

Colombia

August 2021

Colombia's migration authority reported **1,222,009 pre-registrations** for the Temporary Protection Status by 31 August, while the in-person biometric phase is scheduled as of 1 September.

The **Integral Migration Policy** Law was signed by President Duque on 4 August in Leticia (Amazonas) during a ceremony with the participation of the UNHCR Representative.

The **"Primero la Niñez"** initiative which aims to end statelessness for children was extended for two more years through Resolution 8617/21 benefiting more than **63,186** children as of 12 August.

VENEZUELAN REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

1,742,927

Source: Government of Colombia (31 January 2021)

% OF REGULAR - IRREGULAR SITUATION

44% - 56%

Source: Government of Colombia (31 January 2021)

TOTAL NEW INTERNAL DISPLACEMENTS SINCE THE 2016 PEACE AGREEMENT

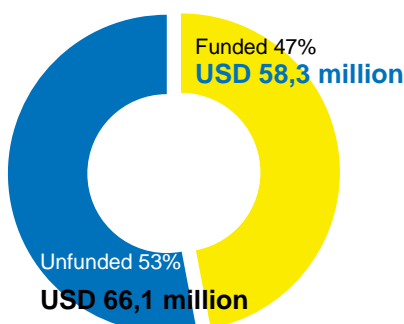
615,759

Source: Government of Colombia (31 July 2021)

FUNDING (AS OF 31 AUGUST 2021)

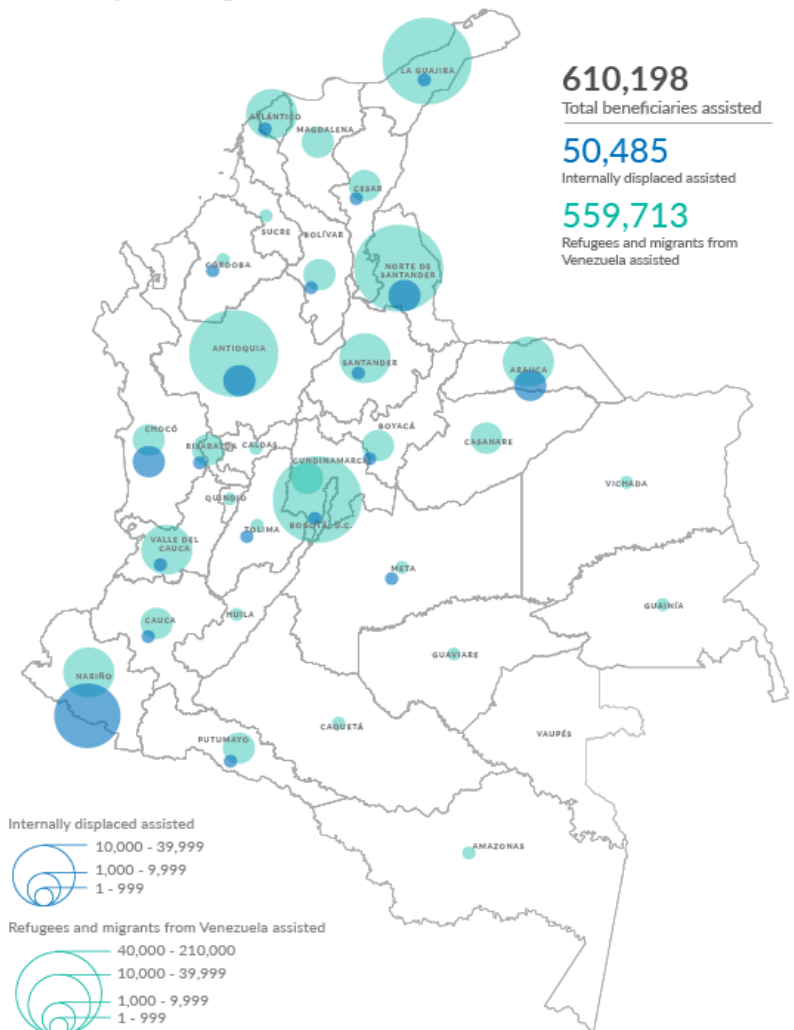
USD 124,4 million

requested for Colombia



UNHCR Response Colombia

January to August 2021



A direct beneficiary can receive more than one type of assistance from UNHCR, so it is possible that the total number of beneficiaries is smaller.

Operational Context

As of 28 August, Colombia's migration authorities report 1,222,009 pre-registrations into the Single Registry for Venezuelan Migrants (RUMV in Spanish) out of which 1,125,952 (92%) with a finalized characterization exercise. A total of 1,003,682 Venezuelans (82% of those who pre-registered) are already scheduled for in-person biometric registration begun on 1 September.

