Colombia
July-October 2022

UNHCR coordinated with the Transition Committee of the President’s Office to position asylum, displacement and statelessness issues with the new Government.

UNHCR actively supported the Regional Binding Dialogues to foster community participation in the forthcoming Development Plans at National and Department level, to include the priorities of both IDPs and refugees.

The Government of Colombia and of Venezuela resumed diplomatic relations after 4 years paving the way for the restoration of flights and transport of goods, and the reactivation of consular services. Peace Negotiations were re-established with the National Liberation Army (ELN).

**FIGURES**

2,351,351 🇻🇪 **Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants in Colombia in process of regularization**

132,495 🇺🇸 **Persons affected by new internal displacements in 2022**

20,404 🇺🇸 **Persons affected by confinements in 2022**

Source: Government of Colombia

**Operational Context**

The new Government’s “Total Peace” approach has the potential to eventually prevent new displacement and facilitate durable solutions for millions of IDPs (6.7 million remain in displacement in vulnerable conditions), as the Government envisions peace talks with illegal armed groups and strengthening its support to communities throughout the country, particularly in underserved areas where the State has been absent. UNHCR has a long history of engagement with IDPs and of strengthening community structures, notably among Afro-Colombian and indigenous populations in Colombia.

President Petro has committed to upholding the Temporary Protection Status for Venezuelan refugees and migrants and to pursue their socio-economic inclusion. Moreover, Colombia will be a co-convener of the Global Refugee Forum in December 2023.

UNHCR also recognizes the commitment of the new Government to strengthen the asylum system, to ensure the efficient processing of increasing numbers of asylum applications and facilitating the recognition of refugee status for those who are in need of international protection.

**Temporary Protection Permits for Venezuelans (TPPs)**

- October 31st, 2022.

**2.3 million**

Pre-registrations in RUMV

**1.9 million**

Bio-metrics registrations (82%)

**1.5 million**

Permits issued (plastic cards) (65%)

Source: Visitas - Migración Colombia
(migracioncolombia.gov.co)
Border population movements between Colombia and Venezuela did not significantly intensify with the reopening of the official border points for vehicles between the two countries on 26 September. Most formal entries in La Guajira, Norte de Santander and Arauca still represent pendular and trade related movements, but irregular entries continue to be higher than the regular movements. UNHCR conducted a binational analysis on border mobility which showed that half of the Venezuelans returning are claiming to do so permanently, and the other half just for family reasons due to the holiday season.

At the border between Colombia and Ecuador most opt to cross through informal border points (“trochas”) (as Venezuelans are still required a visa to enter Ecuadorian territory); there are more than 47 trochas operated ided by smugglers (“coyotes”), and individuals crossing are exposed to significant protection risks.

UNHCR continued to monitor the mixed movements between Colombia and Panama. In October, the U.S Government announced a “New Migration Process for Venezuelans” by including Venezuelans within the scope of application of Title 42, under which asylum-seekers from different nationalities are expelled to Mexico, when apprehended upon crossing the border irregularly. Consequently, the number of people leaving Necoclí for the Darién significantly decreased after having peaked that month (more than 57,000 arrivals). In 2022, up to the reporting period, more than 208,886 people have been registered irregularly crossing the Darién region; Venezuelans accounted for 70% of persons on the move. Whereas the dynamics of the mixed movements fluctuate in numbers, composition in terms of nationalities and profiles, it is clear that the flows continue unabated and present significant protection risks for the persons using these routes.

According to UNHCR monitoring, as of 30 October, more than 58,553 people have been confined in 67 events, the great majority in Chocó (64%), followed by Arauca (13%) and Nariño (9%) mostly affecting indigenous people. In addition, during the same period, 54,778 people have been uprooted since the start of 2022 by 144 large internal displacements due to confrontations between irregular armed groups. The Afro-Colombian population was the most affected population group mainly in Nariño (49%), Cauca (12%), Chocó (10%).
To date UNHCR delivered **cash assistance** to **22,557 individuals** (6,569 households). Recently, UNHCR reached an agreement with the renowned financial services provider **Efecty** to revamp its Cash-Based Intervention (CBI) Program. **Efecty** is present throughout Colombia and UNHCR plans to assist 3,000 Venezuelan families (approximately 9,000 individuals) with cash transfers until the end of the year. The monthly multipurpose cash assistance value varies with the size of the family from **$USD 45 to $USD 115**, and the total budget for all UNHCR cash program in 2022 amounts to **$USD 3.3M**.

