Annual Report
Sérgio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair (SVMAC)
**Contents**

- Presentation ................................................................. 3
- Introduction and Objectives ........................................... 6
- SVMAC in Times of COVID-19 ........................................... 8
- Teaching ........................................................................ 10
- Research ....................................................................... 16
- Extension ...................................................................... 17
- Supporting Programs ...................................................... 22
- Events ........................................................................ 23
- Advocacy ...................................................................... 24
- Publications by SVMAC Members in 2020 ......................... 25
Dear colleagues,

It is with great joy that we approach another National Seminar held by the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair. This event is a unique opportunity to celebrate the achievements of a network that is of paramount importance to strengthen protection mechanisms and the search for solutions to those who seek asylum in Brazil. Higher Education Institutions have proven to be essential allies to the UNHCR Operation in the country, especially when it comes to the production of knowledge and provision of services to the community. In the field of teaching, these institutions have collaborated with the dissemination of knowledge on asylum and by offering disciplines focused on the human rights of displaced populations. In the research field, the existing research groups elaborate analyses and studies addressing global forced displacement from the perspective of the Brazilian reality, contributing with innovative solutions to the problems currently faced by refugees. The various extension projects developed in the universities have also collaborated with the insertion of refugees and asylum seekers not only in the academic community, but also in host communities, benefiting thousands of people.

Even though this is a moment for celebration, it is also important to shed light on some worrying situations.

The first of which is the current forced displacement scenario in the world. The recent edition of UNHCR's Global Trends Report, published in June 2020, shows that 79.5 million people have been forced to leave their homes as a result of persecution, conflicts, and human rights violations worldwide. This number has increased by almost 10 million in one year, reflecting a global increase in human rights violations. In this context, it is important to highlight the Venezuelan situation, which we face with the great support offered by all SVMAC, our UNHCR colleagues from our offices in Belém, Brasília, Boa Vista, Manaus, Pacaraima, and São Paulo, and the help of civil society, the private sector, and the Brazilian government.

The second situation is the global pandemic caused by COVID-19. The possibility of contamination and the social distancing measures recommended by municipal, state, and federal instances – which sought to prevent the spreading of the disease
– have transformed the natural dynamics of our work and the services provided by our partners, forcing us to be more creative in order to adapt to an environment that is less favorable to the socioeconomic insertion of the people we protect, while always seeking to safeguard their rights. The challenges were many, but gradually, and thanks to the dedication of all of our teams and partners, we have been improving our performance on a daily basis, always making sure that no one is left behind.

While the challenges are many, we do not feel discouraged! The protection of refugees and asylum seekers is our main goal and, as is shown throughout the report, we count with a wide and active network of professors and students who not only dedicate their lives to teaching and developing research on asylum-related matters, but also provide services to those who need their support. We extend our deepest gratitude to each of these men and women, and remain certain of the continuous strengthening and renewal of these partnerships!


José Egas
UNHCR Representative in Brazil
The protection of refugees and asylum seekers is our main goal and, as is shown throughout the report, we count with a wide and active network of professors and students who not only dedicate their lives to teaching and developing research on asylum-related matters, but also provide services to those who need their support.”

José Egas
UNHCR Representative in Brazil
Introduction and Objectives

The Sérogo Vieira de Mello Academic Chair (SVMAC) is a shared initiative by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and various higher education institutions (HEIs) in Brazil. The network is considered fundamental to guarantee that refugees and asylum seekers have access to rights and services in Brazil and are supported throughout their local integration.

The SVMAC is an important protection tool which creates and constantly strengthens a network of higher education institutions. It allows HEIs to coordinate efforts to protect refugees by sharing information and fostering good practices. The universities act via their undergraduate and/or postgraduate courses, and in the fields of teaching, research and extension, seeking to strengthen inclusive approaches and protective education, and develop applied research to consolidate the access and inclusion of refugees in the universities, also providing means for a peaceful coexistence with host communities in general.

