

# Southern Cone Situation Report

## July 2019

**Venezuelans** are the largest foreign group in **Chile** representing the 23% of the total foreign population in the country.

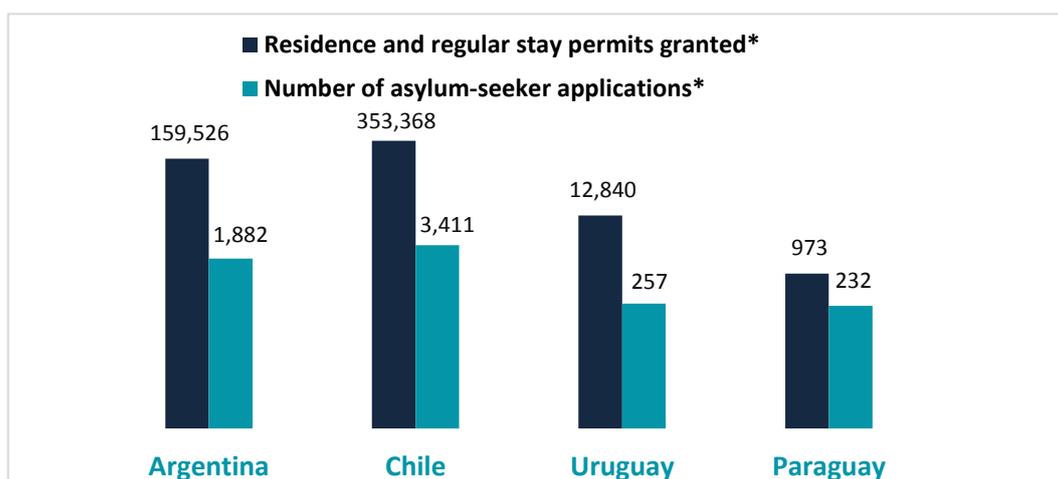
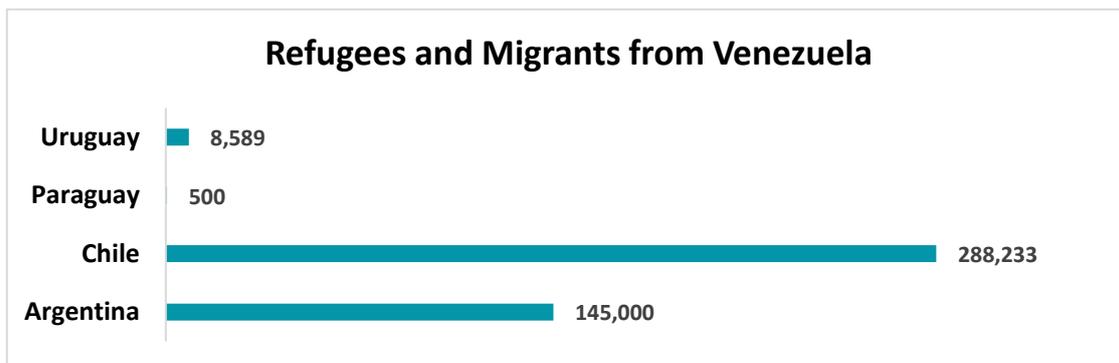
**The Quito IV** meeting took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina. As a result of the meeting, **11 countries** from Latin America and the Caribbean **signed the Joint Declaration** and **12 signed the Road Map**.

**Chile** approved Resolution No. 2.087, accepting the **validity of expired passports for Venezuelans**, based on the Quito Declaration. The country also introduced the **consular tourist visa** as a requirement to enter to the territory.

### KEY FIGURES<sup>1,2</sup>

#### Approximately 442.3 thousand

Venezuelans living in the Southern Cone



\*Cumulative figures

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> While official data for Chile is available until December 2018, other public sources have estimated that, until June 2019, the presence of Venezuelans in the country reaches approximately 400,000 people.

## OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

The countries that conform the Southern Cone are known for keeping an open-door policy towards refugees and migrants from Venezuela. Among other measures, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay and Chile have decided to recognize expired passports as valid documentation to enter, transit and exit their territories as recommended by the Quito Plan of Action.

In this sense, Argentina hosted the IV Technical Meeting of the Quito Process, also known as the Buenos Aires Chapter, on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of July. The forum focused on five main issues: the development of a regional travel document for Venezuelans; the fight against smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons; the importance of international cooperation; the support to the National Refugee Commissions and, the socioeconomic inclusion of Venezuelans into host communities. As a result of the meeting, 11 countries from Latin America and the Caribbean signed the Joint Declaration<sup>3</sup> and 12 signed the Road Map of the Buenos Aires Chapter<sup>4</sup>.

Despite the decision taken in April by the government of Chile to accept expired passports, in July the country introduced the consular tourist visa as a requirement for Venezuelans who wish to enter the territory. This decision followed the application of the Democratic Responsibility Visa introduced in February and has had a series of implications for Venezuelans on their capacity to access regularly to the territory and for asylum application.

The Venezuelan community in Chile represents the largest foreign group residing in the country, representing 23% of the total foreign population and displacing the Peruvians for the first time, according to a report published by the Ministry of Interior and Public Safety and the National Institute of Statistics.

The lack of information and requirements necessary for the processes of regularization and the stressed capacities of the governments of the Southern Cone to attend these requests have resulted in delays in the obtaining of documentation. Especially in Argentina, where the waiting time has gone up to up to ninety days, period during which Venezuelans remain with an irregular status.