UNHCR allied with the Swedish Contingency Agency (MSB), Ericsson and CISCO to donate equipment and deploy experts throughout Colombia to establish **169 Internet hotspots** so that vulnerable Venezuelan refugee and migrants could register for the Temporary Protection Status (TPS). To date, more than **289,350 people** have accessed Internet through these points (roughly **3,200 per day**) to register for the TPS, as well as 48 partners that provide information and orientation.

Since 2020, UNHCR partnered with the Ministry of Health, IOM and implementing partner **Corporación Opción Legal (COL)** to support **26 Health Municipal Secretariates** in the affiliation process to the **National Healthcare System** of more than **86,000 people** (61,000 in 2022). Moreover, more than 44,000 Venezuelan refugee and migrants as well as Colombian returnees received information on how to access the national healthcare system, and approximately **11,000 civil servants and international were trained on the legal framework for health affiliation.** UNHCR continues to work to secure the affiliation of all Venezuelans who have received the **Temporary Protection Status**.

UNHCR Colombia is the **lead** of the inter-agency working group (GIFMM) **on financial inclusion.** As such, most financial inclusion interventions conducted by UNHCR are executed through this working group. A key highlight this period was UNHCR’s support in revising and launching the **orientation guide on financial inclusion targeting financial institutions** developed by Asobancaria. Moreover, throughout 2022 the landmark project “**Tierras y, Viviendas**” (lands and housing) has supported internally displaced people, refugees, migrants and returnees in 9 departments, with the **legalization of 11 informal settlements** and **individual titling of 14 neighborhoods**, adopting an area-based approach. Furthermore, UNHCR provided legal advice and assistance to **14 indigenous communities** to carry out processes of formal recognition and titling of their collective territory.
UNHCR opened a new field presence in the Eje Cafetero region (Risaralda, Caldas, Quindío) seeking to expand the implementation of its Protection and Durable Solutions strategy in terms of labor inclusion in the agricultural, tourism, textile and industrial sectors. Also to mobilize the presence of GIFMM actors in the territory and foster coordination among partners and allies to enhance opportunities for the population we serve.

Meeting between the UNHCR Representative and representatives of the Mayor’s Office of Pereira. ©UNCHR Colombia.

UNHCR united with UNICEF to launch the initiative “Jornalism free from xenophobia”, in the framework of the media campaign “Somos Panas Colombia”. Recognizing the high impact of the media narrative in discrimination and stigmatization, UNHCR worked with the top Colombian media sources (newspaper, radio) and secured the commitment of 28, who subscribed to the “Decalogue”, adopting a human-rights based approach to their editorial policy, while covering news about refugees and migrants. Several Colombian journalists are contributing to the campaign on social media with the hashtag #PeriodismoLibreDeXenofobia.

More information on the Somos Panas Campaign´s Webpage:

UNHCR together with IOM, co-leads the Inter-Agency Mixed Migration Flows Group (GIFMM in Spanish), which includes 77 members, UN agencies, international and local NGOs and members of the Red Cross movement. Its main objective is to coordinate the response to the needs of Venezuelan refugees and migrants, Colombian returnees, and the host population in a complementary manner with the Government.

Special thanks to our major donors for 2022: Austria | Belgium | Canada | Denmark | European Union | France | Germany | Ireland | Italy | Japan | Netherlands | Norway | Republic of Korea | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | United Arab Emirates | United Kingdom | United States of America | Central Emergency Response Fund | UN Programme on HIV/AIDS | UN Trust Fund for Human Security | UN Environmental Programme |

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Vera Quina, Associate External Relations Officer, quina@unhcr.org
Luisa Fernando Alvis Ñungo, Information Management Associate, alvisung@unhcr.org

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