

## **2030 Agenda and Implementation of the Migration Goal: A Critical and Comparative Analysis (Paraguay and Argentina, 2018-2023)**

### **Agenda 2030 e implementación de la meta sobre migración: un análisis crítico comparativo (Paraguay y Argentina, 2018-2023)**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

This article analyzes the implementation of Goal 10.7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, aimed at safe, orderly and regular migration, in two national scenarios: Paraguay and Argentina. The comparative analysis will allow to recognize similarities and differences of consideration of Goal 10.7 in the set of actions to comply with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 10, when it was addressed. Likewise, it weighs to what extent the reference to the 2030 Agenda in government efforts is specifically associated with practices and lines of action created specifically to activate this tool. Finally, it presents a reflection regarding the insertion and indicators of Goal 10.7 in relation to its specific scope and its possibility of being visible as a particular purpose without overlapping with other SDGs and their goals.

*Keywords:* 1. human rights, 2. government, 3. international migration, 4. social welfare, 5. migration policy.

#### **RESUMEN**

Este artículo analiza la implementación de la meta 10.7 de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible, orientada a la migración segura, ordenada y regular, en dos escenarios nacionales: Paraguay y Argentina. El análisis comparativo permitirá reconocer similitudes y diferencias de consideración de la meta 10.7 en el conjunto de acciones de cumplimiento del Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) 10, cuando este fue abordado. Asimismo, sopesa en qué medida la referencia a la Agenda 2030 en las gestiones gubernamentales se asocia de manera concreta con prácticas y líneas de acción creadas específicamente para activar esta herramienta. Por último, presenta una reflexión respecto a la inserción e indicadores de la meta 10.7 en relación con su alcance específico y su posibilidad de visibilizarse como un propósito particular sin que se superponga con otros ODS y sus metas.

*Palabras clave:* 1. derechos humanos, 2. gobierno, 3. migración internacional, 4. bienestar social, 5. política migratoria.

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## INTRODUCTION

In this work, a critical description of the institutionalization mode of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Paraguay and Argentina is made, through the observation of the state structure that allowed the insertion of the aforementioned tool in the management agenda, as well as its functioning in relation with the planification and monitoring of its actions. Therefore, the objective is to problematize the management of Goal 10.7 for a safe, orderly, and regular migration, considering the recorded progress by both countries in reports and strategic plans from 2018 to 2022. This work considers records that end in 2023, since there was not new specific documentary production of monitoring in that period and a change in the presidential term in Argentina at that time postponed the approach of this international tool. Firstly, the foregoing became evident through public declarations of the president, Javier Milei. Secondly, thanks to the deactivation of the web page that compiled progress reports and updates and, finally, due to the disappearance of the organization that included in its action lines the implementation and monitoring of the Agenda.

The specific question that arises is whether, beyond the formal incorporation of the 2030 Agenda in the state discourse and practice, the specific components linked to the management of a safe, orderly, and regular migration, implied structural changes in the formulation and implementation that may be related to the inclusion (or lack thereof) of human rights approach elements, as well as lexicon, and the content of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with regard to migratory regularization and migrants' access to human rights. The broader question delves into the SDG 10 challenge of becoming a specific and clear objective in the Agenda—not overlapping with other SDGs which are, indeed, more focused and that also include it—and which are the barriers affecting the 10.7 Goal to become a source of migration management.

### SAFE, ORDERLY, AND REGULAR MIGRATION AS THE MAXIMUM ACCEPTABLE CHALLENGE

In the recent period, the need to develop global and regional consensus that contribute to reduce the number of lives lost and severely affected by restrictive measures against migration resulted in the consolidation of a state of discursive hegemony over what was the maximum acceptable limit to understand the protection of migrants, including by states whose perspective about this mobility phenomenon does not focus on rights.

The perspective that was taking hold in the international community was the safe, orderly, and regular migration, a discursive fetish (Angenot, 2010) present in frameworks, protection systems documents, and declarations of international cooperation entities. The 2030 Agenda and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (hereafter, GCM 2018) use this formulation trying to recommend, promote initiatives and actions for the development of this specification, which defines a flexible and heterogenous field of political and institutional decisions, as defined by Mármora (2010):

Migratory governance can be defined as the adjustment between perspectives and social demands about causes, characteristics, and effects of migratory movements; as well as the possibilities and states intent to address those demands within a framework of legitimacy and efficiency (p. 71).

Safe, orderly, and regular migration is linked to another concept of great symbolic value in this sense-making field: the Spanish concept *gobernabilidad migratoria* has its equivalent in English known as *migration management*, which differs from the notion of migration governance; however, both concepts are employed in a similar manner having the aim of establishing a migration global regime with a movability administration approach and the fight against illegality and irregularities in migration, where the management or governance obverse is the “migration crisis” (Domenech, 2018).

### 2030 AGENDA AND MIGRATION GOVERNANCE: ITS CONFLUENCE WITH GOAL 10.7

The Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) paved the way for the creation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, composed of 17 SDGs and 169 Goals (UNGA, 2015a). The SDGs are a set of wide and complex purposes based on the cooperation between actors, government levels, and scopes—national, regional, and international—aimed at addressing structural problems of increasing severity across the world: the aggravation of poverty and inequality, the environmental protection and climate change mitigation, cities’ sustainability practices, health and educational systems strengthening, and other agreements. It also focuses a great part of the activities on subnational levels and intersectoral strategic alliances to increase efficiency and goals achievement.

