



SOUTH AMERICA

REGIONAL STRATEGY
2020–2024

IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

Publisher: International Organization for Migration
Av. Santa Fe 1460, 5th floor
C1060ABN
Buenos Aires
Argentina
Tel.: +54 11 4813 3330
Email: robuepress@iom.int
Website: <https://robuenosaires.iom.int/>

Cover photo: A Syrian family – beneficiaries of the “Syria Programme” – is welcomed by IOM staff at the Ezeiza International Airport in Buenos Aires. © IOM 2018

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FOREWORD

In November 2019, the IOM Strategic Vision was presented to Member States. It reflects the Organization's view of how it will need to develop over a five-year period, in order to effectively address complex challenges and seize the many opportunities migration offers to both migrants and society. It responds to new and emerging responsibilities – including membership in the United Nations and coordination of the United Nations Network on Migration – as we enter the Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. As part of the implementation of the Strategic Vision, I asked each of the Regional Offices to develop its own strategic priorities for the 2020–2024 period, integrating key elements of the Vision to respond to emerging needs within the region.

This regional strategy reflects the essential role that IOM plays in the field of human mobility: protecting, assisting and supporting migrants across the world, developing effective responses to the shifting dynamics of migration, and serving as a key source of advice on migration policy, research, data and practice. It also highlights the critical work that IOM undertakes in emergency situations, developing the resilience of communities and mobile populations, and particularly those in vulnerable situations, while building capacity within governments to manage all forms and impacts of mobility.

Most importantly, this strategy highlights the current and future regional and cross-regional trends and challenges with respect to migration and situations of displacement, and outlines how IOM will seek to address them, including through collaboration with United Nations agencies and other partners.

I would like to thank colleagues at all levels of the Organization – and particularly at the regional and country levels – for their diligent and insightful work in developing this strategy, which places IOM's global strategic objectives in context and sets out a course of action to achieve them. It is particularly timely, given the high salience of human mobility in public discourse, and as operational needs on the ground, particularly in the humanitarian sphere, are becoming more complex in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under this strategy, IOM colleagues will engage with a wide range of stakeholders in all countries in the region, along with key regional bodies, including economic communities, consultative processes and multilateral forums, on the priorities it sets out. I and all my colleagues look forward to working with you over the next years to ensure that migration is safe, orderly and regular for the benefit of all. Together, we can respond to the needs and aspirations of migrants and displaced populations around the world, building societies fit for a modern, mobile and interconnected world.



António Vitorino
Director General
International Organization for Migration

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ACRONYMS

CAN	Andean Community of Nations (Spanish: <i>Comunidad Andina</i>)
CELAC	Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (Spanish: <i>Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños</i>)
CIMAL	Centre for Migration Information on Latin America (Spanish: <i>Centro de Información Migratoria para América Latina</i>)
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
CSO	civil society organization
ECLAC/UNECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
IBC	(United Nations regional) issue-based coalition
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPPDH	MERCOSUR Institute of Public Policies on Human Rights (Spanish: <i>Instituto de Políticas Públicas en Derechos Humanos</i>)
MERCOSUR	Southern Common Market (Spanish: <i>Mercado Común del Sur</i>)
MiGOF	Migration Governance Framework
RIAM	Ibero-American Network of Migration Authorities (Spanish: <i>Red Iberoamericana de Autoridades Migratorias</i>)
SACM	South American Conference on Migration
SDG(s)	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
SRF	Strategic Results Framework
UNHCR	(Office of the) United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSDG LAC	United Nations Sustainable Development Group for Latin America and the Caribbean



1.

INTRODUCTION



1. INTRODUCTION¹

IOM maintains that safe, orderly and regular migration benefits migrants and societies. From a holistic approach, focused on the rights of migrants, IOM cooperates with the States of the region to ensure that migration constitutes an opportunity for migrants and their families to achieve greater well-being and better life prospects. For this purpose, IOM guides its actions according to the IOM Strategic Vision, the Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, among other important frameworks.

The IOM Strategic Vision is based on these three pillars: [resilience](#), [mobility](#) and [governance](#).²

Regarding [resilience](#), IOM in South America has set four regional strategic priorities:

- (a) Facilitate distinctive assistance and protection to migrants throughout the migration process, prioritizing the most vulnerable people.
- (b) Address adverse factors that may trigger disordered, insecure or irregular migration.
- (c) Implement stabilization, transition and peacebuilding actions in accordance with the principles, objectives and goals of sustainable development.
- (d) Facilitate channels through which migrants can support sustainable development in origin and host communities.

The priorities under [mobility](#) are as follows:

- (a) Promote more efficient and secure migration administration systems, with a focus on the protection of migrants' human rights.
- (b) Foster sustainable solutions for documentation and regularization.
- (c) Offer alternatives that will enable to harmonize labour market requirements with the needs of migrant workers and their host communities.
- (d) Ensure the continuity of medical attention and health responses to emergent needs related to human mobility.

¹ For definitions of migration-related terminology used in this document, see: IOM, *Glossary on Migration*, International Migration Law No. 34 (Geneva, 2019). Available at <https://publications.iom.int/books/international-migration-law-ndeg34-glossary-migration>.

² The strategic objectives of IOM in the region have been clustered under and respond to its global vision, as operationalized in the Strategic Results Framework (SRF) and its objectives: humanitarian response (SRF Objective 1), resilience (SRF Objective 2), mobility (SRF Objective 3) and governance (SRF Objective 4).

Finally, under [governance](#), the main priorities are:

- (a) Mobilize partners and capacities in support of States for the development of the migration dimension, in line with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.
- (b) Promote the sustainable development and human rights approaches in regional spaces, factoring in the migration variable.
- (c) Facilitate the inclusion of migrant persons and the migration dimension in the planning and management of territories.
- (d) Improve partners' capacities to produce, employ and share information, and increase awareness of migration (and its various processes) and of migrant persons themselves.

The core values and principles of IOM are at the heart of its work. The Organization holds itself to high standards, guided by the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including upholding human rights for all. Respect for the rights, dignity, empowerment and well-being of all migrants and (associated) communities remains paramount. IOM has always assisted governments in their effective implementation of international standards in its programming and will continue to do so. In addition to the values enshrined in the IOM Constitution, the Organization continues to adhere to the core United Nations values of integrity, professionalism, equality and respect for diversity, ensures that it is accountable to its beneficiaries, and plays an active role in preventing sexual exploitation and abuse.

Since early 2020, the region of South America has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. While short-term impacts are already being felt – and most acutely by vulnerable groups – the longer-term, socioeconomic, development-related and humanitarian consequences are yet to be fully determined. These outcomes will continue to impact the needs of migrants and other populations on the move, host communities and governments, and must therefore be fully reflected in the programming of IOM, which has already shifted in response. This regional strategy should therefore be read in light of these developments and will be reviewed periodically to ensure the necessary response to address ongoing and emerging impacts of the pandemic and other significant regional and global developments.

