

4.1.6. Forced displacement

4.1.6. Forced displacement

Colombians continues to have among the world's largest displaced populations, with nearly 7 million people internally displaced in a protracted humanitarian crisis driven by armed violence,[495] and averaging 150 000[496] newly displaced persons per year, with more than 280 000 registered IDPs in 2022 according to UNHCR.[497] Conflict-related displacement is caused by the security situation, security threats, intimidation, and extortion.[498] Decades of internal displacement driven by the presence of multiple armed and criminal groups have affected millions of people, and despite the signing of the 2016 FARC-EP Peace Agreement, individual displacement has become the dominant trend, surpassing mass displacement,[499] though individuals may experience both types of displacement.[500] Individual displacement,[501] differently from mass displacement, tends to be underreported, and locating reliable data is challenging.[502]

Annual figures on displacement vary widely among sources, including between different government sources, due to differences in definitions and mandate; a table of major sources is provided below.

Most sources indicate frequent displacement occurring typically in the same conflict-affected departments year after year,[503] being mainly in the Pacific region.[504] According to multiple sources, the departments most affected in the reference period have been: Antioquia, Arauca, Bolívar, Caquetá, Cauca, Chocó, Córdoba, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Putumayo, Sucre, and Valle del Cauca.[505] Afro-descendant and indigenous communities in the Pacific coast departments were disproportionately affected.[506] Disaster-related displacement due to flooding and drought was lower in 2024 than it was in the previous two years, but with 91 000 movements, still represented the third-highest amount in more than a decade.[507]

Between 1 January and 19 June 2025, UNOCHA recorded a total of 168 300 people affected in at least 112 humanitarian emergencies,[508] of which 67 800 people were victims of mass forced displacement, due especially to the events in Catatumbo in January, representing a 107 % increase compared with the same period in 2024.[509] UNHCR reported similarly that, since January 2025, the escalation of confrontations between armed groups caused the 'worst humanitarian crisis in a decade' with a 74 % increase in displacements and 15 % increase in confinements during the first half of 2025. Specifically, in Catatumbo region, there were 57 259 people displaced and 27 868 people confined as a result of conflict outbreaks there; causing the 'most significant large displacement in Colombia's recent history'.[510] For its part, the Office of the Ombudsperson reported that, between 1 January and 30 May 2025, 77 719 people were

displaced, of which 68 347 were from Catatumbo.511 Below is a table of sources reporting on various displacement figures, both mass and individual displacement:

Year	IDMC	UNOCHA (Mass Displacement)	ICRC (Individual Displacement)	UARIV (Mass Displacement)	Ombudsperson (Mass Displacement)
2022	339 000 512	70 267513	123 220514		58 269515
2023	293 000 516	62 967517	145 049518		54 665519
2024	388 000 520	180 000521	117 697522	41 228523	25 611524

The Unit for the Attention and Integral Reparation to the Victims (Unidad para la Atención y Reparación Integral a las Víctimas, UARIV), the national unit providing assistance to victims of armed conflict, records the number of displaced people, but these figures largely rely on IDPs actively declaring their status to the UARIV.525 However, IDPs frequently avoid reporting their displacement status due to fear for their safety, perceived uselessness, or lack of procedural knowledge. While the legal framework in Colombia offers comprehensive provisions for victims of displacement, implementation fell short and insufficient services were provided to those affected.526

Imported image pandoc_image_12.png

Figure 13: Registered victims of individual forced displacement since the 2016 FARC-EP Peace Agreement (2016-2024), created by FIP based on UARIV data527

In January 2004, The Constitutional Court issued Sentence T-025 which declared the lack of protection for displaced persons as unconstitutional; yet few advances in protection have occurred in the 20 years since that declaration.528 There is often a lack of sufficient government assistance for displaced people.1115F529 IDPs report perceived institutional distrust, inadequate assistance, and delays due to bureaucracy as the main reasons they do not report their situation to the UARIV.530

- 495

  UNHCR, Colombia emergency, n.d., url

- 496

  UNHCR, IDPs in Colombia, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras and Mexico, December 2023, url, p. 2

- 497

  UNHCR, IDPs in Colombia, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras and Mexico, December 2023, url, p. 2

- 498

  IDMC, Global Report on Internal Displacemebt, 13 May 2025, url, p. 78; OHCHR, Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Colombia (A/HR/58/24), 22 January 2025, url, para. 15

- 499

  According to ACAPS, ‘massive displacement as a simultaneous is defined as an event affecting ten or more households or fifty or more people as stated in Article 12 of Decree 2569 of 2000.’ See: ACAPS, Thematic Report – Colombia – Individual displacement: Bogotá, Buenaventura, Florencia, and Ocaña, 2 December 2024, url

- 500

  ACAPS, Thematic Report – Colombia – Individual displacement: Bogotá, Buenaventura, Florencia, and Ocaña, 2 December 2024, url

- 501

  According to ACAPS, ‘individual displacement in Colombia is defined as an incident involving fewer than

- 502

  ACAPS, Thematic Report – Colombia – Individual displacement: Bogotá, Buenaventura, Florencia, and Ocaña, 2 December 2024, url

- 503

  EUAA COI conclusion based on collection of various sources of data on displacement and confinement.