On August 4, [the Integral Migration Policy Law](#) was signed by Colombian President Duque during a ceremony organized in the department of Leticia (Amazonas) with the participation of the UNHCR Representative. UNHCR had successfully advocated for the inclusion of the definition of a refugee, the approval of the *salvoconducto* as an accepted identification document during the refugee status determination process and a series of measures for combating statelessness. The Migration Law also includes specific policies aimed at the socio-economic reintegration of the Colombian returnees.

On 19 of August, the Government of Colombia issued Resolution 8617/ 2021 through which the validity of "Primero la Niñez" is extended for two more years. UNHCR has been supporting the design and the implementation of this initiative which prevents statelessness and grants Colombian nationality to children born in Colombia to Venezuelan parents since 2019. As of 12 August, 63,183 children have benefited from this measure.

Within the framework of the [GIFMM Support Plan for the implementation of the Temporary Protection Status for Venezuelans](#), UNHCR continues to carry out its [Action Plan in Support of the Implementation of the Temporary Protection Status](#), an extraordinary initiative complementary to the international protection comprised of 3 stages: a) online pre-registration; b) individual in-person biometric registration; and c) documentation (Temporary Protection Permit) with some of the key advances outlined below.

POPULATION TRENDS

- According to UNHCR monitoring, as of 31 July, 39,958 people, or 13,270 families, have been uprooted since the start of 2021 by 81 large-group displacement events. This represents an increase of 142% compared to the same period in 2020. In addition, more than 39,022 people, or 10,066 families, have been confined in Chocó, Nariño, Antioquia, Cauca, Valle del Cauca, Risaralda and Putumayo.
- In Arauca, the local Ombudsperson's office reports an estimated 29,250 people having entered Colombia via informal crossing points of whom 23,220 returned to Venezuela during the first weeks of August (net entry of 6,030 people). In Arauca and Saravena an estimated 9,649 entries and 9,407 exits were reported for the month of August (net entry of 242 people).
- In La Guajira, the number of irregular entries vary on a weekly basis between 300 and up to 1,500 per day depending on the COVID-19 7x7 measures applied on the Venezuela side of the border. These movements include those of indigenous Wayyu in search of medicine, food and services with approx. 200 Venezuelans per day (up to 1,000 during COVID-19 flexible weeks) accessing transportation services to destination cities such as Bogotá, Cali and Medellín.
- In Necocli, local authorities report an agglomeration of approx. 18.000 people, mostly of Haitian nationality, that use routes via Colombia to access the USA, with large numbers starting their journey in Chile and Brazil where they have resided for the last few years (e.g. not new arrivals from Haiti) and seeking to reunite with family and community members in the USA. While potential for a small-scale emergency response with support from OCHA is being explored, UN Agencies and NGOs, including UNHCR, are prioritizing strengthening the capacity of national and local institutions.
- In Putumayo and Arauca, humanitarian situations were caused by the heavy rain season with UNGRD reporting 8,442 families, or 20,655 people, affected by floods across 7 municipalities of Arauca. UNHCR delivered more than 1,200 mosquito nets in the department of Arauca.

Achievements



PROTECTION

- UNHCR carried out information and orientation sessions on the Temporary Protection Status (TPS) and on international protection routes for more than 9,400 beneficiaries during the month of August.
- UNHCR and implementing partners conducted 405 capacity building and technical assistance workshops on the TPS, on international protection routes, on the Victims' Law and Colombian Return Home Plan for approx. 700 civil servants and 11.000 Venezuelan refugees and migrants, Colombian IDPs and returnees, and host communities. The National Federation of Local Ombudspersons - FENALPER – assisted 211 public servants and 243 Venezuelans on nationality issues, health, asylum system procedure and TPS.



An Information and Orientation Mobile Unit (PAO) in Arauca providing services to Venezuelan refugees and migrants, Colombian IDPs and returnees in the rural areas of Arauquita © UNHCR / Karolina Rojas

- UNHCR continues with the orientation, registration and identification of vulnerable profiles in PRIMES via 88 telephone reception points – which include the regional pilots of the National Call Center with NRC - registering 7,223 people during the month of August, 81 percent of whom are women. This brings the total number of people registered since 1 January 2021 to 43,311. UNHCR is also operating, in close cooperation with local authorities and the Mayors' Offices, 10 Information and Orientation mobile units (PAOs) in support of Venezuelans in remote areas that wish to apply for the TPS.
- UNHCR, in coordination with legal clinics associated to 30 universities, provided legal orientation and assistance with documentation to 1,847 Venezuelans and 453 internally displaced persons. Additionally, new partner ProBono is offering legal assistance in areas outside the coverage of the legal clinics. ProBono mobile brigades are scheduled in September for Chocó and Norte de Santander and in October for Valle del Cauca and Casanare.

