



REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS IN THE REGION

**198,600**


PEOPLE REACHED WITH SOME FORM OF ASSISTANCE\*

**13.4 K**


FUNDING SITUATION\*\*

**8.6%**

 FUNDED: 2.1 M  
 REQUIREMENT: 24.15 M

## Situation

### COSTA RICA

The Refugee Unit (RU) at the Migration Authority has adopted two changes, effective 21 July 2021, in the Asylum Seeker Card for refugees and migrants from Venezuela: (1) the document issued for the first time will be valid for two years; and (2) the document includes the date the work permit becomes valid (3 months after issuance), hence the person does not need to return to the RU to obtain it.

On 27 July, officials announced the preparation of a joint strategy between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Health to include persons with irregular immigration status in the national vaccination plan. Currently, the lack of documentation creates a barrier to vaccine registration, which makes it challenging for health authorities to track dose applications for those with irregular status. On the other hand, migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers over 20 years of age with the required documentation had access to vaccinations as of 28 July.

The General Directorate of Migration published Resolution [N° DJUR-0141-07-2021-JM](#) on the Temporary Special Category of Complementary Protection, which extends its scope of application. Under this new framework, Venezuelans, Nicaraguans, and Cubans whose asylum claim was denied may opt for this procedure.

While Costa Rica will stop requiring the purchase of a health insurance policy for inbound tourists fully vaccinated with Moderna, Pfizer, AstraZeneca, or Johnson & Johnson as of 1 August, the measure does not include Sputnik V and Sinopharm, which are the main vaccines being applied in Venezuela. In this sense, Venezuelans vaccinated with the above-mentioned vaccines will still require the purchase of medical insurance that covers treatment for COVID-19 to enter Costa Rica.

### PANAMA

In July 2021, there were 32 asylum applications received from Venezuelans (21 men and 11 women), for a total of 103 so far in 2021 (58 men and 45 women). To date, there are 2,453 applications pending decision. Additionally, 246 Venezuelans have been identified to have entered through the Darién Gap, border with Colombia, although this is not a usual route.

As of 30 July, a total of 106 interviews were carried out with Venezuelans, mostly asylum-seekers, for protection monitoring. The main priority needs identified continue to be access to basic needs and to documentation and/or regularization. Consequently, requests for assistance persist, mainly for livelihoods support, rental support, food, and healthcare. Nevertheless, access to food has been improving over the past months, as 47% of interviewees reported having access to 2 meals daily, and 40% to three or more meals a day. In terms of housing, most respondents continue to have payment arrangements with their lessors. Regarding livelihoods, 49% of people surveyed are still unemployed, however, 46% indicated having a source of income, mainly in the informal sector, of which at least one household member is working an average of 2-3 days a week. Concerning access to education, restrictions remain due to limited resources for connectivity and lack of individual electronic devices to allow for uninterrupted class attendance. Nevertheless, 85% of households with school-aged children reported that they are currently enrolled in school. Finally, during surveys conducted in late July, several respondents indicated that they had received at least the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Given that the moratory period for rent payments has been lifted, many Venezuelans and other vulnerable persons face imminent eviction risks due to delays in rent payments mainly caused by the lack of income-generating activities.

Refugees and migrants remain at heightened risk of gender-based violence (GBV) due to vulnerabilities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially the loss of livelihoods and related economic and emotional dependency, lack of access to basic needs and

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\* From 01/01/2020 | \*\*Source: FTS Website

services, and the psychosocial impact of the overall context. In this sense, the requirement for mental health and psychosocial support programs and services is ever important to reduce this protection risk.

## MEXICO

R4V partners have identified an increase in the flows of Venezuelans arriving to Mexico, while the first half of 2021 has seen one of the highest numbers of refugee status determination (RSD) applications so far. In the first semester of 2021, approximately 52,000 people, roughly 3,500 of whom are Venezuelans, applied for asylum in Mexico, and the authorities estimate that the total number will exceed 100,000 applications by the end of the year. This figure would represent an increase even compared to the peak of applications in 2019, which reached approximately 71,000. Meanwhile, July 2021 was the month with the highest number of asylum processes initiated in any month since 2013, with 12,804 asylum applications submitted.

