

**STATE CAPACITIES, DIGITALIZATION PROCESSES IN CHILE AND
THEIR EFFECTS UPON MIGRANTS' LIVES: SELECTIVE
COMPARISONS WITH THE BRAZILIAN EXPERIENCE**

LILIANA ACERO

Affiliation: Collaborating Professor of the Post-Doctoral Programme on Public Policies, Strategies and Development (PPED) at the Institute of Economics (IE) at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), Brazil.

Address: Rua Conselheiro Lafaiete 104, Ap. 202, Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro, RJ. CEP: 22081-020, Brasil.
Cellular phone & WhatsApp: +5521976296337

<https://doi.org/10.37602/IJSSMR.2026.9510>

ABSTRACT

State digitalization has spread globally at an overwhelming rate in the last decade or so, including in Latin America. However, in this region, strategic planning for the spread of these technologies has been mostly lacking and the training of bureaucracies to manage them insufficient. State dynamic capacities for policy coordination, leadership and legitimation have been weak. Though migrants have been affected by these processes no consistent strategy has been designed to overcome the bottlenecks they face, such as digital illiteracy, low connectivity level and access to internet devices. These facts have generated further inequalities among them and lowered their capacity for social integration. The present research focuses on how this process has developed in Chile and makes selective comparisons to that of Brazil, already analysed in a previous study. Methodologically, the research was designed as a qualitative analysis, a narrative-based, critical review of academic specialized social science literature, an analysis of selected public documents, as well as upon information produced by pro-migrant NGOs. The findings show that both countries' experiences present more similarities than differences, though the academic analysis focuses on slightly different issues: macroeconomic trends of platform capitalism in Brazil, versus narrative-based case-studies of migrants' experiences in Chile.

Keywords: State digitalization; migrants in Chile; migrants in Brazil; State capacities; digital inequalities; digital bottlenecks; public administration digitalization; migration governance.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the development of migrants' resilience strategies and their social integration to the host society, the role of the State is central. It involves the design of adequate migration policies, the development and implementation of administrative capacities, including those of service digitalization.

At present, digital platform capitalism predominates globally. It can be defined by the extraction of large volumes of data from different social and economic sectors, its processing, the expansion of businesses operated via digital platforms, and the evolution of internet technologies that are all widely influencing the way societies function and perform (Srnicsek, 2017). The use of digital platforms not only follows algorithmic logics but also expresses

certain forms of rationality for capital accumulation (Grohmann, 2020). Algorithmic logics, during the last thirty years, progressively began to govern more dimensions of social and communicational life, such as food, transport, love and work, among other (Gillespie, 2018). While algorithms are produced like any other technology within technology firms, they are also a product of the daily interaction with ordinary people, though asymmetrically, as the providers of information are in a privileged position to rewrite social understandings.

There is a need to implement coherent public migration policies, during the existing humanitarian crises linked to migration, as well as that of the development of dynamic capacities by the State that are related to “policies oriented by missions”, as defined in the model designed by Kattel & Mazucatto (2018), to be briefly discussed next. These type of policies focus on concrete problems through actions oriented by specific aims, especially in contexts of risk, insecurity and permanent change. They are driven not only by economic factors but also by those regarding social welfare. They also require the structuring of favourable consensus and arguments on the part of bureaucrats, even in the case of digital technologies.

Dynamic capacity-building must reassure within institutions an ability to establish an ongoing revaluation, reconfiguration and redefinition of borders. For agencies to be efficient, State coordination must define clear aims, have legitimacy and show leadership. Objectives are to be predefined, measure's and mechanisms' coherence taken into account, as well as the possibility of experimentation and evaluation. Moreover, bureaucracies have to develop substantive operational capacities to implement, evaluate and adjust these policies to become productive for societies as a whole and for more vulnerable groups like migrants, while maintaining a perspective that respects and promotes civic and human rights.

Associated public agencies behave differently according to the political hegemonic context in which they are functioning and the tensions and conflicts derived from the multiple perspectives held on the issues under study by different sectors in government. The building of consensus through permanent negotiations is necessary to approve a law for digital administration that also benefits the regularization and social inclusion of migrants and designs specific policies in this direction.

2.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

Two contrasting perspectives are transversal to the literature on State digitalization. The earlier one, argued that digitalization positively affects administrative procedural designs, transparency in resource allocation and a direct, non-mediated relationship with beneficiaries (e.g. Abdou, 2021; Mendoza & Delgado, 2022). That approach blindly defended digitalization's multiple benefits. This important change of governance paradigm seems to have been carried out without previous strategic planning, following a 'trial and error' approach regarding both the growth of platforms and the traits to include or exclude migrants' labour.

