

Southern Cone Situation Report August & September 2019

Almost **13 per cent** of the total number of **Venezuelans** residing in Latin America and the Caribbean until September 2019, lives in the countries that are part of the **Southern Cone** Chapter.

The **financial contributions** towards the RMRP 2019 in the Southern Cone remain extremely low, reaching a **13.3 per cent** as of mid-September, with only USD 4.7 million covered out of the USD 35.6 million required.

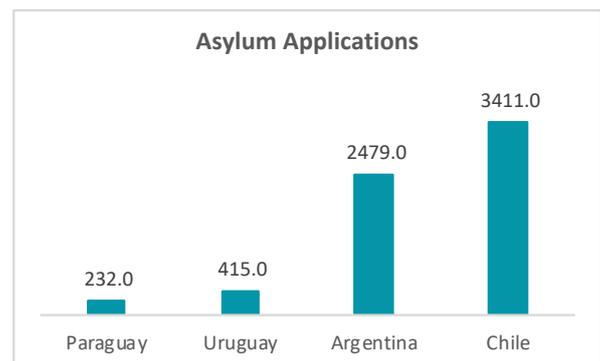
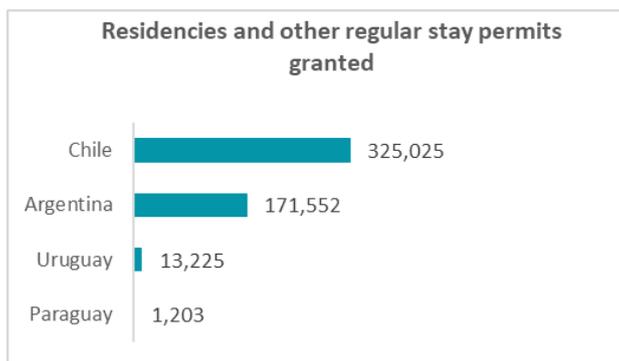
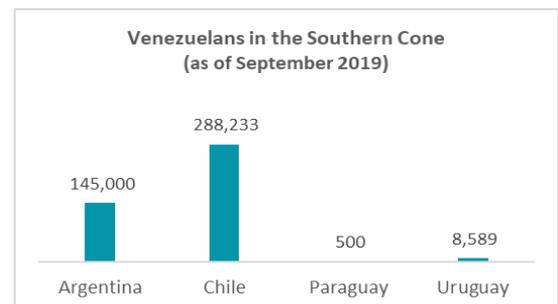
KEY FIGURES¹

3.5 Million

Approx. Venezuelans in Latin America and the Caribbean

442,000

Approx. Venezuelans in the Southern Cone



OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

As a result of the modifications in **migratory policies and access restrictions (visas)** imposed by several countries in the region, new **routes in the Andean corridor** (namely via Bolivia subsequently to Argentina) used by Venezuelan refugees and migrants have emerged. This has generated new challenges with a notable increase in the number of **arrivals by land and cases of family separations**. In response to this phenomenon, partners have strengthened their presence in Puerto Iguazu (border with Paraguay and Brazil), La Quiaca (border with Bolivia) and San Salvador de Jujuy in northern Argentina.

In Paraguay, three migratory **regularization** sessions (one in August and two in September) through mobile brigades from migration authorities took place in cities with a high presence of refugees and migrants. In Chile, as of 28 August 2019, online applications were established for the extension of the Mercosur Temporary Visa and Democratic Responsibility Visa in the Metropolitan Region. Additionally, since mid-August, refugees and migrants who wish to apply for a **visa** to enter Chile from Peru, are referred to the Chilean Consulate in Lima, as the consulate in Tacna no longer receives online applications.

¹ Total population figures in this document represent the sum of Venezuelan migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers reported by host governments. It does not necessarily imply individual identification, nor registration of each individual, and may include a degree of estimation, as per each government's statistical data processing methodology. As numerous government sources do not account for Venezuelans without a regular status, the total number of Venezuelans is likely to be higher. The figures of people with regular status do not include Venezuelans holding tourist visas, nor recognized refugees, or asylum seekers.

