

# VENEZUELAN REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS IN COLOMBIA

October 2018

According to official government figures, by the end of October 2018 there were more than **one million Venezuelans** living in Colombia. This figure represents an increase of more than 2,500% compared to 39,000 at the end of 2015.

Of this number, **573,322** are in a regular situation, **240,596** are in the process of regularization and **218,098** are in an irregular situation. The needs of refugees and migrants are becoming increasingly urgent.

The Interagency Group for Mixed Migratory Flows (GIFMM) coordinates the response of the United Nations and NGOs, and supports the Colombian Government in responding to these needs.

*This report reflects the response of the Interagency Group for Mixed Migratory Flows (GIFMM) for Venezuelan refugees and migrants, Colombian returnees, and host communities for the month of October 2018.*

## KEY UPDATES

- More than one million Venezuelan refugees and migrants have settled in border areas and urban centres throughout Colombia. 233,806 of the irregular 442,000 Venezuelans registered by the government in the RAMV exercise have obtained the Special Permit of Permanence (PEP).
- In the last week of October there was an increase in the number of Venezuelans crossing the border with Ecuador due to the introduction of new regulations in Peru, with around 15,000 people crossing between Friday 26 to Sunday 28 October. The local GIFMM in Nariño continues to work with authorities at the border.
- On October 19, the Ministry of Labor established a National Registry of Foreign Workers in Colombia (RUTEC for its Spanish acronym), highlighting the Government's commitment to regular and safe labor migration.
- On October 20, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Carlos Holmes Trujillo, announced that the Government will create a unique biometric registration system to identify Venezuelans arriving in Colombia.
- Víctor Bautista, Director of the Development and Border Integration Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, announced the expansion of the Governmental Migration Management Committees to serve the more than 1 million Venezuelans in Colombia with access to information on health services, labor inclusion, protection and security. Local GIFMM teams will participate in these committees.
- This month, the GIFMM presented the Government with a report on the situation of "walkers" in Colombia and its offer to respond, with contributions from UNHCR, IOM, CRC, WFP, UNICEF, OXFAM, OCHA and NRC. Refugees and Venezuelan migrants continue to walk across Colombia (known as "walkers") to main cities in Colombia, and onwards to other countries such as Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Argentina and Brazil. The most direct route is from Cúcuta to the border with Ecuador (1,430 kilometres), taking more than a month to walk in difficult and dangerous conditions.

## KEY STATISTICS

- **1,032,016** Venezuelan migrants and refugees are in Colombia.
  - More than **300,000** Colombians have returned in 2018.
  - **415,298** Venezuelans have obtained the PEP.
  - **549,485** Venezuelans have exit Colombia in 2018 via the Rumichaca International Bridge in Nariño, on the southern border with Ecuador (official figures as of 15 of October).
  - More than **1.5 million** Venezuelans have a Border Mobility Card (TMF for its Spanish acronym) to enter Colombia for up to 7 days to buy basic goods. The issuance of new TMFs was suspended as of February 2018.
- \*official statistics as of 31 October.*

## OPERATIONAL RESPONSE

*This information includes activities of GIFMM members until the end of October, including activities that benefit refugees and migrants from Venezuela, Colombian returnees and host communities.*

### 1. DIRECT EMERGENCY RESPONSE

#### 1.1 HEALTH

- At Migrant Assistance Centres in Santander, Norte de Santander, Arauca, La Guajira, Nariño and Guainía, the **Colombian Red Cross** undertook 9,033 medical consultations including 14,984 nursing services and 6,039 First Aid services. Through psychological consultation, 2,340 migrants and refugees were assisted in Norte de Santander, Arauca, La Guajira and Nariño. Psychosocial support activities with a community focus were carried out for 796 migrants and refugees, to identify referral cases.
- **UNICEF** implemented primary health services in Arauca, Nariño, Norte de Santander and La Guajira aimed at preventing acute malnutrition in children from 0-5 years and health care for children up to 9 years, as well as promoting breastfeeding and nutritional recovery with pregnant women and nursing mothers. It also provided information with key messages to improve the nutritional status of children and adolescents and trained pediatric doctors and health personnel in hospitals and health centres in health and nutrition. In Arauca, more than 200 people benefitted from these actions during October.
- Over a three day period, **IOM** delivered primary health care for the migrant and refugee population in the municipalities of Soacha (284), Valledupar (343) and Cali (442) reaching a total of 1,069 people. The services included prenatal control, child growth and development, vaccinations and general medicine.
- In Cúcuta, Norte de Santander, the Margarita Health Centre was inaugurated on October 6 and has attended to more than 3,000 people throughout the month. The Centre is supported by **UNHCR, NRC, PAHO, the Colombian Red Cross**, the Departmental Health Institute (IDS), the Jorge Cristo Sahium Hospital in Villa del Rosario and the City Hall of Villa del Rosario Town Hall. In Cúcuta, health care days were supported by **UNHCR**, the third day of health care was held in the Las Delicias neighborhood, where 580 vaccination services, general medicine, prenatal check-ups, child growth and development, ophthalmology, psychosocial care, rapid HIV and syphilis tests and sexual and reproductive rights. In the Divina Providencia dining room in Villa de Rosario, Cúcuta, **UNHCR** continued to provide psychosocial care services reaching a total of 576 people in group care and 250 people in individual care.

