

Venezuela

1. Poverty Rate Determined by Unmet Basic Needs:

Total poverty rate (96.2%), extreme poverty (79.3%), multidimensional poverty (64.8%)¹

2. Migration Data:

- **Emigration:** Because of the humanitarian crisis affecting the country, there has occurred an exodus² of 5,180,615 people, largely bound for Colombia (1,754,884), Peru (829,708), Chile (455,494), Ecuador (362,857), United States (351,144), and Argentina (179,069).
 - Many women lead the migratory project and travel autonomously, 70% of this group declares themselves as not in a relationship.³
 - It is estimated that approximately 1.1 million are children and adolescents, this includes both those who emigrate with families as well as those who travel alone.⁴
- **Immigration:**
 - In the 70s, 80s, and 90s, Venezuela was a pole of attraction for migrants arriving from Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador, Perú, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, as well as from other continents. They were economic and political migrants. Toward the end of the 1980s, those immigrants totaled 1,074,629 people, a figure that represented 7.4% of the total population. Due to the crisis, foreigners have returned to their countries of origin or to third countries.
- **Refugees Received:**

¹ National Survey of Life Conditions 2019/2020. <https://www.proyectoencovi.com/informe-interactivo-2019>.

² Regional Interagency Coordination Platform for Venezuelan Migrants and Refugees. <https://r4v.info/en/situations/platform>.

³ The marital status of women travelers is: 43.6% single; 18.7% married; 11.4% separated; 10.10% divorced; 11.2% live in de facto union; and 5% are widows. For more information on the marital status of woman migrants consult: Equalities in Action Coalition (2019); Woman on the edge; The weight of the humanitarian emergency; Vulnerability of human rights of women in Venezuela; Caracas: Centro de Justicia y Paz (Cepaz), Freya, Avesa, and Mujeres en línea.

⁴ United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2019). Venezuela migrant crisis: 1.1 million children across the region will need assistance in 2019, up from nearly half a million today – UNICEF. <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/venezuela-migrant-crisis-11-million-children-across-region-will-need-assistance-2019>.

- Refugees – 8,892; asylum seekers – 49; people recognized as in situations similar to refugee status – 58,826.⁵
 - **Deported Nationals Received:**
 - The United States deported on average one Venezuelan every day of 2019; Colombia deported 2,387 between 2014 and 2017;⁶ Brazil 1,200 people in August 2018;⁷ there were registered other expulsions that violate international agreements on human rights, coming from Peru, Ecuador, Chile, and other countries of the region.
 - **Returning Citizens:**
 - Within the framework of the Plan Vuelta a la Patria [Plan Return to the Homeland], implemented by the Venezuelan government, through the 10th of February, 2020 a total of 17,522 have returned (Brazil 7,285, Peru 4,259, Ecuador 3,242, Colombia 764, Dominican Republic 366, Argentina 434, Chile 1,136, Panamá 35, and Uruguay 1).⁸
- 3. Covid-19 Infections (through the 20th of August, 2020):⁹**
- a. Registered cases: 38,219
 - b. Percentage of cases as portion of population: 0.132%
 - c. Deaths: 317
- 4. State Measures:**
- a. Plan Vuelta a la Patria: to address the necessity that Venezuelans, finding themselves in vulnerable situations in host-countries, return to Venezuela.¹⁰
 - b. In the context of Covid-19, the Venezuelan government implemented the Points of Comprehensive Social Attention (PASI),¹¹ in principle, established conditioned spaces to host returning nationals during the two weeks of

⁵ ACNUR (2020). Info sheet.

https://www.acnur.org/op/op_fs/5e5ecadb4/acnur-venezuela-hoja-informativa-enero-de-2020.html.

⁶ *El Tiempo* (30th of March 2017). In figures: Venezuelan immigration to Colombia.

<https://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/otras-ciudades/la-inmigracion-de-venezolanos-a-colombia-en-cifras-73006>.

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<https://latinamericanpost.com/es/22928-miles-de-venezolanos-son-deportados-de-estos-paises-latinoamericanos>.

