

Approximately 13.5 per cent of the total number of Venezuelans residing in Latin America and the Caribbean, lives in the Southern Cone, as of December 2019.

Partners in Argentina presented the Southern Cone Chapter of the RMRP 2020 at an event gathering representatives from UN agencies, civil society, government institutions and donors.

The financial contributions towards the requirements of the Southern Cone in the RMRP 2019 reached 19 per cent as of the end of December 2019, with only USD 6.7 million received among the four countries.

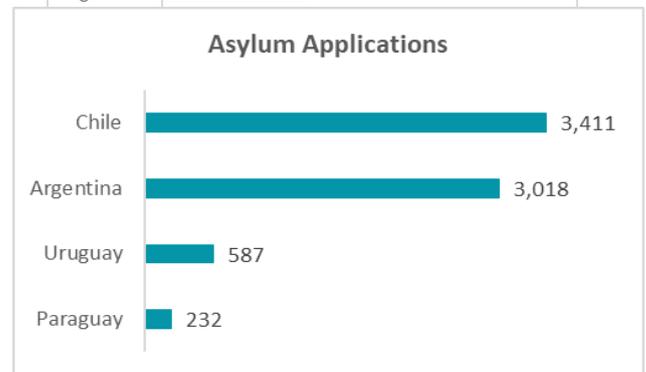
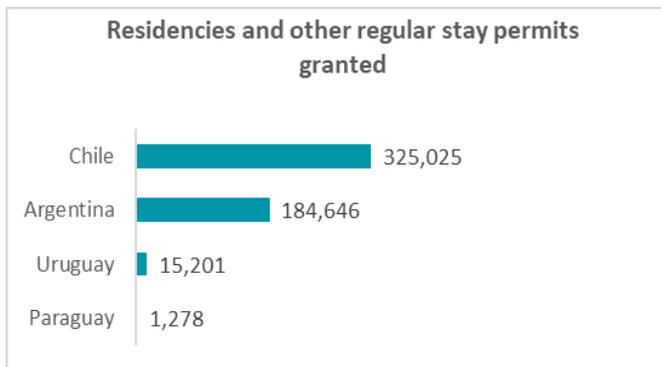
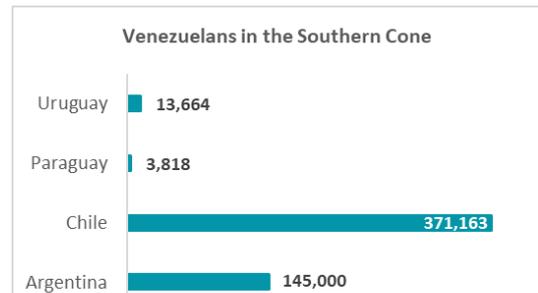
KEY FIGURES¹

3.9 Million

Approx. Venezuelans in Latin America and the Caribbean

533.6 Thousand

Approx. Venezuelans in the Southern Cone



OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

On 6 December, the National Coordination Platform in Argentina presented the Southern Cone Chapter of the RMRP 2020 at the Faculty of Law of the University of Buenos Aires. The presentation was led by the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System in Argentina, Roberto Valent; the Head of the IOM Country Office in Argentina, Gabriela Fernandez; and the UNHCR Regional Representative for Latin America, Juan Carlos Murillo. The event had the participation of UN agencies, civil society organizations, Argentine Government authorities and donor countries' representatives. The Chapter now includes Bolivia², comprises 34 partners and requires USD 31.3 million.

In Argentina, the elected President, Alberto Fernandez, took office on 10 December, after which he announced a series of economic and social reforms that aim to "reactivate the economy, generate employment, revive consumption and fight against hunger and poverty". The measures include, among others, the launching of the Argentina Plan against Hunger; wage increases; a 30 per cent surcharge on the purchase of foreign currency; freezing of gas, electricity and public transportation tariffs; and an 8 per cent reduction in the price of medications.

In Chile, amidst the social unrest that begun in October, on 27 December, President Sebastian Piñera signed a decree that set the date for the referendum on the adoption of a new constitution for 26 April 2020, asking Chileans if they want a new constitution and who should draft it. A referendum on a new constitution was one of the key demands of Chileans who have been waging anti-government mass rallies.

¹ 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.

² In the RMRP 2020, Bolivia is included in the Southern Cone Chapter and Chile is no longer included; it has its own national chapter.

Despite the ongoing protests in Chile, on 14 December, the ninth **Flight Esperanza** from Venezuela arrived at Santiago, with 88 out of the 999 Chileans who have returned from Venezuela to Chile under Chile's Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Operation Hope program.

Paraguay replaced Brazil on 5 December for the rotating presidency of South American trade bloc MERCOSUR (Southern Common Market) for the next six months.

In Paraguay, 720 Venezuelans, including 112 children, were granted **refugee status** by the National Refugee Commission (CONARE).

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, 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.