#### 1.2 WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

- The **Colombian Red Cross** distributed 12,476 litres of bottled water at its attention points in Santander, Norte de Santander and La Guajira. Hydration points in Arauca and Nariño continue to supply 3,000 litres of drinking water daily. In partnership with **UNHCR**, the **Colombian Red Cross** delivered 1,878 personal hygiene kits.
- **UNICEF** is rehabilitating water and sanitation systems through the reconstruction of bathrooms, distribution of water filters, installation of water tanks, as well as initiatives to promote hygiene practices, such as hand-washing and treatment of solid waste in Nariño, La Guajira, Norte de Santander and Arauca. Together, these interventions benefitted more than 11,000 children, adolescents and their families in October. In addition, **UNICEF** has delivered 3,625 hygiene kits for children and their families.

#### 1.3 HUMANITARIAN TRANSPORT

- **IOM** provided transport for 662 people from Bogotá, 98% who were transiting to Ipiales to continue their journey to Ecuador, Peru and Chile and the remaining 2% who were traveling to cities in Colombia.
- Through the Pastoral Social office in Ipiales, **UNHCR** assisted 70 people with transport (18 women, 25 girls, 18 men, 9 boys).

#### 1.4 FOOD SECURITY

- The **Colombian Red Cross**, in partnership with **UNHCR**, has distributed 2,990 individual food kits through Migrant Assistance Centres in Santander, Norte de Santander, Arauca, Guajira, and Nariño. 180 family market kits were delivered in Norte de Santander in association with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons). In Riohacha, La Guajira **UNHCR** in association with the **World Food Program (WFP)** set up a soup kitchen hosting 1,800 migrants and refugees daily with breakfast and lunch.
- **The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)** delivered hot meals to 3,620 Venezuelans in soup kitchens in Saravena, Arauca, Villa del Rosario, Cúcuta and Bucaramanga.
- Between April and October 2018, **WFP** has provided assistance to nearly 117,000 people facing food insecurity in Arauca, La Guajira, Nariño and Norte de Santander. This assistance includes hot meals in community kitchens, distribution of bonuses not conditioned for food and food kits. In La Guajira, **WFP** offered emergency support to the school feeding program.
- **World Vision** in partnership with **WFP**, delivered food vouchers to 2,955 people in Cúcuta.
- Through Orientation and Assistance Points in Paraguachón, La Guajira, **UNHCR** with the support of the Government and the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF for its Spanish acronym), delivered nutritional liquid supplements to 1,426 people in the municipality of Maicao. In Medellín, through the partnerships of **UNHCR** and the Humanitarian Aid Corporation, approximately 37 people were served 5 meal daily for an average of 18 days each. The **UNHCR** office in Pasto supported the delivery of 3,000 snacks between October 28 and 30 to the population in transit through the border point of Rumichaca.

#### 1.5 NON-FOOD ITEMS

- The **Colombian Red Cross**, in partnership with the **International Federation of the Red Cross**, has delivered 161 shelter kits in Norte de Santander and Nariño.
- **UNHCR** together with UNIQLO, GU and the Embassy of Japan delivered 3,900 pieces of donated clothing for people from Venezuela. The activities were carried out in La Guajira (in the Migrant and Refugee Care Centre in Maicao, Casa del Abuelo, the Esperanza Foundation School, the ICBF Centre and Riohacha Hospital) and in Cúcuta (in the Scalibrini Migration Centre) and at the Red Cross information point. The beneficiaries were aged between 0-5 years (600), 6-17 years (600) and 18 years + (2,700).
- **UNHCR** delivered sleeping kits (mattresses, sheets and pillows) to 139 families affected by torrential rains in Riohacha in the neighborhoods of Villa del Sur and Brisas del Norte. In Mocoa, **UNHCR** has delivered 40 sleeping kits, 300 baby kits and 10 toilet kits to people with specific protection needs from Venezuela.

