



HIGHLIGHTS

Historical commitment with protection

Argentina is a State Party to the 1951 *Convention relating to the Status of Refugees* since 1961 and its Protocol since 1967. Argentina acceded to the 1954 *Convention relating to the Status of Stateless People* in 1972 and the 1961 *Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness* in 2014.

Syria Humanitarian Visa Programme

In September 2016, at the Leader's Summit on Refugees held in New York, the President of the Republic, Mr. Mauricio Macri announced that Argentina will receive 3000 Syrians (*Programa Siria*).

Support Access to Durable Solutions and Local Integration

In July 2016, the National Secretary for Families, Children and Adolescents (SENNAF / Ministry of Social Development) started providing direct assistance to vulnerable asylum seekers.

The UNHCR Regional Office for Southern Latin America based in Buenos Aires covers and financially manages operations in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.

Context information

- The domestic legal framework dealing with refugees is set out in the 2006 Refugee Law N° 26.165 "*Ley General de reconocimiento y protección al refugiado*", and enshrines high standards of protection, including the extended refugee definition in line with the 1984 *Cartagena Declaration*.
- Migration Law N° 25.871 incorporates safeguards regarding the protection of asylum seekers and the prevention of *refoulement* at borders.
- UNHCR, CONARE and the Public Defense Office (*Defensoría General de la Nación*) signed an agreement to ensure public and free legal representation prior to the RSD procedure to asylum seekers, and legal assistance for refugees in other procedures.
- Argentina actively contributes to the consolidation of the Southern Cone as a "regional protection space", through the adoption of the Brazil Declaration, the implementation of its Plan of Action (BPA), and the consolidation of the MERCOSUR National Refugee Commissions' Forum.
- Argentina grants nationality on the basis of the *ius solis* criteria which also benefits children of refugees and asylum seekers born in the country.
- Refugees and asylum seekers enjoy access to public education, health services and have the right to work.
- In 2015, 306 refugees were naturalized and their refugee status was ceased by the CONARE.



Map Sources: UNCS, UNHCR
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Printing date: 27 Sep 2016

UNHCR presence

Offices:

1 Country Office in Buenos Aires

Population of concern 4,986

Refugees	3,222
Asylum Seekers (pending decisions)	1,764

Source: UNHCR Mid-year Statistical Report, June 2016

Funding Regional Office for Southern Latin America USD 4.8 million



WORKING WITH PARTNERS

- UNHCR works in close coordination with Government counterparts, namely the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, the National Migration Directorate, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, the National Institute against Discrimination and Xenophobia, and the National Refugee Commission (CONARE).
- UNHCR is a member of the CONARE, with voice and no voting right. UNHCR works in close cooperation with the local Government of the City of Buenos Aires where the majority of refugee population resides.
- ADRA (Agencia Adventista de Desarrollo y Recursos Asistenciales) and MIRARES are UNHCR's Implementing Partners in Argentina executing operational projects aimed at providing counselling, basic humanitarian assistance and support to facilitate self-reliance / sustainable livelihoods to refugees and asylum seekers.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Protection & Durable Solutions

- Provide technical support and advice to national authorities involved in the drafting of refugee/migration legislation and the implementation of fair and efficient refugee status determination procedures (RSD). Capacity building activities are implemented to strengthen the National Refugee Commission, and its technical secretariat in order to ensure due process in admission, registration, eligibility interviews, RSD assessments and right to appeal.
- Assist CONARE and the Ministry of Social Affairs in the elaboration of a comprehensive public programme to guarantee the required social assistance for asylum seekers and to facilitate the social economic integration of refugees.
- Assist the Government during its Temporary MERCOSUR Presidency (first semester of 2017) in the implementation of the Brazil Plan of Action, and the initiatives of the CONARE Forum (capacity building and trainings, durable solutions and migratory alternatives for refugees, statelessness, exchange of information and regional cooperation within MERCOSUR, in particular with the Institute of Human Rights Public Policy – IPPDH).
- Provide technical support to the Government in the implementation of the *Programa Siria*. In 2014, Argentina established the “Special Programme for the Issuance of Humanitarian Visas for Foreigners affected by the Conflict in the Syrian Arabic Republic”. Since its entry into force, Argentina has granted over 300 humanitarian visas to persons affected by the conflict in Syria with family/social ties in Argentina.
- Advocate for the facilitation of the naturalization procedure for refugees and provide the necessary information to ensure they are able to make an informed decision on this option.
- Advocate for the adoption of a law for the protection of stateless people as well as the establishment of a stateless determination procedure in line with the pledges made by the Government of Argentina (Brazil Plan of Action).
- Promote actions aimed at identifying, preventing and responding to situations of SGBV affecting refugee women and children through regular protection dialogues and empowerment activities.

Humanitarian Assistance, Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- CONARE registers asylum claims and identifies possible needs for direct assistance and refers the cases either to SENNAF (families and cases with special needs) or to ADRA.
- Provide technical support for the implementation of the CONARE's “Assistance and Local Integration Plan”.
- Promote the adoption of a Protocol among CONARE, SENNAF, ADRA and MIRARES to ensure a smooth coordination of all institutions involved in providing direct humanitarian assistance.

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