- 504

  UNOCHA, Informe : Impacto y Tendencias Humanitarias En Colombia Enero-Octubre de 2022, 21 November 2022, url; Colombia, UARIV, Informe de Desplazamiento Forzado – Segundo Semestre 2023, 2024, url, p. 8; Colombia, Defensoría del Pueblo, Boletín sobre Dinámicas de Movilidad Humana Forzada en Colombia, 24 January 2025, url

- 505

  ICRC, Colombia Humanitarian Report 2024, April 2024, url; ICRC, Retos Humanitarios Colombia 2025, March 2025, url, p. 7; Infobae, Colombia alcanzó los 5 millones de desplazados internos en 2023, un 5,6 % más que en 2022, 14 May 2024, url; UNHCR, Colombia - Monitoring of humanitarian emergencies January to December 2023, 20 May 2024, url; OHCHR, Situation of Human Rights in Colombia (A/HRC/55/23),12 July 2024, url, para. 12; Colombia, UARIV, Informe de Desplazamiento Forzado – Segundo Semestre 2023, 2024, url, p. 8; Colombia, Defensoría del Pueblo, Boletín sobre Dinámicas de Movilidad Humana Forzada en Colombia, 24 January 2025, url; Colombia, Defensoría del Pueblo,

Informe anual sobre movilidad humana forzada en Colombia 2022, n.d., url, pp. 19, 25; UNVMC, Report of the Secretary-General (S/2025/419), 27 June 2025, url, para. 36; Infobae, Colombia alcanzó los 5 millones de desplazados internos en 2023, un 5,6 % más que en 2022, 14 May 2024, url; Colombia, UARIV, Informe Semestral de Dezaplamiento Forzado 2022-1, 2023, url

- 506

  OHCHR, Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Colombia (A/HR/58/24), 22 January 2025, url, para. 15; IDMC, Global Report on Internal Displacement, 13 May 2025, url, p. 78

- 507

  IDMC, Global Report on Internal Displacement, 13 May 2025, url, p. 78

- 508

  UNVMC, Report of the Secretary-General (S/2025/419), 27 June 2025, url, para. 36

- 509

  UNVMC, Report of the Secretary-General (S/2025/419), 27 June 2025, url, para. 36

- 510

  UNHCR, Colombia Factsheet 2025, August 2025, url, p. 2

- 511

  Colombia, Defensoría del Pueblo, Boletín mensual – Dinámicas de Movilidad Humana Forzada en Colombia, July 2025, url

- 512

  Infobae, Colombia alcanzó los 5 millones de desplazados internos en 2023, un 5,6 % más que en 2022, 14 May 2024, url

- 513

  UNOCHA, Informe : Impacto y Tendencias Humanitarias En Colombia Enero-Octubre de 2022, 21 November 2022, url

- 514

  ICRC, Retos Humanitarios 2023 – Colombia, March 2023, url

- 515

  Colombia, Defensoría del Pueblo, Informe anual sobre movilidad humana forzada en Colombia 2022, n.d., url, pp. 19, 25

- 516

Infobae, Colombia alcanzó los 5 millones de desplazados internos en 2023, un 5,6 % más que en 2022, 14 May 2024, url

- 517

  OHCHR, Situation of Human Rights in Colombia (A/HRC/55/23),12 July 2024, url, para. 12

- 518

  ICRC, Colombia Humanitarian Report 2024, April 2024, url

- 519

  Colombia, Defensoría del Pueblo, Durante el 2023 en Colombia, cerca de 121.000 personas fueron víctimas de desplazamiento forzado masivo y confinamiento, url. MD = Mass displacements, ID = Individual displacements

- 520

  Eje21, Colombia contabilizó 7,2 millones de desplazados internos en 2024, un 43 % más que en 2023, 13 May 2025, url

- 521

  UNOCHA, Informe Tendencias e Impacto Humanitario en Colombia 2024 – Fecha de corte : Enero-Diciembre de 2024, 3 February 2025, url

- 522

  ICRC, Retos Humanitarios Colombia 2025, March 2025, url, p. 7

- 523

  ICRC, Humanitarian Challenges 2025 – Colombia, April 2025, url, p. 7

- 524

  Colombia, Defensoría del Pueblo, Boletín sobre Dinámicas de Movilidad Humana Forzada en Colombia, 24 January 2025, url

- 525

  ACAPS, Thematic Report – Colombia – Individual displacement: Bogotá, Buenaventura, Florencia, and Ocaña, 2 December 2024, url

- 526

  ACAPS, Thematic Report – Colombia – Individual displacement: Bogotá, Buenaventura, Florencia, and Ocaña, 2 December 2024, url

- 527

CODHES, Informa 118 – Tendencias del desplazamiento forzado en Colombia en ocho años de posacuerdo (2016-2024), February 2025, url, p. 14

- 528

  Colombia, Defensoría del Pueblo, Se cumplen 20 años de una sentencia a favor de los desplazados, pero se ha avanzado poco, 26 January 2024, url

- 529

  HRW, World Report 2025 – Colombia, 16 January 2025, url

- 530

  ACAPS, Thematic Report – Colombia – Individual displacement: Bogotá, Buenaventura, Florencia, and Ocaña, 2 December 2024, url

© European Union Agency for Asylum 2026 | Email: info@euaa.europa.eu