

CHILE

March 2020

To date, Chile is in the **stage 4 of the COVID-19 outbreak** with thousands of confirmed community transmission cases, the vast majority in the Region of Santiago, where most of refugees and migrants reside.

On 18 March 2020, Chile declared a “state of emergency” as well as the closure of all borders to foreigners and non-residents. The Government has also established a **nation-wide curfew (10pm-5am) and a quarantine** in seven districts of the city of Santiago and two in the Region of La Araucanía. Schools will remain closed for the month of April 2020.

Within the framework of the national response plan, the Government of Chile **authorized the hiring of foreign healthcare professionals** who have graduated abroad, without the need of carrying out the national medical examination-EUNACOM.

In support of the response, the government is drawing on private health care institutions and is looking to rent additional locations that could eventually be turned into emergency hospitals.

UNHCR and IOM are working with the Chilean authorities and the UNCT to ensure that the **national response to the crisis** includes the needs of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. Also, UNHCR is currently carrying out a **re-prioritization** of assistance to refugees and migrants, based on providing **cash-based interventions (CBI), food, shelter and access to health services**. Finally, UNHCR and its partners are offering **remote orientation and services** and are disseminating **communication materials and graphics** focused on the prevention of COVID-19 and the recent measures adopted by the Government, in order to meet the information needs of the refugees and migrants.

POPULATION OF CONCERN:

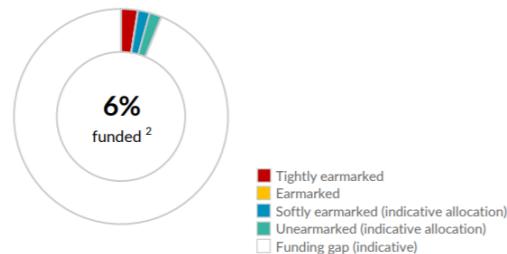
465,383

Refugees	2,053
Asylum-seekers	8,585
Others of concern	2,073
Venezuelans displaced abroad	452,712

FUNDING (AS OF 19 MARCH)

USD 22.2 M

requested for the UNHCR operation MCO Argentina (incl. Chile),
900,000 received



UNHCR PRESENCE

The UNHCR Multi-country Office for Southern Latin America based in Buenos Aires covers operations in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay.

Staff in Argentina and Chile:

- 71 National staff and affiliated workforce
- 12 International staff

Offices in Chile:

- 1 National Office in Santiago
- 1 Field Unit in Arica



Figure 1. Arica, Chile. UNHCR staff visiting a Cuban asylum-seeker hosted in the country. ©UNHCR/Santiago Escobar

Working with Partners

- In line with the “whole of society approach” envisaged by the Global Compact on Refugees and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, **UNHCR works closely with the national government, refugee communities, municipalities, civil society organizations and private sector to ensure refugees’ and migrants’ protection and durable solutions.**
- UNHCR has entered into partnership agreements with, **World Vision International, the National Human Rights Institute, Municipality of Santiago, Social Aid Foundation of Christian Churches (FASIC), Scalabrin Foundation, Jesuit Migrant Service (SJM), Diego Portales University (UDP), International Federation of Red Cross and Vicaría Pastoral Social**, to provide shelter, food, hygiene and winter kits, legal counselling, medical and psycho-social assistance to Venezuelan refugees arriving in the country.
- **UNHCR and IOM co-lead the National Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela** and works closely with other UN sister agencies on ensuring holistic responses to their plight.
- Given the need to have spaces for assistance and guidance for **LGBTIQ + people on the move**, the Foundation for Social Assistance of Christian Churches (FASIC) with the support of UNHCR, is currently establishing a national network of LGBTIQ+ migrants and refugees in Chile.

Main Activities

Protection

- **Identify protection risks and main needs of Venezuelans in Chile** to plan for all protection activities and making sure they will serve everyone whatever their age, gender or needs. In 2019, through the application of the Protection Monitoring Tool (PMT) UNHCR reached some **1,800** people. Also, the Agency held various meetings with members of Venezuelan organizations, in order to develop strategies to support and empower these institutions as well as to collect information on the living conditions and challenges experienced by Venezuelans in the country.
- **Provide legal assistance to Venezuelan refugees and migrants and conduct border monitoring** through partnership agreements with the National Human Rights Institute (NHRI), the Legal Clinic of University Diego Portales and the Jesuit Migrant Service. In 2019, UNHCR partners provided legal support to around **5,000** persons and some **8,000** people were assisted directly by UNHCR staff, either by telephone or face-to-face orientation in Arica, Antofagasta, Iquique and Santiago. Also, since mid-2019, UNHCR has been supporting the online app "**MIGRAPP**", implemented by the Jesuit Migrant Service, to provide free legal assistance to refugees, migrants and asylum-seekers.
- **Support efforts to strengthen national protection frameworks**, through technical legal assistance and capacity building activities.
- **Implement the regional initiative "Spaces of Support"** that seeks to ensure that refugees and migrants from Venezuela have quality information and basic assistance services during their displacement in the region. In 2019, UNHCR in Chile achieved the gradual consolidation of 19 support spaces throughout the country.
- **Provide psychosocial assistance and food items to refugees and migrants** through partnership agreements with World Vision International (WVI), Municipality of Santiago, Scalabrin Foundation, FASIC and the International Federation of Red Cross. In 2019 some **1,400 people received psychosocial assistance** and some **1,100 people received nutritional contributions and food boxes**.

Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFIs)

- **Provide food assistance, hygiene kits, winter clothes and support for emergency shelter to newly arrived and vulnerable refugees and migrants.** In 2019, some **1,500** people received support to cover for their basic needs.

Durable Solutions

- **Work together with the private sector, as part of its livelihoods strategy, to foster the local integration of refugees and migrants.** In 2019, UNHCR held the First Forum with the Private Sector for the labour inclusion of refugees in Chile, an event that counted with the support of IOM, ILO, OECD, Tent Foundation, the National Chamber of Commerce, the Organization "Acción Empresas" and Global Compact. Nearly 80 representatives from the private sector, local governments, national government, international organizations and civil society organizations attended. In July 2019, UNHCR and IOM jointly financed and supported a labour fair in Antofagasta, in which approx. some 1,200 people participated, many of them refugees and migrants. In January 2020, UNHCR, IOM and the Commission of the National System of Certification of Labor Competencies, Chile Valora, carried out a project to certify the labor competencies of some 70 Venezuelan people in the sales and call centre sector, to improve their employment opportunities in Chile
- **Using a community-based approach, teams of Venezuelans are capacitated to help reach refugees and migrants in different communities to facilitate and inform about access to work, labour rights and Refugee Status Determination;** an initiative which is jointly implemented by UNHCR and its partner Vicaría Pastoral Social

CARITAS. In 2019, some 6,000 persons were reached by these activities. Also, during 2019, UNHCR supported some 80 Venezuelan doctors with a training to pass the national medical examination, allowing them to practice in Chile.

- **Promote the "Cities of Solidarity" programme adopted within the framework of the Brazil Plan of Action** to facilitate the reception and integration of persons of concern.
- **Support "INMI", a digital labour inclusion platform that already has more than 5,000 registered people**, and whose purpose is to support the inclusion of refugees and migrants in the Chilean labour world, linking their job search with companies that have an interest in recruiting candidates.

Public Information

- **Develop campaigns and communicational material to promote a favourable environment for refugees and migrants in the country.** During 2019, UNHCR and IOM carried out an opinion survey to assess xenophobia that was applied to 1000 people from Santiago, Arica, Antofagasta and Talca. These results are being used to design a public campaign that aims to promote non-discrimination.
- **Carry out community-based activities involving refugees, host communities, municipalities, civil society and private sector.** Within the framework of World Refugee Day, UNHCR carried out the Music Festival "ORIGEN", sponsored by the Municipality of Santiago, the National Institute of Youth and the United Nations National System as well as supported by the companies Lipigas and Mall Plaza. Fifteen foreign communities - including Venezuelans - participated through gastronomic and cultural stands, which were visited by more than 3,000 people.
- **Provide timely and adapted information to refugees and migrants**, including the design and provision of materials to inform people about their rights and access to services.
- **Raise awareness among journalists, editors, and media workers on the refugee and migrant plight.** During 2019, UNHCR organized a workshop together with the Central University, which was attended by nearly 100 journalists. The same year, the agency released a brochure with recommendations for journalists covering news on forced displacement. Currently, UNHCR is working together with UNESCO to launch a "**virtual training for journalists and editors**" on forced displacement, anti-xenophobia and non-stigmatization (will be available during the first semester 2020).
- **Empower the voices and testimonies of refugees, and strengthen their communication skills.** On March 2020, in frame of the Women's International Day, UNHCR carried out a three-days training workshop on storytelling for 30 refugee and migrant women in Santiago and Arica. The women -most of them Venezuelans- learnt tools on how to inspire audiences through their own life-stories and, in the future, participate in UNHCR public events sharing their testimony.

Special thanks to our donors who have provided earmarked funds for the MCO Argentina (incl. Chile):

[European Union – USD 351,617](#)

[Private donors Spain – USD 220, 507](#)

[UN Programme on HIV/AIDS – 8,500](#)

Special thanks to the major donors who have provided softly earmarked funds in 2020 at global level

United States of America 6.8 million | Canada 2.3 million

Ireland | Morocco | Slovakia | Sweden | Private donors

Thanks to other donors who have provided unearmarked funds in 2020 at global level

Sweden 76.4 million | Norway 41.4 million | Netherlands 36.1 million | Denmark 34.6 million | United Kingdom 31.7 million | Germany 25.9 million | **Switzerland** 16.4 million | Private donors Spain 13.2 million

Belgium | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Indonesia | Ireland | Kuwait | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Peru | Portugal | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Slovakia | Sri Lanka | Thailand | Turkey | United Arab Emirates | Uruguay | Private donors

CONTACTS

José Manuel Cáceres, Regional Reporting Officer, CACERES@unhcr.org

Stephanie Rabi, Snr Communications/PI. Assistant, RABIMISL@unhcr.org

[UNHCR operation page - Twitter](#)