock (1993) population share of migrants from each IDP-expulsion municipality as well as from Venezuela. The predicted flows are exogenous to the municipal electoral outcomes after controlling for differential municipal trends parametrized by a large number of pre-shock municipal characteristics. In the case of the internal displacement shock, in addition to the reduced-form estimate of the effect of the predicted flow on electoral behavior, we instrument the actual observed arrival of IDPs to each municipality with our predicted migration in a 2SLS strategy.

¹⁹The surveys were carried out by *Invamer S.A.S. Gallup* and were funded by three large news outlets including *Caracol Televisión*, *Semana*, and *Blu radio*. See [Invamer, 2018](#).

We find evidence of strong negative effects of internal and international migration on political participation, but we also find that only international migration has an effect on the composition of votes. Particularly, larger international migration shift votes composition from left- to right-wing ideologies. Notably, these results are, by and large, not accounted for by the observed changes caused by migrants in such socioeconomic variables as violent crime, government behavior, and population outflows.

We interpret these findings as consistent with the idea that negative political perceptions about Venezuelan migrants are not fully explained by a deterioration of the material welfare of host communities. Voters thus appear to have *sociotropic* motives when reacting to Venezuelan migration at the polls. This may be explained by the perception among Colombians that migrants with different nationalities, races, or religions are a threat to local social or cultural norms. Our results are also in line with the possibility that voters respond to larger inflows of international migrants by associating their originating crises with left-wing ideologies.

References

- Altindag, O., O. Bakis, and S. Rozo (2018). Blessing or burden? the impact of refugees on businesses and the informal economy. *SSRN Working Paper N. 3188406*.
- Altindag, O. and N. Kaushal (2017). Do refugees impact voting behavior in the host country? evidence from Syrian refugee inflows in Turkey. *IZA Discussion Paper Series. N. 10849*.
- Altonji, J. G. and D. Card (1991). The effects of immigration on the labor market outcomes of less-skilled natives. In *Immigration, Trade, and the Labor Market*, pp. 201–234. University of Chicago Press.
- Barone, G., A. D’Ignazio, G. de Blasio, and P. Naticchioni (2016). Mr. Rossi, Mr. Hu and politics. The role of immigration in shaping natives’ voting behavior. *Journal of Public Economics* 136, 1–13.
- BBC (2016, November). “Una pena de muerte disimulada”: la polémica Operación de Liberación del Pueblo, la mano dura del gobierno de Venezuela contra el crimen. Accessed from: <http://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-38126651>.

- BBC (2018, June). Duque presidente: por qué en Colombia nunca triunfó un candidato de izquierda en las elecciones presidenciales. Accessed from: <https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-44041837>.
- BBC News (2017, November). Venezuela profile - Timeline. Accessed from: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-19652436>.
- Card, D. (2001). Immigrant inows, native outows, and the local labor market impacts of higher immigration. *Journal of Labor Economics* 19(1), 22–64.
- Card, D., C. Dustmann, and I. Preston (2012). Immigration, wages, and compositional amenities. *Journal of the European Economic Association* 10(1), 78–119.
- Carrillo, A. C. (2009). Internal displacement in Colombia: humanitarian, economic and social consequences in urban settings and current challenges. *International Review of the Red Cross* 91(875), 527–546.
- Chen, Y. and S. X. Li (2009). Group identity and social preferences. *American Economic Review* 99(1), 431–457.
- Citrin, J., D. P. Green, C. Muste, and C. Wong (1997). Public opinion toward immigration reform: The role of economic motivations. *The Journal of Politics* 59(3), 858–881.
- Crasto, T. C. and M. R. Álvarez (2017). Percepciones sobre la migración venezolana: causas, España como destino, expectativas de retorno. *Migraciones. Publicación del Instituto Universitario de Estudios sobre Migraciones* (41), 133–163.
- Del Carpio, X. V. and M. C. Wagner (2015). The impact of Syrians refugees on the Turkish labor market. *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper* (7402).
- Dube, O. and J. F. Vargas (2013). Commodity price shocks and civil conflict: Evidence from Colombia. *The Review of Economic Studies* 80(4), 1384–1421.
- Dustmann, C., K. Vasiljeva, and A. P. Damm (2016). Refugee migration and electoral outcomes. *CReAM DP* 19, 16.

- El Espectador (2018, February). Venezuela y el “castrochavismo encienden la campaña presidencial. Accessed from: <https://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/venezuela-y-el-castrochavismo-encienden-la-campana-presidencial-articulo-738729>.
- El Nuevo Herald (2014, July). Oleada de venezolanos emigra escapando de la inseguridad y la crisis. Accessed from: <http://www.elnuevoherald.com/noticias/mundo/america-latina/venezuela-es/article2036640.html>.
- El País (2018, February). La crisis de Venezuela agita la campaña para elecciones presidenciales. Accessed from: <https://www.elpais.com.co/elecciones/elecciones-presidenciales/la-crisis-de-venezuela-agita-la-campana-para-elecciones-presidenciales.html>.
- Engel, S. and A. M. Ibáñez (2007). Displacement due to violence in Colombia: A household-level analysis. *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 55(2), 335–365.
- Facchini, G. and A. M. Mayda (2009). Does the welfare state affect individual attitudes toward immigrants? evidence across countries. *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 91(2), 295–314.
- Fergusson, L., P. Querubin, N. A. Ruiz-Guarin, and J. F. Vargas (2017). The real winner’s curse. *SSRN Working Paper N. 2912915*.
- Garay, L. J. (2008). Proceso nacional de verificación de los derechos de la población desplazada. *First Report to the Colombian Constitutional Court*.
- Gerdes, C. and E. Wadensjö (2008). The impact of immigration on election outcomes in Danish municipalities. *IZA Discussion Papers N. 3586*.
- Hainmueller, J. and D. J. Hopkins (2014). Public attitudes toward immigration. *Annual Review of Political Science* 17, 225–249.
- Halla, M., A. F. Wagner, and J. Zweimüller (2017). Immigration and voting for the far right. *Journal of the European Economic Association* 15(6), 1341–1385.
- Hanson, G. H., K. Scheve, and M. J. Slaughter (2007). Public finance and individual preferences over globalization strategies. *Economics & Politics* 19(1), 1–33.

- Harmon, N. A. (2017). Immigration, ethnic diversity, and political outcomes: Evidence from Denmark. *The Scandinavian Journal of Economics*.
- Ibáñez, A. M. and A. Moya (2006). *Cómo el desplazamiento forzado deteriora el bienestar de los hogares desplazados?: análisis y determinantes del bienestar en los municipios de recepción*. CEDE.
- Invamer (2018). Elecciones 2018. Accessed from: <https://www.scribd.com/document/381331134/Encuesta-Segunda-Vuelta>.
- Invamer (2019). Colombia Opina, Febrero 2019. Accessed from: <https://www.scribd.com/document/399703754/Encuesta-Invamer-febrero-de-2019>.
- Jaeger, D. A., J. Ruist, and J. Stuhler (2018). Shift-share instruments and the impact of immigration. *NBER Working Paper N. 24285*.
- Letras Libres (2018, May). El fantasma de Venezuela marca las elecciones en Colombia. Accessed from: <https://www.letraslibres.com/espana-mexico/politica/el-fantasma-venezuela-marca-las-elecciones-en-colombia>.
- Lewis, E. and G. Peri (2015). Immigration and the economy of cities and regions. In *Handbook of Regional and Urban Economics*, Volume 5, pp. 625–685.
- Lozano-Gracia, N., G. Piras, A. M. Ibáñez, and G. J. Hewings (2010). The journey to safety: conflict-driven migration flows in Colombia. *International Regional Science Review* 33(2), 157–180.
- Malhotra, N., Y. Margalit, and C. H. Mo (2013). Economic explanations for opposition to immigration: distinguishing between prevalence and conditional impact. *American Journal of Political Science* 57(2), 391–410.
- Mayda, A. M. (2006). Who is against immigration? a cross-country investigation of individual attitudes toward immigrants. *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 88(3), 510–530.
- Mayda, A. M., G. Peri, and W. Steingress (2016). Immigration to the U.S.: A problem for the republicans or the democrats? *NBER Working Paper N. 21941*.