Considerations about migration are included in SDG 10, which focuses on reducing inequality within and among countries, although it is implicitly and explicitly associated with the rest of SDGs since its basis is multi-dimensional and multi-scale (International Organization for Migration [IOM], 2018) and the inequalities’ interdependence is considered as a part of its basis.

There are still inequalities and wide disparities in the access of health and educational services and other productive assets [...]. In order to reduce inequality, it has been recommended the implementation of universal policies that attend to the needs of marginalized and disadvantaged populations (UNGA, 2015, as cited in Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean [ECLAC], 2018, p. 47).

In the SDG 10, the migratory and migration governance management is specified in Goal 10.7: “facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.” (UNGA, 2015a, p. 24). Each goal has progress indicators or a level of compliance; for example, the indicator of the Goal 10.7 is the 10. 7. 1, which specifies “recruitment cost borne by employee as a proportion of monthly income earned in country of destination.” Furthermore, the indicator 10. 7. 2 that indicates, “number of countries with migration policies that facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people” (UNGA, 2015b, p.12).

The well-managed migration policies had been defined by IOM (2018) as policies involving a heterogeneity of action areas, accompanied by the protection of migrant rights, guarantee of access to rights, and the prevention or reduction of the vulnerabilities arising through the route and the migratory project.

The 2030 Agenda coincides with some purposes of the GCM 2018, an agreement and a framework that underlines the states' consensus that are part of the United Nations system with regard to common guidelines promoting safe, orderly, and regular migration, "while addressing risks and challenges that people and communities face in origin, transit, and destination countries" (UNGA, 2018, p. 4).

On the other hand, from the perspective of GCM 2018, promoting a safe, orderly, and regular migration also provides benefits to all the parties involved: nation states, international community, migrants, organizations, etc. The aforementioned is a result of when "it is based on good information, planning is in place and is also a subject of consensus" (UNGA, 2018, p. 4).

Partial and mid-term balances regarding the 2030 Agenda's implementation agree that advancements made in the framework of this tool had been insufficient in global terms and, as for the Latin American region, these advances have been classified as "lost decades" (Mur, 2024), which was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Among the most affected vulnerable groups, migrants have been subject to the pandemic negative impact since preexisting inequality dynamics were enhanced and, at the same time, severe effects caused by the limitations on access to health systems and protection deficits in specific subgroups, such as migrant children and adolescents were increased (ECLAC, 2021). Many perspectives are focused on a dynamic or actively driven implementation through strategies and alliances based on both local or sub-national level, as well as multi-stakeholders and multilevel approaches (international, national, sub-national). The objective is to overcome the implementation difficulties in national states derived from bureaucratization, as well as the concrete and symbolic remoteness regarding territories that would be subject to transformation through SDGs. The foregoing has been called localization of the SDGs (Ojeda, 2020; Kanuri et al., n.d.).

In the academic research field, the studies of the implementation of Goal 10. 7 in state cases are not frequent. Furthermore, there is a gap between the critical discussion of the goal's development and the global and regional migratory context. In contrast, there is an active knowledge-building by international entities who established definitions, scopes, and provided frameworks for understanding safe, orderly, and regular migration in relation to sustainable development; owing to the fact that sustainable development deficits could increase the flood of migrants when living conditions become inadequate or there is a possibility to migrate to another place with better opportunities (IOM, 2017) since the efficient development or its slowdown in contexts related to transit, and/or destination for migrants act—for such explanations—as means of push and pull factors of migration.

## THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA IN PARAGUAY AND ARGENTINA

In Argentina, the 2030 Agenda implementation was in charge of the National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies (CNCPS by its Spanish acronym). The CNCPS was framed within Argentina's Ministry of Social Development until December 2023. This Ministry was replaced by the Ministry of Human Capital, which covers various areas related to social rights. At that time, the Ministry of Social Development had the mission to articulate areas of operation and agendas, as well as state apparatus related to formulation and implementation of social policies with the aim of guaranteeing resource use efficiency and avoiding overlaps. In addition, its responsibilities extend to the monitoring of national and local progress of the 2030 Agenda.

The implementation of the 2030 Agenda was suspended by decision of the current president Javier Milei at the moment of his assumption. The President described it as “a 2030 socialist agenda that will only bring misery to the world” (Gardel, 2024). Prior to the president election victory, he stated that if he managed to become President, he would withdraw the 2030 Agenda's authorization because it was considered a sample of “cultural Marxism and decadence” (Gardel, 2024) and his statement at the United Nations Assembly in September 2024 reaffirmed his position.

In Paraguay, the 2030 Agenda's implementation was linked with Paraguay 2030 National Development Plan, which began to associate its implementation with SDGs objectives in 2016. For this purpose, Paraguay set up the Paraguay SDG Commission on September 6, 2016, through the Decree No. 5888. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE by its Spanish acronym) is the coordinator of the commission and was composed of four institutions at the time of its creation. However, through the Decree No. 3581, more institutions joined the Commission in 2020, reaching the current number of 17 participating state agencies.<sup>2</sup> Its management structure is composed by a High Level Directive Council, which is represented by the member organizations of which few members form the Management Operations Unit (*Unidad Operativa de Gestión*), which is an entity in charge of coordinate and manage activities and strategies of the commission. This entity is divided into four pillars, each overseen by a state agency: 1) Multisectoral Thematic Committee (Ministry of Foreign Affairs); 2) Strategic Planification and Coordination Committee (*Comité de Coordinación y Planificación Estratégica*); 3) Committee for the Localization of the SDGs (Technical Secretariat for Social and Economic Development Planning), and 4) Technical Committee for Statistical Monitoring (National Statistics Institute [INE]).