OBJECTIVES:

a. Establish a university network to support refugees and asylum seekers in all Brazilian regions, seeking to promote partnerships, safeguard protection, provide quality education, and facilitate access to services and academic teaching;

b. Raise awareness, empower and contribute to building capacity about International Refugee Law, International Human Rights Law, and International Humanitarian Law, among university professors and students, seeking to raise-awareness and promote educational activities on asylum-related matters;

c. Encourage research, production of scientific knowledge, and the dissemination of academic works, strengthening the elaboration and dissemination of knowledge among university students;

d. Incorporate the provision of services to refugees, by offering volunteer services and providing community services within the HEIs and in their areas of coverage.
Higher Education Institutions

Up until August 2020, the SVMAC counted with 23 MEMBER-HEIs
SVMAC in Times of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented several challenges to society as a whole, affecting the daily lives of all Brazilian citizens. These challenges are even greater for people who are in the process of - forced or voluntary – movement, many of whom were displaced due political and socioeconomic difficulties in their countries of origin, and had no other option but to seek international protection in Brazil.

Refugees and asylum seekers have strived to overcome the instability caused by the pandemic in the Brazilian context. Many felt that it became more difficult to access public services. Language is also commonly mentioned as a significant barrier, considering that most newly arrived refugees and migrants have limited Portuguese skills, which creates additional challenges for their socioeconomic integration. Even refugees who had previously been able to access the job market are currently losing their jobs or dealing with uncertainty, and many had to seek alternatives of income generation. The permanent presence of children at home is also very demanding for refugee parents, who might be also facing a risk of eviction as a consequence of economic hardship. This complex scenario may worsen the already delicate mental health of the refugee population.

The universities part of the SVMAC also had to deal with quite a few challenges imposed by the pandemic. According to our affiliated HEIs, all classes and face-to-face activities had to be suspended due to the need for social distancing. This created the difficulty of having to transfer all classes and activities to online environments, which was especially difficult considering that most refugees and asylum seekers do not have constant internet access, necessary for using e-learning platforms and/or other platforms used by the SVMAC to offer remote services.

Several support activities offered to refugees have been interrupted as a direct consequence of the pandemic. These included the cancelling of admission processes that would allow refugees to access the HEIs, and the provision of services by university extension projects, meaning that the assisted population was not able to receive the same level of care.

The referral pathways offered by the HEIs – or by the City Halls who work together with the SVMAC network – also suffered, since many of these services had to be
interrupted or reduced. The SVMAC-member institutions also noticed an increase in the reporting of formal employment dismissals and difficulties in continuing informal work by the refugee population.

The pandemic became a milestone in the assessment of the quality of life and the rights safeguarded to refugees in Brazil. The current situation forced HEIs to rethink their role and how to reach the refugee population through the SVMAC network.

Many HEIs carried out active searches and offered support for the digital inclusion of the most vulnerable individuals, in order to facilitate their participation in remote activities. The HEIs also directed their efforts to maintaining student grants. Some institutions even engaged in active dialogue with public defenders to support refugees in requesting the emergency aid offered by the Federal Government during the pandemic.

Some HEIs took the opportunity to verify what changed in the refugees and asylum seekers demands, and made adaptations to improve the services offered. Efforts were also made towards the democratization of access to information during this period, with many institutions reaching out and engaging with the population through previously little-used channels, like social networks (Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp).

The Rio de Janeiro State University (UERJ), for example, has published a weekly newsletter about the COVID-19 pandemic with information about the situation in the state, in the country and in the world, focusing on other countries that receive large refugee flows. This material (summarized news articles, links, and audios) is weekly posted via WhatsApp by the pedagogical coordination of the Caritas Archdiocese of Rio de Janeiro, reaching asylum seekers and refugees enrolled in the “Portuguese with Refugees” course offered by the institution. The initiative considers that many individuals are not able to access other communication platforms, considering that WhatsApp does not affect the data limits of the user’s 3G or 4G cellphone internet plans.

Internet access was also the motto for the “Conectate” project, carried out by the UFRR, which has already benefited 300 Venezuelans, Haitians and Cubans. Meanwhile, the UFES institution has distributed food baskets to approximately 2,000 people from various nationalities (Venezuelans, Cubans, Syrians, Lebanese, Congolese, and Angolans) in partnership with the “Ninho” project.
A series of live sessions and webinars addressing the themes of human rights and asylum were also held, and many of which can be accessed at acnur.org/portugues/catedra-sergio-vieira-de-mello/eventos.

Teaching

The SVMAC also disseminates asylum and human rights-related themes through its teaching activities. The network offers classes on International Humanitarian Law, International Human Rights Law and International Refugee Law.

The academic training and capacity-building of professors and students are only possible through teaching activities. It is also through these activities that refugees and asylum seekers gain access to HEIs and the services offered by them, such as support in the revalidation of diplomas and specific admission processes aimed at the refugee population.