- NPR (2018, February). Venezuela's Deepening Crisis Triggers Mass Migration Into Colombia. Accessed from: <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2018/02/20/587242391/venezuelas-deepening-crisis-triggers-mass-migration-into-colombia>.
- OLR (2017). Características de los migrantes de Venezuela a Colombia. Technical report, Observatorio Laboral de la Universidad del Rosario.
- Otto, A. H. and M. F. Steinhardt (2014). Immigration and election outcomes. evidence from city districts in Hamburg. *Regional Science and Urban Economics* 45, 67–79.
- Revista Semana (2017, March). El triste éxodo de los venezolanos a Colombia. Accessed from: <http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/venezolanos-en-colombia-y-colombianos-repatriados/519657>.
- Revista Semana (2018, January). Cuántos venezolanos se quedan en Colombia? Accessed from: <https://www.semana.com/on-line/articulo/cuantos-venezolanos-hay-en-colombia-segun-migracion-colombia/554505>.
- Rozo, S. (2018). Is Murder Bad for Business? Evidence from Colombia. *The Review of Economic and Statistics*. Forthcoming.
- Scheve, K. F. and M. J. Slaughter (2001). Labor market competition and individual preferences over immigration policy. *Review of Economics and Statistics* 83(1), 133–145.
- Sniderman, P. M., L. Hagendoorn, and M. Prior (2004). Predisposing factors and situational triggers: Exclusionary reactions to immigrant minorities. *American Political Science Review* 98(1), 35–49.
- Tingley, D. (2012). Public finance and immigration preferences: A lost connection? *Polity* 45(1), 4–33.
- UNHCR (2017). Statistical Yearbook, 2016. Technical report, United Nations Refugee Agency.

Table (I) Descriptive Statistics

	Year	Obs.	Average	St. Deviation
Panel A. Presidential Elections - First Round (1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014, and 2018)				
IDP Inflows (Indv.)	1994-2018	7,178	543.69	2,886
IDP Inflows (% Pop. × 100)	1994-2018	7,178	1.253	3,812
Predicted IDP Inflows	1994-2018	7,178	6,843	12,717
Predicted Venezuelan Inflows	1994-2018	7,178	1,988	8,153
Population (municipality)	1994-2018	7,178	41,413	247,737
Total Votes	1994-2018	7,178	11,889	83,811
Votes for Left	1994-2018	7,178	1,614	17,095
Votes for Center	1994-2018	7,178	5,415	41,009
Votes for Right	1994-2018	7,178	4,237	32,691
Share of Votes for Left	1994-2018	7,178	0.097	0.129
Share of Votes for Center	1994-2018	7,178	0.497	0.325
Share of Votes for Right	1994-2018	7,178	0.349	0.279
Panel B. Presidential Elections - Second Round (1994, 1998, 2010, 2014, and 2018)				
IDP Inflows (Indv.)	1994-2018	5,132	314.55	1,777.44
IDP Inflows (% Pop. × 100)	1994-2018	5,132	0.702	2.692
Predicted IDP Inflows	1994-2018	5,132	4,739	11,557
Predicted Venezuelan Inflows	1994-2018	5,132	2,582.12	9,529.46
Population (municipality)	1994-2018	5,132	41,796.80	250,726.40
Total Votes	1994-2018	5,132	13,015.69	85,654.74
Votes for Left	1994-2018	5,132	1521	28,010
Votes for Center	1994-2018	5,132	5,834	42,562
Votes for Right	1994-2018	5,132	4,987	37,301
Share of Votes for Left	1994-2018	5,132	0.07	0.16
Share of Votes for Center	1994-2018	5,132	0.51	0.41
Share of Votes for Right	1994-2018	5,132	0.38	0.35
Panel B. Mayoral Elections (1997, 2000, 2003, 2007, 2011, and 2015)				
IDP Inflows (Indv.)	1997-2015	5,827	678.21	3,266.84
IDP Inflows (% Pop. × 100)	1997-2015	5,827	1.52	4.20
Predicted IDP Inflows	1997-2015	5,827	8.18	12.48
Predicted Venezuelan Inflows	1997-2015	5,827	1,045	3,170
Population (by municipality)	1997-2015	5,827	42,182	252,364
Total Votes	1997-2015	5,827	14,064	72,473
Votes for Left	1997-2015	5,827	1,166	20,318
Votes for Center	1997-2015	5,827	8,673	40,715
Votes for Right	1997-2015	5,827	1,677	7,787
Share of Votes for Left	1997-2015	5,827	0.04	0.12
Share of Votes for Center	1997-2015	5,827	0.71	0.26
Share of Votes for Right	1997-2015	5,827	0.13	0.20

Table (II) Descriptive Statistics - Control Variables

Variable	Year	Obs.	Average	St. Deviation	Classification
Panel E. Controls for All Elections					
N. of Hectares of Coca Crops	1999	1,124	142.46	960.24	Conflict and Violence
N. of Terrorist Attacks	1993	1,124	0.66	2.63	Conflict and Violence
Homicide Rate (per 100,000 Indv.)	1995	1,048	52.92	66.89	Conflict and Violence
Municipal Tax Income (Millions)	1995	1,098	1,033	16,066	Government Finance
Mun. Public Expenditure (Thousands)	1995	1,098	2,909	28,866	Government Finance
Central Gov. Transfers (Millions)	1995	1,098	1,168	5,348	Government Finance
Number of Financial Institutions	1995	1,046	1.75	8.92	Institutions
Number of Tax Collection Offices	1995	1,046	36.05	182.37	Institutions
Per capita GDP (Millions)	2005	1,097	6.38	6.63	Economic Growth
Night Light Density	1995	1,048	3.97	7.47	Economic Growth
GINI	1993	1,043	0.46	0.04	Poverty and Inequality
Unsatisfied Basic Needs (UBN, % Households)	1993	1,035	52.98	19.21	Poverty and Inequality
Subsidized Health System Cov. (%Pop.with UBN)	1998	1,136	0.72	0.41	Poverty and Inequality
Informal Labor* (% Household)	2005	1,114	0.95	0.06	Labor Market
Homicide Rate(per 100,000 Indv.)	1994-2015	24,411	45.32	64.80	Endogenous
Municipal Tax Income (Millions)	1994-2015	24,189	6,585	109,238	Endogenous
Mun. Public Expenditure (Thousands)	1994-2015	24,156	22,486	221,487	Endogenous
Central Gov. Transfers (Millions)	1994-2015	24,156	616.81	1,524.35	Endogenous
Population	1994-2015	24,684	37,975	231,550	Endogenous
IDP Outflows (Indv.)	1994-2015	24,684	302.60	1,079.34	Endogenous
IDP Transfers (Billions)	1994-2018	28,075	3.55	27.35	Endogenous

Notes: *Informal Labor is a dummy variable equal to one if less than 100% of the economically active population within a household does not contribute to the pension system.