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<sup>2</sup> Decree No. 3581 establishes that the Directive Council will decide which are the priority SDGs for Paraguay, in relation to the 2030 National Development Plan. The Management Operations Unit (*Unidad Operativa de Gestión*) is under the supervision of the Directive Council and its members must be high-ranking officials (directorate or similar) and they have the mission to elaborate the annual Management Plan, create monitoring indicators of the SDG implementation and evaluate its implementation in the country.

On the other hand, it is important to mention that each country's governmental structure also reflects different implementation approaches. For instance, Argentina has a federalist system of government and Paraguay has a centralist system of government. The aforementioned has an impact on the set of institutional structures for the Agenda's implementation and on the autonomy of subnational levels to carry it out. Therefore, in the Argentine case, the innovative fact was the observation of the implementation in local contexts, where the strategic interest for municipal administrations was noted. However, in the Paraguayan case, the normative and institutional framework was more meticulous in terms of organizational structure and implementing procedures.

The following problematizes the implementation's content in both countries, considering the objectives established and the degree of attention to the Goal 10.7 by each state. Through documentary analysis, a critical reading of the visibility and importance that Goal 10.7 had in each case is made with the objective of observing transformative or intensifying elements of the state-level approach about the migratory management in relation with the 2030 Agenda incorporating.

#### MANAGEMENT OF THE SDG 10 AND GOAL 10.7 IN EACH NATIONAL CASE

The monitoring and analysis of the planification of Goal 10.7 in Paraguay and Argentina was made through official documents that reported the objectives fulfillment to the international community: the *Informes País* and *Voluntary National Reviews* (VNR).

Paraguay has two VNR, one published in 2018 and the other in 2021. Argentina has a report called *Informe País* (2021) and three VNRs (2017, 2020, 2022). This information is meaningful due to the fact that a broader institutionalization or integration into the state structure does not necessarily imply a greater generation of relevant data or information to make an assessment. Therefore, questions are raised about the institutionalization and bureaucratization of an implementation process to identify a balance that allows achieving an efficient and strategic structure to deliver results.

#### *Argentina*

Table 1 below synthesizes established priorities in the SDG 10 regarding inequalities reduction at each reported moment. Since in several occasions Goal 10.7 does not appear, it was necessary to indicate what was prioritized from the SDG in general, simultaneously with omitting information regarding the referred goal.

*Table 1. Argentina: Implementation Progress of the SDG  
Focused on the Goal 10 (2017 - 2022)*

Document	SDG 10: prioritized objectives
First Voluntary National Review (July 2017)	Goals 10.1 and 10.4, associated with the increment and equality in the income distribution. Goal 10.3 associated with the percentage of discriminated individuals.*  Goal 10.7 was not addressed.
Second Voluntary National Review (June 2020)	Goals 10.1, 10.3 and 10.4 previously mentioned. Goal 10.2 focused on the promotion of people's inclusion without discrimination is attached  Goal 10.7 was not addressed.
Informe de País 2021	Goals 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, and 10.4 previously mentioned. Goal 10.5 focused on the improvement of regulations and monitoring of global financial markets and Goal 10.7 about the facilitation for a safe, orderly, regular, and responsible migration of people.
Third Voluntary National Review (June 2022)	Goals 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4, and 10.7.

\* This perception of discrimination should be associated with one of the non-discrimination motives stated according to human rights standards; within those lies the national origin.  
*Source:* Own elaboration based on documentary analysis.

The first Voluntary National Review (2017) elaborated during Mauricio Macri's government (2015-2019), was created in the framework of another state structure and a different way of institutionalization. The reported results, as well as the implementation process, were not regulated by the CNCPS because this organization was created during Alberto Fernández's term (2019-2023). Therefore, this report highlights the coinciding management priorities with the general ideals of the said government management. A management more fragmented in relation to social rights protection and with liberal principles (Fischman & Gottero, 2021).

Prior to 2021, the legal structure of Argentine's migratory politics was comprised by the law of migration known as "Ley de Migraciones 25.781" (2003), whose validity in formal terms maintained a tension with Decree 70/2017 (2017). The adoption of the decree was during Mauricio Macri's government, which limited the law's scope and enhanced certain aspects of the lack of legal protection and the access to justice of migrants (Amnistía Internacional, 2017; Carril, 2017). After more than a year of social and organization demands, the Decree was repealed in March 2021 during Alberto Fernández's government.

In connection with the foregoing, it could be observed in Argentina's first VNR in 2017 about 2030 Agenda's implementation that governmental strands of action related to the SDG 10 are focused on macroeconomic stability, human development, and institutional strengthening. For its

part, the government areas associated with these guidelines are verbatim, social protection and entrepreneurship (CNCPS, 2017).

Even though Goal 10.4 transversally includes the situation of migrants who have suffered discrimination, the avoidance of Goal 10.7 implies that a safe, orderly, and regular migration is not addressed as one of the objectives, even when promoting a migratory regularization is an effective strategy to modify patterns of formal and substantive discrimination.

The second VNR (2020) reported the same goals in common with the previous report and an additional goal focused on the inclusion of all people that could find barriers to access, according to the expressed non-discrimination reasons, including national origin. However, the implemented actions related with this Goal are focused on early childhood, families living in vulnerable circumstances and social risk. Even though logically there may be migrants in these groups, neither actions nor representations for this group are specified.