Access to the asylum system at airports in Mexico continues to be highly restricted. An R4V partner in Monterrey and Cancun has spoken with relatives of Venezuelans in those cities who claim to have been denied access to the asylum system at both airports. In Nuevo León, the number of detained Venezuelans has increased from 21 in 2020, to 203 in 2021 (up until June). In recent months, there have also been reports of detention of Venezuelans on internal flights in Mexico, especially on flights to cities in the north of the country.

## Response

**Education.** In **Costa Rica**, 61 Venezuelans received educational support through the distribution of educational kits, orientation on academic degree validation processes, training for the development of soft skills, empowerment and finances, and technical training for income-generation and identification of occupational profiles. In **Panama**, 3 Venezuelan girls received educational support. In **Mexico**, support for 88 Venezuelan children and adolescents in their enrolment into school.

**Food Security.** In **Costa Rica**, 64 Venezuelans received food assistance in the form of food baskets or prepaid cards.

**Health.** In **Costa Rica**, 1,013 Venezuelans received medical insurance in July under a special agreement with the Costa Rican social security entity. In July, 77 Venezuelans received psychosocial assistance, 40 of whom attended group workshops on emotional wellbeing. Additionally, 6 Venezuelans participated in health promotion fairs. In **Panama**, 29 individuals received psychological assistance, 8 of whom are Venezuelan GBV survivors. 33 Venezuelans received hygiene kits. In **Mexico**, 36 persons received health assistance through medicines, medical exams, assistive devices, and access to prescription glasses.

**Integration.** In **Costa Rica**, 10 Venezuelans participated in training activities for entrepreneurship, and 9 received disbursements to purchase raw materials, equipment, or other items needed for business continuity. In **Panama**, 44 Venezuelans received livelihoods support through training and other activities, and one woman was supported with seed capital. Additionally, 22 Venezuelans participated in local

integration activities delivered remotely. In **Mexico**, approximately 36 Venezuelans were assisted with vocational training and obtaining skills certifications for job placement.

**Protection.** In **Costa Rica**, 276 Venezuelans received information and legal assistance and, in qualified cases, support for the payment of their migratory procedures. This included consultations on the new Temporary Special Category of Complementary Protection. In **Panama**, 170 Venezuelans received information, orientation, and legal assistance on refugee status determination (RSD) procedures, housing, land and property (HLP), and access to rights. Additionally, 10 persons received personalized legal orientation sessions on protection and specialized services. Seeking to strengthen and build capacity for national and local authorities on trafficking in persons (TiP), 128 officials from different institutions participated in training sessions on relevant topics regarding protection and rights of vulnerable migrants, as well as prevention of trafficking and labour exploitation. Protection from GBV was addressed through community capacity-building sessions, where 64 Venezuelan women participated. In **Mexico**, 122 Venezuelans were supported to regularize their status in the country.

**Shelter.** In **Costa Rica**, 3 Venezuelans were supported with emergency shelter. In **Panama**, 14 Venezuelans were supported with rental payments.

**CVA.** In **Costa Rica**, 361 Venezuelans received cash interventions for basic needs, utilities and other household expenses, transportation, and general emergency support. In

## CENTRAL AMERICA &amp; MEXICO



**RESPONSE FOR VENEZUELANOS**  
Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela



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**Panama**, 53 Venezuelans, 10 of whom were in a state of extreme vulnerability, were assisted with cash for basic needs. Additionally, 103 Venezuelans were supported with multipurpose cash for access to the RSD procedure and other basic rights. In **Mexico**, a total of 159 Venezuelans benefitted from CVA in July: 81 persons received multipurpose cash (MPC)

grants to meet their basic needs such as food, household and domestic products, and a contribution towards housing and utility bills, and 78 Venezuelans received sectoral top-ups addressing protection-related risks identified (including contingency top-ups for COVID-19).



PEOPLE REACHED\*

Education	Food Security	Health	Hum. Transp.	Integration	NFI	Nutrition	Protection	Shelter	WASH	CBI
152	64	1,161	0	122	33	0	642	17	0	676