Basic Needs & Essential Services

Partners in the Southern Cone continue to provide direct emergency assistance to the most vulnerable refugees and migrants from Venezuela. More than 1,600 refugees and migrants were reached with **non-food items**, including mattresses, personal care and hygiene kits, kitchen sets and winter clothes.

Food assistance was also provided by partners in Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, reaching 175, 1069, 29 and 354 individuals, respectively. **Humanitarian transportation**, especially from border areas to urban areas was provided to 136 vulnerable refugees and migrants in the subregion.

Temporary accommodation, especially for families, has been provided to 377 persons in the sub-region (182 persons in Argentina, 170 in Chile and 25 in Uruguay).

Monitoring and Assessment Tools

Partners in the sub-region interviewed more than 689 Venezuelans to **assess their needs**. Particularly, the objective of the assessments was to delineate the profile of the Venezuelan population and their needs regarding migratory status, employment and access to basic services, among other things.

Area of Intervention 2: Protection

Strategic outcome: Refugees and migrants enjoy rights and protection.

Documentation and regularization

Partners in Chile provided support, advice and guidance to refugees and migrants from Venezuela for **regularizing their migratory status** in the country.



Newly opened child-friendly space/day-care centre by partners in Santiago. ©UNHCR, Chile, 2019

Access to information

Partners in Argentina and Chile supported 13 centres that provide key information and assistance to refugees and migrants across these countries. In Chile, partners opened a second **child-friendly space/day-care centre** in Santiago which will have the capacity to host some 25 children and parents.

Partners in the Southern Cone also continued providing information on **referral pathways and protection services** to refugees and migrants from Venezuela through 2019. During the reporting period, 300 persons in Argentina were provided with leaflets on prevention of human trafficking and smuggling of migrants and refugees at the crossings of the triple border between Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay.

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

In Argentina, partners reached 156 individuals through workshops for **skills' development**, particularly on how to prepare a CV, design a job search strategy and carry out a job interview; and, on the sequence of service in restaurants, use of tray, etiquette and protocol. During the reporting period, 12 refugees and migrants from Venezuela were reached with support for accessing job opportunities in the **formal sector** in Paraguay through the referral and registration in a job board in which profiles are analyzed by the General Employment Directorate of the Ministry of Labour.



Representatives of migrant/refugee and host communities playing baseball in an integration through sports event in Buenos Aires, Argentina. ©IOM Argentina, 2019

Socio-cultural integration

In the framework of the holidays that take place in December, partners in Chile prepared a set of activities aimed at the **sociocultural integration** of refugees and migrants from Venezuela, reaching approximately 900 persons. These included: two Christmas concerts; a graduation ceremony of the training on dressmaking and hairdressing for pregnant women and mothers in Santiago; the provision of food boxes for families in vulnerable conditions and toys for children; among other events.

In Argentina, on the other hand, partners held **sports events** in Buenos Aires with the participation of approximately 600 persons; including people not only from the Venezuelan community but also representatives from Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Japan, the United States and Argentina.

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.*

Technical and material support

Partners continue to support national authorities with human resources, infrastructure and/or technical assistance. In Uruguay, partners regularly provide the Directorate General of Consular Affairs with human resources, allowing Venezuelans to initiate their **regularization process**. Constant support is also provided to the National Migration Board through its technical secretariat and the National Refugee Commission to improve their inter-institutional coordination.

Capacity building

In Argentina, partners provided the government with a guide for addressing **human trafficking** at the consular level, strengthening the responses capacity of the Argentine Consulates in: Asunción del Paraguay, Ciudad del Este and Foz do Iguacu, as well as the Focal Point of Assistance for the Province of Misiones and the Security and Police Forces. Also, capacity building workshops on tools for detecting and addressing cases of human trafficking and smuggling were provided to 40 officials of the previously mentioned institutions, the National Directorate of Migration and labour inspectors.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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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 **Chile:** ADRA | ECLAC | FAO | FASIC | ILO | Inmigrante Feliz | IOM | Jesuit Refugee Service | Jesuit Refugee Service | Office of the Resident Coordinator | OHCHR | PAHO | Red Cross Chile Scalabrini/INCAMI | UDP Legal Clinic | UNAIDS | UNDP | UNESCO | UNFPA | UNHCR | UNICEF | Vicaria Pastoral Social | World Vision **Uruguay:** ADRA | El Paso | Idas y Vueltas | ILO | IOM | Manos Veneguayas | OHCHR | PAHO | Red Cross Uruguay | SEDHU | UNAIDS | UNHCR | UNICEF | UNOPS **Paraguay:** Asociación Civil de Venezolanos en Paraguay | IOM | OHCHR | PAHO | Pastoral de Movilidad Humana | Red con Migrantes y Refugiados | Semillas para la Democracia | Red Cross Paraguay | UNFPA | UNHCR

For more information, please contact:

Juliana Quintero, Media and Communications Officer, **IOM**, robuepress@iom.int, +54 11 3248 8134

José Manuel Cáceres, Regional Reporting Officer, **UNHCR**, caceres@unhcr.org, +54 11 40141600