Regarding the fulfilment of Goal 10.4, which is also associated with the deactivation of discrimination practices, among the measures to achieve this are; firstly, a program named Work without Discrimination (*Trabajo sin Discriminación*) which broadly addresses issues related to discrimination at work; secondly, the visibility and development of an agenda against gender-based violence called “agenda de Género” (sic); thirdly, deaf people comprehensive care; fourthly, a prevention program for racism, xenophobia, and discrimination in soccer and, finally, a free sponsorship system to persons who have alleged discrimination to the National Institute Against Discrimination, Xenophobia and Racism (*Instituto Nacional contra la Discriminación, la Xenofobia y el Racismo*) and, if this institution agrees with that allegation. (CNCPS, 2020). Even though migrants are included in the aforementioned two measures as a part of the approach, it does not refer to regularization and management of migration, which is also not specifically included in this report.

Among the presentations of the Voluntary National Review 2020 and the Informe País 2021, the repeal of Decree 70/2017 was made. That act was—probably—delayed due to pandemic’s onset, an event that, however, demonstrated the accentuated vulnerability that migrants suffered on account of isolation measures (Center for Legal and Social Studies [CELS], 2020; Gavazzo & Penchaszadeh, 2020). Decree 70/2017 was repealed in March 2021 based on two fundamental reasons: the contradiction of this regulation regarding the state commitments of human rights and the disproportionate growth of the number of procedures originated by infringements created by the decree, which was so-called “litigiousness in immigration matters” by the derogation Decree 138/21 (Gottero, 2022a).

In this context, the report that includes for the first time Goal 10.7 is the report Informe de País 2021 about the level of fulfillment of 2030 Agenda, establishing the ministry called *Ministerio del Interior* as the organization responsible. Among the actions reported about this goal, the said report lists the following:

1. Remote Registration of Foreigners (Radicación a Distancia de Extranjeros [RADEX, for its acronym in Spanish]).
2. Temporary residence certificate.
3. Territorial approach operations for migratory regularization.
4. Exemption from the residency fee for people in vulnerable situations.
5. Creation of the Early Human Trafficking Detection Area (*Área de Detección Temprana de Trata y Tráfico de Personas*) and the Migration Policies with a Gender Perspective Implementation Area (*Área de Implementación de Políticas Migratorias con Perspectivas de Género*), which are implemented in the regulatory authority Dirección Nacional de Migraciones (DNM, for its acronym in Spanish).
6. Protocols about health protection procedures to DNM employees in airports and border crossings (CNCPS, 2021).

In the previous points, it is observed a particular structure in this type of reports that have already been identified in other cases (Gottero, 2023); actions and operations that have not been addressed by the logic of the measurement tool or the standard, although they are useful to complete or illustrate the highest number of actions associated with the international commitment implementation.

These milestones and informed advances are, occasionally, prior to the agreement that gives rise to the report and, if these advances are reported during the period of its effectiveness, they are not formulated with the envisaged approach by the said tool. This type of state information includes some kind of actions accreditation similar to tagging. Therefore, results or, prior or heterogeneous practices of what is being monitored are immediately considered as evidence of implementation, without taking into account if the elaboration or development of this action line considers the envisaged expectations and approach of the tool, agreement, or framework that imparts sense to the report.

The intention is to reflect a formal incorporation of the commitments made but this does not necessarily enable examination of reported content or state practice modalities.

Another example of the foregoing is the reported advance in the VNR (2022) about the acquisition of a digital precarious residence (*residencia precaria*), as a part of residence's automatic renovations that have been fixed by decree during the pandemic. The measure was adopted as a result of the COVID-19 health emergency and was not considered for the SDGs implementation. Moreover, the regular access to the residence "precarious residence" caused a suspension of access to permanent residence which, at the same time, conditioned the social security benefits acquisition and, to properly acquire these benefits, it is imperative to have certain years of that migratory status in the country (Jaramillo & Gottero, 2023). Therefore, although that measure sustained the migratory regulation of migrants, it generated other adverse effects on the access to rights that should be contemplated in relation to the idea of a dignified migration.

In the third Voluntary National Review of the 2030 Agenda implementation (2022), it is shown that Argentina has considered the vulnerable position as a cross-cutting issue because of multiple factors:

Argentina included in its monitoring framework 34 of the 42 international goals, which is the 74%, that specifically include cross-cutting issues related to groups in vulnerable positions in its formulation. Some factors named in the international proposal are disability, indigenous origin, age, migratory status, gender, income, geographical level, origin, sex, race, and marginality (CNCPS, 2022, p. 28).

Thus, while the comprehensive compliance of the 2030 Agenda is a management purpose, the migrant's protection is formally considered for the first time as a main pillar of the approach. Simultaneously, the document highlights the heterogeneity of the associated actions with the implementation of Goal 1.7, those who have different producing compositions.

On the one hand, the characteristic state tasks of the DNM are highlighted: “the *Dirección Nacional de Migraciones* facilitates migration regulation access to foreign people that want to be Argentine residents, through the resolution of their residency applications by agencies nationwide” (CNCPS, 2022, p. 234). The aforementioned description is not a monitoring progress of Goal 10.7 but description of the scope of action of this institution. On the other hand, the measures created in the emergency framework of COVID-19 are referred to—such as the digital residence precarious residence already mentioned in the last report.

Finally, some specific actions of this period connected to Goal 10.7 are the granting of a humanitarian visa and residence to Ukrainians—in relation to the displacement originated by the war between the Ukraine-Russia war—and for Mexican, Central American, and Caribbean residents who migrate for humanitarian grounds due to environmental issues. All these initiatives are associated with migrant regulation, but it should be stated that these measures are based in an emergency situation and are focused on certain groups; therefore, the actions implemented lost the structural and general characteristic of the Agenda's purpose.