2.

POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL OUTLOOK FOR THE REGION



2. POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL OUTLOOK FOR THE REGION

As of 2019, IOM in South America was composed of 10 country offices – Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela – with a regional office based in Buenos Aires.

In the region, IOM provides technical cooperation and support to governments and assistance to migrants and communities through the development of actions in the following areas: protection of vulnerable migrants; migration and development; migration and health; migration and border administration and border management; migration, environment and climate change; risk management and emergency response; migration dialogue; migration policy; and migration data and research, among others.

In recent years, within a context marked by high socioeconomic inequality and vulnerability to disasters of the countries of the region, migration has had increased political and social significance to the governments of South America. Progress in the field of migration governance has been possible because of timely responses to the challenges posed by migration processes in the region.^{3,4}

Against this backdrop and in coordination with several other United Nations agencies, as well as with the support of many partners, IOM has put robust responses in place, which include direct involvement in emergency situations, protection of vulnerable migrants, socioeconomic and cultural inclusion of migrants in destination countries, and strengthening of governments' capacities to better face current migration challenges, such as the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on migration and the well-being of migrants – in particular, in relation to the promotion of the social rights of migrants, protection of stranded migrants, and prevention of discrimination and xenophobia against migrants, among others. A key factor driving cooperation is the fact that attention to migration issues has been set as public agenda by governments of the region.

The South American region has shown willingness to implement policies that promote respect for the rights of migrants, as well as attention and protection to those in need. Currently, several countries in the region count on mechanisms that can ensure migration in regular conditions and programmes that encourage the inclusion and/or integration of migrants into their societies. These steps must be strengthened; undoubtedly, good practices developed in the field in certain countries will serve to guide innovations and solutions

³ An example of such response is that of South American countries' to the flows of Venezuelan migrants and refugees, characterized by the deployment of a series of tools and mechanisms that aim to improve regulation of intraregional migration movements and, in the countries receiving the most recent inflows, the conditions for residency offered.

⁴ In 2018, IOM established the Office of the Director-General's Special Envoy for the Regional Response to the Venezuelan Situation, with the aim of setting up the coordination of IOM's response to the crisis, given the complexity of its political and humanitarian context and development impact on countries of destination and on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela itself, as well as its regional dimensionality. This office coordinates IOM response by promoting and implementing the full range of the Organization's services. In particular, it is responsible for the coordination of project implementation and fundraising under the Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RMRP). IOM provides support to country platforms in the operationalization of regional and national strategies, information management, communications and resource mobilization. The Organization's mandate covers 17 countries that host Venezuelan migrants and refugees, in addition to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela itself. The Special Envoy is responsible for political liaison, implementation and oversight of the response. He also co-chairs the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform, co-coordinates the Technical Secretariat of the Quito Process and supports the mandate of the IOM–UNHCR Joint Special Representative for Venezuelan refugees and migrants.

coming out of others that present less developed situations. IOM will intervene throughout the process, as it has historically done so, specifically promoting South–South cooperation through the promotion and advancement of peer-to-peer dialogue within global, subregional and regional processes on migration.

2.1. IOM ENGAGEMENT WITH UNITED NATIONS BODIES IN THE REGION

In South America, IOM is strongly involved with United Nations bodies at the national (country) and regional levels. Several areas of regional cooperation and specific experiences relating to migration contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including through data collection and policy repositories; capacity-building and regional initiatives to coordinate guidelines and policy responses; and analysis of the links between migration and development. Promoting data collection and systematization helps to support evidence-based governance and policies and, in turn, combat negative narratives about migrants.

Within the Global Compact for Migration process, country-level United Nations migration networks are essential platforms for providing a coherent United Nations response to help address countries' migration priorities based on the work of the Global Compact, IOM and other United Nations agencies, with governments supporting the implementation of actions to promote good migration governance in the countries of the region. At the regional level, IOM and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), with the participation of other United Nations entities, lead the regional review process of the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration. This process represents a major stepping stone for Member States to advance implementation of the Global Compact for Migration.

Since the incorporation of IOM into the United Nations system, it has been bolstering coordination with different regional institutions in the system by progressively taking part in, for example, the United Nations country teams (UNCTs) and by participating in the United Nations Sustainable Development Group for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNSDG LAC), with a leadership role in migration.⁵

At the country level, the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework is informed by the respective government's prioritization, planning, implementation and reporting as regards the 2030 Agenda, including, among others, through the preparation of evidence-based voluntary national reviews based on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators.

2.2. IOM ENGAGEMENT IN REGIONAL MECHANISMS

The South American region has a high level of regional integration and cooperation, including in the area of migration. Recent changes in migration patterns have led several countries in the region to adopt mechanisms that ensure migration under regular conditions and programmes that encourage the integration of migrants into their host societies.

⁵ In the framework of the UNSDG LAC working groups, IOM, together with UNHCR and UNICEF, leads the Issue-based Coalition (IBC) on Human Mobility, which develops activities that seek to establish a platform for inter-agency discussion, to boost coordination and involvement of agencies in the field of migration. IOM also participates in other IBCs, such as those on resilience and climate change, equitable growth, crime and violence, and institutions and governance, bringing about the human mobility perspective to each of them.

Given the importance of regional dialogue mechanisms and their proven effectiveness in confronting regional migration challenges, IOM considers the strengthening of these dialogue mechanisms to be key. The Organization will expand the advances achieved in building anchored institutional discourse on good migration governance in the region, based on the principles and objectives included in the forthcoming IOM Strategic Results Framework.

IOM has been working closely with the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), focusing on specialized programming with some of its migration-related mechanisms.⁶ IOM also provides technical assistance to the Andean Community of Nations (CAN), the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and the Pacific Alliance.

IOM, moreover, has strong ties with the South American Conference on Migration (SACM) and the Ibero-American Network of Migration Authorities (RIAM), and will continue supporting these processes to strengthen discussions and the exchange of good practices in the field of migration governance.⁷

The Quito Process,⁸ as a cooperation mechanism developed by governments of 11 South and Central American countries⁹ to manage the humanitarian and migration challenges linked to the Venezuela crisis, represents an informal group that has agreed on 18 points of action and has called for increased spending on assistance for Venezuelan migrants and refugees by the participating countries themselves, with support from the United Nations and other “specialized international organizations.” IOM, alongside other United Nations organizations, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), have supported the implementation of these action points through technical assistance, specifically in the areas of humanitarian assistance, documentation and economic integration, among others. As a result of Venezuelan migrant and refugee flows through the region, the United Nations and its partners are supporting government efforts through the Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RMRP), which aims to address immediate humanitarian and protection needs while facilitating the socioeconomic integration of migrants and support to host communities. The magnitude of the ongoing crisis requires further support to host countries to address humanitarian and development gaps.