Table (III) Effects of crises-driven migration on presidential elections (First-Round)

Dependent variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Log Total Votes	Share of Votes for Left	Share of Votes for Center	Share of Votes for Right				
Panel A. Venezuelan Migration and Internal Displacement Shock - Reduced Form								
Predicted Venezuelan Inflows	-0.00002*** (0.0000)	-0.00001*** (0.0000)	-0.00001*** (0.0000)	-0.00001*** (0.0000)	-0.00000* (0.0000)	-0.00000 (0.0000)	0.00001*** (0.0000)	0.00001*** (0.0000)
Predicted IDP Inflows	-0.0030*** (0.0012)	-0.0020** (0.0010)	0.0005 (0.0004)	0.0004 (0.0004)	-0.0003 (0.0002)	-0.0005** (0.0002)	-0.0006 (0.0005)	-0.0003 (0.0004)
Adj. R-squared	0.960	0.965	0.728	0.748	0.919	0.926	0.890	0.903
Panel B. Venezuelan Migration Shock- Reduced Form								
Predicted Venezuelan Inflows	-0.00002*** (0.0000)	-0.00001*** (0.0000)	-0.00001*** (0.0000)	-0.00001*** (0.0000)	-0.00000* (0.0000)	-0.00000 (0.0000)	0.00001*** (0.0000)	0.00001*** (0.0000)
Adj. R-squared	0.960	0.965	0.727	0.748	0.919	0.926	0.889	0.903
Panel C. Internal Displacement Shock- Reduced Form								
Predicted IDP Inflows	-0.0032*** (0.001)	-0.0022** (0.001)	0.0005 (0.000)	0.0004 (0.000)	-0.0003 (0.000)	-0.0005** (0.000)	-0.0006 (0.001)	-0.0003 (0.000)
Adj. R-squared	0.960	0.965	0.727	0.747	0.919	0.926	0.889	0.903
Panel D. Internal Displacement Shock- OLS								
IDP (% Total Population × 100)	-0.0091*** (0.002)	-0.0080*** (0.002)	0.0018* (0.001)	0.0017* (0.001)	0.0001 (0.001)	-0.0004 (0.001)	-0.0022*** (0.001)	-0.0016** (0.001)
Adj. R-squared	0.960	0.966	0.728	0.748	0.919	0.926	0.889	0.904
Panel E. Internal Displacement Shock- 2SLS (Second-Stage)								
IDP (% Total Population × 100)	-0.0444*** (0.011)	-0.0291*** (0.009)	0.0067 (0.005)	0.0057 (0.004)	-0.0045 (0.003)	-0.0063** (0.003)	-0.0083 (0.006)	-0.0040 (0.004)
Panel F. Internal Displacement Shock- 2SLS (First-Stage)								
Predicted IDP Inflows	0.072*** (0.021)	0.074*** (0.023)	0.072*** (0.021)	0.074*** (0.023)	0.072*** (0.021)	0.074*** (0.023)	0.072*** (0.021)	0.074*** (0.023)
F-test (Excluded Instrument)	11.66	11.06	11.66	11.06	11.66	11.06	11.66	11.06
Observations (All Panels)	6,837	6,837	6,837	6,837	6,837	6,837	6,837	6,837
Controls (all panels)								
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year × Department FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Conflict and Violence × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Government Finance × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Institutions × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Growth × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Poverty and Inequality × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Labor Market × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Standard Deviation (Indp. Variables)								
Predicted Venezuelan Inflows								8.153
Predicted IDP Inflows								12.77
IDP (% Pop. × 100)								3.81

Notes: Clustered standard errors at the municipality level are reported in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table (IV) Effects of crises-driven migration on presidential elections (Second-Round)

Dependent variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Log Total Votes	Share of Votes for Left	Share of Votes for Center	Share of Votes for Right				
Panel A. Venezuelan Migration and Internal Displacement Shock - Reduced Form								
Predicted Venezuelan Inflows	-0.00002*** (0.0000)	-0.00001*** (0.0000)	-0.00001*** (0.0000)	-0.00001*** (0.0000)	0.000001** (0.0000)	0.0000001 (0.0000)	0.00001*** (0.0000)	0.000001*** (0.0000)
Predicted IDP Inflows	-0.0031*** (0.0007)	-0.0021*** (0.0004)	0.00002 (0.0003)	-0.00005 (0.0002)	-0.00030*** (0.0001)	-0.00007 (0.0001)	0.00030 (0.0002)	0.00009 (0.0003)
Adj. R-squared	0.963	0.969	0.890	0.908	0.971	0.975	0.960	0.966
Panel B. Venezuelan Migration Shock- Reduced Form								
Predicted Venezuelan Inflows	-0.00002*** (0.0000)	-0.00001*** (0.0000)	-0.00001*** (0.0000)	-0.00001*** (0.0000)	0.0000001** (0.0000)	0.0000001 (0.0000)	0.00001*** (0.0000)	0.000001*** (0.0000)
Adj. R-squared	0.962	0.968	0.890	0.908	0.971	0.975	0.960	0.966
Panel C. Internal Displacement Shock- Reduced Form								
Predicted IDP Inflows	-0.0030*** (0.001)	-0.0021*** (0.000)	0.0000 (0.000)	-0.0000 (0.000)	-0.0003*** (0.000)	-0.0001 (0.000)	0.0003 (0.000)	0.0001 (0.000)
Adj. R-squared	0.963	0.969	0.887	0.906	0.971	0.975	0.959	0.966
Panel D. Internal Displacement Shock- OLS								
IDP (% Total Population × 100)	-0.0068*** (0.002)	-0.0056*** (0.002)	-0.0000 (0.001)	-0.0000 (0.001)	0.0000 (0.000)	0.0000 (0.000)	-0.0002 (0.001)	0.0000 (0.001)
Adj. R-squared	0.962	0.968	0.887	0.906	0.971	0.975	0.959	0.966
Panel E. Internal Displacement Shock- 2SLS (Second-Stage)								
IDP (% Total Population × 100)	-0.0607*** (0.015)	-0.0443*** (0.012)	0.0008 (0.005)	-0.0008 (0.004)	-0.0064** (0.003)	-0.0014 (0.003)	0.0052 (0.006)	0.0019 (0.007)
Panel F. Internal Displacement Shock- 2SLS (First-Stage)								
Predicted IDP Inflows	0.050*** (0.016)	0.048*** (0.014)	0.050*** (0.016)	0.048*** (0.014)	0.050*** (0.016)	0.048*** (0.014)	0.050*** (0.016)	0.048*** (0.014)
F-test (Excluded Instrument)	9.74	11.57	9.74	11.57	9.74	11.57	9.74	11.57
Observations (All Panels)	4,886	4,886	4,886	4,886	4,886	4,886	4,886	4,886
Controls (All panels)								
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year × Department FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Conflict and Violence × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Government Finance × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Institutions × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Growth × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Poverty and Inequality × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Labor Market × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Standard Deviation (Indp. Variables)								
Predicted Venezuelan Inflows								9.529
Predicted IDP Inflows								11.57
IDP (% Pop. × 100)								2.69

Notes: Clustered standard errors at the municipality level are reported in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table (V) Effects of crises-driven migration on mayoral elections