In this sense and, as much for the aforementioned section as for the following section, it is important to state that the Implementation Guide for the SDGs in the national frameworks elaborated by United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) in 2020, does not indicate that each country must select its priority SDGs based on its perspective or development plan. On the contrary, the concerns and methods provided to develop and evaluate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in each state government policies tend to focus on the inclusive and equal integration of the 17 SDGs and never establish a principle of selection. In fact, it is stated that “an integrated implementation of 2030 Agenda means that existing interconnections among the SDGs must be assessed, as synergies and exchanges or conflicts.” (DESA, 2020, p. 27).

Furthermore, the questions list orientated to achieve this purpose establish that it is important to identify negative obstacles for the integration of the 17 SDGs and assess how it is guaranteed that all government levels work together to integrate them (DESA, 2020). The aforementioned

implies that prioritization is not indicated by the implementation guide—on the contrary, a specific structure is established since the beginning of the action lines— and, furthermore, the carried-out selections in the analyzed cases do not result in a progressive or equal incorporation of Goals in its entirety.

### *Paraguay*

As was done in the Argentine case, the following Table 2 is a summary of the progress of the 2030 Agenda in documents that were published in Paraguay since 2018. Since the absence of Goal 10.7 is further investigated than its presence— a fact in this investigation that is also repeated in this national case— the reference to each document implies that SDG 10 is addressed, even if the migration regularization is not specifically the purpose.

*Table 2. Paraguay Implementation Progress of the SDG  
Focused on the Goal 10 (2017-2022)*

Document	SDG 10: prioritized objectives
Voluntary National Review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Implementation 2018	The equality of opportunity regardless of the place of birth is referred as one of the strategic pillars
Second Voluntary National Review 2021	SDG 10's slow progress with the lowest percentage of progress in all the SDGs fulfillment. Goal 10.7 is associated with regulations of 2015 and 2018 that are not directly related to 2030 Agenda's implementation
The Agenda's support program "Programa Apoyo a la Agenda 2030 en Paraguay"	The SDGs 5, 13, 15, and 17 are prioritized. Despite the promise that all SDGs are considered, there is no mention of other SDGs in the initiative development besides the ones already mentioned

*Source:* Own elaboration based on documentary analysis.

The first published document was the *Voluntary National Review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Implementation 2018*. The structure of the report is organized in accordance with the assumptions and partial results of National Plan for Development Paraguay (NPD) Paraguay 2030. Therefore, in contrast with Argentina, the content reported does not follow the SDGs sequence and goals. However, elements and information related to migration management can be identified or with its pending approach.

Firstly, the VNR mentions cross-cutting action lines of the NPD, which are also the same as those of the implementation of Agenda and, from that perspective, the equality of opportunities is highlighted as a variable, establishing this principle for all people “regardless of their birth status such as “gender, ethnicity, place of birth, and family environment” (Comisión ODS Paraguay 2030, 2018, p.18). While the place of birth may be associated with internal migration and with socioeconomic disparities rooted in geographical discrimination criteria, the aforementioned can serve as an argument that opens dialogue about this migratory issue.

However, it is worth noting that when the cross-cutting line of equality of opportunities is associated with the SDGs, it is not related with SDG 10 on the reduction of inequalities— despite the possibility of a clear and compelling relation— but with SDG 5 of gender equality. The SDG 10 is only addressed concerning the strategic approach of inclusive economic growth (Comisión ODS Paraguay 2030, 2018). In fact, that persists as such in the monitoring distribution put forward by Paraguay SDG Commission 2030, where the SDG 10 is implemented in the framework of the group known as Economic Labor Group (Grupo de Trabajo-Económico), which is led by Ministry of Finance of Paraguay. Additionally, it is estimated that subgroups will be formed to establish a partial monitoring of selected SDGs, in partnership with strategic stakeholders.

The section in the NVR that organizes the feasibility of generating information in a way that allows for reporting on each progress indicator of the 17 SDGs is interesting. The first table indicates the situation related to data indicators for each SDG. Although it is not specified which one has information and which one does not, the first table reflects that, of the total of expected indicators to SDG 10, only four have available processed information to justify its measurement— although it does not specify what indicators are—, while three could be developed with available information but this has not been done yet, and another three would require information that is not currently available to elaborate the indicator and measure the progress.

In a more specific area regarding the available information to collect and implement the Goal 10.7 in the framework of the SDG 10, a second table reports what the segmentation variables to analyze each SDG are. For SDG 10, the line of action concerning geographical, sex, age, income, and “other fields” is available, but the migratory status—considered optional—does not provide information that could be used in the analysis of the SDG, which does have a specific goal of migratory regulations and policies. The availability is likely related to the number of indicators (three) that have non-processed information or lack of information, according to the table previously mentioned.

This situation can be supported quantitatively based on the same report’s calculation of the level of progress of SDGs’ implementation, goals, and indicators. It can be observed that, while the SDGs seem to be mostly covered—not entirely, only 12 of 17 and the missing ones are not indicated— the level of goals have a much lower incorporation percentage compared to the total (38 of 169: 22%), and this tendency increases if level indicators are observed (47 of 232: 20%)

The second NVR (2021) was elaborated under a discursive framework that acknowledges the United Nations principle of “Leave no one behind,” originally envisaged for the equal inclusion of all people in protective and vaccination measures against COVID-19, although later the objective of this principle was generalized to inequalities in general. In this report, the implementation structure of each SDGs that had been assigned to a set of involved state agencies is described; Nevertheless, in the SDG 10 the General Directorate of Migration is not considered as a convened body.