IOM in South America considers the social inclusion and integration of migrants, as well as strengthening multi-stakeholder processes for policy development, as observed in countries such as Brazil and Peru, to be important areas of work.¹⁰

⁶ These include the Specialized Forum on Migration, the Working Group on Consular and Judicial Matters, the Meeting of High-level Authorities on Human Rights, the MERCOSUR Institute of Public Policies on Human Rights (IPPDH), the Meeting of Female Ministers and High Authorities for Women and the MERCOSUR Social Institute, among others. Visit www.mercosur.int for more information on these mechanisms.

⁷ As an example, SACM has advanced guidelines for the protection of persons crossing borders in contexts of disasters and climate change, which could be leveraged to pursue enhanced coordination among countries of the region.

⁸ The website of the Quito Process is available at www.iom.int/quito-process.

⁹ Namely, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.

¹⁰ Monitoring national and regional obligations to immigrants requires the production of coordinated, timely and accurate information. Harmonized data collection systems should be sensitive to gender, age, disability, and ethnic and racial differences. Some advances have been made regarding the production of border statistics and administrative registration; however, these good practices should be extended to most sources used by national statistical systems. One important tool in this regard is the IOM Migration Information and Data Analysis System (MIDAS), installed at most border-crossing points in Paraguay, and used in Ecuador as a tool to register foreigners for regularization purposes. Another tool is the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), which is already being used by most South American countries.

2.3. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

The major current and future partners of IOM in South America include governments, intergovernmental institutions (regional consultative processes, regional integration mechanisms and regional forums), United Nations agencies,¹¹ international organizations,¹² academia (universities and research centres) and civil society (workers' and business unions, migrants' associations and migrants' rights organizations, among others).

Considering that migration is increasingly complex, a more integral approach will be progressively required towards the future, implying the need to strengthen relationships with several social sectors, both at the individual State level, as well as with multiple States at the bilateral, regional, cross-regional and global levels. In this context, IOM is called on to strengthen its strategic ties with the aforementioned partners (previous paragraph). The growing relevance of migration has greatly increased the number of actors, including various United Nations agencies, that are developing actions in the field in specific areas closely linked with migration.

In addition to current partners, it would be necessary to find a better approach for the private sector and organizations that represent their interests, such as the International Organization of Employers.¹³

The field of environmental migration has also enabled IOM to build collaborative relationships with actors such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Platform on Disaster Displacement. Further innovative partnerships should be developed with other relevant entities¹⁴ to position IOM as a key actor in this thematic area and establish synergies with existing interventions.

Lastly, the Organization, in accordance with the whole-of-society approach, will increasingly promote the involvement of civil society organizations (CSOs) in regional spaces as an important area of migration governance, as well as in the Global Compact for Migration and other frameworks, where Member States and other stakeholders could benefit from the experience of CSOs on the ground.

2.4. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

IOM has identified opportunities and challenges in the migration arena, which will be addressed in the coming years.

The increasing relevance of migration on the global and regional agenda represents an important opportunity for IOM, as it puts the Organization at the centre of many discussions with governments and other partners. The wide-ranging issues related to migration allow IOM to engage in exchanges with diverse government sectors, giving IOM a favourable

¹¹ UNHCR, UNICEF, ECLAC International Labour Organization (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Population Division (UNPD), and UN-Habitat, among others.

¹² The Organization of American States (OAS), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the International Committee of the Red Cross, among others.

¹³ There is an important potential to expand this type of collaboration in the region, replicating cooperation models such as the "business table setup" by IOM Chile, introducing global initiatives on business involvement, such as the International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS) and Corporate Responsibility in Eliminating Slavery and Trafficking (CREST) in the context of the region, and applying cooperation frameworks with the private sector at both the global and regional levels.

¹⁴ For example, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).

position to strengthen relationships with them. In addition, considering the importance of regional platforms, IOM is called upon to perform a key role in regional dialogue processes on migration, ensuring its leadership in migration policy. Besides issue-based coalitions (IBCs) and other United Nations structures that support Member States in the regional review of the Global Compact for Migration process, the experiences of the different UNCTs will be useful in informing new migration initiatives in the region within a framework of deeper inter-agency coordination. The reform of the United Nations development system (United Nations Reform) and the SDG implementation and Global Compact for Migration processes demand that IOM adapt to these frameworks through the development of strong programming with Member States. Considering its full integration into the United Nations system, IOM is reinvigorating its role in UNCTs and inter-agency groups. Also, in a context of scarce resources, and recognizing the importance of a common understanding of migration and needs in the field of migration in the region, South–South cooperation should be put at the forefront. Another fact is that the work of IOM in the production, analysis and dissemination of migration data and evidence will become a priority, as part of actions to fight discrimination and xenophobia in the region. Finally, drawing from the COVID-19 experience, IOM will enhance initiatives for the promotion of the health of the migrant population, migrants' access to health services, continuity of treatment, assistance to vulnerable migrants, and the fight against the discrimination of ill migrants.

As most South American countries are either middle- or high-income countries and because, in general, traditional donors do not focus on the region (with the exception of Venezuelan and Colombian flows), the role of cooperation in these countries must be re-examined, such that international cooperation should consider their particularities (e.g. per capita GDP does not reflect a country's real capacity to access or mobilize resources). Furthermore, in order to be a full development actor, IOM should pursue a whole-of-Organization approach to its cross-cutting interventions to better connect humanitarian and development programming. Another important challenge is enhancing relationships with CSOs, fostering, in particular, their engagement in the regional forums. Lastly, considering the impacts of COVID-19 on migration dynamics, as well as societies at large, IOM should reinforce actions and mechanisms to protect migrants and work towards recovery in countries of origin and destination.

3.

MIGRATION OUTLOOK FOR THE REGION



3. MIGRATION OUTLOOK FOR THE REGION

3.1. OVERVIEW

This section presents an overview of key (intra-regional) migration and policy trends in the region that are expected to shape major drivers and trends over the next decade.

3.1.1. Venezuelan migration

Driven by social, economic, institutional and political factors, the massive exodus of Venezuelans since 2015 has resulted in more than 5 million people scattered in different countries around the world, with a clear predominance of South America (the main receiving countries being Colombia, Chile and Peru). Given the current dynamics, there is no end in sight to this massive population movement, which includes an increasing number of people with heightened vulnerabilities. The ongoing issues include serious risks of exploitation and abuse (particularly gender-based violence and human trafficking and smuggling) and family separation (most notably, the protection risks faced by unaccompanied and separated child migrants), as well as issues around inclusion and integration stemming from increasing levels of xenophobia.