Dependent variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Panel A. Venezuelan Migration and Internal Displacement Shock - Reduced Form								
Predicted Venezuelan Inflows	-0.000006*** (0.0000)	-0.000006*** (0.0000)	-0.000001 (0.0000)	-0.000001 (0.0000)	-0.000002 (0.0000)	-0.000001 (0.0000)	0.000002 (0.0000)	0.000001 (0.0000)
Predicted IDP Inflows	-0.000091 (0.0011)	-0.000055 (0.0011)	0.00041 (0.0003)	0.00040 (0.0003)	0.00024 (0.0005)	0.00005 (0.0005)	0.00024 (0.0003)	0.00032 (0.0004)
Adj. R-squared	0.938	0.943	0.406	0.419	0.415	0.433	0.470	0.481
Panel B. Venezuelan Migration Shock- Reduced Form								
Predicted Venezuelan Inflows	-0.000006*** (0.0000)	-0.000006*** (0.0000)	-0.000001 (0.0000)	-0.000001 (0.0000)	-0.000002 (0.0000)	-0.000001 (0.0000)	0.000002 (0.0000)	0.000001 (0.0000)
Adj. R-squared	0.936	0.943	0.402	0.418	0.414	0.433	0.469	0.481
Panel C. Internal Displacement Shock- Reduced Form								
Predicted IDP Inflows	-0.00008 (0.001)	-0.00005 (0.001)	0.0004 (0.000)	0.0004 (0.000)	0.0003 (0.001)	0.0001 (0.001)	0.0002 (0.000)	0.0003 (0.000)
Adj. R-squared	0.936	0.943	0.402	0.419	0.414	0.433	0.469	0.481
Panel D. Internal Displacement Shock- OLS								
IDP (% Total Population × 100)	-0.0019 (0.002)	-0.0011 (0.001)	0.0004 (0.001)	0.0005 (0.001)	-0.0008 (0.001)	-0.0006 (0.001)	0.0007 (0.001)	0.0005 (0.001)
Adj. R-squared	0.936	0.943	0.402	0.418	0.414	0.433	0.469	0.481
Panel E. Internal Displacement Shock- 2SLS (Second-Stage)								
IDP (% Total Population × 100)	-0.0065 (0.008)	-0.0039 (0.008)	0.0033 (0.002)	0.0031 (0.002)	0.0021 (0.004)	0.0005 (0.004)	0.0017 (0.003)	0.0023 (0.003)
Panel F. Internal Displacement Shock- 2SLS (First-Stage)								
Predicted IDP Inflows	0.128*** (0.031)	0.130*** (0.032)	0.128*** (0.031)	0.130*** (0.032)	0.128*** (0.031)	0.130*** (0.032)	0.128*** (0.031)	0.130*** (0.032)
F-test (Excluded Instrument)	17.04	17.34	17.04	17.34	17.04	17.34	17.04	17.34
Observations (All Panels)	5,555	5,555	5,555	5,555	5,555	5,555	5,555	5,555
Controls (All Panels)								
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year × Department FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Conflict and Violence × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Government Finance × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Institutions × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Growth × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Poverty and Inequality × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Labor Market × Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Standard Deviation (Indp. Variables)								
Predicted Venezuelan Inflows								3,170
Predicted IDP Inflows								12.48
IDP (% Pop. × 100)								4.2

Notes: Clustered standard errors at the municipality level are reported in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table (VI) Accounting for Socio-Economic Controls

Dependent variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Log (Total Votes)	Share of Votes for Left	Share of Votes for Center	Share of Votes for Right				
Panel A. Presidential Elections (First-Round)								
Venezuelan Migration and Internal Displacement Shock - Reduced Form								
Predicted Venezuelan Inflows	-0.000001*** (0.0000)	-0.000001*** (0.0000)	-0.000001*** (0.0000)	-0.000001*** (0.0000)	-0.000000 (0.0000)	0.000000 (0.0000)	0.000001*** (0.0000)	0.000001*** (0.0000)
Predicted IDP Inflows	-0.0020** (0.0010)	-0.0020** (0.0010)	0.0004 (0.0004)	0.0004 (0.0004)	-0.00050** (0.0002)	-0.0005** (0.0002)	-0.0003 (0.0004)	-0.0003 (0.0004)
Adj. R-squared	0.966	0.966	0.748	0.748	0.926	0.926	0.904	0.904
Observations	6,837	6,837	6,837	6,837	6,837	6,837	6,837	6,837
Panel B. Presidential Elections (Second-Round)								
Venezuelan Migration and Internal Displacement Shock - Reduced Form								
Predicted Venezuelan Inflows	-0.000001*** (0.0000)	-0.000001*** (0.0000)	-0.000001*** (0.0000)	-0.000001*** (0.0000)	0.000000 (0.0000)	0.000000 (0.0000)	0.000001*** (0.0000)	0.000001*** (0.0000)
Predicted IDP Inflows	-0.0021*** (0.0004)	-0.0021*** (0.0004)	-0.00005 (0.0002)	-0.00005 (0.0002)	-0.00007 (0.0001)	-0.00007 (0.0001)	0.00009 (0.0003)	0.0001 (0.0003)
Adj. R-squared	0.969	0.969	0.908	0.908	0.975	0.975	0.966	0.966
Observations	4,886	4,886	4,886	4,886	4,886	4,886	4,886	4,886
Panel C. Mayoral Elections								
Venezuelan Migration and Internal Displacement Shock - Reduced Form								
Predicted Venezuelan Inflows	-0.000006*** (0.0000)	-0.000006*** (0.0000)	-0.000001 (0.0000)	-0.000001 (0.0000)	-0.000001 (0.0000)	-0.000001 (0.0000)	0.000001 (0.0000)	0.000001 (0.0000)
Predicted IDP Inflows	-0.00051 (0.0011)	-0.0005 (0.0011)	0.00034 (0.0003)	0.0004 (0.0003)	0.00005 (0.0005)	0.00002 (0.0005)	0.0004 (0.0004)	0.0004 (0.0004)
Adj. R-squared	0.943	0.943	0.421	0.421	0.433	0.434	0.482	0.482
Observations	5,555	5,555	5,555	5,555	5,555	5,555	5,555	5,555
Controls								
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year × Department FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pre-trend × Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Homicide Rate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Municipal Tax Income	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Municipal Public Expenditure	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Central Government Transfers × Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Population	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
IDP Outflows	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
IDP Transfers	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

Notes: Clustered standard errors at the municipality level are reported in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Figure (I) Annual Aggregated Venezuelan and IDP Inflows