#### 1.6 TEMPORARY ACCOMODATION

- **The Colombian Red Cross**, in partnership with **IOM** and **UNGRD**, provided assistance to 6,453 people through the Migrant Care Centre in Norte de Santander. The National System of Humanitarian Attention to Return with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, provided temporary accommodation to 76 Colombian returnees.
- **IOM** supported 162 Venezuelans in Bogotá, 159 in Ipiales and 30 in Cúcuta with temporary accommodation in partnership with the Scalibrini Centre for Migration.
- At the Scalibrini Migration Centre supported by **UNHCR**, 351 people were provided temporary accommodation including food, basic legal orientation and psychosocial assistance. **UNHCR** has provided temporary shelter to 52 people from Venezuela during October through the Riohacha Hotels Network.
- **UNHCR** supported 70 people with temporary accommodation through Pastoral Social in Ipiales (18 women, 25 girls, 18 men, 9 children) and provided shelter support to 10 family groups in Mocoa. Through the agreement between **UNHCR** and the Humanitarian Aid Corporation, 37 people were supported in Medellín with temporary shelter.

#### 1.7 EDUCATION

- In Cúcuta, **World Vision** gave 265 school vouchers to children and adolescents, and guidance sessions on child protection for 214 people.
- **UNHCR** delivered 160 school kits to children and adolescents between 0-17 in Uribia, La Guajira.

- The "Pedagogy and Protection of Children" project implemented by the Mandala Corporation, with support and funding from **UNHCR**, has been working with 420 children and adolescents, 880 parents, public officials of municipal education secretaries in Antioquia and teachers from the municipalities of Rionegro, Santuario, Medellín, Sabaneta, Envigado, Bello and Itagüí. This project provides psychosocial support to parents and unaccompanied children from Venezuela.

## 1.8 MULTI-SECTOR

- **Mercy Corps** is launching a multipurpose cash assistance program to cover non-food items, local transportation, communications and water and sanitation for 7,000 people in Cesar and La Guajira. The beneficiaries are 70% Venezuelan and 30% Colombian.
- **ADRA** provided temporary shelter for one day, delivering food, drinking water, hygiene kits, luggage, shoes and clothes to 1,200 'walkers'.

## 2. PROTECTION RESPONSE

### 2.1 REGISTRATION AND REGULARISATION

- **UNHCR** assisted 5,020 people to obtain their PEP-RAMV in La Guajira, 2,500 in Norte de Santander, 45 in Antioquia and 12 in Putumayo. In Arauca, **UNHCR** opened a PEP information point in agreement with Casa Coral for access to documentation assistance for Venezuelans registered in the RAMV. The point assisted 200 people to print their PEPs in October.
- The Border Ombudsman's Protection Network, supported by **UNHCR** in Arauca, provided legal assistance to 3,329 Venezuelans.

### 2.2 INFORMATION AND ORIENTATION

- Through the Points of Attention and Orientation, **UNHCR** and the Government of La Guajira, provided information and orientation to 5,658 people (4,148 in Riohacha, 1,120 in Norte de Santander, 210 in Medellín, 180 in Apartado).
- **The Colombian Red Cross** provided orientation assistance for 5,109 migrants and refugees in Santander and Norte de Santander. It supported migrants and refugees with 5,425 free WIFI services, 1,800 national call services and 1,943 power services to charge phones in Norte de Santander, Guajira and Nariño.
- **IOM** implemented its Displacement Tracking Matrix to 125 people in transit in Norte de Santander.
- In Bogotá Pastoral Social, in partnership with **UNHCR**, has assisted and advised 38 cases (a total of 87 people) who expressed their interest in applying for refugee status. Through the **UNHCR** and Pastoral Social projects, psycho-legal assistance was provided to 161 people in Pasto and 48 people in Mocoa.
- In Valle de Cauca **UNHCR**, in partnership with **World Vision**, held an orientation session for 200 Venezuelans on the process to request the PEP and their rights to accessing services in Colombia.