CLASSES OFFERED

Between 2019 and 2020 the Higher Education Institutions that make up the SVMAC have offered postgraduate/undergraduate classes related to asylum. Approximately 83 classes were offered at the undergraduate level and another 66 at the postgraduate level.

A wide range of students and courses are covered by the SVMAC, which not only confirms asylum as an interdisciplinary topic, but also shows the efforts made towards promoting it. Classes on asylum-related matters are currently offered in the courses of Anthropology, Arts, Political Science, Social Sciences, Communication, Social Communication, Law, International Public Law, Economics, Education, Geography, History, Portuguese, Medicine, Pedagogy, Public Policy, Psychology, International Relations, Public Health, Public Safety, Social Work, Occupational Therapy and Tourism. While it is true that several universities had to interrupt their teaching activities in 2020 as a result of the pandemic, these activities are expected to return either in the second half of 2020 or in early 2021.
It is important to emphasize that, in spite of the situation caused by the pandemic, teaching activities offered by the HEIs usually have a wide reach. In Unicamp, for example, classes related to the SVMAC have no prerequisites, and any student enrolled in the university can attend them. PUC-Minas, in turn, offers a module on Migration, Asylum and Human Rights in the postgraduate courses offered by the Social Work and Social Sciences departments. UFSM offers classes such as International Public Law, Communication and Citizenship, Human Rights and International Human Mobility, Ethnic and Racial Studies, Migration Studies, and International Protection of Human Rights. Univali university, in turn, offers a professional master’s program focused on discussing the regulation of the migratory and forced displacement phenomena. Classes on asylum-related issues are also offered by the Education, Psychology, and Collective Health departments at UniSantos university. Together, the SVMAC institutions are able to encourage discussions on the right to seek asylum and the situation of refugees that encompass the most diverse areas of knowledge.
FACILITATED ADMISSION

The facilitated process of admission to higher education is an initiative by the HEIs that considers the situation of vulnerability faced by many refugees, and offers specific university spots for refugees, asylum seekers and/or migrants in vulnerable situations.

Between 2019 and 2020, 14 universities had facilitated admission procedures in place for undergraduate and graduate studies, 11 of which offered specific admission processes for refugees. Together, the SVMAC institutions were able to secure about 383 exclusive spots for refugees and asylum seekers in undergraduate courses.

Currently, 329 refugees and asylum seekers are completing their undergraduate studies in a HEI, 9 are getting their master’s and 1 is carrying out doctoral studies. The number of students from these groups who were admitted through the general procedure may be even higher. Some universities have also reported that current online enrollment records do not include this classification, making it difficult to identify refugee students who are currently part of the academic environment.
This year, UNIFESP conducted its first admission process that included specific spots for refugees in undergraduate courses - 14 students were selected in five different courses. The UFPR institution has two different admission procedures for refugees. The first, held since 2014, is specific for re-enrollment. This procedure allows refugees to re-enroll to complete the studies they started in their countries of origin by occupying remaining spots after the general admission process. The second procedure, approved in 2018, is an adapted admission test that offers 10 additional spots for refugees in which the applicants are able to choose their course of interest upon admission. 115 students have already enrolled in the UFPR through these procedures, 60 students are currently enrolled in the UFRGS, and 37 are enrolled in the UFES through the same method.

**REVALIDATION OF DIPLOMAS**

The local integration of refugees is more successful in contexts where there are opportunities to take advantage of their previous training and education. The profile of refugees in Brazil is diverse, and many individuals hold university diplomas.

The SVMAC has engaged in establishing validation procedures that are sensitive to the specific situation faced by this population. This means that the procedures consider issues related to language barriers or lack of documentation proving academic qualifications.

The revalidation of diplomas allows refugees to find better employment opportunities and achieve self-sufficiency. Furthermore, by having the possibility to continue developing their life projects and educational/professional aspirations, refugees can actively contribute to their host communities, also promoting local development.

In order for a diploma issued by a foreign institution to be recognized as valid in Brazil, the applicant must submit a series of documents to a Brazilian public university. The university is then responsible for analyzing whether or not that diploma may amount to a valid curriculum in Brazil. The SVMAC has created specific revalidation procedures for the refugee population, so that refugees are able to find employment consistent with their academic backgrounds or continue their academic studies.