Despite the fact that the budget information is not present in the corpus— and, therefore, it is not a comparable aspect in this work—, it is important to mention that 6.9% of the total budget allocation for implementation corresponds to SDG 10, which is less than half compared to other SDGs, each of which is allocated with more than 14% (specifically, 3 and 16). From a human rights perspective, a better budget allocation is one of the main factors that explain the slowness of the progress, as observed in the first NVR 2018, where the SDG 10, according to the reported period in the second NVR 2021, has the least progress (it went from 9.1% to 14.3% of the 100% implementation).

Finally, in the section of segmentation according to goals and indicators, it is noted that the attention of SDG 10 was in Goal 10.2 (promote social, economic, and political inclusion without the influence of the non-discrimination principles) and Goal 10.4 (adopt equal wage, labor, and social protection policies). In these goals, cross-cutting equality includes people according to their origin of birth, but it does not specifically focus on them. If the migrants issue is focused on, it is possible to observe that the report includes two regulations prior even to the first NVR: the enactment of a “new National Migration Policy adapted to new realities, based on principles of International Law and Human Rights” (Paraguay SDG Commission 2030, 2021, p. 231) and the enactment of Law 6149 (2018) with specific provisions for stateless persons that are not refugees.

Accordingly, it can be concluded that no measures have been implemented to start the management of Goal 10.7 in the first NVR and between the first and second reports. Moreover, by the time the report was published, Law 978/96 (1996) was in effect, not the current migration law (Law 6984/2022).

The third and final initiative presented during this period is agenda’s support program in Paraguay called “Programa Apoyo a la Agenda 2030 en Paraguay” (Paraguay SDG Commission 2030 and European Union, 2020). It is a funding from the European Union of 3 340 000 euros for a period of three years, aimed at 2030 Agenda’s implementation strengthening in Paraguay. Furthermore, it is explained that support will be allocated for all the SDGs; however, some of them are particularly selected; for example, Goal 5 (gender equality), Goal 13 (climate action), Goal 15 (life on land), and Goal 17 (partnerships for the goals).

In the presentation of that collaborative work, in February 2020, it was noted that its purpose was to help increase and accelerate SDGs fulfillment. The main focus is on the SDGs selected for prioritization (5, 13, 15, and 17) and three specific cross-cutting objectives with the initiative: a) Governance of the system; b) Progress in the implementation of SDG 5, 13, and 15; finally, c) citizen participation and cross-sectoral partnerships (related to SDG 17).

#### DISCUSSION: METHODOLOGICAL OVERLAPS AND DIFFICULTIES OF SDG 10 AND GOAL 10.7

This article began with the idea of explaining how Goal 10.7 was approached in the implementation of Agenda 2030 in two Southern Cone countries, where the migration

phenomenon is dynamic and there is constant debate surrounding the access to regularization of migrants. To that end, it is important to bear in mind the distinct migratory profiles of both countries. Argentina was, and still is today, a country with immigration trends but it shows a decline of migrant population: from 4.5% to 4.2% of the total population, aligned with a persistent and exacerbated migration tendency at times of socioeconomic change, such as the present (National Institute of Statistics and Censuses [INDEC], 2024). In this sense, although the final results obtained by the National Population Census of Paraguay (*Censo Nacional de Población de Paraguay*) were published, the documents focusing on population variables and specific groups do not provide information on migration or migrants.<sup>3</sup>

However, the document *Migration politics. Republic of Paraguay 2015 (Política migratoria. República del Paraguay 2015)* that determines the migration policy of Paraguay and is approved by Decree 4483/2015, focuses on emigration and establishes that by 2013, 15% of the native population were outside the country (approximately 1 100 000 persons) (Dirección Nacional de Migraciones, 2016).

Taking into account more updated data, the database and statistical publications website of CEPAL (CEPALSTAT), indicates that the migration rate for the year 2024 is -1.8% of the total population. (CEPAL, n.d.). The aforementioned is in line with the data recovered by the body National Directorate of Migration (*Dirección Nacional de Migraciones*<sup>4</sup>). This information reveals that from August 1, 2022, to May 5, 2024, the departure of Paraguayan citizens was primarily to Argentina (2 581 625), followed by Brazil (253 506), and thirdly to Spain (68 758). Although this fact does not give information about migration decisions nor the type of residence foreseen, it does provide information about migration processes in the country and its predominant tendency of emigration.

Based on documentary analysis, it is initially observed that the Goal 10.7 of SDG 10 has no priority in either Paraguay or Argentina—despite indications of approaching the guide in a comprehensive and balanced manner—, and when it is raised, the lack of specific measures that demonstrate its influence on the fulfillment of the Agenda is noted. There is mention in both cases of regulations and previous actions from different time periods, which are not necessarily within the monitored period or considered results or management choices that were not explicitly created for the implementation of 2030 Agenda but rather migratory political actions of each country.

Furthermore, the reports are focused on creating and implementing regulations and in some public policy guidelines, which speaks of a partial representation, inflexible, of migration

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<sup>3</sup>For more information, consult results published on the official website: <https://www.ine.gov.py/censo2022/>

<sup>4</sup> The public statistics of migration movements in the DNM of Paraguay web site are updated periodically. Although during the elaboration of this article the data of 2023-2024 was available online, currently the access to information depends on a access request, as stated in the following URL: <https://migraciones.gov.py/estadisticas/>

governance and the available range of options that a government management can carry out to strengthen Goal 10.7, whose purpose is to facilitate migration and a safe, regular, and orderly mobility “even through the implementation of well-planned and well-managed migration policies” (UNGA, 2015a, p. 24). Normative measures are not the only path and can be complementary to other paths for action that, despite being able to be supported by the 2030 Agenda, take time to emerge.

