



REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS
IN THE REGION
265,000



PEOPLE REACHED WITH SOME
FORM OF ASSISTANCE*
314



FUNDING SITUATION**
% REQUIREMENT: 24.1M



Context

Panama

More than 500 Venezuelans have [regularized](#) their status in Panama in 2022 (242 in January and 345 in February). Meanwhile, at least 215 Venezuelans returned to their country during the first two months of the year, according to official figures of [Migración Panamá](#).

The Migratory Authority suspended the validity of all applications for Extensions and Permanent Residences regulated by Executive Decree No. 235 until 30 April 2022. As of 1 May 2022, all applications will be processed through the regular channels; likewise, the validity of all Extraordinary and General Migratory Regularization permits is [extended from 1 July 2021 until 30 April 2022](#).

Costa Rica

On 21 February, Costa Rica introduced [entry visa requirements](#) for Venezuelan nationals ([Executive Decree No. 36626-G](#)). To apply for a visa, Venezuelans must submit the application at an Embassy of Costa Rica prior to entering the country. Exceptions are made only in cases of emergency or *force majeure*. In addition, a new requirement for a transit visa was also introduced for Venezuelan, Cuban and Nicaraguan nationals.

Venezuelan nationals who have legal residence in Costa Rica as refugees or stateless persons, if they depart the country, must obtain the consulted entry visa in order to return. Those whose asylum requests are still processing, need a permit from the Migration Authority to be exempt from this requirement; if not, they must obtain a visa to return to Costa Rica when travelling.

Mexico

According to Mexican Government data on immigration procedures for Venezuelan nationals (including requests for humanitarian visas), 2,578 such procedures were initiated in January, most in Mexico City. The Mexican Migration Institute (INM) reported through the [national transparency portal](#) that a total of 3,578 Venezuelan nationals arrived to the country by air in February, a sharp drop from the 27,835 who arrived by air in January, prior to the imposition of a visa requirement for Venezuelans to enter Mexico effective on 21 January.

[U.S. Customs and Border Protection](#) (CBP) registered 3,073 encounters with Venezuelan nationals attempting to enter the country via the U.S. Southwest land border with Mexico in the month of February, representing a substantial drop from the 22,779 encounters registered in January 2022, also after initiation of the visa requirement. These numbers include encounters between and at ports of entry. They also represent instances of attempted entry to the U.S., and not the number of individuals arriving, as an individual may attempt to cross the border multiple times. Current recidivism rates remain at around 25%.

The introduction of the visa requirement brought significant challenges for Venezuelans who tried to enter Mexico, resulting in sharply reduced arrivals by air, and greater numbers of Venezuelans arriving by land via the border with Guatemala. A total of 619 asylum applications were registered in Tapachula (Chiapas) in the month of February which represents an exponential increase from the 58 claims registered in January, before the visa requirement came into force. In February, R4V partners did not report assisting any asylum-seekers at Mexico City's International Airport.

For more information, please contact: Livia Manente - لمانente@iom.int |

* From 01/02/2022 to 28/02/2022 | **Source: FTS Website



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Meanwhile, partners reported receiving requests for information from Venezuelans who needed to leave Venezuela but could not travel to Mexico due to the absence of a visa. The difficulties of family reunification are anticipated to increase notably due to this situation. *Apoyo a Migrantes*, a Venezuelan activist group, [challenged](#) the visa requirement for Venezuelan nationals.

In the beginning of February, local media reported multiple protests of asylum-seekers and migrants that took place in Tapachula, near the Mexican border with Guatemala. A group of 20 asylum-seekers and migrants, including Venezuelans, started a [hunger strike](#) to pressure Mexican authorities to attend to their cases. The following day, media outlets reported asylum-seekers and migrants [sewing their mouths shut in protest for not being allowed to transit](#) through Mexico to reach the United States. As an additional form of protest, asylum-seekers and migrants [placed chains around their bodies](#) and demanded that Mexican immigration authorities provide them with transit documents. The Mexican Human Rights Commission (CNDH) asked national immigration authorities such as the National Migration Institute (INM) and the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR) to implement precautionary measures to safeguard the rights of refugees and migrants who take part in demonstrations in Tapachula.

R4V partners also learned of Venezuelans with regular status in Mexico who were detained by the INM while on internal flights.

Response

Education. In **Costa Rica**, 88 Venezuelans received technical courses and short courses (enrollment, follow-up and graduation) to increase their earning potential and improve their occupational profiles.

Food Security. In **Panama**, food vouchers of USD 100 each were given to 5 individuals and/or families. This allowed up to 14 people to have access to food during this period. In **Costa Rica**, 47 Venezuelans received food assistance, mainly through food cards. 2 Venezuelan entrepreneurs were financially supported to distribute meals to the Venezuelan population in vulnerable situations.