⁸ Ministry of Popular Power for Exterior Relations (2020). Vuelta a la Patria Bulletin. Updated figures:

http://mppre.gob.ve/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/2020-02-10_Bolet%C3%ADn_Vuelta_a_la_Patria.pdf.

⁹ John Hopkins University (2020). "Corona Virus Resource Centre". <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>.

¹⁰ Ministerio del Poder Popular para las Relaciones Exteriores de Venezuela. <http://mppre.gob.ve/temas/vuelta-a-la-patria/>

¹¹ Ministerio del Poder Popular para las Relaciones Exteriores de Venezuela.

<http://mppre.gob.ve/temas/vuelta-a-la-patria/>.

isolation established by the government; this as part of the epidemiological quarantine activated to contain the spread of the virus within the national territory.

- c. On the 20th of August, 2020, the government of Venezuela restricted the entry of Venezuelan citizens through the border passages in the state of Táchira, asking that the the high number of people who are in this entity comply with isolation measures.

5. Migrant Situation Alerts:

Emigrant Venezuelans

Before the Pandemic

- Due to the complex humanitarian emergency that affects Venezuela as well as the massive exodus, many foreign migrants have left, and it is unknown if there are government programs directed at this population. The agencies of the United Nations (ACNUR, OIM), humanitarian aid organizations, and international cooperation (HIAS, NRC, SJR, among others), incorporate this population, mainly refugees in Venezuela, into their programs.
- Almost half of the Venezuelan migrants in neighboring countries of the Andean region (Colombia, Peru, and Ecuador) found themselves in irregular conditions, which limited the possibility that government programs in the receiving countries might attend to them. It should be added that labor precarity was larger than the local population, which impedes access to unemployment insurance, healthcare, and other types of benefits.
- Before COVID-19, in Colombia, 64% of migrants earned less than the minimum salary. In Peru, more than 86% were receiving salaries of less than the minimum, and 60% did not have resources to cover two days of expenses. In Ecuador, large percentage of the Venezuelan migrant population live in poverty.¹²
- In the Andean countries, the Venezuelan migrant population concentrates itself in the service sector: retail, restaurants, hotels, and the construction sector. They also participate in informal work, or as “essential” workers.
- Before the measures to combat COVID-19, the deportations continued, as 130 people were deported from the US.¹³

¹² Abuelafia, Emmanuel (2020). Migración en la región andina: Impacto de la crisis y expectativas en el mediano plazo. Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo.

¹³ Noticias Telemundo (13 de marzo de 2020). Una isla caribeña es la puerta trasera de ICE para deportar a venezolanos.

<https://www.telemundo.com/noticias/2020/03/13/una-isla-caribena-es-la-puerta-trasera-de-ice-para-deportar-venezolanos-tmna3719290>

During the Pandemic

- A growing number of Venezuelans have no alternative than considering returning to Venezuela in an unregulated and potentially dangerous fashion that carries significant health risks. Venezuelans throughout the region now face hunger, the lack of access to medical attention, lack of housing, lack of access to medical care, and xenophobia. It must also be noted, in the case of Venezuelan women and children, there exists danger of gender violence, stigmatization, exploitation, and sexual abuse.¹⁴
- In the context of COVID-19, through the 23rd of June 2020, 334 people of Venezuelan nationality have been deported from Colombia for not abiding by minimum standards of biosecurity.¹⁵
- Since the closing of the border this last 14th of March 2020, close to 100,000 Venezuelan citizens have returned voluntarily to their country and close to 40,000 more are hoping to be able to do so, according to Migración Colombia (August 2020).¹⁶
- In Inter-American Commission on Human Rights rejected the discrimination that returning Venezuelan citizens are suffering, including by high-ranking officials in the Venezuelan government, who have incurred stigmatizing declarations in the context of COVID-19, signaling that they return because of “karma” or they call them “fascists and camouflaged coup plotters,” who do not deserve assistance.¹⁷
- The quarantine measures implemented by the Venezuelan government and the Points of Comprehensive Social Attention (PASI), end up being ineffective in protecting the population, both returned citizens, as well as the general public, since isolation in crowded conditions and the need for returnees to go out to meet basic needs, ends up being counterproductive.¹⁸
- The sectors of Andean countries where greater reductions in economic activity are expected include: retail, restaurants, hotels, and the construction sector, where we find the

¹⁴ Noticias ONU (12 de mayo de 2020). Los refugiados y migrantes venezolanos tienen cada vez más dificultades para sobrevivir en medio de la pandemia. <https://news.un.org/es/story/2020/05/1474222>.