3.1.2. Socioeconomic migration

Motivated by economic and social asymmetries, economic crises and recent episodes of social unrest and political instability that have taken place in several countries, citizens of Andean Community countries and Paraguay move to Argentina, Chile and Brazil in search of jobs and better lives.¹⁵ Intra-regional migration has increased in recent decades, often between neighbouring countries, but recently to more distant countries in the region, facilitated by greater flexibility in mobility and residency regulations.¹⁶

3.1.3. Colombian migration

The Colombian conflict over the past few decades have caused substantial movements of Colombian citizens within the country and outwards, particularly to developed countries (e.g. the United States and Spain) and neighbouring countries (mainly, Ecuador and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela).¹⁷ The peace process promoted by the Government of Colombia, culminating in an agreement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia in 2016, has meant huge progress in the stabilization of the country. However, illegal armed groups continue to be the main ones operating in remote rural areas and near the country's borders with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Ecuador, causing occasional displacement of people within Colombia and neighbouring countries.

¹⁵ IOM, *Tendencias migratorias en América del Sur, Informe Migratorio Sudamericano No 3* ["Migratory trends in South America", South American Migration Report No. 3] (Buenos Aires, 2020). Available at https://robuenosaires.iom.int/sites/default/files/Informes/Tendencias_Migratorias_en_America_del_Sur_Marzo.pdf.

¹⁶ In the last 10 years, more than 2 million intra-regional migrants in South America have regularized their situation. (IOM, *Evaluación del Acuerdo de Residencia del MERCOSUR y su incidencia en el acceso a derechos de los migrantes, Cuaderno Migratorio No 9* ["Evaluation of the MERCOSUR Residence Agreement and its impact on access migrants' rights", Migration Notes, No. 9] (Buenos Aires, 2018). Available at https://robuenosaires.iom.int/sites/default/files/publicaciones/Cuaderno_9-Evaluacion_del_Acuerdo_de_Residencia_del_MERCOSUR.pdf.

¹⁷ Over 5.7 million people remained internally displaced as of the end of 2018. (IOM, "Migration and migrants: regional dimensions and developments", in: *World Migration Report 2020* (Geneva, 2020). Available at https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2020_en_ch_3_1.pdf.)

3.1.4. Internal and intraregional migration linked to the environment

Natural hazards, such as floods, droughts, wildfires and lahar, are also main drivers of migration in South America. Both sudden-onset disasters and gradual environmental degradation are affecting South America and compelling people to move. The negative impacts of climate change further exacerbate these hazards, depleting people's livelihoods and pushing them to leave their homes.¹⁸

3.1.5. Caribbean migration

Increased numbers of Haitians, Cubans and Dominicans have migrated to South America over the last few years.¹⁹ A significant number of Haitians have benefited from the humanitarian visa scheme established in 2012 by the Brazilian Government, with the support of IOM, which ensures safe and regular migration to the country. To a lesser extent, Haitians also migrated to Chile and Argentina.²⁰ The establishment of these safe and regular pathways for migration in humanitarian circumstances has enabled persons affected by disasters to seek security and rebuild their livelihoods. On the other hand, due to recent policies promoted by some governments,²¹ a significant number of Cuban citizens have migrated to these countries, the vast majority belonging to the health sector as a result of bilateral agreements between the said countries and Cuba. Dominicans have also emigrated in great numbers to Argentina, as well as to Chile, in search of labour opportunities.²²

3.1.6. Extracontinental migration

During the last two decades, the region has experienced an increasing number of nationals from Africa and Asia in an attempt to reach the United States by passing through Central America and Mexico. Extracontinental migrants²³ – and, especially, the criminal smuggling networks that help them move – exploit visa regimes, weak border controls and/or the fact that some countries in the region facilitate their passage. These flows represent a great challenge in terms of migration governance because African and Asian migrants are more vulnerable due to their lack of regular migration status and its corresponding protections, along with language and cultural barriers, among others.

3.1.7. South American emigration to North America and Europe

A phenomenon that continues to develop is the migration of citizens from South America to North America (particularly, the United States and Canada), as well as Europe (mainly, Spain and Italy), in search of economic opportunities.²⁴ Although these flows increased from the beginning of the current millennium until the European economic crisis in 2008, migration of South Americans to Spain since 2016 has grown again – and not exclusively as a result of the migration of Venezuelans.²⁵

¹⁸ IOM, *Migraciones, ambiente y cambio climático, Cuaderno Migratorios No 8* ["Migration, environment and climate change", Migration Notes, No. 8] (Geneva, 2017). Available at <https://robuenosaires.iom.int/sites/default/files/publicaciones/Migraciones%2C%20ambiente%20y%20cambio%20clim%C3%A1tico.PDF>.

¹⁹ IOM, Chapter 3, *World Migration Report 2020* (see the reference citation in footnote 17).

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Mainly of Brazil, Ecuador, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

²² IOM, Chapter 3, *World Migration Report 2020* (see the reference citation in footnote 17).

²³ Featured as mixed migration due to the composition of this groups, mainly economical and irregular migrants, refugees, and victims of smuggling.

²⁴ IOM, Chapter 3, *World Migration Report 2020* (see the reference citation in footnote 17).

²⁵ Annual entries of nationals from South America to Spain increased from 75,851 in 2015 to 256,210 in 2018. (Spain, National Statistics Institute, Residential variation statistics, data set. Available at www.ine.es/dynt3/inebase/en/index.htm?padre=5740&capsel=6628 (accessed 20 December 2019).)

3.2. REGIONAL MOBILITY REGIMES

South American governments have made consistent advancements to facilitate regular migration and immigrant integration through a series of agreements that favour access to residency and social rights, as well as the portability of social security rights. Thus, two salient traits characterize this evolution. The first is that regional integration and dialogue processes on migration, supported by IOM, and national policies have turned from treating almost exclusively the regulation aspect of migration to a broader discussion of migrants' rights and their integration in host countries. IOM initiatives (e.g. in training and research) developed with the MERCOSUR Institute of Public Policies on Human Rights (IPPDH) have enhanced the human rights approach and set high standards in migration policy. The second is the interaction between agreements and dialogues that take place at the regional level and the changes in norms, regulations, procedures and policies that take place at the national level. Many countries in the region have changed their migration legislation according to international standards for the protection of migrants' rights. These improvements involved considering not only immigrants but also nationals living abroad and returnees. IOM provided technical advice during these processes.