Article 14 of Normative Decree No. 22, issued by the Ministry of Education in
December of 2016, recognizes the difficulties of those who were forced to leave their homes, often without time to gather the required documents, and makes provisions for refugees living in Brazil to have access to a facilitated process and to the opportunity of taking advantage of previously obtained academic achievements. The states of São Paulo (Law No. 16,685/2018), Rio de Janeiro (Law No. 8,020/2018) and Paraná (Law No. 19,830/2019) have also passed legislations that determine an exemption from the payment of revalidation fees by refugees who live in those states.

The revalidation of diplomas by federal universities can currently be initiated in three different ways, one of which is in-person and two of which are online. The in-person revalidation, which involves the delivery of physical documents to the university, is used by five universities. The first online format is through the SEI System (Electronic Information System), and the second is through the Carolina Bori Platform for the management of revalidation processes. Three universities currently use the SEI system, and eight universities currently use the Carolina Bori platform. It should be noted that the same university can use more than one system.

Since June 2019, 76 diplomas held by refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons, or humanitarian visas holders have been revalidated by universities affiliated to the SVMAC. The universities with the highest numbers of revalidated diplomas in 2020 were: UFF (22), UFPR (21) and UNICAMP (19).

The diplomas revalidated in 2020 corresponded to various courses, including Administration, Visual Arts, Biological Sciences, Law, Physical Education, Forest Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Pharmacy, Physics, Geography, French, Nutrition, Dentistry and Pedagogy.

**Eight universities** affiliated to the SVMAC currently have a specific program or process to facilitate the revalidation of diplomas held by refugees, stateless persons, asylum seekers or humanitarian visa holders. The revalidation of undergraduate diplomas obtained abroad is made more flexible through these procedures when, e.g., required documentation is lacking. This situation is then justified and compensatory proof can be presented. The curricular schedule of the completed course needs to be presented for the equivalence analysis.

Regardless of the applicability of a state decree for the revalidation of diplomas
held by refugees, **11 universities** reported the existence of extension projects or support groups within the university that offer documentation support so that this population can engage in the revalidation process.

The nationalities of these refugees are diverse, including Venezuelan, Syrian, Haitian and Congolese people.

One of UNHCR’s main goals in Brazil is to expand the opportunities for the revalidation of diplomas, since the Agency recognizes the importance of people having the opportunity of exercising their original occupations. UNHCR and the Compassiva NGO have been working to support refugees in this process since 2016. Out of the 16 HEIs that indicated having procedures for the revalidation of diplomas (facilitated or not), four were supported by the Compassiva NGO. The UFF reports that the support of the Compassiva NGO was essential for the revalidation of at least 75% of the diplomas recognized this year.

### Revalidation of diplomas of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers in HEIs affiliated to the SVMAC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Diplomas Revalidated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

© UNHCR / Felipe Irnaldo
Research

The research aspect of the SVMAC encourages and promotes themes related to the protection and local integration of refugees in Brazil and in the world. The HEIs are responsible for disseminating and promoting the theme of international protection through curricular and extracurricular activities, including public conferences, participation in seminars, publications, and the offering of research grants for students and professors.

The generation of data results in a greater understanding of the socio-cultural dynamics, which impacts local integration and the elaboration of public policies for refugees, in addition to giving more visibility to asylum-related issues among the academic community, civil society, and the general public. Several dissemination and awareness-raising programs are carried out by the SVMAC network in partnership with UNHCR, many of which take the form of training activities and joint capacity-building events for actors involved in receiving and facilitating the integration of refugees and asylum seekers in the country.

It has been reported that the 23 HEIs from the SVMAC have over 45 research groups that focus on international protection, asylum, or related topics, with lines of study that address migration in general or focus on the issues faced by refugees and asylum seekers. The UNHCR also encourages researching activities and the production and dissemination of qualitative data on the refugee population in Brazil by carrying out partnerships with civil society, the academic community and public institutions. The aforementioned research groups are composed by 565 researchers including undergraduates (225), graduates (122), masters and doctoral students (89) and doctors (129). Currently, 164 researchers from these groups receive research grants from state and federal funding institutions.

In 2019, a study on the socioeconomic profile of refugees in Brazil was published as a result of the research activities promoted by the SVMAC professors, and the data generated by them. Another study, entitled “The Economy in the City of Roraima and the Venezuelan Migrants: Evidence and Bases for the Development of Public Policies”¹, published by the UFRR institution, may also be mentioned.