On 13 August, the Chilean Senate approved a new **bill on migration**. Senators present agreed on the issues to be addressed including the change of migratory category once in Chile, the scope of the principle of *non-refoulement*, the mechanism and institutionalization for the validation of titles, measures for the inclusion of migrant workers.

On 3 September 2019, Chile, Ecuador and Peru agreed to create a technical working group to promote a safe, orderly and regular migration of Venezuelan refugees and migrants through the establishment of a **mechanism to exchange information** on granted and rejected visas, as well as experiences on the verification of documents.

On September 18, representatives from Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Panama, Costa Rica, Mexico, Guyana and the Dominican Republic met in Buenos Aires for a meeting of the Technical Working Groups of the Quito Process. A **consensus on the five projects presented in the Buenos Aires Chapter** (July 2019) was reached, as well as concrete measures to respond to the Venezuelans in the region. For instance, in compliance with the Quito's Plan of Action, the delegations agreed to advance in the creation of the Migration Information Card which would allow to analyze information in social and economic matters, as well as support family reunification and access to health and education services.

RESPONSE HIGHLIGHTS

These response highlights do not provide an exhaustive overview of all response activities by partners under the regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RMRP), but rather highlight some key activities implemented during the month. The R4V aims to support and complement national authorities' efforts across Latin America and the Caribbean, consistent with the principles outlined in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants.

Area of Intervention 1: Direct emergency assistance

Strategic outcome: *Refugees and migrants are provided with life-saving goods and services.*

Basic Needs & Essential Services

Partners in the Southern Cone continued to provide **direct emergency assistance** to more than 2,000 among the most vulnerable refugees and migrants from Venezuela. **Non-food items**, including mattresses, bedclothes, blankets, hygiene kits and heat warmers, were provided to 874 refugees and migrants in Argentina, 257 in Chile, 11 in Uruguay and 103 in Paraguay (of which 27 persons also received food), while **cash assistance** was provided in Paraguay to 22 persons.

Food assistance was provided by partners in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, reaching 163, 256 and 75 refugees and migrants respectively, while **humanitarian transportation**, especially from border areas to main urban centers, was provided to 51 vulnerable individuals in Argentina, 13 in Paraguay and 3 in Uruguay.

Temporary accommodation, especially for families, has been provided to 108 persons in Argentina, 35 in Chile, 46 in Uruguay and 67 individuals in Paraguay.

Finally, during the reporting period, **emergency psychosocial support** and/or **referral services** were provided in Paraguay and Uruguay to 39 and 67 refugees and migrants from Venezuela, respectively.



Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Buenos Aires, Argentina receive clothes during a winterization campaign in August 2019 ©UNHCR/E. Sarraf, 2019

Monitoring and Assessment Tools

Partners in the sub-region interviewed more than 1,500 Venezuelan refugees and migrants to **assess and understand better their needs**. In **Argentina**, a total of 974 refugees and migrants from Venezuela were subjects with monitoring and assessment exercises across five regions of the country: Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires Province,

Mendoza, Jujuy and Misiones. In **Chile** some 343 refugees and migrants were reached with the same purposes in Santiago and Arica, 210 persons in Montevideo, **Uruguay** and 19 in Ciudad del Este, **Paraguay**. These exercises included questions regarding their needs in health, housing, protection, access to information, access to labour and family reunification.

Area of Intervention 2: Protection

Strategic outcome: Refugees and migrants enjoy rights and protection.

Access to information

Partners in the Southern Cone have been providing information on **referral pathways and protection services** to refugees and migrants from Venezuela on a regular basis, this time to some 465 refugees and migrants. During the reporting period, 324 persons were reached with orientation and information services in Argentina through five **information and support centers** supported by partners in the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, Misiones and Jujuy. Similarly, in Paraguay, 145 refugees and migrants were provided with key information at their arrival and during community events.