Within this framework, some countries have enhanced their institutional capacities by creating, at both the national and local levels, inter-institutional spaces for the treatment of migration issues. IOM participates in most of these instances, contributing to discussions and providing advice. Consequently, most countries in the region have improved migration services, facilitated access to residency permits, favoured educational transfers and the portability of social security rights. IOM has been supporting governments by enhancing migrant orientation centres, as well as by strengthening border installations and registration systems, among others. These agreements were facilitated, in part, by a previous dynamic of regional dialogues in which migration and the rights of migrants were at the core. MERCOSUR, the Andean Community and SACM, where IOM acts as the technical secretariat, are salient examples of this regional cooperation.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, regional agreements started to treat migration in a more consistent manner and through a human rights-based approach. Countries in the region had previously signed several bilateral migration agreements, as well as subregional and regional agreements (e.g. the Andean Community). Built partly on this experience, MERCOSUR made considerable progress in migration governance in the region. The MERCOSUR Residence Agreement specifically focuses on protecting human rights and promoting similar legal standards and control mechanisms for their citizens. Since then, governance of intraregional migration and protection of migrants' rights have considerably improved through a series of mechanisms, such as access to residency rights, improving economic integration through access to formal jobs, recognition of educational credentials, portability of social security rights, and access to health services and education.²⁶

²⁶ The MERCOSUR Residence Agreement was originally signed in 2002 and entered into force in 2009. Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay were the first States party to the agreement, with Colombia, Ecuador and Peru signing later. The agreement establishes common rules for the processing of residence permits, simplifying and harmonizing the requirements. Holding a residence permit (which may be temporary or permanent) of the receiving country implies a right to enter, leave, circulate and remain freely in the territory of that country, as well as access to health and education, the right to family reunification, and the right to work and freely transfer remittances. Thus, the agreement provides equality of civil rights and social, cultural and economic freedoms with nationals of the receiving country. The contributions of IOM to MERCOSUR include a research to evaluate the implementation of the MERCOSUR Residence Agreement and a series of workshops and meetings with government officials to disseminate and discuss the main findings of the research and determine how to replicate best practices. (IOM, *Evaluación del Acuerdo de Residencia del MERCOSUR y su incidencia en el acceso a derechos de los migrantes* ["Evaluation of the MERCOSUR Residence Agreement and its impact on Access migrants' rights"] (see footnote 16).)

Additionally, most South American countries have changed their national migration laws to be more respectful of migrants' rights and adapted their frameworks to current migration patterns. Most countries have improved the institutional capacities of offices facilitating access to residency permits, border control and sharing of information. Certain migration laws, including, for instance, those of Brazil and the Plurinational State of Bolivia, have also evolved to address the situation of persons on the move due to disasters and climate change. In some countries, such improvements have even proven helpful in managing the arrival of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Large numbers have stayed in the region, and a considerable portion arriving in countries with very small immigrant populations, such as Colombia and Peru. Massive inflows of people entering countries that were unprepared to receive them led to critical situations, as those seen in border areas between the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Brazil, as well as Colombia, and those between Colombia and Peru, and between Colombia and Ecuador.

In 2018, the governments of the South American countries of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay, as well as those of Costa Rica, Mexico and Panama, signed the Quito Declaration on Human Mobility of Venezuelan Citizens in the Region – an agreement on managing the Venezuelan migration crisis in a coordinated manner. This declaration was followed by several technical meetings in which governments specified concrete actions to provide humanitarian assistance; enable and promote access to mechanisms for regularity and permanence; combat human trafficking and smuggling; prevent sexual and gender violence; ensure child protection; reject discrimination and xenophobia; facilitate access to procedures for determining refugee status; and, in general, continue working on the implementation of public policies for the protection of the human rights of all migrants in the respective countries, in accordance with national laws and applicable international and regional instruments. Many of these initiatives have received technical assistance and support from IOM, UNHCR and many other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations. The response actions represent a clear case for both short- and longer-term planning, partnerships, and responses operating in parallel and which draw upon all partners from the humanitarian, development, public and private sectors.²⁷

In summary, regional agreements have proven to be suitable instruments for improving mobility and pathways to residency, and protecting migrants' rights. However, there is considerable room for improvement at both the national (country) and regional levels. Immigrant integration is a matter that spans several executive areas and should be treated in an integral manner. Inter-institutional agencies (covering areas such as education, health, migration and labour), with the participation of CSOs, are good alternative structures responsible for the design, execution and monitoring of public policy towards immigrants, and, thus, should be replicated in all immigrant-receiving countries. Also, since States are accountable for their commitments towards immigrants, monitoring national and regional obligations to them requires the production of timely, coordinated and accurate information. Harmonized data collection systems should be sensitive to gender, age, and ethnic and racial differences. Some advances have already been made in the production of border statistics and administrative registration; however, the application of these good practices have to be extended to most sources used by national statistical systems. Another challenge is strengthening dialogue through well-established organizations such as MERCOSUR, the Andean Community and SACM, among others. Certainly, it is through these organizations

²⁷ Many good examples can be cited – from shelter and humanitarian transportation, food security and nutrition, to health and hygiene. Dozens of such initiatives include the issuance of Border Mobility Cards to Venezuelans crossing the border into Colombia; simplification of the process of validating prior obligatory education and academic degrees (Argentina); and expediting refugee recognition (Brazil).

that coordinated steps towards providing better, articulated responses to crucial needs, including measures to prevent xenophobia and favour social integration, can be ensured.

3.3. POTENTIAL AREAS OF EXPANSION OF THE WORK OF IOM

Much of the work done by IOM in South American countries in the last few years should be strengthened in the future for the Organization to become a key player and/or partner in supporting governments in the field of migration governance. Within the framework of the issues raised thus far, it is possible to identify several areas where IOM involvement can be potentially deepened.

First, it is necessary to expand cooperation with governments, particularly in the various areas where IOM has direct or indirect responsibilities in migration management – and, within these areas, on more specific themes that have recently become relevant in relation to migration (e.g. social inclusion, health, education services, justice and human rights, gender, and children). With the continued migratory movements of Venezuelans within the region, receiving countries should improve their capacities to integrate migrants in host communities, especially through the development of social inclusion programmes. In this sense, IOM has the opportunity to strengthen relationships with parts of government such as labour and social development ministries.

There is also an opportunity to enhance cooperation with governmental entities that manage important issues related to mobility, such as environmental agencies and emergency and risk reduction management units, and mainstreaming migration into development areas and policies. Increased migration and displacement due to disasters and environmental factors, and the adverse impacts of climate change and environmental degradation, require IOM to have closer contact with parts of government that manage these areas for the provision of technical assistance and relevant capacity-building. The work of IOM will include closer attention to the environmental impacts of migration flows and humanitarian assistance. IOM will therefore promote integral attention to environmental migration in its different aspects, including migration, displacement and planned relocation in the context of disasters, as well as the adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation, through an integrated governmental approach and international cooperation. A closer look is also required at the nexus between migration, the environment, climate change and other thematic areas such as health, where the compounding impacts of different crises and pressures on vulnerable communities and migrants require comprehensive interventions.