¹⁵ Proyecto Migración Venezuela (23 de junio de 2020). <https://migravenezuela.com/web/articulo/colombia-ha-deportado-a-334-venezolanos-por-incumplir-normas-durante-la-pandemia/1995>.

¹⁶ Proyecto Migración Venezuela (August 20th, 2020). Venezuela suspende retorno de migrantes por el puente Simón Bolívar. <https://migravenezuela.com/web/articulo/venezuela-suspende-retorno-de-migrantes-por-el-puente-simon-bolivar/2102>.

¹⁷ Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (2020). CIDH llama a los Estados a garantizar derechos de personas venezolanas que retornan a Venezuela ante la pandemia del COVID-19. <http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/prensa/comunicados/2020/112.asp>.

¹⁸ CEPAZ (2020). Retornados son perseguidos y estigmatizados en tiempos de pandemia. <https://cepaz.org/articulos/retornados-son-perseguidos-y-estigmatizados-en-tiempos-de-pandemia/>

largest concentration of Venezuelan migrant workers. The same occurs within the informal economy.

- An increased proportion of the migrant population lives in situations of housing precarity, at the same time there has been an increase in evictions suffered by this same group for inability to pay rent.
- The enduring policies of migration control on the borders might incentivize human trafficking networks, criminal organizations that profit from unregulated crossing between countries.

4. Social Responses

Migrant Resistance

In Venezuela, returned citizens have taken to protest within the context of COVID-19, the protests take place at the Points of Comprehensive Social Attention, due to deficient food, hygiene, and sanitation needs that exist in the shelters, as they demand to be allowed to return to their homes.

Migrant resistance in Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru has centered on demanding that they be allowed to enter Venezuela, due to the existing restrictions within the context of COVID-19.

Solidarity Networks

- Networks have been developed in all countries, some made up of humanitarian aid organizations and non-governmental organizations that already existed in host countries, in addition to developing others directly linked to Venezuelan migration. In Colombia, we should mention: Asociación Ávila Monserrate, Somos Panas Colombia, Venezolanos por decisión, Venezolanos en Colombia, among others. In Peru, la Unión Venezolana en Perú, Venezolanos en Perú, among others. In Ecuador, Chamos Venezolanos, Casa del Migrante Buen Samaritano, Venmundo-Ecuador, among others. In Chile, la Asociación Venezolana en Chile, and Venmundo-Chile.

Xenophobia

- In Colombia, toward the end of November 2019 there have been situations of looting and vandalism for which the migrant population was blamed, which caused a sharp increase in xenophobia. The unfavorable opinion of the Venezuelan migration in Colombia peaked with the triggering of the pandemic in April. Since then, it has returned to pre-epidemic values. Two thirds of the Colombian population hold an unfavorable view of people who come to stay.
- In Peru, according to a survey by the Institute of Peruvian Studies (IEP) conducted in June 2019, 73% of Peruvians consulted disapprove of Venezuelan migration, especially for economic and labor reasons—they fear that Venezuelans will take away their

jobs—as well as fears of increased crime and insecurity. This situation has been exacerbated by the pandemic.

- Ecuador, in a hearing of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights entitled “Situation of human rights of Venezuelan migrants in Ecuador”, representatives of Ecuadorian civil society who participated warned of an increase in cases of xenophobia towards the Venezuelan diaspora.
- With relation to Venezuelan migrant women, xenophobia is compounded by stigmatization, which implies an increased risk. In an investigation carried out by OXFAM between February and July 2019 in Colombia, Peru and Ecuador, it was concluded: “Close to half of the population consulted in the three countries thinks that migrant women will end up practicing prostitution. While reproducing sexist roles, this adds to the overprotection of women and their responsibility to be careful, which facilitates the violation of their rights.”
- In other countries of the region like Brazil, Panama, and the Dominican Republic, among others, there have occurred episodes and xenophobic messages against the Venezuelan migrant population.