However, later approaches- that were born after the initial intents to digitalize public administration - provide important critiques to the initial perspective. In the case of migration, for example, they tend to consider that the State draws and updates in new ways and in a subtle manner, its management and control of the direction of human mobility flows (Domenech,

2018); whereby people only ‘appear’ as participating more directly in a leading role versus bureaucrats, while in practice they do not.

The new form of governance, called electronic governance or e-government, has become a global phenomenon for which many governments were ill-prepared, partly because of an insufficient knowledge on how digital mechanisms and tools function and interconnect. During digitalization, governments are confronted with new challenges. They have to integrate more sophisticated digital systems into their internal and external operations and guarantee standards of cybersecurity, interoperability and interconnection (Ragulina et al., 2021).

The accumulation of Big Data - the processing of large volumes of information – was long present in other socioeconomic sectors, such as the hard sciences and the health sciences. It required the concomitant evolution of methods and mechanisms that can ensure data security and privacy, most especially, because the implementation of public administration policies often deal with sensitive data about the intimacy of human beings.

The development of algorithms began to rule our lives. Moreover, in the relationship with the State and in daily behaviour people contribute to the constant evolution of algorithms and to their reformulation. Data and algorithms are part of the infrastructures of contemporary societies in the context of digital platforms (Murdock, 2018). In the case of migrants, they also rule their form of social integration into the host societies.

This study’s main aims, presented as questions are:

- What has the process of State digitalization been like in Chile? What are the main efficiencies and deficiencies found in public dynamic capacities?
- How has that process affected the lives of migrants?
- How have State digitalization processes and other digital means used by migrants, converged and diverged between Chile and Brazil?

The present research uses secondary data and limited statistical information to develop a qualitative analysis. The study consists of a narrative-based, critical review of academic specialized national and international social science literature, an analysis of selected public documents, as well as of information produced by relevant migrant/refugee collectives and pro-migrant NGOs in Chile. In the case of the comparisons established between countries, findings about digitalization in Brazil were often drawn from a more detailed previous study about this country’s digitalization processes (See, Acero, 2026). Main trends were drawn for both countries and contrasted, searching for similarities, differences and nuances.

Recent academic articles on the Chilean State’s digitalization processes and the role of migrants were retrieved, from specialized national and international journals, such as: *Migraciones Internacionales*, *Revista Interdisciplinar da Mobilidade Humana (REHMu)*, *Périplos: Revista de Investigación sobre Migraciones*, *Doxa Comunicación / InCom UAB / Cuadernos.in* and *Polis Revista Latinoamericana*. Google Scholar was used in this search and the keywords: “State digitalization” “administration digitalization”; “digital platforms”; “digital migrant platforms”; “migrants’ narratives about digital platforms” AND Chile. These keywords have been followed up in the titles and contents of the texts selected.

The article illustrates the most recurrent themes in the articles and documents gathered and analysed. The criteria chosen for content analysis includes: the benefits and setbacks of platform capitalism, administrative digitalization virtuosity and bottlenecks, faults in digital platforms, migrants' digital gaps and other obstacles, migrants' digital opportunities and forms of exclusion, among other. Content analysis centred upon representative phrases that show the main social meanings attributed to the definition, implementation and direction of digitalization (Castro, 2004). Depending on the literature reviewed, when possible, the content analysis was performed by gender.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 State Digitalization Processes in Chile and Their Impacts Upon Migrants' Lives

Law N° 21.180 on the Digital Transformation of the State – that modifies transversally the previous Law N° 19.880 on administrative processes in Chile - was passed in 2019. But it was only gradually implemented during 2022 – as part of an ambitious institutional modernization leap. This law was discussed during the period of transition towards the new migration law, Law N° 21.325 of 2021 and approved around the same time. The Government's Digital Division of the General Secretariat of the Presidency was responsible for its approval. Its main aim is to establish a “digital default” State where, gradually, there would be “no paper” and “no queues” (Garda, 2021).

The law intends to adapt administrative processes among State agencies from a physical to an electronic format in order to reach greater certainty, security and agility in service delivery, as well as, a higher transparency of State's processes and actions in its relationship with citizens. Since 2023, 89% of government administrative procedures have become digital, according to reports from the Division of Digital Government. The new norm has five operational axes for the internal and external transformation of the State: (1) official electronic communications, e.g. DocDigital; (2) electronic files and procedures; (3) electronic notifications from the Civic Registry; (4) the interoperability Principle- sharing of citizens' data between agencies and (5) document digitalization.