- UNHCR is supporting, in close coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Internal Working Group on Refugees (GIT Refugio in Spanish), the resumption of in person interviews with asylum seekers in Medellín and in the coming weeks in Cali, Villavicencio, Cucuta, Arauca, Riohacha, Santa Marta, Barranquilla and Cartagena.
- UNHCR carried out in Bogotá the first workshop of the project [#Micasaestucasa](#) with the participation of 12 Migración Colombia civil servants from the Observation of Human Rights Group, activity which included efforts for tackling xenophobic manifestations. Similar workshops are scheduled for Leticia, Pasto, Cartagena, Pereira and Medellín.
- UNHCR assisted more than 14.500 beneficiaries in 21 Support Spaces with legal orientation, delivery of domestic kits, school and hygiene kits, psychosocial support and sexual and gender-based (SGBV) prevention and mitigation measures. In Cali, as co-leader of the Local GIFMM, UNHCR inaugurated the first Support Space at the bus terminal with the participation of the Border Manager, Secretaries of the Mayor's Office and IOM representatives.
- UNHCR continues to distribute relevant information on the requirements and benefits of the TPS to counter misinformation and fraud schemes such as those reported in Paraguachón where "spontaneous informal street offices" were charging between COP 20,000 to 50,000 for passport stamping and for assistance with the CheckMig app.



HEALTH

- Colombia continues to be the third most affected country by COVID-19 in the Americas region. The pandemic is challenging Colombia's health and social welfare systems, with Venezuelan refugees and migrants among the most vulnerable.
- UNHCR has stepped up its efforts to strengthen the local capacities of departmental health authorities in their response both to the COVID-19 situation and to additional health needs. More than 25,291 people were assisted during the month of August with healthcare services, 800 of whom with healthcare affiliation in various health centers and through implementing partners supported by UNHCR. The Health Centre Las Margaritas provided services which include general medical attention, psychosocial assistance, sexual and reproductive healthcare assistance, and odontology services to 2,755 Venezuelan refugees and migrants during the month of August.

During 2021 the Health Center Las Margaritas has provided services to more than 18,000 people, including Venezuelan refugees and migrants and Colombians outside the reach of the health system © Corprodinco / Paola Cañizares
- UNHCR through implementing partner ProFamilia, among others, provided 247 HIV consults and assistances, 3,152 sexual and reproductive health services, 327 family planning services with the delivery of 198 male and female condoms during the month of August.

**SHELTER AND NFIS**

- UNHCR and implementing partners assisted a total of 1,891 new beneficiaries with temporary shelter during the month of August. At the Integrated Assistance Centre (CAI) in Maicao, 61 people in transit from the border area towards the interior of the country were assisted in the transitory section of the CAI with shelter and core relief items. Additionally, the CAI provided 273 people with shelter, legal orientation, health and other needs.
- UNHCR donated a total of 44 Refugee Housing Units (RHUs) and family tents in support of the response of local health authorities to the COVID-19 pandemic. In Pamplona, 12 RHUs were installed at the Sanitary Attention Center (CAS acronym in Spanish) so as to provide assistance for persons in transit from Cúcuta to Bucaramanga and two family tents at CAS Los Patios so as to extend the COVID-19 testing facilities.
- UNHCR delivered a total of 2,500 core relief items, including hygiene kits, blankets, tents and solar lamps for 3,500 persons during the month of August. In Medio Baudo, Chocó, UNHCR delivered 254 hygiene kits and 91 kitchen sets to IDPs affected by the heavy rain season and in Alto Baudo 160 solar lamps to confined indigenous communities.

**LIVELIHOODS**

- UNHCR assisted 831 people with self-employment and business or employment opportunities in the context of the reactivation of the Colombian economy during the month of August.
- UNHCR in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and the Office of the Management of the Venezuela-Colombia Border presented on 20 August the National Labour Mobility Pilot Project at an event organized by the National Business Association of Colombia (ANDI in Spanish) and the Corona Foundation.

**COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE**

- UNHCR and partners carried out workshops on the prevention and mitigation of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) benefiting 2,137 people during the month of August. In Bucaramanga, the recently opened Safe Space, run by CORPRODINCO with an operating capacity of 80 persons, started to provide accommodation, food, psychosocial and legal assistance for women at risk and survivors of SGBV and their children.

- UNHCR inaugurated in Yopal, Casanare, the exhibition 'Footprints and Faces of People in Transit' (in Spanish "Huellas y Rostros de Caminantes") at the Museum House Ocho de Julio to raise awareness on the hardships faced by people fleeing their homes on their journey across the country by foot.
- More than 400.000 people have been reached via social and national media platforms with messages addressing manifestations of xenophobia and discrimination through the [#SomosPanasCampaign](#).



'Footprints and Face of People in Transit' exhibition at the Museum House Ocho de Julio in Yopal, Casanare. ©UNHCR / Karolina Rojas.

Working in partnership

- 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, migrants, Colombian returnees, and the host population in a complementary manner with the Government.

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