### 2.3 CHILDREN

- **Save the Children** assisted 264 children in its child friendly spaces located in Arauca in the settlements El Refugio, Brisas del Puente and Jerusalén, and 60 children in the child friendly space located in the Migrant Care Centre in the municipality of Maicao in La Guajira.
- **UNICEF** has 19 friendly spaces (fixed and mobile) in La Guajira, Arauca, Nariño and Atlántico, providing 7,293 children and adolescents and 2,800 adults psychosocial support and primary health care in October.
- **UNHCR** assisted with technical support and a donation to the Marist Brothers Home in Bogotá, which has served approximately 120 Venezuelan children since it opened its doors on July 12, 2018.
- In Riohacha, La Guajira, **UNHCR** started implementing the anti-xenophobic tool "[Mi Viaje](#)" in educational institutions and informal settlements, targeting 100 Colombian children. In Riohacha, La Guajira, "Mi Viaje" was piloted at the Riohacha Baptist School reaching 95 Venezuelan children and adolescents.

## 2.4 SEXUAL AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (SGBV)

- **The Colombian Red Cross** carried out 16 activities to promote non-violence in Norte de Santander, Arauca and Nariño.
- **UNICEF** conducted training workshops in the departments of La Guajira and Arauca for health personnel and local authorities, to raise awareness about SGBV and establish referral routes for victims of sexual violence, exploitation and trafficking of girls and adolescents in high risk and vulnerable situations.
- **UNHCR** prepared the first reception room for survivors of SGBV in the San Vicente de Arauca Hospital. During the last week of October, the first victims were treated by a psychologist and a social worker.

## 3. SOCIOECONOMIC AND CULTURAL INCLUSION

### 3.1 INCLUSION ACTIVITIES

- In Cúcuta, **World Vision** trained 100 people in entrepreneurship, market and financial studies. 45 economic productivity units were supported and the first fair was held with 16 of these units, with representatives of the Public Employment Agency of [SENA](#).
- In Cúcuta, **UNHCR** supported the establishment of a network of 23 solidarity homes in the neighbourhoods of Manuela Beltrán and Las Delicias which can receive up to 150 people. **UNHCR** assisted 21 people in the Casa de las Oportunidades, a specialised care space for people with specific protection needs.
- In Arauca, **UNHCR** carried out its first group workshop for job orientation attended by 92 people. In Riohacha, **UNHCR** started a livelihoods project for 50 Venezuelan women as part of an alliance with the Casa del Abuelo Foundation. In Medellín, **UNHCR** supported 144 families in their process for social inclusion by providing assistance to obtain their vocation of permanence in Colombia. In Quibdó, **UNHCR** led its first local integration initiative in which more than 100 Venezuelans and Colombians participated through a football sporting event.

### 3.2 PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

- Through its field offices **UNICEF**, collects information to identify cases and trends of discrimination and xenophobia. In specific cases, this information is shared with local authorities to take action.
- The **UNHCR** Somos Panas Colombia campaign had an organic reach of 3,300,524, as well as 486,634 interactions (for example, number of likes, comments and shares) and 35,190 followers.
- **UNHCR** conducted two sensitization and anti-xenophobia workshops, one for 70 local public officials and another for 20 journalists in Mocoa, on October 19 and 20.

## DATA AND ANALYSIS

- **WFP, FAO and UNICEF** conducted a joint study on food security and nutrition in Arauca, La Guajira and Norte de Santander. The results and recommendations of this study are being shared at both the national and local levels in several interagency forums, including the GIFMM, local coordination teams, and the working group for information management (REDLAC/OCHA).
- **IOM** officially presented the GIFMM members with the VISOR dashboard tool of the Venezuelan Administrative Registry (RAMV). The tool allows data analysis and assists with decision making regarding the situation of migrants and refugees.
- **IOM** carried out its first key findings of the DTM survey to the GIFMM members. This characterization survey will be of assistance for the humanitarian response to the migrant and refugee population.

## COORDINATION

The GIFMM functions as the strategic and operational coordination space in Colombia for refugees and migrants. It is co-led by UNHCR and IOM and has 38 members. The Group of Humanitarian Donors in Colombia also participate in this coordination forum. It is the national expression of the [Regional Platform](#) established by UNHCR and IOM following the decision of the Secretary General, and has six local branches in La Guajira, Arauca, Cesar, Nariño and Atlántico.