However, there is in Chile a permanent tension between the legal mandate and the existing implementation capacities, especially at the municipal level. A study by Hernández Domínguez (2024) shows that the process' success depends, not only upon the adoption of the digital platforms but mainly, on the strengthening of the human capital required to operate them. This author's empirical research shows a low level of investment in the continuous training of bureaucracies and little attention being paid to organizational well-being; two factors that threaten to widen the unequal geographical gap related to service delivery. Other authors have attributed this gap to the scarce access, coverage and quality of internet connectivity, the low technological and infrastructural capacities, the lack of full-time management personnel and the absence of strategic planning. (Amuch, 2022; Sepúlveda, 2017). The last authors also state that the obstacle found in structural asymmetries needs to be overcome through a deep cultural change within organizations that can transcend the government in charge.

On the one hand, drastic savings in terms of people's time and resources have been officially claimed as constituting one of the benefits of digitalization. On the other, initially the process

faces lots of obstacles, most especially, the high investment required to obtain data interoperability between agencies. Alternatives to the official approach have been found within critical empirical studies developed by academics grouped in the Millennium Nucleus in Inequalities and Digital Opportunities (NUDOS) This Nucleus carried out, during 2023, a National Survey on Digital Inclusion, applied to 1.200 individuals over 14 years old living in urban and rural contexts. I prioritized variables such as their capacity to access digital technologies. The group and the survey tend to be in contrast with official declarations on digital benefits when compared to the complex socioeconomic reality of Chile.

The Subsecretary of Telecommunications (SUBTEL) reports high rates of internet penetration in Chilean households, in the order of 94%, and the precious work performed by regional leaders conducting digital networks. Instead, NUDOS and most specially Touro-Madureira et al. (2025), expose the secondary level digital gaps that they found in their study, mainly: differences digital in abilities and in effective use and appropriation of the technology. The authors show that people frequently need the sporadic assistance of intermediaries in order to operate digital technologies. These predominantly involve close relatives and friends - in the order of 42% of cases. They are usually their sons and daughters with a higher level of digital literacy. But also often political figures, bureaucrats and community leaders act as intermediaries. Bureaucrats complement their face-to-face interactions with digital support when people need to obtain benefits; politicians aim to increase 'clientelism' i.e. use their influence to obtain electoral support, while community leaders – not so frequently involved- usually belong to pro-migration NGOs.

3.2 Migrants' experience with State digitalization

Public services specifically oriented to migrants were also gradually digitalized in Chile. For example, the platforms: Digital Procedures (Trámites Digitales) and Foreigners' Portal (Portal de Extranjería), allowed migrants to request visas and residencies on line. From 2019 on, these digital services were expanded and continue to be so, with the implementation of the last Migration and Foreigners Law of 2021. The new platform Foreigners on Line (Extranjería en Línea) required a more extensive digital modernization.

In terms of migrants' access to these technologies, Chile presents very strong contradictions. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the government massively implemented the Unique Key or Clave Única, i.e. a personal digital identity that cannot be transferred and is associated to a number that allowed people's access to various State services to apply remotely to public welfare benefits and subsidies, complete bureaucratic procedures and present claims and demands (Gobierno de Chile, 2017). The mechanism reduces the costs of personalized transactions. However, it has been observed that 46.7% of Chileans, in 2023- most especially, 79% of people over 60 years old - have never used this key and many other, only use it very sporadically (Toro-Madureira et al., 2025).

This Unique Key, processed at the National Civic Registry, has become a universal requisite to operate digitally with the Chilean State. However, for a migrant newcomer to obtain the credential Clave Única, he/she has to have previously obtained approval of the definite Unique National Role (RUN) - i.e. the main identification document for migrants (ID). This generates a 'vicious circle'. One has to be a registered migrant and subscribe to the national systems of

identification to operate digitally. But in order to access many of the regularization procedures, one is required the use of digital platforms that demand this Unique Key – a main bottleneck.

Migrants that face this type of barrier have to pay for digital support at call shops or from informal ‘managers’ – a process sometimes referred to as ‘digital outsourcing’ - raising significantly the cost of their digital operations and exposing them to fraudulent practices. Martínez Quesada & Ochoa Urrego (2024) warn about how the State’s demands for digital literacy, applied in the countries of settlement, can act as an ‘exclusion wall’. This happens when migrants are not officially accompanied to learn how to use complex digital platforms, generating a dependency on informal assistance or that provided by third parties.

Language differences are also another frequent obstacle for migrants’ access to State digitalization, a form of digital opacity that hinders most especially some nationalities – such as, Haitians- and also interferers with the digital ability of older people. Platforms are usually designed only in the Spanish and, moreover, migrants tend to lack knowledge about the legal and administrative Chilean codes.