Concerns about the well-being of children under the age of nine who do not have any travel documentation have risen in Argentina as they can start the process of regularization but a resolution cannot be reached without a nationality certificate that is provided by the Venezuelan Consulate only to those persons who hold a passport or an ID.

## 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.*

#### Direct emergency assistance/Basic Needs Essential Services

Due to the worsening of the economic conditions with which refugees and migrants from Venezuela arrive to the countries in the Southern Cone, **direct emergency assistance** continues to be provided to the most vulnerable. During the reporting period, platform partners provided humanitarian assistance to approximately **195 Venezuelans** through temporary accommodation, humanitarian transportation, food assistance, mental health and psychosocial support and the provision of non-food items. Out of the 195 Venezuelans provided with support, 148 were in Argentina and 47 were in Uruguay.

#### Monitoring and Assessment Tools

Given the importance of monitoring exercises to ensure refugees and migrants have equal access to and enjoyment of rights and services in host and transit countries, partners have developed tools for the collection and analysis of information relating to protection, rights and well-being of refugees and migrants of Venezuela. From April to July, **589**

<sup>3</sup> <https://data2.unhcr.org/es/documents/download/70300>

<sup>4</sup> <https://data2.unhcr.org/es/documents/download/70301>

**persons** have been reached with these monitoring and assessment tools in Argentina and **19 organizations** were reached with the results of previously developed ones. Out of the total of organizations reached with these tools, 6 are from public sector, 7 from the academia and 6 are NGOs.

Among the main findings of the reports, it can be highlighted that 50% of the interviewed finished university, 30% had been living in Argentina for 1 to 6 months and 28% for more than a year. Also, 52% of the Venezuelans interviewed said to be processing a temporary resident permit. In terms of socioeconomic integration, 40% of the respondents were unemployed, while approximately 40% of the total of Venezuelans employed, had informal jobs.

Partners in Paraguay have also started with the roll out of monitoring and assessment tools, so far reaching **115 persons** through interviews developed in July.

## Area of Intervention 2: Protection

*Strategic outcome: Refugees and migrants enjoy rights and protection.*

### Access to information

Partners in Argentina have been providing information on protection and service pathways to refugees and migrants from Venezuela on a regular basis. During the reporting months, **429 persons** were reached with **orientation and information** through three specialized centers that receive the support of partners to increase their capacities, located in the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, Misiones and Jujuy, respectively.

In Paraguay, an informative event took place in July, reaching **343 refugees and migrants from Venezuela** who received **information on public services** available to them. The event had the participation of the General Directorate of Migration, the Ministry of Women, the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Children. As part of this event, some persons were provided with medical care and vaccines.

### Legal counseling

Partners in Chile have reported that the number of cases of Venezuelans not being able to formally seek asylum has increased significantly. As a result, partners have improved the frequency of the legal counselling provided to Venezuelans to twice a week, in person and via telephone. Two outreach missions per month will take place in order to offer legal counseling in the metropolitan area and other regions. The missions have been successful in San Felipe and another one is taking place in a migrant center in Puente Alto, a neighborhood in Santiago.

## 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

One of the most pressing needs that have been identified in the Southern Cone is the access to livelihoods. In this sense, during the months of April and May, partners in Argentina have provided information, orientation and support to **9 Venezuelan entrepreneurs** in order to help them subsist on their own.

### Socio-economic inclusion

The socio-economic inclusion of Venezuelans into their host communities is key for their and the country's development. In this context, partners in Argentina have provided trainings and information on opportunities available in the job market and how to access social services, such as health and education. During the reporting period, partners reached approximately **2360 refugees and migrants** of Venezuela.

### Anti-xenophobia and anti-discrimination initiatives

Partners in Argentina and Chile have developed several actions to fight against discrimination and xenophobia. In Argentina, two concert featuring Latin Vox Machine, a Venezuelan orchestra, were organized in May and June,

respectively. The concerts were attended by approximately **3600 persons**. In Chile, communication actions have been developed towards this objective, reaching approximately **1000 persons** so far.

## 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.*

### Capacity building

Partners in the Southern Cone constantly support government agencies to increase their ability to offer support to refugees and migrants from Venezuela with specific needs. During the reporting period, partners in Argentina provided **63 public officials** with **trainings** on standards and practices of assistance, protection and integration.

### Technical and material support

In the context of the IV Meeting of the Quito Process that took place in Buenos Aires in July, technical and financial support was provided by partners to the government of Argentina for the development of the meeting and its tools.

In Uruguay, on the other hand, support was provided to the National Migration Board through its technical secretariat to better their inter-institutional response coordination; and, regular support has been provided to the Directorate General of Consular Affairs for the issuance of resident permits to Venezuelans, **407 Venezuelans initiated their regularization process** in July, through the support provided to the government. Also, a **set of tools** for teachers to work in the **inclusion of migrant children** and a **systematization of good practices** on the same topic was presented to the National Administration of Public Education of Uruguay in June.

## REGIONAL COORDINATION

During the month of April, two meetings of the National Coordination Platform took place. During the second meeting, the Terms of Reference of the Platform were shared with the partners. In Uruguay, the second meeting of the National Coordination Platform took place in May, during this meeting, the monitoring and financial tools were shared with partners. In Chile, on the other hand, the first official meeting took place in May and a reporting tool was put in place among the partners (4W).

The Mid-Year Report process was completed by the National Platforms in due time and consolidated into a Sub Regional report which reflects the activities and the impacts reached during the period.

## 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

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Paraguay: IOM | Semillas para la Democracia | UNHCR

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