**For more information, please contact:**

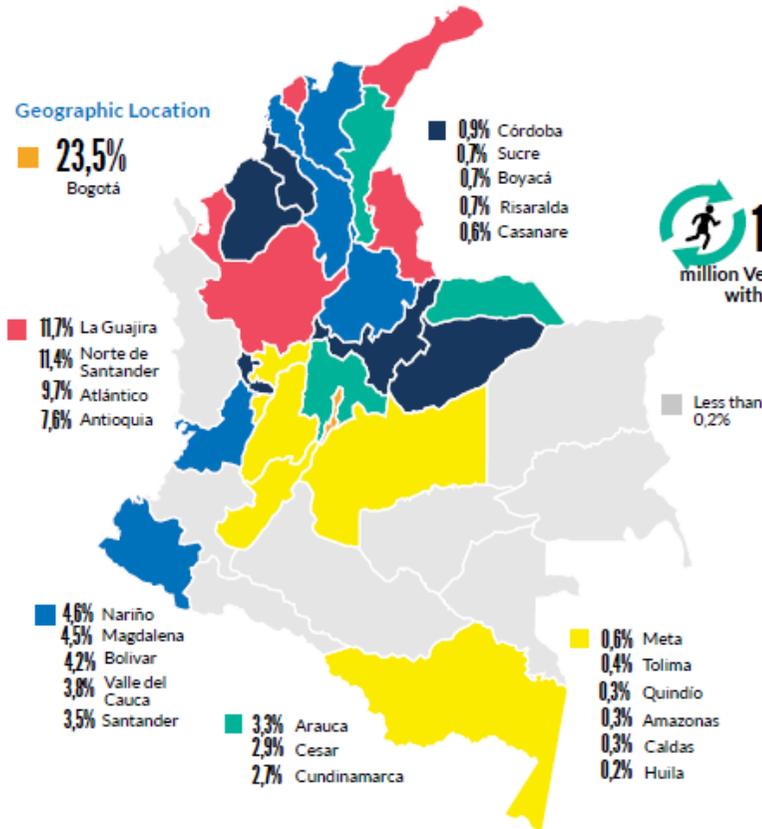
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# Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants

Date: 31 of October 2018

# 1,032,016

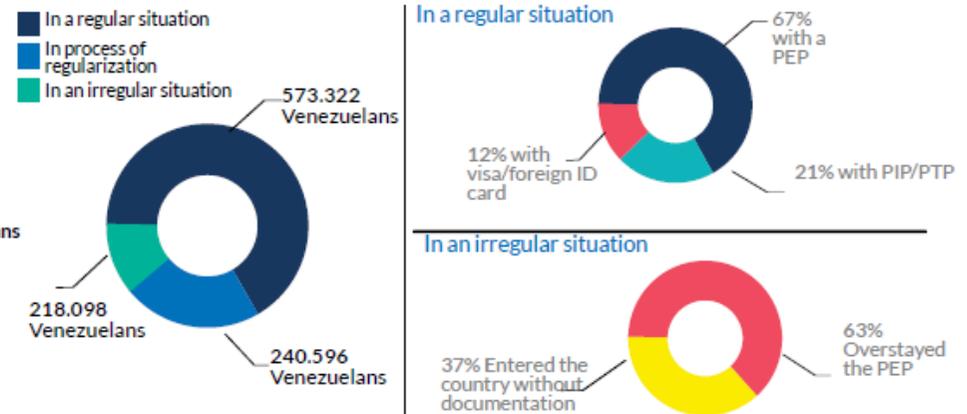
Venezuelans in Colombia



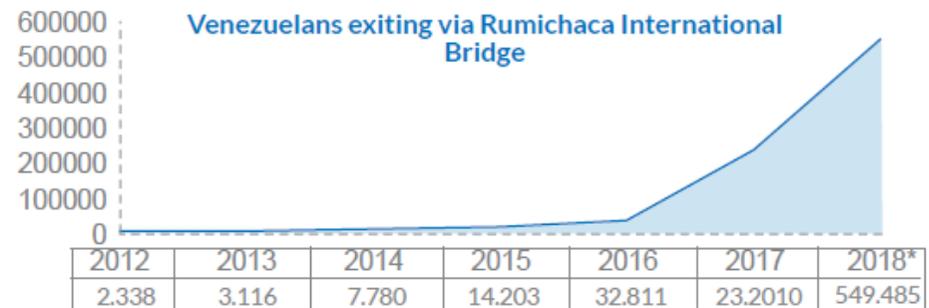
Colombia and Venezuela share a 2,219 km land border, along which there are 7 migratory control points and an undetermined number of informal crossing. Since 2015, the situation in Venezuela has caused an increase in the arrival of Venezuelan refugees and migrants to Colombia

Source: Data from Migracion Colombia

## Legal Status of Venezuelans with a Special Stay Permit



Note: Numbers as of 30 September 2018



Note: Numbers as of 15 October 2018