¹ More information about publications by UNHCR can be found at: acnur.org/portugues/publicacoes/
Extension

University extension is an interdisciplinary process that promotes interaction between the HEIs and other sectors of society. It is an educational, cultural, scientific and political process that transforms and is transformed by the social sectors with which it interacts.

Extension has a direct impact on the lives of refugees and asylum seekers, and is one of the most immediate tools for safeguarding protection. Extension activities provide support and assistance networks for vulnerable individuals, greater local integration, and promote the peaceful coexistence between refugees and host populations. For the universities, it is an excellent way of allowing future professionals to have contact with other cultures, which is essential for professional growth.

This report touches on extension projects related to the following themes:

a. Health Services  
b. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support  
c. Portuguese Classes  
d. Legal Advice  
e. Integration into the Job Market

HEALTH SERVICES

Both the Federal Constitution of 1988 and Law No. 9,474/97 address the refugee’s right to access the public health system. Effective access to this right is one of the main challenges faced by the refugee population.

Every year, the number of HEIs connected to the SVMAC and offering complementary services to support the physical and mental health of the refugee population increases. These services are provided by various undergraduate or postgraduate courses, mainly in the departments of Health Care, Medicine and Psychology.

Some examples of the services available are: access to clinics in hospitals maintained by HEIs, primary and dental care services offered by the university community,

roex.ufsc.br/files/2016/04/Pol%C3%ADtica-Nacional-de-Extens%C3%A3o-Universit%C3%A1ria-e-book.pdf
emergency care and referrals to other health departments. The SVMAC universities also offer awareness-raising and capacity-building activities to health managers and professionals. **Six universities** offered these types of services in 2020, assisting about 36 individuals.

**MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT**

Forced displacement situations are intrinsically complicated and can often cause or deepen traumas for the people who experience them. Access to mental health and psychosocial support are fundamental for the well-being and empowerment of refugees and asylum seekers. Mental health services are essential so that people can feel prepared to rebuild their lives in Brazil. One of UNHCR's efforts is the prevention and mitigation of the medium- and long-term risks and consequences related to mental and psychosocial health.

In 2020, **13 HEIs** have offered services related to mental and psychosocial health. The referral to these services is usually carried out by civil society partner organizations. The HEIs are a fundamental element of this inclusion and support network for the integration and protection of the refugee population. Over **485** people benefitted from the services offered by the HEIs in 2020.

The Suicide Combat Working Group of the City of Vitória, in Espírito Santo, has been developing a suicide prevention project in partnership with UFES. This project aims to implement awareness-raising and suicide prevention activities that use interpreters to translate back and forth from the individuals' native languages.

**PORTUGUESE CLASSES**

Learning the Portuguese language is one of the greatest immediate challenges faced by the refugee population newly-arrived in Brazil. This language barrier tends to hinder the insertion into the job market and the development of social relationships. Learning Portuguese is, without a doubt, decisive not only for integration, but also for protection, since local services and networks are usually only Portuguese-speaking.

It is through language learning that other integration objectives can be more efficiently achieved, like the search for a formal job, access to public health and
education services, and knowledge of social and labor rights. For this reason, the HEIs part of the SVMAC are encouraged to offer free language classes – especially Portuguese classes – to the refugees, regardless of whether they are already enrolled in the university or not.

A textbook entitled “Passarela” was published by the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR), considering the need for the linguistic and academic inclusion of the refugee population. This work was developed by the Portuguese: Academic Textual Practices I and II disciplines, and is intended for refugees and migrants who are enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate courses and need to learn Portuguese for an academic context.

The UNHCR encourages all higher education institutions to engage in this activity and offer this type of support to the refugee population. Between 2019 and 2020, 18 SVMAC universities have offered Portuguese classes to nearly 4,000 refugees and asylum-seekers living in Brazil.

Current situation of Portuguese classes offered by the HEIs affiliated to the SVMAC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of HEIs that offer Portuguese classes</th>
<th>Number of spots offered in the Portuguese classes every year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2017 1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>2018 1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>2019 1400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>2020 3954</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UERJ, UFRGS, UFABC, UFF, UnB, UFRR, UVV, UFPR, UFGD, UFES, UNIFESP, UNIVALI, UFSM, UEPB, UFSCAR, PUC-Minas, UNISINOS, UNICAMP.
LEGAL ADVICE

The protection of refugees and asylum seekers, and their integration into the host society have a few fundamental elements, including access to justice and legal advice. An effective way of making these services economically accessible to the population is through the Law Departments of the SVMAC institutions. This option also provides university students with practical and intercultural experiences in their chosen field.