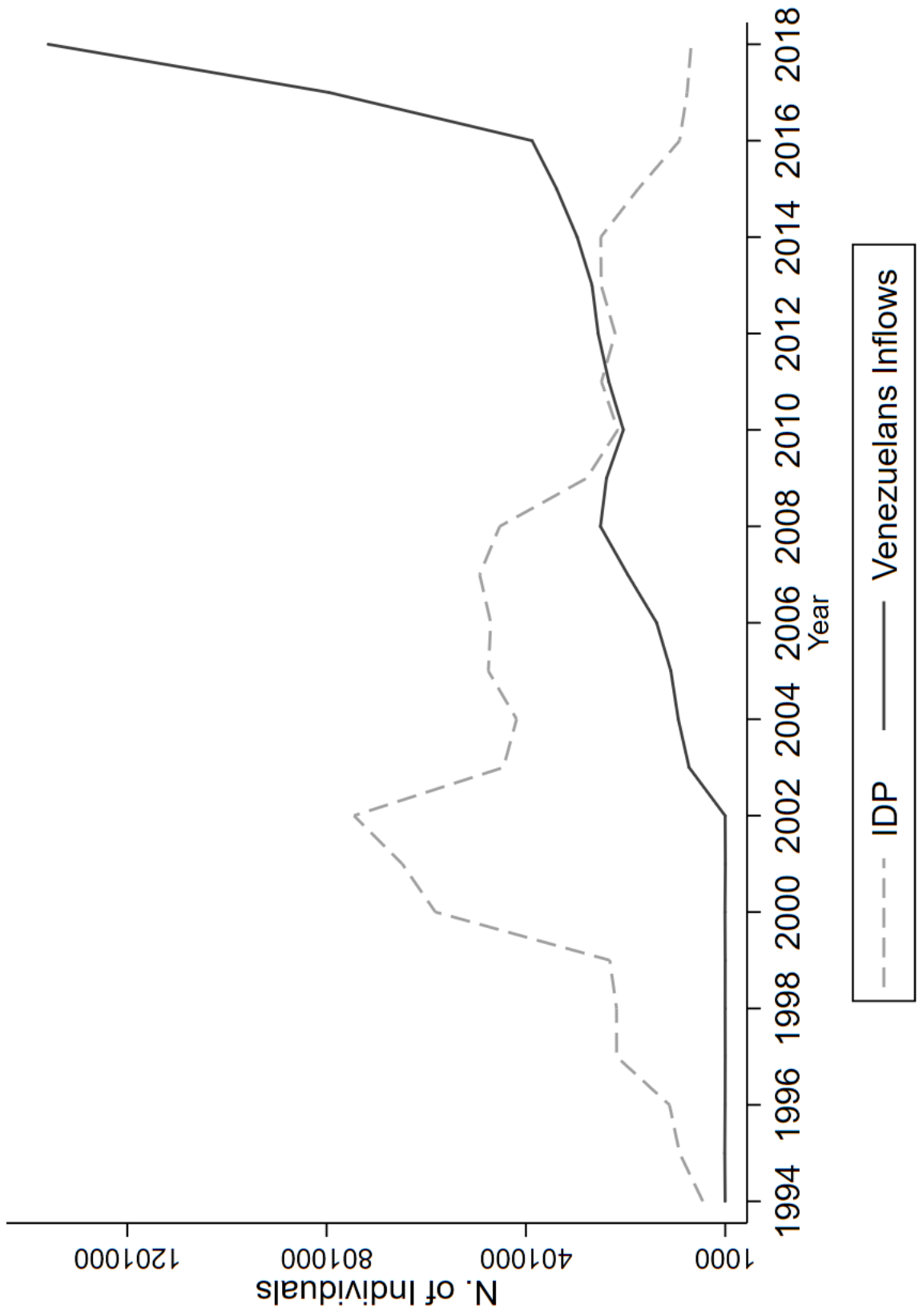
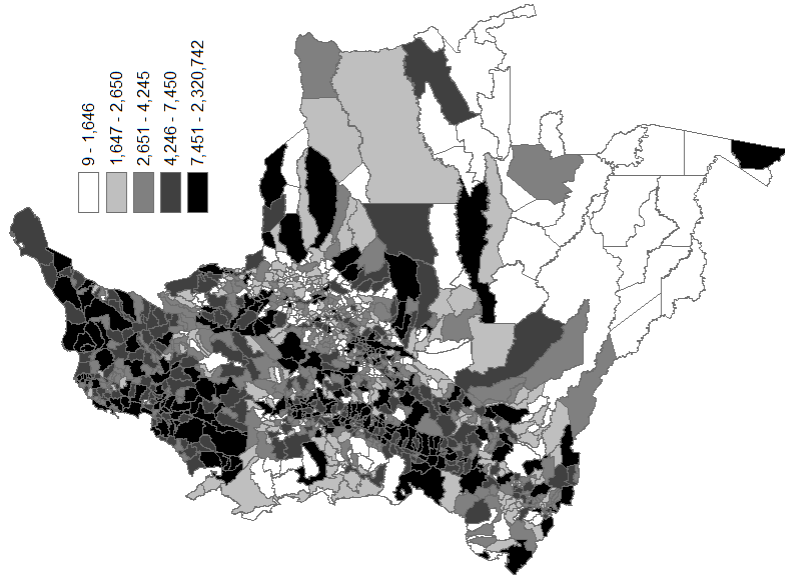
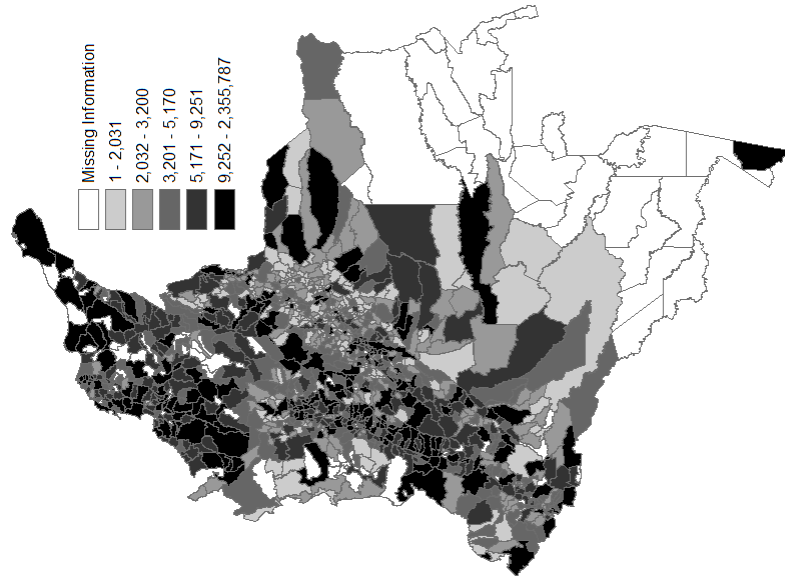


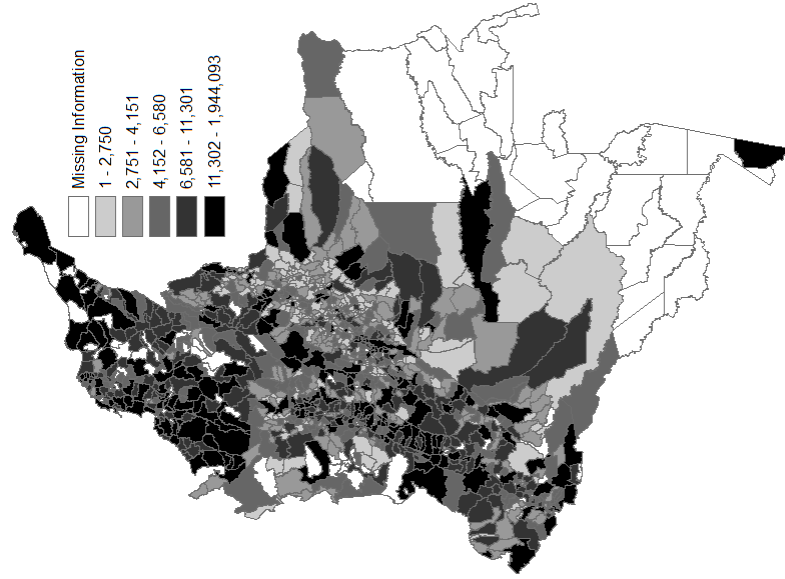
Figure (II) Average Total Votes



Presidential Elections (First Round)



Presidential Elections (Second-Round)



Mayoral Elections

Figure (III) Average Share of Vote for Left, Center, and Right (Presidential Elections First-Round)