Digital transition for migrants has not necessarily become the end of regularization delays, but they have meant a change ‘from physical collapse to digital collapse’ – a saturation of processes and virtual queues within public agencies (Bailur et al., 2023). Physical exclusion can become algorithmic and institutional exclusion with bureaucrats displaced by virtual centralized digital windows. This process can further limit the exercise of migrants’ human rights. Massive delays in processing temporal or definitive residencies in the National Service for Migrations’ platforms (SERMIG) generate periods when certificates undergo long ‘approval processes’ that can extend for months and/or years. The lack of interoperability with other institutions such as, the Civic Registry, the banking system, as well as, lacunae in obtaining Clave Única, aggravate the situation. Migrants are left in an administrative limbo which hinders their access to formal labour markets, permanent contracts, the opening of bank accounts, health-care access, registration for educational programmes and certain welfare benefits. This situation turns to be the opposite to that quick socioeconomic integration that the Chilean State claims digitalization brings about.

Other authors, like Brower-Beltramin & Contreras-Candía (2025), analyse how the digitalization of migration processes becomes a technocratic mechanism of control, vigilance and strict State regulation of the status of foreigners, automating their public access and issuing sanctions. In a similar direction, the Jesuit Service for Migrants (SJM), a prominent pro-migrant organization of the Catholic Church, denounced how the digitalization of migration policy is framed in logics of frontier control and strict regularization. In their Annual Statistical Reports on Migration, such as, the Anuario 2020: Medidas migratorias, vulnerabilidad y oportunidades, their Observatory and their support network MigrApp, the SJM discusses how digitalization’s operational and managerial costs are largely borne by the migrant him or herself, generating indirect exclusions for those migrants that lack digital literacy or a stable connectivity.

Infomigra (2021), an independent channel that orients migrants, for example, addresses an emblematic case that describes the problems that have had to be solved when administration at the provincial level became centralized. It studied the tensions generated during the transition

towards digitalization within the Department of Foreigners and Migration (DEM), when it became SERMIG. It applied a survey to migrants in three languages (Spanish, Creole and Portuguese) to evaluate their perceptions on the use of personal data, the dependence upon ClaveÚnica, the long periods of digital processing, under review or pending documents, virtual queues and the barriers to institutional interoperability. It measured the impact upon the lives of migrants brought about by digital gaps, technical faults and the collapse of systems – widespread errors in the initial period of digital implementation. It also addressed the lack of transparency and traceability of documents. All of these inefficiencies generated a strong psychosocial impact among migrants, increasing their vulnerability, stress and anxiety. The report makes several recommendations to State authorities, among them, to follow up those migrants who face technological barriers and to improve the security and privacy of the extremely sensitive data they have to digitalize.

3.3 The case of female migrant digital entrepreneurs in Chile

Female migrants confront many more obstacles than male migrants in most of their socioeconomic initiatives, given the inequality embedded in engendered social relationships, how they are manifested in the specific country of settlement and also, according to the cultural patterns embedded in the nationality of each type of migrant population. [See, Acero (2025) for differences on patriarchal mandates between Haitian women migrants' behaviour in Brazil and Chile]. Gendered practices are also the case in relation to health-care access, digital literacy and regular access to connectivity.

Given their multilevel difficulty in accessing the formal labour market and even the informal market – due to their double and/or triple roles as household workers, carers of children and the old and sometimes secondary income providers - migrant women in Chile often resort to train as and become digital entrepreneurs This behaviour is also influenced by their desire or mandate to combine domestic work with income generation.

The Chilean State digitalization's onset was largely related to the CODVID-19 pandemic, when women's health and economic resources were the most affected. Ramirez Gonzalez (2024) have qualitatively analysed trends in the development of migrant women's digital entrepreneurship within the program: "Digital Transformation of Businesses," led by Migrant Woman Entrepreneur: Collaborative Growth Community in Chile (MWECGC). The program was created by private firms and civic society organizations to improve the commercial and digital strategies of migrant women with the use of social networks. The participants were first trained in digital abilities to overcome the technological gap between genders and female underutilization of digital devises (Komarraju, et al., 2021).

For migrant women, entrepreneurship represented a high-risk decision during a delicate moment involving health uncertainty and recent migration. Ramirez Gonzalez (2024) shows how the success of migrant women entrepreneurs was not solely based on individual resources, such as human and social capital, but also on their ability to navigate and negotiate within institutional systems and markets often biased by ethnicity and gender. The author's study also questions the role of digital technology, considering how social practices can generate both continuities and discontinuities compared to their analogue versions. At key identified tipping points, that connect structural changes with personal and professional development, these

women acted as both sellers and customers. The data they generated through sales processes was used to profile and enrich platform databases. This case study analyses how these migrant women entrepreneurs manage and digitalize their businesses and explores the many tensions and strategies that arise from the relationship between their migratory condition, labour, educational, family, and technological trajectories with their business practices. The author highlights both the barriers faced by these women and the strategies developed to overcome those challenges.