Between 2019 and 2020, 14 universities have offered legal advice services through over 2,100 appointments. The number of appointments carried out in the previous year was 860, which shows an increase of approximately 150% up until July 2020. This increase demonstrates how relevant this service is to the refugee population. UNHCR encourages other HEIs to develop similar projects and implement these types of services.

The AMMAM project (Alliance of Stateless and Refugee Migrant Women), a UFPR project, offers health care and legal, linguistic, and psychological services to women who are refugees, migrants or humanitarian visa holders and who are or have been the victims of domestic and/or sexual violence. The program has reached 20 Haitian and Venezuelan women in Curitiba. PUC-Minas also receives and refers refugees and migrants to social assistance networks, in support of the “Welcome” Minas (or “Acolhe Minas”, in Portuguese) Network, which has reached 53 people.

LABOR INTEGRATION

Refugees and asylum seekers can only be fully integrated into the country through the achievement of financial independence and self-sufficiency, both of which can only be achieved by their insertion into the job market. The possibility of working has always been related to the perspective of being treated with dignity and is a tool for the empowerment of the refugee population. When someone is integrated into the job market, that person contributes to the diversification of the economy and to the development of society as a whole.

It is essential that all refugee individuals have information about how to enter the formal job market, the labor rights that are extended to all refugees upon entering Brazil, and how to issue their Brazilian Work Permit (CTPS). The HEIs are able to
contribute by offering services, guidance and advice on labor rights. They can also generate data on the profile and potential of the refugee population in Brazil.

Between July 2019 and June 2020, seven universities have offered job market integration services. The number of appointments related to integration into the job market, carried out between 2019 and 2020 was about 800. It is also important to consider that the pandemic caused the interruption of many services and that less people were hired in 2020 in the country as a whole.

Going beyond the job market, the UFGD institution has developed a project for the Promotion, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Interiorization and Integration of Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants in the Municipality of Dourados-MS. This project has currently reached about 2,000 Venezuelans through its services.

The SVMAC network also carries out other extension programs, for example, programs related to the training of school-teachers and the monitoring of refugee children’s school development. In a first project, the UERJ institution offered capacity-building to teachers belonging to the Basic Education Network. These capacity-building activities were focused on intercultural work with refugees, migrants, and indigenous students, children with special educational needs, and young people and adults of the “EJA” modality (Young and Adult Education). The activities were carried out in São Gonçalo and Duque de Caxias.
Supporting Programs

Problems such as the lack of resources for accommodation, food and transportation make staying in a university difficult or even impossible for many students. Some universities offer support to these students via financial aids, scholarships, student dorms, payment of transportation fees, among others, in order to keep them from abandoning their studies. Some of these initiatives already include refugees and others are currently adapting to do so in the future.

In addition to the initiatives that will be described below, other fronts of action such as the “Cultural Exchanges” project, carried out by UNISANTOS, the “Activity Scholarship” offered by UFSCAR and the “Social Aid Scholarship” offered by UNICAMP, may also be mentioned. These tools allow students to receive financial aid based on their participation in extension or research activities for about 10 hours a week. Several of the HEIs affiliated to the SVMAC currently support permanence initiatives:
Currently, 17 universities affiliated to the SVMAC offer some type of scholarship, including scientific initiation scholarships, and scholarships that cover the amount of tuition. The Casa de Rui Barbosa Foundation maintains a research program with scholarship offered at the scientific initiation, master’s and doctorate levels, the program has selected students to conduct research on the themes of international migration and protection, including refugee and migrant students.

A total of nine universities offer housing arrangement assistance to students, either in the form of university dorms or in the form of a financial aid ranging from BRL 350.00 to BRL 550.00.

Nine of the universities affiliated to the SVMAC currently offer food aid, mostly through the provision of free meals in university restaurants (URs).

## Events

The HEIs associated with SVMAC have held a total of 84 events, including courses, seminars, workshops, lectures, discussions, book launches, meetings and other types of activities between 2019 and 2020.

The Second Seminar of the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair of UERJ was held in June 2020. The event was held remotely – due to the COVID-19 situation – and counted with the presentation of research papers and extension projects related to the Academic Chair.