At the same time, and because inter-agency coordination is becoming increasingly crucial to the activities carried out by IOM in behalf of its beneficiary populations, it is recommended that the Organization move towards greater articulation with agencies in the United Nations system, as well as with members of the UNSDG LAC that have competencies in or are developing actions on migration issues, seeking to consolidate a leadership role in human mobility. At the national level, IOM will encourage strong coordination with agencies that form the UNCTs, improving their technical assistance to governments. At the regional level, the Organization will be more involved in Latin-American platforms and networks, such as the IBCs and the United Nations Network on Migration, to monitor follow-up on the Global Compact for Migration.

Furthermore, it is important to deepen IOM assistance in areas linked to the capacity-building of institutions in charge of migration governance, such as policy, normative frameworks, programmes and information, to deliver adequate human rights-based responses to the challenges posed by migration in the region. Aware of the weaknesses of some countries in the region, IOM will enhance its actions to give more support to countries in areas that need improvement.

Another area that should be expanded is technical assistance to governments in the discussion and formulation of possible responses for the protection of vulnerable migrants, including migrants in irregular situations, victims of trafficking, unaccompanied child migrants, indigenous migrants, migrants with health problems, and other categories of migrants suffering exploitation, violence and/or abuse. IOM will be part of key partnerships in the main discussions around protocols, guidelines and recommendations at national and regional forums, sharing its experiences in the field.

Public campaigns highlighting the positive impacts of migration in host countries – particularly, in relation to highly skilled migrants from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela – are extremely important in fighting xenophobia and racism. IOM will strengthen actions in this area, in coordination with various partners, to disseminate reliable information, including by training journalists and government officials, among others.

In the current context, it is also important to take into consideration the relationship between population mobility and health to prevent infection and assist vulnerable migrants. IOM will capitalize on its experience with COVID-19 to enhance initiatives to promote the health of migrant populations, migrants' access to health services, continuity of treatment, assistance to vulnerable immigrants, and the fight against discrimination towards ill migrants.



4.

REGIONAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



4. REGIONAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES²⁸

Regional strategic priorities under each pillar ([resilience](#), [mobility](#) and [governance](#)) and expected outcomes are outlined in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

Table 1. Resilience pillar regional strategic priorities and expected outcomes

Strategic priorities	Expected outcomes
1. Facilitate distinctive assistance and protection to migrants, prioritizing the most vulnerable people throughout the migration process.	1.1. The differential needs and characteristics of vulnerable internal and international migrants are promptly visualized.
	1.2. Integral services of differential assistance and protection are available to vulnerable migrants throughout the migration process. 1.2.1. Unaccompanied child migrants and refugees from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela or victims of gender-based violence or human trafficking receive comprehensive protection services throughout the migration process.
	1.3. Differential assistance and protection provided reflect suitable inter-agency coordination at the local, national and regional levels.
	1.4. Coping mechanisms are strengthened to support vulnerable migrants and host communities.
2. Address adverse factors that may trigger disordered, insecure or irregular migration.	2.1. Communities are aware of their vulnerabilities and capacities as regards disaster-related risks and dangers, climate change impacts and environmental degradation in their territories.
	2.2. Communities are organized to efficiently act against local risks as part of their territorial policies and plans.
	2.3. Populations at greater risk of displacement and irregular migration improve their access to adequate social services, including health services, to reduce gender equity and equality gaps.
	2.4. Alternatives in the form of sustainable improvements in living conditions are available in territories with populations at risk of irregular migration.
3. Implement stabilization, transition and peacebuilding actions in accordance with the principles, objectives and goals of sustainable development.	3.1. Assistance to communities emerging from disasters and situations of social violence is based on comprehensive models and rights approaches framed in development agendas.
	3.2. Population groups that face exclusion conditions are supported as transition agents towards development and peacebuilding.
4. Facilitate channels through which migrants can support the sustainable development of their origin and host communities.	4.1. Diaspora capacities and resources are channelled towards activities that contribute to the sustainable development of their communities.

²⁸ These strategic priorities respond to the pillars described in the IOM Strategic Vision. The IOM Strategic Results Framework (SRF) and its four objectives, namely, humanitarian response and resilience (SRF Objectives 1 and 2), mobility (SRF Objective 3) and governance (SRF Objective 4) capture the areas highlighted in the IOM Strategic Vision. The strategic priorities in this regional strategy will be tackled through coordinated, cross-thematic approaches to contribute to the broader regional goals.

Table 2. Mobility pillar regional strategic priorities and expected outcomes

Strategic priorities	Expected outcomes
1. Promote more efficient, secure migration administration systems, with a focus on the protection of migrants' human rights.	<p>1.1. Information and computer technology innovations enable the modernization of migration management systems.</p> <p>1.2. Infrastructure and registration at border checkpoints facilitate the implementation of integrated controls; there are strengthened public health measures in place throughout the migration process.</p> <p>1.3. The practical competence of migration officials is strengthened for the dignified treatment of migrants.</p> <p>1.4. Persons displaced by disasters, including across borders, are attended to based on a rights protection approach.</p>
2. Foster the sustainability of durable solutions for migrant documentation and regularization.	<p>2.1. States know the advantages of taking sustainable durable steps for migrant identification, documentation and regularization.</p> <p>2.2. Registration and regularization systems set their processing capacities according to the size and nature of migration flows.</p> <p>2.3. Migrant persons have access to sustainable durable solutions offered by States.</p> <p>2.4. Migrants are aware of their own rights.</p>
3. Offer alternatives to harmonize labour market requirements with the needs of migrant workers and their host communities.	<p>3.1. Migrants have a better awareness of existing demands in the labour markets of host countries.</p> <p>3.2. Migrants have access to decent job opportunities in labour markets that require complementation or improvement of their composition.</p> <p>3.3. Employers are receptive to contracting migrant workers.</p> <p>3.4. Mechanisms of labour intermediation are in place, with easy access for migrant persons and potential employers.</p>
4. Ensure the continuity of medical attention and health responses to emergent needs related to human mobility.	<p>4.1. Community-level health systems and primary health attention respond to human mobility dynamics, ensuring universal health coverage for all, including migrants and mobile populations, regardless of their migration status.</p> <p>4.2. The capacities of the health systems to respond to humanitarian emergencies and public health needs related to human mobility, including in terms of preparedness for outbreaks, as well as disease surveillance, detection and responses, are improved.</p>