That study's findings show that the pandemic acted as a macro structural turning point, creating new business opportunities for some entrepreneurs, while others with more consolidated trajectories used digitalization to strengthen their projects. This emphasizes the potential of technology to create new opportunities, even in challenging times. However, the study also identifies significant barriers, such as the need to balance work and family domains. In this context, the female entrepreneurs' previous educational and labour trajectories played a crucial role in their success in adapting to the digital environment. In contrast, some other academics have concluded that the program favoured labour informality, that mainly tends to affect undocumented female migrants, and that it limited women's integration with Chileans (Peticca-Harris et al., 2020; Komito, 2011).

A case-study by Ramirez & Soto (2025) on female migrants in Chile from different nationalities holding temporary visas, with an average of 39 years old and middle or high educational levels, showed that: (a) half of them had taken specialization courses on business digitalization previously, either in their country of origin or in Chile; (b) that they combined social networks with the use of e-commerce platforms; (c) that they offered products and services; and (d) that the products were commercialized through : WhatsApp Business, Marketplace of Facebook, Instagram, Yapo and Mercado Livre.

Those authors conclude, similarly to other academics, that the use of digital platforms does not necessarily lead to an economic autonomy of the entrepreneurs nor to the democratization of social relationships. Both these aspects are mediated by racialized labour segregation by gender, increase the integration of women into the informal labour market and that they tend to exploit female sexualisation or maltreatment. The integration of technological knowledge can sometimes be considered as influencing the development of a positive self-perception among women. However, digital platforms can also reproduce and even intensify gender inequalities. (Grau-Sarabia & Fuster-Morell, 2021).

Another set of prominent studies, backed by the Fulbright research programme on female migrants in Chile, closely examined personal narratives regarding smartphone usage, Wi-Fi connectivity, and how migrant women manipulate digital visibility to maintain co-presence with families back home. For example, a case study was developed focusing on the population served through MigrApp, a platform operated since 2018 by the Jesuit Migrant Service (SJM), and designed to provide information, guidance, and support to migrants. In one of the dimensions of the study, participants' experience of receiving support through MigrApp was addressed. It examined the conditions participants considered necessary to receive support, their preferred support formats, the barriers encountered in accessing psychosocial support, the level of recollection of the support they had received, the reasons for seeking support, the

follow-up on the guidance provided, and their perception of the usefulness of both the information provided and the interaction itself.

The study's results indicate that migrant women's perception of the effectiveness of the intervention is inversely correlated to their reported psychosocial distress. Timely and linguistically adapted information is considered a fundamental human right that can be promoted through digital interventions, thereby promoting well-being and social inclusion. (Grau et al., 2026).

4.0 DISCUSSION

4.1 Selective comparisons with the Brazilian case

A number of parallels can be drawn between the experiences of State digitalization in Chile and Brazil. In both countries, they have been recently implemented, have expanded rapidly, to a certain extent accompanying global processes, and those processes have earned recognition from international organizations such as, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank.

The Federal Law nº 14.129/02/2021 — Digital Government Law- is the core framework for the digitalization of the Brazilian public administration. Its key provisions include: digital delivery and access to public services; interoperability among government data-bases; the use of digital identification and electronic signatures, and the right to in-person services when digital access is problematic. This Law establishes principles, norms and instruments for Digital Government, and for the increase of public efficiency (Acero, 2026).

Chile centralized citizens' digital procedures through the use of the Unique Key (Clave Única), a digital identity tool, issued, validated and managed by the Civic Registry. Meanwhile, Brazil instituted the centralized platform Gov.br and modernized, among other agencies, the Federal Police and the Ministry of Labour platforms. Unfortunately, ClaveÚnica in Chile functions as a primary digital gateway to the State in a way that mirrors the exclusionary mechanisms of Brazil's Gov.br. While both platforms are publicly framed as key to administrative modernization, transparency, and efficiency, they frequently act as digital bottlenecks that structurally marginalize migrant populations—particularly those who are newly arrived or undocumented. Both countries have also digitalized social assistance registration directed to marginalized populations through CadÚnico in Brazil and at the Social Registry of Households (RSH) in Chile - key programmes for migrant subsistence or else, used as a way to complement household earnings.