The emergence of observations that were not expected at the beginning of the inquiry forced consideration of possible explanations for the limited visibility of SGD 10 and, specifically, of the Goal 10.7. These ideas sought to refute first ascertainment of the absence of an ongoing concern, lack of political resolve, or ideological stance against migratory regulation since the lesser attention given to this goal is not in alignment with the derogation of Decree 70/2017 and the enforcement of a migratory law that recognizes mobility as a human right. This means that, even though institutional practices and principles could go against rights recognition, this political and regulatory framework provides more resources than other countries of the region.

In the case of Paraguay, Law 978/96 was in effect at the time of publication of the reports, but just one year after the second National Voluntary Review, the law of migration (Law 6985/2022) was enacted, which incorporates guidelines consistent with a human rights approach and is coordinated with the National Migration Policy that appears as an example of progress in the country’s reports. In that case, what factors might contribute to the ongoing lack of management and late visibility of Goal 10.7? At this point, it is necessary to review the 2030 Agenda’s document again and see if there are more barriers in its structure or approach that compromise the implementation of SDG 10 and the goal on migration.

At the outset, it can be considered that the promising nature of seeking a reduction of inequalities in the countries and among them from a multi-dimensional approach and, therefore, different to other SDGs that also promote the management of particular forms of inequality or vulnerabilities, is not implemented to its full potential when the monitoring reports are reviewed. The reduction of inequalities in countries as a separate goal from others is linked to the concept of multidimensional poverty and non-monetary deprivations (United Nations Children’s Fund [UNICEF], 2021). According to these concepts, the barriers to access to rights cannot be observed just from an economist’s perspective and involve non-financial variables that worsen the situation of those who are affected by these differences.

The obstacles to accessing civil, social, and political rights, gender gaps, racial, ethnic or national origin discrimination, as well as violence exposure, are forms of multidimensional or non-monetary poverty that affect those who suffer from those situations and create a structural imbalance that has an impact on their possibilities to live a dignified life. Furthermore, the reduction of inequalities between countries refers to a global and regional consideration of subordination of certain countries over others in the framework of models of accumulation or political participation schemes in the international community. It is important to identify, characterize, and promote solutions to inequalities, in such a way as to disassemble sources of

concentrated state and private corporate power (business, media, organizational, etc.) that encourage inequality and lack of opportunities in some countries, which contrast with an unequal and imperative behavior of other States.

The SDG 10 indicators represent a part of this foreshadowed scene—since it is not clear which one refers to the reduction of inequality among countries—and, at the same time, it is possible to observe a nonspecificity of this SDG in relation to others that are also focused on sectoral or thematic inequalities, as mentioned in the 2030 Agenda's document: Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere; Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth; Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable; Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels” (UNGA, 2015, p. 16), among others.

From different perspectives, these SDGs—as a partial sample of coincidences— address aspects of SDG 10. The aforementioned does not mean that SDG 10 is not necessary, but it is required that states consider those components or dimensions that are not included in other SDGs to address them in a specific way; likewise, they should focus on the mitigation of inequalities among countries in global and regional contexts.

For example, in the Argentine case the monitoring allows to see that the implementation results of SDG 10— beyond the goal of migration— are associated with an economic and balance growth of global financial markets, and both results are goals of SDG 8 that, furthermore, is more specific on the subject of migrants, as can be read in Goal 8.8. In this sense, indicator 8.8.1 asks to pay attention to rates of occupational injuries by sex and migrant status, while indicator 8.8.2. points out the need to observe the level of compliance of labor rights based on agreements of the International Labor Organization (ILO) and national legislation of each country by sex and migrant status (UNGA, 2015b).

In this way, it can be observed that an indicator not intended to monitor a goal related to migration may be more accurate and valuable in terms of information than those that are specifically formulated to evaluate Goal 10.7. This can be considered as the first level of nonspecificity of Goal 10.7 in comparison to other goals in the rest of SDGs. However, there is a second level of imprecision that is observed in the internal structure of Goal 10.7 indicators, which should have been considered for the monitoring of the reinforcement of a safe, orderly, and regular migration.

As explained previously, one of the indicators of this Goal (10.7.1) is about considering employee recruitment cost as a proportion of income earned in country of destination and, the first difficulty that arises with this measurement tool is that, although it has been developed to the migration goal, it can be useful for any sector of workers (nonspecificity), just as it also does not

address the goal's concern of approaching the accessibility of migration regularization, as well as the possibility of migrating in an orderly and safe manner (lack of eloquence).

On the other hand, indicator 10.7.2 tends to measure a category simultaneously introduced with 2030 Agenda's creation and, considering its formulation, the need for a prior operationalization is identified (Cea D'Ancona, 2014). This operationalization will allow the clear identification of countries whose actions coincide with a well-managed migration policy. Which would be examples or starting points of an action strand that allows accounting a comprehensive policy for the mitigation of multiple vulnerabilities in the migratory process?