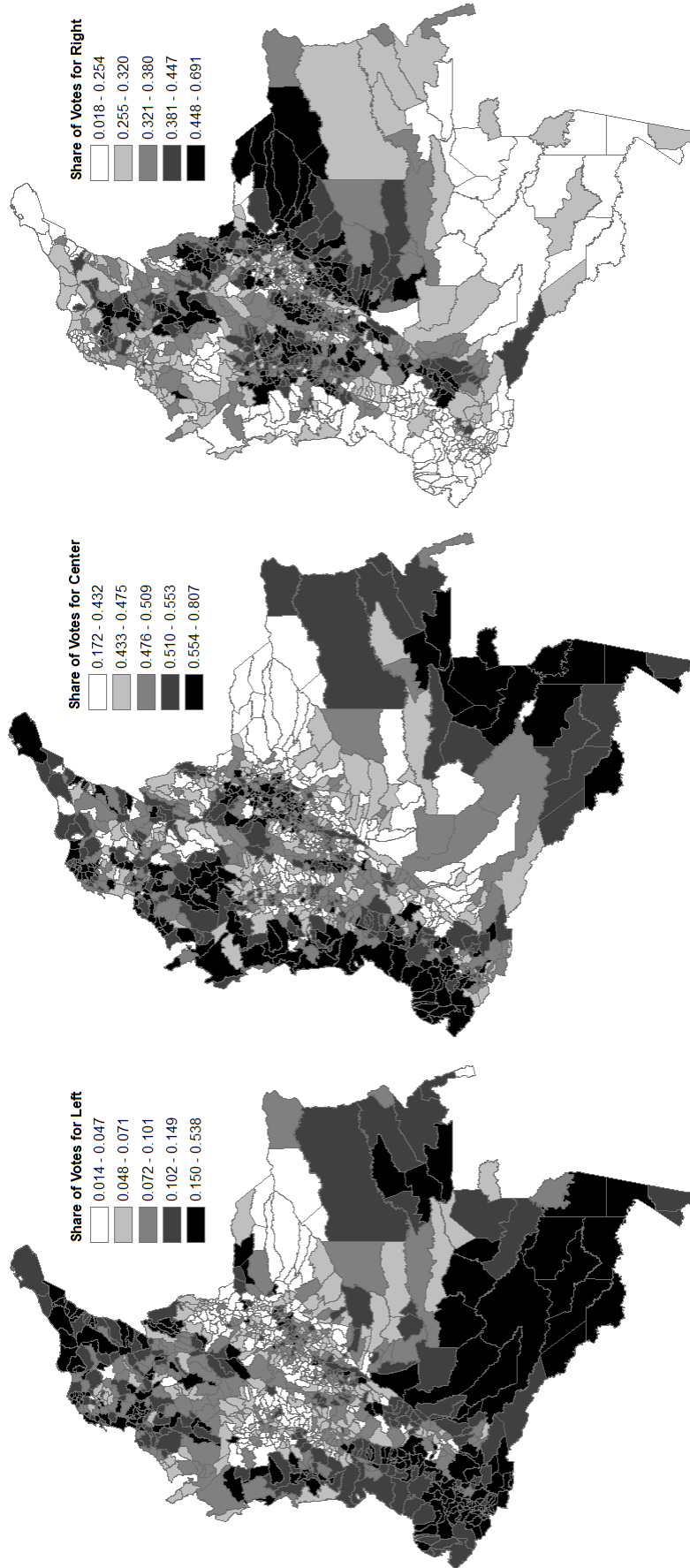


Figure (IV) Average Share of Vote for Left, Center, and Right (Presidential Elections Second-Round)

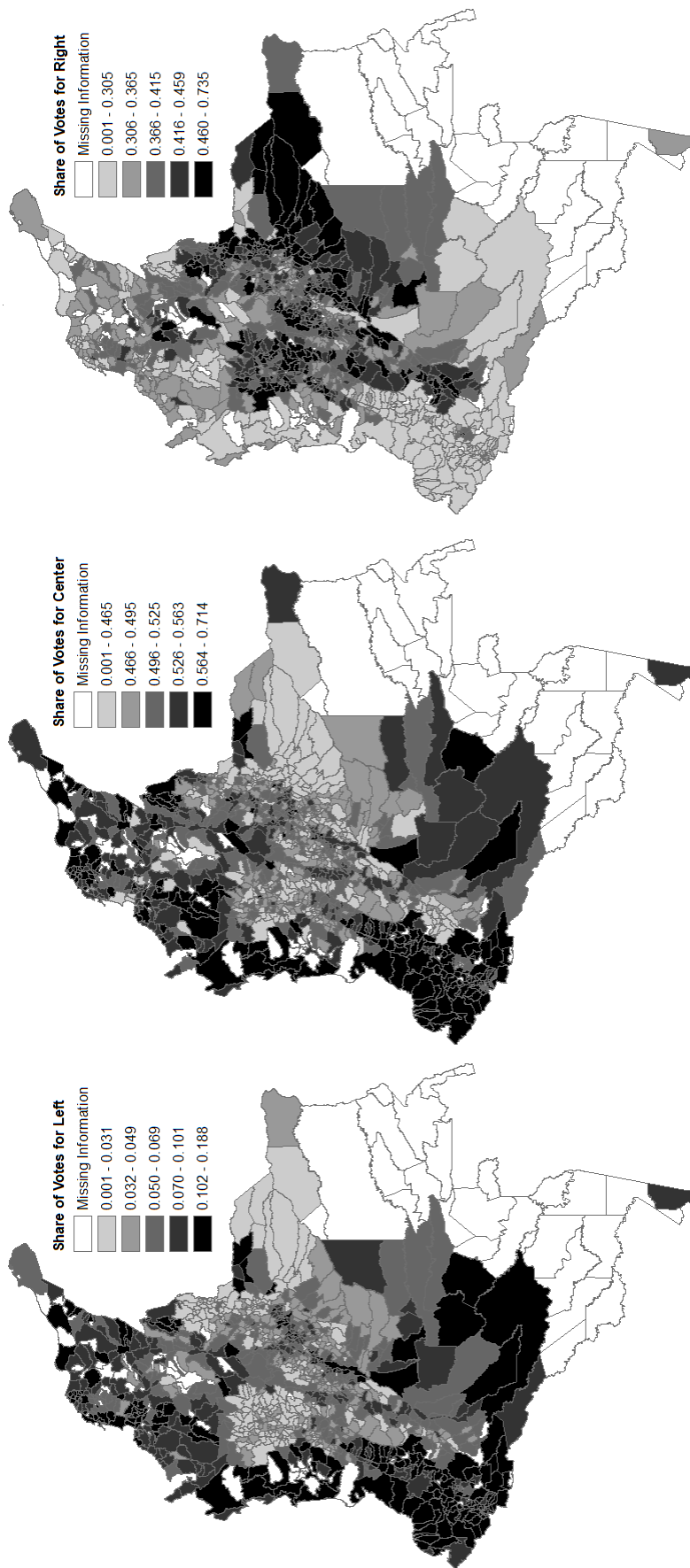


Figure (V) Average Share of Vote for Left, Center, and Right (Mayoral Elections)