In both cases, digitalization radically transformed migration governance and the access of migrants/refugees to rights and public services. This allowed for multiple institutional changes. For example, in Brazil data was centralized through the Platform SisMigra (the National Registry System of Migrants of the Federal Police) and the e-Sisref (Registry System of the National Committee for Refugees - CONARE). In Chile, migrant registration transformed the Department of Foreigners and Migration (DEM) into a new digitalized agency, the National Service of Migration (SERMIG) and designed other specific digital platforms for migrant registration already commented upon. Also, in both cases, critiques of State digitalization focus heavily on the structural inequalities that deeply affect the population as a whole, though

principally migrants as an already vulnerable social sector, the digital divide, and the exclusion of digitally marginalized populations.

There are a few aspects in which critical perspectives on these issues in these two countries differ or present nuances. Next, some of the main ones will be selectively discussed.

- In Brazil, the risks of surveillance and data privacy concerns within centralized personal databases (such as the National Civil Identification/ICN), algorithmic bias, fragmentation and lack of coordination across federal, state, and municipal levels, data architectural risks, the erosion of labour rights among public servants and that of migrants' human rights appear to deserve greater attention than in the case of Chile (e.g. Bioni et al., 2022). Moreover, prominent institutions, like the Institute of Economic Applied Research (IPEA), centre their research on issues around how service availability obscures real institutional limitations (Direito et al., 2023).
- Concerns and controversy regarding centralized personal data mega-bases is very high in Brazil. The main aspect debated is how to establish the adequate mechanisms to ensure data protection compliance and safeguard vulnerable populations, like migrants, from diminishing or being dispossessed of their human rights (de Aguiar Borges, 2023)
- Instead, one of the central topics discussed in Chile is that of the disparities in public personnel digital capacities, training upgrading and continuous learning between agents located at municipalities and those in charge of centralized digitalization, an issue which also severely affects the ways those agents deal with migrants. There is a systematic demand for the development of administrative literacy, based upon the work of international authors such as Safarov (2021). Also, the need of government programs to provide personalized support to migrants towards digital literacy development is an ongoing demand (e.g. SJM, 2020). Moreover, chronic gaps between legal mandates and the practical, ground-level capacity of local and regional public services to execute them are at the forefront of social debates (Infomigra, 2021).
- Chile's digitalization process has been criticized for its disperse governance structures, scarce oversight, overlapping institutional responsibilities, and a lack of a single authoritative entity to supervise digital adoption across all autonomous public bodies (Ponce de León Solís, 2026). This often affects/excludes migrants and leaves them without adequate information on their potential options to access adequate digital platforms.
- In terms of migrants' micro-level narratives on their experiences of and adaptation to digitalization, a larger number of empirical- often qualitative- studies have been found in Chile than in Brazil (e.g. Doña-Reveco & Pavicevic, 2021). However, few of them have adopted an intersectional approach, except in the case of gender. In contrast, Brazil's literature addresses mainly macro-level administrative digitalization, public registries (such as CadÚnico), and large-scale humanitarian logistics such as the one developed during the Welcome Operation for Venezuelans in the Northern States – a Federal Government and military joint strategic policy for the settlement of this massive migration.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

The dynamic capacities of both the Chilean and Brazilian State to design a coherent policy on administrative digitalization have been shown to be scanty and fragmented, most especially, among those policies oriented to migrants. Lack of coordination between agencies and

government levels, weak leadership among State agencies, as well as, of a solid anticipation and preparation strategy of these countries' societies have been lacking. State digitalization, as a major social transformation, requires strong social legitimation. This has been absent, most especially in the Chilean case. Also, bureaucracies were not systematically trained in operational abilities to face adequately the digitalization of processes in either country. More so, in countries with such a high influx of South- to-South migrants, these have been largely left on their own to find their way to relate to the use and application of digital tools. There are always exceptions to this hegemonic trend. For example, there exist small and disperse local endeavours oriented to migrants' digital literacy training and more systematic capacity-building programmes developed by international organizations with the crucial support provided by pro-migrant NGOs and migrant collectives.

The opportunity to relate to digitalization and migration as a 'mission –oriented' policy. and implement it with all the characteristics discussed at the beginning of this text, has been literally wasted. Going back to our initial questions, dynamic State capacities have been largely deficient in Chile and the lives of migrants settled in that host society have become somewhat more cumbersome regarding many aspects of digital platformization, e.g. regularization processes. Digital inequalities have increased and made more visible, a process that has led towards the social exclusion of substantive sectors within different nationalities of migrants. However, digital platforms have also facilitated migrants' regular transnational communications with their countries of origin.