Table 3. Governance pillar regional strategic priorities and expected outcomes

Strategic priorities	Expected outcomes
<p>1. Mobilize partners and capacities in support of States for the development of the migration dimension, in line with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Global Compact for Migration.</p>	<p>1.1. The United Nations Network on Migration is active in South American countries that are signatories to the Global Compact for Migration.</p>
	<p>1.2. Approved cooperation frameworks (e.g. the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework) take the human mobility issue into consideration.</p>
<p>2. Promote the sustainable development and human rights approaches, factoring in migration, in regional spaces.</p>	<p>2.1. Integration and regional coordination spaces encourage the linkages between human mobility management and the development rights approach of the 2030 Agenda.</p>
	<p>2.2. States participating in the Quito Process harmonize policy tools for the fight against trafficking in persons and the protection of child migrants.</p>
<p>3. Facilitate the inclusion of migrant persons and the migration dimension in the planning and management of territories.</p>	<p>3.1. Key actors in migration governance consider human mobility as a determining factor in sustainable development, adaptation and resilience to climate change, and in the management of their territories.</p>
	<p>3.2. Migration governance tools are adapted to the specific challenges and opportunities of human mobility in their territories.</p>
	<p>3.3. Civil society, including the private sector, is mobilized to influence planning to take a migration perspective.</p>
<p>4. Improve partners' capacities to produce, employ and share information, and increase awareness of migration (and its various processes) and of migrants themselves.</p>	<p>4.1. Producers and users of migration data cooperate in local, national and regional spaces for exchange and discussion on migration information systems.</p>
	<p>4.2. Partners have proposals and solutions for addressing critical gaps in the production and utilization of information on human mobility.</p>
	<p>4.3. Experiences in the use of evidence for migration management, policy decision-making and interventions on human mobility are shared at the national and regional levels.</p>



5.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT





5. INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

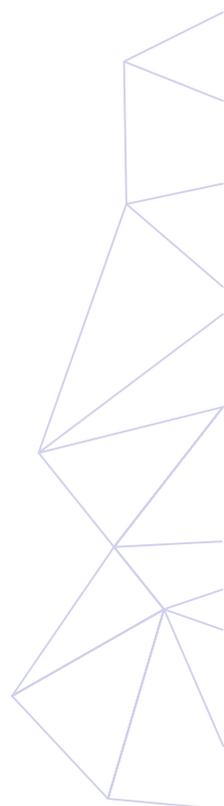
To meet its strategic priorities in the next five years, IOM will strengthen its organizational effectiveness and capacity through institutional development in the following key areas.

5.1. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND POLICY CAPACITY

IOM South America has a vast amount of information and knowledge – and while a good part of it is systematized, the rest remains fragmented. In general, knowledge generated through studies is available within the Organization. On the other hand, information on projects implemented by IOM is less systematized and access to its practical application in policymaking is more difficult. Therefore, IOM will seek to consolidate and systematize all strategic project information and store it on a single platform for quick access, so that it can be used as quality input to technical assistance to governments in policy formulation. Additionally, IOM will enhance existing platforms, such as the Centre for Migration Information on Latin America (CIMAL) and the South American Observatory on Migration (OSUMI), to achieve widespread use that penetrates the migration field as these platforms become important references in the search of information on and analysis of migration matters. Additionally, as part of the Regional Office's institutional development, the Migration Analysis Unit will be reinforced, focusing its products to have greater impact on users of migration information on the region. The objective is for IOM South America to set the quality benchmark for the production (i.e. through the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) and, basing on the Migration Governance Indicators (MGI)), on the collection and analysis of migration information according to the IOM Migration Data Strategy. The information base will be expanded as new data sources are identified and, with the use of innovative technology, form the foundation of a regional information and knowledge hub. It would also be necessary to increase collaboration with IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC) and Policy Hub to collect high-quality information and build sophisticated knowledge on migration issues at the national, regional and global levels.

5.2. MONITORING, ASSESSMENT, LEARNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY ISSUES

The Regional Office will seek to generate the sustainable commitment of IOM teams in the region to the monitoring and evaluation policies and practices of the Organization as part of the United Nations system. Missions will be guided in adapting their monitoring and evaluation activities to the short-, medium- and long-term impacts of the COVID-19 crisis according to the “Do no harm” principle, while remaining committed to their accountability and learning purposes. This is a sine qua non condition to boost demonstrable improvements in the management and outcomes of projects and programmes, as well as of country missions themselves, and in the Organization's engagement with beneficiaries, partners and donors. In addition, with the aim of securing IOM leadership and relevance in South America, it would be necessary to translate the 2030 Agenda, the Global Compact for Migration and the Humanitarian Action Standards into useful, quality instruments, processes and products for monitoring and evaluation, leaving sufficient space for the voices of migrants, particularly those in situations of vulnerability.



5.3. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

For IOM to play a central role in the field of migration, different aspects related to public information – as well as the way IOM approaches them – must be reinforced. These include immigration information generated by the Organization and shared with the media. Published information on migration issues – which include terminology and concepts and may come from journalistic sources or as media resources – is often very limited. The lack of data, contextualization, use of migration concepts and the absence of evidence on the positive contributions of migrants in media content help create and reinforce negative stereotypes, resulting in stigmatization or discrimination. In light of this, IOM should implement strategic actions to facilitate its relationship with the media through capacity-building, as well as generation and dissemination of information to satisfy needs for media coverage. It would be crucial to strengthen the links between migration knowledge (including data) generated by the Organization and strategic dissemination plans. In addition, it would be important to reinforce communication with communities assisted by IOM. The Organization's action in the field based on feedback from migration-affected communities should be the rule, not the exception. The involvement of migrants in communication processes is of utmost importance in terms of knowing their profiles and needs, and in helping to create projects that focus on the actual requirements of migrants.

5.4. TECHNICAL CAPACITY OF STAFF IN THEMATIC AREAS

IOM will work to build strong capacities in diverse thematic areas associated with migration, as included in the regional and global agendas, such as governance at the local level; protection of migrants; migration and development; migration, environment and climate change; and migration and health. Capacity-building will also target various processes in/for the collection, processing and analysis of migration information, among others, with the aim of producing more tools to develop high-quality migration projects.

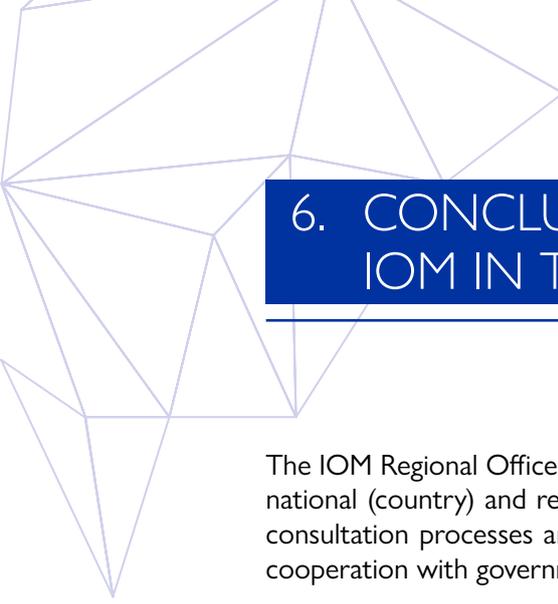
5.5. LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION OF INITIATIVES AT THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS

IOM leads and co-leads multiple national and regional migration initiatives. In order to be more effective and strategic, and enhance impacts of national and regional migration policies, IOM will invest in national and regional engagement capacity at both the programmatic and policy levels.