These empirical references represent measured aspects, both quantitatively and qualitatively, of the progressive shaping of a well-managed migration policy. Since, as stated by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in its General Comment No.3 (1990), which explained that states' international obligations are characterized by their immediate but also progressive compliance, as long as it is considered that no country can comply entirely with this kind of commitment, but they must demonstrate that allocate the maximum extent of resources and efforts, in an increasing manner, over a short or medium term.

In view of the above, perhaps there is no need to list countries that implement well-managed migratory policies because what would be achieved with this list, aside from displaying examples and good practices for those who do not know how to face or continue with this mission? On the contrary, identifying and defining different pathways of state management for a well-managed and comprehensive migratory policy with the aim of highlighting obstacles, inconsistencies, contradictions, and challenges in results formulation, start-up, and measurement, are the considerations that could be global and regional subjects of discussion and the reason to create collective and consensual solutions. Undoubtedly, that could be a transformative effect to SDG 10 implementation in terms of inequality reduction and among countries, showing its potential through international human mobility processes.

Finally, in relation to the multi-dimensional perspective (within countries) and multisited perspective (among countries) of inequality provided by SDG 10, the representation of migratory regularization as an effect of comprehensive policies has also been neglected in the reports of Argentina and Paraguay. First of all, the non-operationalization of the concept "well-planified and well-managed migratory policies" in the indicators of Goal 10.7 (AGNU, 2015a, p. 24) makes it difficult to recognize that the possibility of a safe, orderly, and regular migration goes way beyond of just migratory regularization procedures, even if they are an essential requirement.

Indeed, migratory regulation is a source and outcome of at least five sociopolitical and institutional dynamics that show their complex and multi-dimensional nature, which were described by Gottero (2022b):

1. Migratory regularization accessibility reinforces migrants' access to justice, since—in many countries—the accessibility to requested migrant documentation by each state is essential for a protected status residency and exercise indispensable rights to live a full life.

2. Fostering migratory regularization enhances the prevention of discriminatory acts and stigmatization against irregular migrants, which being called “illegals” might be the entry point to increasingly serious prejudices and definitions, as well as increasing their risk of exclusion and exploitation.
3. Migrants in regular status can develop mechanisms of expression and participation without the fear of receiving penalties or being deported for not having their documentation in order. This reinforces their role as political subjects in transit and destination countries.
4. Regularization policies and programs establish the guarantee of the right to migrate, as they ensure its safe, orderly, and regular implementation—following guidelines of 2030 Agenda and PMM 2018—and, with that, reinforce the access to services and rights systems to which, in many countries, a regular migrant condition is needed.
5. Regularization strengthens and improves national and subnational migratory statistics, as long as it is established how many migrants reside in the country and what their characteristics are. Simultaneously, regular migrants have visibility in the public scene, which allows them to form part of public collaboration initiatives or state information-gathering, as censuses or vaccination campaigns due to epidemiological alerts (The global strategy against COVID-19 provided enough evidence of this importance).

## CONCLUSIONS

This article required an emergent perspective (Valles, 2014) applied to the analysis of a social phenomenon to understand and address methodological observations and findings that, as the research progressed, were reshaping the purpose of the study. The documentary analysis started from the study of 2030 Agenda as a framework and a reference instrument to inquire about the implementation of this proposal in national scenarios considering the concept of “well-managed migratory policies”, but the absence of Goal 10.7 as a constant appearance in the reports called for a renewed examination of 2030 Agenda’s document to see it in a different light, no longer as a source, but as a subject of study. Along that spiral investigation process, critical descriptions of monitoring reports from selected countries (Argentina and Paraguay) were redefined. In addition, it was possible to formulate proposals and conjunctures to reflect and reformulate in practice the way in which compliance with a standard or international tool is understood in the framework of state management practices.

In this analysis, it was possible to demonstrate how the lack of operationalization of the concept “well-managed migratory policies” in the level of government actions, the nonspecificity, and the lack of eloquence of indicators in Goal 10.7 are at the core of the existing weakness in reports with that purpose in national reports from studied countries. In both cases, promoting initiatives of a safe, orderly, and regular migration were associated with migratory policy measures related to regularization, but not necessarily with access to rights in a comprehensive sense.

Furthermore, the country's tendency of informing about the compilation of policies and management measures oriented to create a regular status to migrants was highlighted, which implied considerate regulations and actions prior to 2030 Agenda or that were not created specifically to its implementation, even generating forced linkages that were defined here as "taggings." The focus on regulation or administrative measures, which are created and come into force until another measure replaces them or deactivates them, leaves in the background— and barely mentioned in the reports— all those government actions that, without being migratory policies, strengthen and support the shaping of migratory flows in a safe, orderly, and regular manner.

That limited, partial, and simple perspective of Goal 10.7 had a negative impact, in the analyzed cases, on the possibility to establish creative compliance mechanisms—through other political and institutional practices— and to produce heterogeneous, and concomitant information, regarding the fulfilment of this purpose.

The purpose of this analysis is not, by any means, to question the validity of the 2030 Agenda as a global instrument for the transformation of states and societies. On the contrary, especially in sociopolitical and institutional contexts where confusion is exploited to suppress fundamental rights won by the social struggle, the aim is to strengthen the methodological and techno-political position of 2030 Agenda to preserve solid and regionally and internationally consensual guides in times of need. To boldly think and restore the underlying complexity in these documents of global and independent reference is a political thinking and managerial challenge needed to revive the legitimacy and capacity of change of these documented common agreements, as well as reflecting on the possibility that these social and discursive facts have to confront situations characterized by multi-dimensional inequalities that generate multiple risks, acts of violence, structural exclusion, and exposure to suffering originated by the inaccessibility to fundamental rights.

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