Both countries seem to be more prone to have had an experience of convergent rather than divergent impacts within platform capitalism. However, the degrees and subtleties between them vary. While in the case of Brazil structural racism is hardly analysed as part of intersectionality, in Chile approaches to gender and digitalization abound, especially in the format of qualitative case-studies of selected experiences and practices. Also, the Chilean case gives us a better perspective on what the migrants' narratives on State digitalization are like than the research performed in Brazil.

Towards the near future, an aspect that merits being quickly tackled is that of the establishment of more sophisticated methods for the privacy and security of the large volumes of data generated by digitalization processes, most especially, that provided by more vulnerable populations as those of migrants. This issue is far from being characterized as a major problem in Chile and relatively unresolved in Brazil, even among United Nations' international organizations active in this country (Santos, 2023).

6.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Foundation for Research Support from the State of Rio de Janeiro (FAPERJ) is thanked for the funded granted for this study as Post-Doctoral Senior Fellow based at the Postdoctoral Programme of Public Policies, Strategy and Development (PPED) at the Institute of Economics (IE) of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), Brazil.

REFERENCES

1. Abdou, A. M. (2021). Good Governance and COVID-19: The Digital Bureaucracy to Response the Pandemic (Singapore as a Model). *Journal of Public Affairs* 21, no. 4: e2656. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.2656>
2. Acero, L. (2025). A case-study of Haitian migration, 2010-2025: Selective comparison of trends and governance between Brazil and Chile. *International Journal of Development Research, (IJDR)* v. 15, n. 06, p. 68612-68620. <https://doi.org/10.37118/ijdr.xxxxx.xx.2025>
3. Acero, L. (2026) STATE DIGITALIZATION AND PLATFORM WORK AMONG MIGRANTS IN BRAZIL: OPPORTUNITIES OR TRAPS? *International Journal of Social Science and Management Review (IJSSMR)*. v. 09, n. 04 p. 2024- 220. <https://doi.org/10.37602/IJSSMR.2026.9414>
4. Amuch (2022). Programa nacional de impulso a la transformación digital a nivel local. Santiago de Chile. Disponível em: <https://www.tdmunicipal.cl/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Libro-Programa-Transformacion-Digital-AMUCHversion-digital-11F.pdf> Acesso em 15 out.2025
5. Bailur, S. et al.(2023). Migrants, identification, and services in Chile, Ecuador, and Peru: Experiences and stories. Report.p.1-85. Washington: Interamerican Debelopment Bank (IDB)
6. Bioni, B., (2022). The digitization of the Brazilian national identity system: A descriptive and qualitative analysis of its information architecture. *Data & Policy*, 4, e22. <https://doi.org/10.1017/dap.2022.14>
7. Brower-Beltramin,J. & Contreras-Candía,L.(2025) La nueva Ley de Migración para Chile: un dispositivo de saber/poder jurídico controlador y sancionador. *Revista Gestión de las Personas y Tecnología*, 18(52), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.35588/mpdbe793>
8. de Aguiar Borges, G. O. (2023). Navigating Human Rights in the Digital Age: An Exploration of Data Protection Laws in Brazil and in Europe. *Beijing Law Review*, 14, 1772-1789. <https://doi.org/10.4236/blr.2023.144098>
9. Direito, D. et al. (2023). (Des) Mobilização de capacidades na instrumentação de políticas: o caso do Cadastro Único para Programas Sociais. Rio de Janeiro: IPEA,
10. Gobierno de Chile (2017) “¿Qué es la Clave Única y para qué sirve? - Gob.cl.” Gobierno De Chile. Available at: <https://www.gob.cl/noticias/que-es-la-clave-unica-y-para-que-sirve/> Access in July 3 , 2026.
11. Domenech, E. (2018). Gobernabilidad migratoria: producción y circulación de una categoría de intervención política. *Temas de Antropología y Migración*,10, 83- 128.
12. Doña-Reveco, C., & Pavicevic, Y. (2021). Virtual Communities of Anglo and Spanish Migrants in Chile. A Multiple Case Study. *SocArXiv Papers*. <https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/f52qu>.
13. Garda, P. (2021). Making digital transformation work for all in Chile. *OECD Economics Department Working Papers* 1684, p.1-66. <https://dxdoi.org/10.1787/6b1a524c-en>
14. Gillespie, T. (2018) A relevância dos algoritmos. *Parágrafo*, v. 6, n. 1, p. 95-121. Available at: https://revistaseletronicas.fiamfaam.br/index.php/recicofi/pt_BR/article/view/722. Access in: June 14, 2026.
15. Grau-Sarbia, M.& Fuster- Morell, M. (2021). Gender approaches in the study of the digital economy: A systematic literature review. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 8(201), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-021-00875-x>