The UEPB celebrated the World Refugee Day with an online round table. The institution also participated in public hearings to address the issue of Venezuelans in Paraíba, together with the City Hall of João Pessoa, the Legislative Assembly of Paraíba and the Federal Public Prosecutor’s Office.

Before the pandemic, UNICAMP held friendly football matches between Indigenous students and refugees. Documentary screenings, anti-trafficking awareness-raising activities and open classes were also held in celebration of the World Refugee Day.

The Casa de Rui Barbosa Foundation held the following events in 2020, among other activities:
a. The Migration “Crisis” as a Crisis in International Law. International Migration Series, with Keynote Speaker Ralph Wilde;
b. V Summer Course: International Protection and Migration Under a Global Perspective;
c. The Imagery of the Border: Securitization of Immigration and Lives in Resistance. International Migration Series, with Keynote Speaker Suzana Velasco;
d. Launch of the study “Socioeconomic Profile of Refugees in Brazil: Bases for the Elaboration of Policies”;
e. Colloquium: “Hospitality: Between Ethics, Politics and Aesthetics”.

The online contents promoted by the universities are available at acnur.org/portugues/catedra-sergio-vieira-de-mello/eventos

Advocacy

The HEIs play an important role in strengthening government responses and helping influence authorities, non-governmental partners and society as a whole to adopt practices that safeguard the protection of those in need. These institutions often help adjust policies and services that affect displaced and stateless people at the municipal, state and/or national levels. In 2020, 15 universities promoted advocacy actions, at various levels, participating in networks and committees that address the issues faced by refugees, migrants and asylum seekers.

© UNHCR / Allana Ferreira
Publications by SVMAC Members in 2020

A


B


CALVO DEL OLMO, FRANCISCO JAVIER; ERAZO MUÑOZ, ANGELA MARÍA
La intercomprensión como herramienta para la integración educativa en el espacio sudamericano: posibilidades, dinámicas y límites a partir de las experiencias del programa PEIF y de la UNILA. REVISTA IBEROAMERICANA DE EDUCACIÓN (ONLINE). , v.81, p.115 - 134, 2019.


Dossiê “Deslocamentos Populacionais, Migrações de Crise e Refugiados” na Revista Monções;


; O Estado de Mal-Estar Social Brasileiro: inspiração, definição pela negativa, conceito e consequências para os imigrantes e refugiados. In: Marco Aurélio


____.; MELLO, L. E. . A Terra dos Homens Vermelhos: Mitos e Tensões do


Livro Entre Lugares: trajetórias de migrantes, refugiados e apátridas

de integração: práticas clínicas e sociais em um Centro de Referência de Atendimento a Imigrantes em Santa Catarina. REMHU: Revista Interdisciplinar da Mobilidade Humana, 27(55), 79-96


Obra coletiva “Panorama das Migrações Internacionais no Mato Grosso do Sul” no prelo


___.; SILVA, S. F. L. . A proteção aos refugiados na Paraíba: Uma análise descritiva do Programa Nacional de Interiorização dos Venezuelanos. In:


REVISTA LIMIARES 2019 - A Revista Limiares, dedicada à geopolítica e às questões referentes aos temas de migração e refúgio, é o resultado de um esforço conjunto e horizontal empreendido por estudantes de graduação, pós-graduação e professores do Departamento de Economia e Relações Internacionais e do Departamento de Direito da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul.


TROITINHO, Bruna R. POLÍTICA DE ACESSO AO ENSINO SUPERIOR E O SONHO DO DIPLOMA DIÁSPORA HAITIANO. Revista Monções: Revista de Relações Internacionais da UFGD, Dourados, v.8, n.16, jul./dez.2019


VINCENZI, Brunela Vieira de; COSTA, Manuela Coutinho; MENEZES, P. F. O direito humano de acesso à justiça para os refugiados e os obstáculos enfrentados para sua efetivação. REVISTA DE DIREITO CONSTITUCIONAL E INTERNACIONAL, v. 116, p. 173-186, 2019;


___; OLIVEIRA, I. T. A.; Poltronieri, Fernando. A lei de migração e a possibilidade de transferência de presos venezuelanos para cumprimento de pena no Brasil. REVISTA DE DIREITO CONSTITUCIONAL E INTERNACIONAL, v. 119, p. 295-311, 2020;

UNHCR Brazil appreciates the wonderful support and partnership of all other UN agencies, Brazilian authorities (at federal, state and municipal levels), and the civil society organizations involved in the emergency response and in the regular programmes part of the Brazilian operation.