6.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT: IOM IN THE REGION IN 2024





6. CONCLUDING STATEMENT: IOM IN THE REGION IN 2024

The IOM Regional Office in Buenos Aires will be a key player in the field of migration at the national (country) and regional levels, solidifying its leading role in regional integration and consultation processes and reaffirming its place as a leading global reference for technical cooperation with governments in migration-related issues.

Member States will trust the capacities of IOM to support its structures to achieve high migration management standards. At the same time, several partners, particularly, United Nations agencies and CSOs, will strengthen cooperation with IOM, ensuring good performance and long-term impacts of IOM initiatives in the migration sphere.

IOM will aim to strengthen the positive impacts of its interventions in the field of migration governance and assistance, promoting the human development of migrant populations. Through the lens of the SDGs, the Global Compact for Migration and MiGOF, IOM will continue to support Member States in the formulation of migration policies and norms, modernization of institutional structures, and in the design and application of migration programmes and initiatives, in line with the realities of migration processes. Also, IOM will continue fostering the protection of the human rights of migrants, assisting States in the formulation of public policies that take into account the complexity of migration processes and the risks that migrants face during the migration cycle.

ANNEX 1. IOM IN SOUTH AMERICA

Geographic coverage

IOM in South America is composed of 10 country offices – Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela – with a Regional Office in Buenos Aires.

IOM offices and staff counts in the region (as of September 2020)

🌐 Regional Office

📍 Country offices

📍 Sub-offices:

Brazil: 4
(Boa Vista, Pacaraima, Manaus, São Paulo)

Colombia: 5
(Cali, Cucuta, Florencia, Medellin, Pasto)

Ecuador: 3
(Tulcan, Huaquillas, Lago Agrio)

Peru: 2
(Tacna, Tumbes)

Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela: 1
(San Cristobal)

with a presence in:
Maracaibo (Zulia), Ureña (Táchira), Santa Elena de Uairén (Bolívar), Puerto Ordáz (Bolívar)



IOM STAFF	
General service	739
National officers	86
Professional staff	39
Total	864

Source: This map was created using resources from [Freepik.com](https://www.freepik.com).

Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

IOM offices and their functions and activities

Country offices and **sub-offices** implement a wide range of projects addressing specific migration needs. These offices keep abreast of and analyse migration issues and emerging trends in the country in order to develop appropriate responses and contribute to regional strategies and planning.

The **Regional Office in Buenos Aires** oversees, plans, coordinates and supports IOM activities within the region. It is responsible for project review and endorsement, and provides technical support to country offices, particularly in the area of project development, project implementation, monitoring and evaluation, resource mobilization, resource management, and liaison coordination with regional and subregional governments, United Nations agencies and other key partners.

Through programming, policy, research and partnerships, IOM covers the following key areas in the region:

- (a) Protection and assistance of vulnerable migrants;
- (b) Migration and development;
- (c) Labour migration;
- (d) Migration, environment and climate change;
- (e) Emergencies and risk management;
- (f) Migration and health;
- (g) Policies and liaison;
- (h) Data and information management;
- (i) Migration research;
- (j) Knowledge management;
- (k) Communication and press;
- (l) Migration and cities;
- (m) Border management;
- (n) Project development;
- (o) Project implementation;
- (p) Monitoring and evaluation;
- (q) Resource mobilization;
- (r) Resource management.

ANNEX 2. COVID-19 CONSIDERATIONS

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the health, social and economic situation in the countries of South America. The pandemic has affected millions of people in the region, and migrants are some of the worst affected. Thousands have lost their livelihoods and can no longer meet their basic needs, such as shelter, food and health care. Others find themselves stranded and unable to return to their home countries, and/or face discrimination and xenophobia.

South American governments have taken several measures to reduce the health impact of the pandemic. However, lockdowns, curfews, business closures, travel restrictions and border closures in the region have caused migrants to lose their jobs, with negative impacts on incomes and remittances. Job loss often results in the corresponding loss of regular migration status, precluding the possibility of a migrant's return, and therefore substantially increasing their vulnerability. In some cases, migrants in South America, especially those in an irregular situation and other vulnerable conditions, might encounter obstacles in accessing health services – including, but not limited to, language and cultural barriers, a lack of inclusive health policies in some countries, and the possibility of arrest or deportation. Specific factors, such as high rates of urbanization, densely populated cities, concentration in informal settlements, high levels of informality in labour markets and deficiencies in health-care services, exacerbate migrant vulnerability. Furthermore, migrants are often overrepresented in essential sectors (such as agriculture, retail and sanitation) during the pandemic and, thus, must continue working. This shows the immense contribution that migrants make to countries of destination, even more so if we consider the key roles adopted by thousands of migrants in the frontlines of the response to COVID-19.

South American countries are taking several measures to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on migrants, in areas such as facilitating the return of nationals, establishing humanitarian corridors, assisting stranded migrants, extending the validity of residence permits, disseminating information among migrants, relaxing requirements to access high-skilled jobs in the health sector, and suspending evictions from rented properties, among others.

IOM South America leads a diverse array of projects and initiatives in these areas: migration health, migration protection and assistance, emergency preparedness and response, immigration and border management, transition and recovery, labour mobility and human development, and migration, environment and climate change. IOM's regional response for South America focuses on reaching the vulnerable and building operational capacities to address the mobility dimensions of the pandemic. Also, IOM brings partners, frameworks, guidelines and awareness-raising communication materials and tools to provide affected populations with holistic and inclusive humanitarian assistance and protection from COVID-19. IOM supports governments by providing personal protective supplies (disinfecting or sanitizing gel, face masks and gloves) to migration agents, as well as infrared thermometers, thermic chambers and sanitary tents, and key medical and infrastructure supplies to hospitals. Also, IOM supports governments in the management of camps and shelters for returned migrants and stranded migrants during the quarantine and by providing accommodations and food to migrants. In addition, IOM implements virtual training for different stakeholders on repatriation and reintegration assistance and prosecution of human

trafficking. The Organization is also delivering a digital campaign to prevent trafficking in persons. In addition, IOM collaborates with private institutions, such as banks, with the aim of migrating presentational entrepreneurship training to online platforms. Lastly, IOM provides cash-based interventions for food assistance to the most vulnerable migrants.

The crisis therefore offers a re-evaluation of the development path and the positive contributions of migrants. The pandemic brings to our attention the need to address the human mobility dimensions of global health security and public health strategies with a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, ensuring that mobility remains safe and inclusive and respects international human rights law.





International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Av. Santa Fe 1460, 5th floor, C1060ABN, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Tel: +54 11 4813 3330 • Email: robuepress@iom.int • Website: <https://robuenosaires.iom.int/>