16. Grau, M. et al. (2026). Promoting inclusion through information: a study on the well-being of migrant women using a mobile application in Chile. *Frontiers in Human Dynamics*, 8, 1830327. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fhumd.2026.183032>
17. Grohmann, R. (2020). Plataformização do trabalho: entre dataficação, financeirização e racionalidade neoliberal. *Revista Eletrônica Internacional de Economia Política da Informação da Comunicação e da Cultura*, 22(1), 106-122.
18. Hernandez Domínguez, J. (2024) Transformación digital del Estado en Chile: implicancias y desafíos para el capital humano de municipalidades de la Región Metropolitana, *Revista Enfoques: Ciencia Política y Administración Pública*, v. 22, n°. 41, p. 87-105 <https://doi.org/10.60728/0f99k039>
19. Infomigra (2021) Soy migrante y mi información está en tus manos: La transformación digital de los procesos migratorios en Chile, Santiago de Chile: Centro de Estudios y Documentación de Migraciones en Chile. Kattel, R.& Mazzucato M. (2018) Mission-oriented innovation policy and dynamic capabilities in the public sector. *Industrial and Corporate Change*, v. 27, n. 5, pp. 787–801.
20. Komarraju, S., et al. (2021). Agency and servitude in platform: A feminist analysis of blended cultures. *Media, Culture & Society*, 44(4), 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437211029890>
21. Komito, L. (2011). Social media and migration: Virtual community 2.0. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 62(6), 1075-1086. <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.21517>
22. Martínez Quesada, C.& Ochoa Urrego. L. (2024) El impacto de la transformación digital en las personas migrantes y sus comunidades, Santiago de Chile: Le Monde Diplomatique. September 24.
23. Mendoza, F.& Delgado, J.M. (2022) Tecnologías de Información Del Gobierno Digital: Acceso a Internet y Barrera Digital Caso Loreto 2021. *Ciencia Latina Revista Científica Multidisciplinar* 6, n. 4 p. 4. https://doi.org/10.37811/cl_rcm.v6i4.2586
24. Murdock, G. (2018) Media Materialities: for a moral economy of machines. *Journal of Communication*, v. 68, n. 2, p. 359-368.
25. Ramirez, M. & Soto, J. (2025) La digitalización de emprendimientos de inmigrantes latinoamericanas en Chile (2020-2022) *Apuntes* 99, 43-71 <https://doi.org/10.21678/apuntes.99.2215>
26. Peticca-Harris, A. et al. (2020). Postcapitalist precarious work and those in the «drivers» seat: Exploring the motivations and lived experiences of Uber drivers in Canada. *Organization*, 27(1), 36-59. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508418757332>
27. Ponce de León Solís, V. (2026). Algorithmic Centralism in a Fragmented Welfare State: Institutional Logics and Legal Paradoxes in the Chilean Case. *Social Policy & Administration*. 0::110 <https://doi.org/10.1111/spol.70090>
28. Ragulina, J. V., et al., (2021). Adaptation to the Risks of Digitalization: New Survival Trends for States in a Multipolar World. *Risks (Basel)* 9, n. 12: 1–21.; <https://doi.org/10.3390/risks9120218>
29. Safarov, N. (2021). Personal experiences of digital public services access and use: Older migrants' digital choices. *Technology in Society*, 66. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2021.101627>
30. Santos, G. (2023) Redes de organização da migração no Brasil O papel da OIM e a produção do conhecimento sobre a população migrante *Revista Tramas y Redes* (5)

- Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales – CLACSO, pp. 191-205
<https://doi.org/10.54871/cl4c500r>
31. Sepúlveda, N. (2017). Gobierno electrónico municipal chileno: análisis logístico de la brecha de acceso. Tesis para optar al grado de magíster en Gestión y Políticas Públicas de la Universidad de Chile. Santiago de Chile. Available at: <https://repositorio.uchile.cl/handle/2250/148406>. Accessed: Nov. 10, 2025.
 32. SJM (2020) Anuario 2020: Medidas migratorias, vulnerabilidad y oportunidades Anuario Estadístico de Movilidad Humana en Chile, Santiago de Chile. Available at: <https://sjmchile.org/incidencia-y-estudios/anuarios/> Access June 12 , 2026
 33. Srnicek, N. (2017). Platform Capitalism. Cambridge: Polity Press.
 34. Touro-Maureira et al., (2025) The Missing Link: Identifying Digital Intermediaries in E-Government. Under review <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.70033>