

## Operation: Venezuela

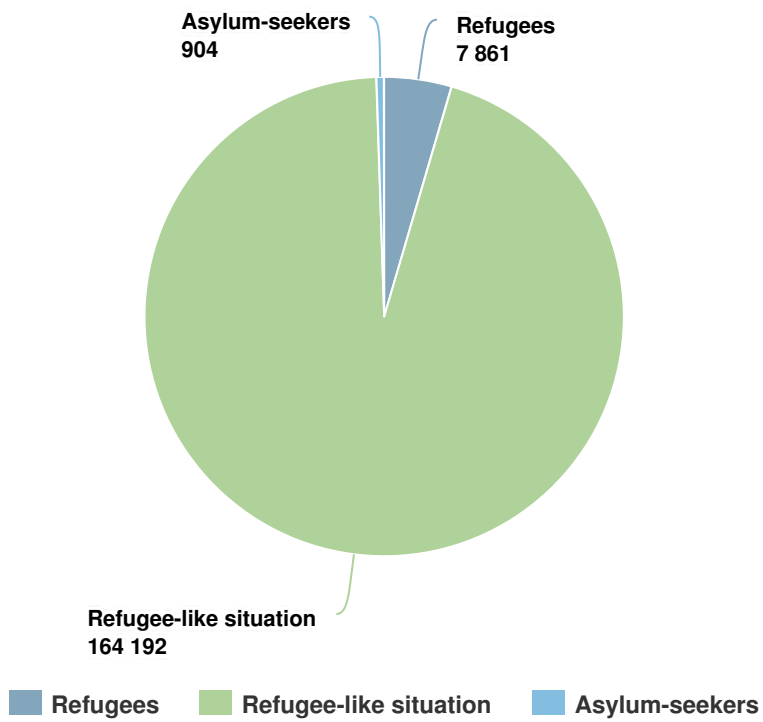


Latest update of camps and office locations **21 Nov 2016.**

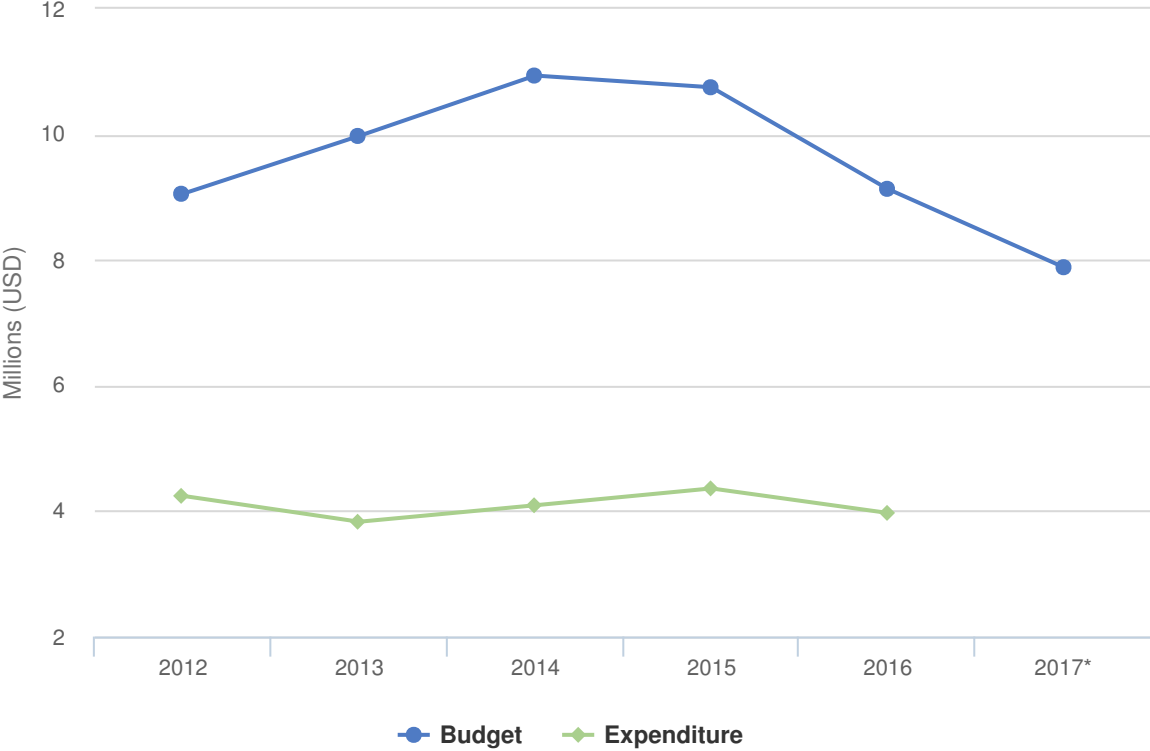
# People of Concern

DECREASE IN  
**1 %** **2016**

<b>2016</b>	172,957
<b>2015</b>	173,989
<b>2014</b>	174,027



# Budgets and Expenditure for Venezuela



## Working environment

Venezuela was challenged by political, socio-economic and security concerns throughout 2016. The scarcity of food, medicines and basic goods affected the general well-being of the population. UNHCR's partners and people of concern (PoC) reported difficulties in obtaining food and medicines, alongside low-wages, high inflation, limited access to formal jobs, and lack of documentation.

## Population trends

- Over 2,700 asylum applications were processed following implementation of a work plan with the National Commission for Refugees (CONARE).
- Previous backlog of more than 800 cases pending interview was reduced to some 300.
- A total of 1,940 asylum applications were approved by CONARE, increasing the approval rate to 60 per cent from 23 per cent in 2015.

## Achievements and impact

- In 2016, UNHCR prioritized the reactivation of the agreement with CONARE as a means to address gaps in the asylum system and move forward its solutions strategy, by addressing structural weaknesses and promoting a more active role of CONARE in policies and practices affecting people of concern.
- UNHCR strengthened its partnerships with key governmental actors, most notably the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Communication, and the Ministry of Interior, to conduct a national survey aimed at establishing the number, location, profiles, needs and potential for solutions for people living in a refugee-like situation or at risk of statelessness in Venezuela. The exercise was endorsed by authorities as a strategic tool to inform future policies and plans for the protection of people of concern to UNHCR, including stronger asylum procedures, regularization, naturalization, facilitation of return and effective access to social programs and livelihoods.
- UNHCR in Venezuela and Colombia established a bi-national protocol to better coordinate actions in the context of the situation in Venezuela and the peace negotiations in Colombia. The plan includes joint monitoring activities along border areas to understand and respond to new dynamics in cross-border movements on PoC in both countries.
- The Office completed the roll-out of proGres v4, UNHCR's registration database.

## Unmet needs

- Livelihood activities could not be prioritized in 2016 due to more pressing needs such as the lack of valid documentation for PoC to access basic rights, public services and welfare programs. High inflation levels also discouraged investing in livelihood opportunities at a larger scale. Through inter-agency coordination, the Office ensured that people of concern were referred to relevant NGOs or public institutions offering microcredits, grants or vocational training opportunities.
  - Due to limited resources and reduced staffing capacity, UNHCR could not conduct a more systematic verification on the ground of the reasons compelling people to leave Venezuela, the figures and trends of increasing cross-border movements, the flight conditions and protection risks faced by Venezuelans, and the communities facing risks of forced displacement.
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