Documentation and regularization

Partners in Paraguay provided support, advice and guidance to 86 refugees and migrants from Venezuela for obtaining a **regular status** and the Paraguayan identity document. In Uruguay partners supported 109 Venezuelan asylum-seekers to file their **asylum applications**.

Area of Intervention 3: Socio-economic and cultural integration

Strategic outcome: Refugees and migrants are socially, economically and culturally integrated in empowered communities.

Access to employment and livelihoods

Over the past two months, 192 refugees and migrants were reached with support for accessing job opportunities in the **formal sector** in Argentina. This support was provided by partners in Buenos Aires through workshops in which they acquire skills to develop businesses; and, in Mar del Plata, Iguazú and Quilmes through various orientation sessions on rights, available employment programs and the procedures for title validation. Also, in Chile and Paraguay, 1,790 and 159 persons were reached with **job placement** support.

Partners in Paraguay also provided refugees and migrants from Venezuela with assistance for the recognition and **validation of diplomas**, reaching 82 persons.

Socio-cultural integration

Partners in Paraguay reached 15 persons through an event that aimed at **strengthening the linkages** among the Venezuelan population. In Argentina, partners reached 129 persons through various **integration** activities.

Area of Intervention 4: Strengthening capacities of the host government

Strategic outcome: Government institutions' capacity to manage situations of refugees and migrants from Venezuela is strengthened.

Technical and material support

Partners continued to support national authorities with human resources, infrastructure and/or technical assistance. In Uruguay, partners regularly provided the Directorate General of Consular Affairs with human resources, allowing 1,048 Venezuelans to initiate their **regularization process** in the reporting period. Constant support is also provided to the National Migration Board through its technical secretariat to improve their inter-institutional coordination.

Capacity building

In Argentina, partners presented the study "**Labour Integration** in the Health Sector of the Venezuelan Population in the Argentine Republic" with an attendance of 200 people. The study aims at disseminating reliable information regarding the job qualifications of the Venezuelan health workers and the local labor market demands.

In Uruguay, partners provided training to 40 officials from government agencies, NGOs and local associations to improve their **response to victims of trafficking** and vulnerable persons. Similarly, in Chile, 131 government officials received training on **standards and practices** of assistance, protection and integration.

CONTRIBUTIONS

RMRP Partners are very grateful for the financial support provided by donors, contributing to their activities with un-earmarked and earmarked funds.

United States of America | United Kingdom

RMRP PARTNERS

Argentina: ADRA | Amnesty International Argentina | CAREF | FECCAM | ILO | IOM | MIRARES | OHCHR | Office of the Resident Coordinator | PAHO | Red Cross Argentina | UBA | UNAIDS | UNDP | UNHCR | UNICEF

Chile: ADRA | ECLAC | FAO | FASIC | ILO | Inmigrante Feliz | IOM | Jesuit Refugee Service | Jesuit Refugee Service | Office of the Resident Coordinator | OHCHR | PAHO | Red Cross Chile Scalabrini/INCAMI | UDP Legal Clinic | UNAIDS | UNDP | UNESCO | UNFPA | UNHCR | UNICEF | Vicaria Pastoral Social | World Vision

Uruguay: ADRA | El Paso | Idas y Vueltas | ILO | IOM | Manos Venecuayas | OHCHR | PAHO | Red Cross Uruguay | SEDHU | UNAIDS | UNHCR | UNICEF | UNOPS

Paraguay: Asociación Civil de Venezolanos en Paraguay | IOM | OHCHR | PAHO | Pastoral de Movilidad Humana | Red con Migrantes y Refugiados | Semillas para la Democracia | Red Cross Paraguay | UNFPA | UNHCR

For more information, please contact:

Juliana Quintero, Media and Communications Officer, **IOM**, robuepress@iom.int, +54 11 5219 2033

José Manuel Cáceres, Regional Reporting Officer, **UNHCR**, caceres@unhcr.org, +54 11 4815 7870