Integration. In Panama, one of the priorities of the R4V in Panama in 2022 is the prevention of xenophobia. In order to raise awareness and engage new partners in the areas of prevention and mitigation, the private sector has been selected as a key actor. In this regard, R4V Partners, as part of the *Somos lo Mismo* Campaign, designed information [tools](#) to raise awareness and facilitate actions to promote peaceful coexistence, which will be used, shared, and socialized through R4V's Integration Sector to

ensure a greater impact on the prevention of xenophobia in Panama. The *Somos Lo Mismo*-campaign reached more than 540,000 people and 50 journalists participated in a forum to enhance knowledge regarding international protection to improve press and social media content. Moreover, in February partners reached 242 people through workshops and online courses to promote refugees and migrants' socioeconomic inclusion. In Costa Rica, 22 Venezuelans received career guidance to identify their occupational profiles and information on the process for degree recognition. 37 Venezuelans received training in soft skills development, legal empowerment and financial education. 20 Venezuelans received technical assistance for the development of their entrepreneurship initiatives and the implementation of their business plans. In Mexico, R4V partners organised an 18-hour entrepreneurship course for Venezuelan women based on the Manual for Migrant Entrepreneurship. The course will continue in March 2022 and will benefit 44 Venezuelan women.

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Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA). In **Panama**, 34 Venezuelans received multipurpose cash (MPC) for enhanced access to essential rights, including refugee status determination (RSD) procedures, and basic needs, including food and healthcare. In **Costa Rica**, 82 Venezuelans in vulnerable conditions received CVA for basic needs. In **Mexico**, 50 asylum-seekers from Venezuela received multipurpose cash assistance during the month of February to meet their basic needs, such as food, rent, utilities, household and domestic products. An additional 37 refugees and asylum seekers from Venezuela received sectoral CVA addressing protection-related risks identified, including due to vulnerabilities associated with COVID-19.

Protection. In Panama, 134 persons (including refugees, migrants and host communities) were provided with information, orientation, and legal assistance to access the refugee status determination (RSD) procedure and other essential rights. In **Costa Rica**, 126 Venezuelans received information and legal assistance, 36 people were assessed for protection needs, and 1 Venezuelan received help with the payment of immigration procedures.

GBV. In **Panama**, seeking to reduce the risks of gender-based violence (GBV) and enhancing protection for women, girls, adolescents, and other groups at risk of GBV, 8 community workshops were held in community safe spaces and in the migratory reception centres in San Vicente (Darién) and Gualaca (Chiriquí) and in Panama Centro, San Miguelito and Panama Oeste. The sessions addressed topics such as self-care, menstrual hygiene, violence prevention, leadership skills, and pathways for comprehensive care for survivors. A total of 165 persons participated, 68 of whom were refugees and migrants

from Venezuela. Furthermore, 6 adolescent survivors of sexual violence were treated at the Migrant Reception Station (ERM) in Darién, 3 of whom are Venezuelan nationals. In **Costa Rica**, 1 Venezuelan was assessed for access to justice or support networks

Health. In Panama, in February, 20 individual and group psychosocial support activities (remote and/or face-to-face) were carried out for refugees and migrants, seeking to reduce anxiety and stress levels. These activities were held in Panama, West Panama, San Miguelito, and Chiriqui. During the sessions, psychological first aid and psychological orientation were provided, as well as crisis intervention and promotion of mental health through various workshops on self-care, self-discovery, and self-esteem, managing anxiety, and assertive communication. In **Costa Rica**, 67 Venezuelans received psychosocial assistance. Of these, 16 Venezuelans attended group workshops on emotional wellbeing. 1,195 Venezuelans received medical insurance during February under a special agreement with the Costa Rican social security entity. 12 Venezuelans received psychiatric care. In **Mexico**, R4V partners provided COVID-19 tests to 25 Venezuelan asylum-seekers returned from the United States to await their asylum procedures in Mexico.

Shelter. In Costa Rica, 33 Venezuelans were supported with emergency shelter. 26 Venezuelans were supported with the payment of rent for housing for 3 months.

WASH. In Costa Rica, 41 Venezuelans received basic hygiene kits and 1 child received diapers. In **Mexico**, R4V partners provided WASH interventions through donations of 12,130 hygiene kits to 58 shelters.



PEOPLE REACHED*



Education

88



Food Security

56



Health

183



Hum. Transp.

0



Integration

115



Nutrition

0



Protection

296



Shelter

60



WASH

52



MPC

84



GBV

3