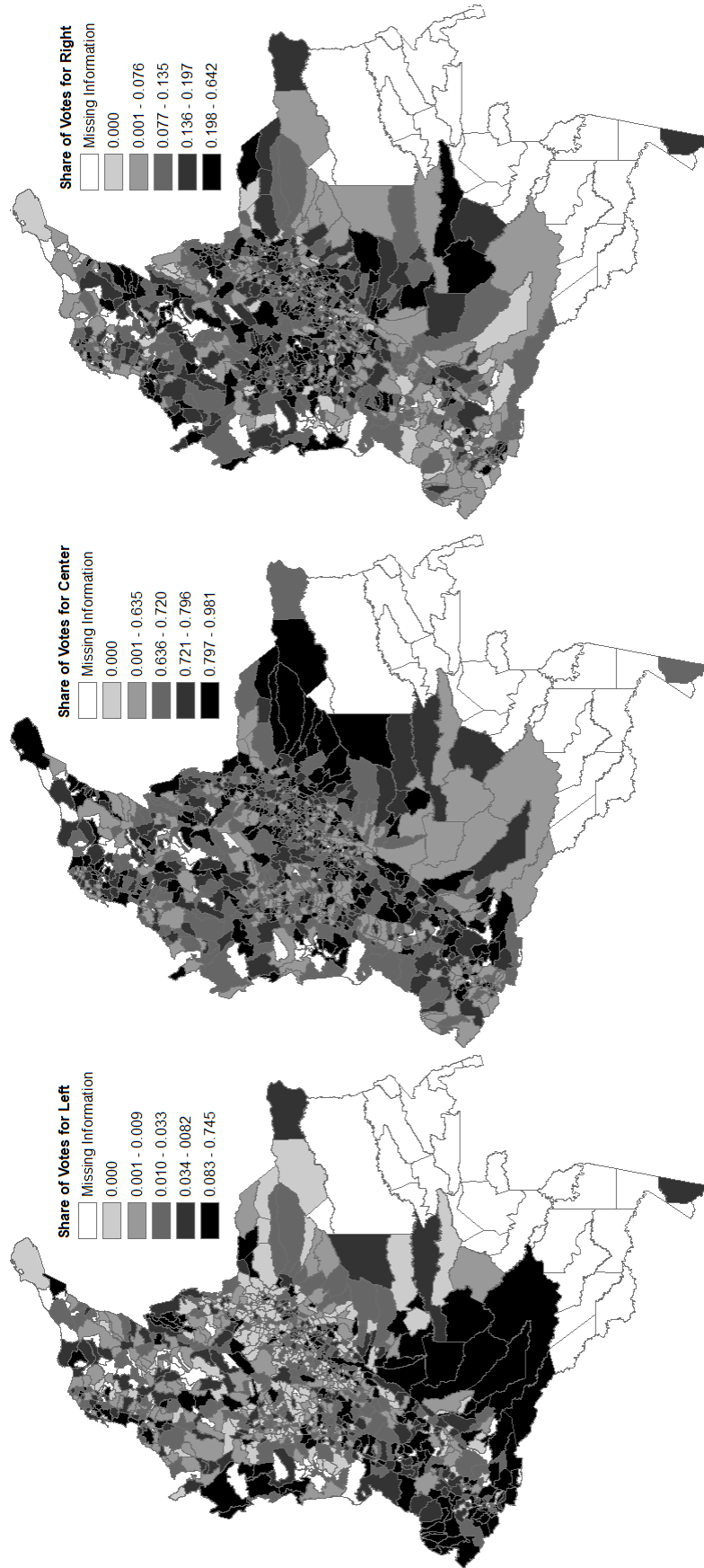
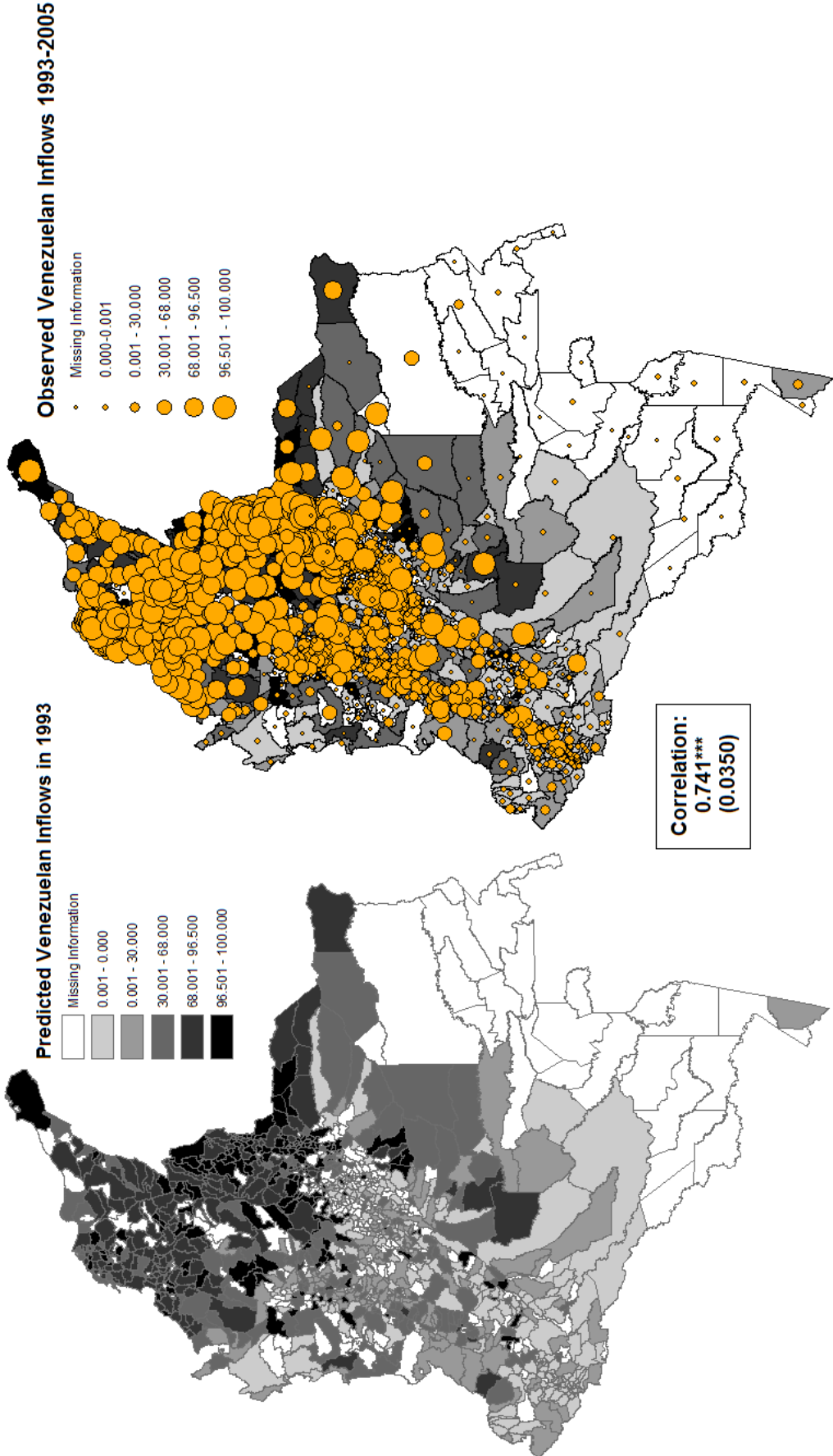
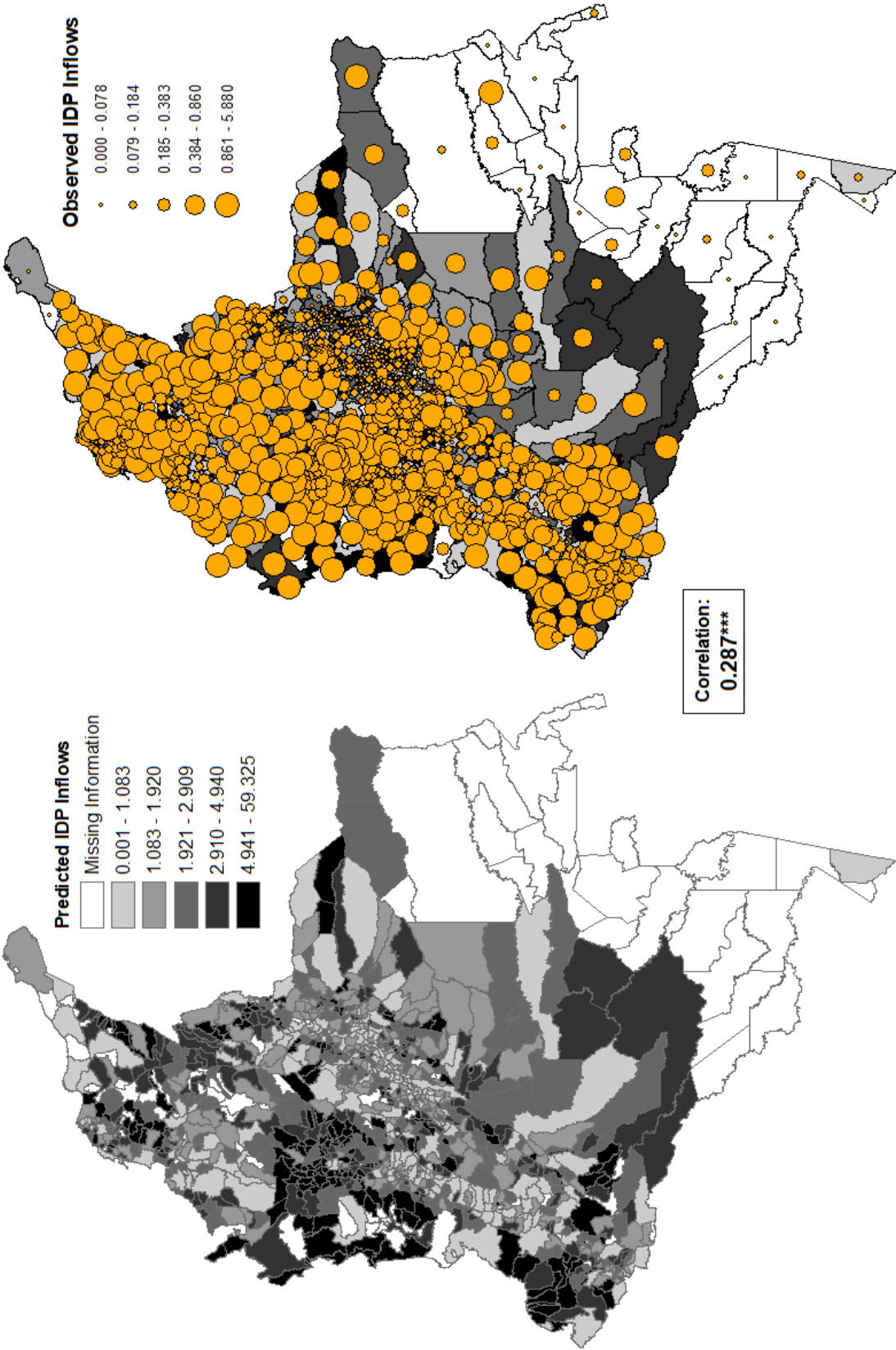


Figure (VI) Predicted Venezuelan Inflows in 1993 and Aggregate Venezuelan Inflows between 1993 and 2005



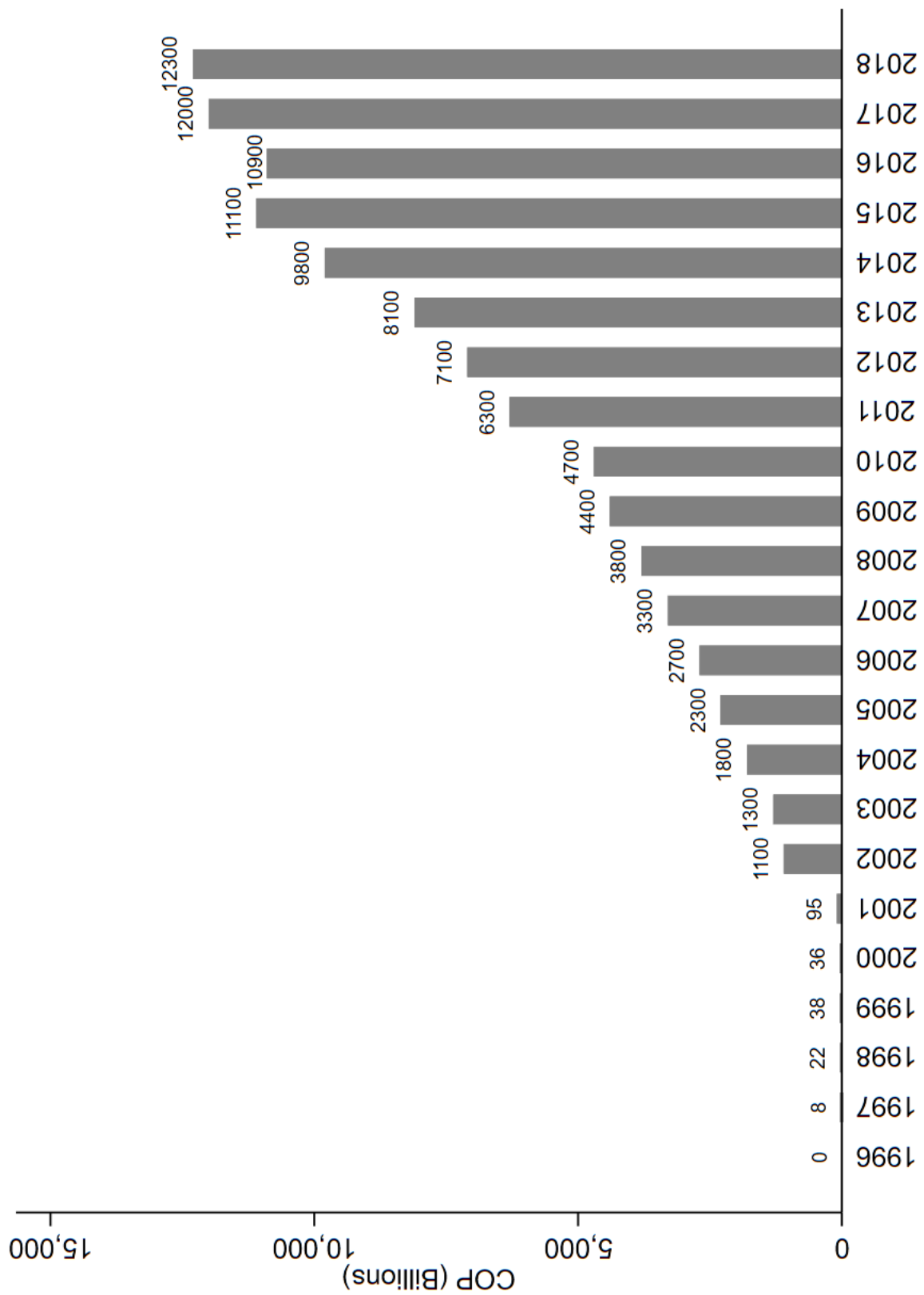
Notes: Municipalities with missing information were created after 1993. The maps were constructed using information from the populations censuses of 1993 and 2005. *Predicted Venezuelan Inflows in 1993* and *Venezuelan Inflows between 1993 and 2005* were constructed using the following formulas:
 Predicted Venezuelan Inflows 1993 = $[\text{Venezuelans in } 1993_m / \text{Population Borned Abroad in } 1993_m] \times 100$
 Venezuelan Inflows between 1993-2005 = $[\text{Aggregate Venezuelan Inflows } 1993\text{-}2005_m / \text{Population Borned Abroad between } 1993\text{-}2005_m] \times 100$

Figure (VII) Predicted and Observed IDP Inflows between 1994 and 2018 (Mean Values)



Notes: Municipalities with missing information were created after 1993. Predicted IDP Inflows were created according to equation (3) and observed IDPs corresponds to the mean number of IDP inflows as a share of municipal population times 100.

Figure (VIII) Share of National Public Budget Allocated by the *Ley de Víctimas* to IDP from 2005 and 2015



FOR ONLINE PUBLICATION

Appendix I: Political Elections Data Base Construction

We constructed three data bases two for presidential and one mayor elections. The databases were constructed with original data from the *Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil*, the Colombian electoral authority. We begin all data bases after 1994, since after this year the electoral data has information on the total votes received for all candidates.

To begin we identify the political party of each candidate for mayor or presidential elections and then classify it in left, center, or right following the methodology proposed by [Fergusson et al. \(2017\)](#). The classification for each political party includes three steps.

1. Check party names, mottos, and slogans for words that identify the mayor's/president's party clearly as left leaning or right-leaning (e.g., communist, or socialist for left-wing oriented and conservative or Christian for right-wing oriented).
2. Since few parties can be classified using the method outlined in the previous step, check the party statutes (when available) for policy stances that are clearly left- or right-leaning. A party is coded left-wing if the party statutes include at least three of the following five leftist policy positions: (1) pro-peasant, (2) advocates greater market regulation, (3) thinks that workers should be defended against exploitation, (4) advocates state-owned or communal property rights, and (5) anti-imperialist. A party is coded as right-leaning if its statutes include at least three of the following five right-wing policy positions: (1) economic growth is emphasized over redistribution, (2) advocates free market, orthodox policies, and privatization, (3) believes that family and religion are the moral pillars of society, (4) appeals to patriotism and nationalism, and accepts the suspension of some freedoms in order to guarantee security, and (5) prioritizes law and order. Parties that do not include at least three of the policy stances from either list in their statutes are classified as neither left- nor right-wing.

3. For parties for which official statutes are not available, check the government plan that candidates submit to the electoral authority before elections and, when available, search them for the same policy stances as in the second step.