

# VENEZUELA

Venezuela, formally known as the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, is a nation located in northern South America with a total population of approximately 28 million. Since 2014, over seven million Venezuelans have fled the country due to hyperinflation and political oppression, making it the largest migrant crisis in modern American history. As of October 2022, at least 4.3 million people have fled Venezuela. The UNHCR has not released information on the number of refugees from Venezuela currently residing in the country, making it unclear how many refugees represent a percentage of the total population.

## **Negotiation guidelines**

In the negotiations, the fact that Venezuela has signed a resolution on family reunification and protecting unaccompanied minors can be used as an argument to persuade more countries to prioritize efforts for the arrival of refugees and family reunification. You can collaborate with Australia and Colombia, who have also signed the resolution. It is recommended to steer the discussion towards family reunification instead of SRHR, as your policies in that area may be criticized. In SRHR issues, Venezuela holds values similar to Colombia, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Russia, and Lebanon. Regarding the right to complain to the UN, Venezuela has a similar stance as Ethiopia and the USA.

## **Family reunification**

Due to millions of people fleeing from Venezuela, there is more information available on the situation of refugees in neighbouring countries than on those

who have fled within or to Venezuela. In March 2022, Venezuela signed a resolution entitled “Rights of the child: Realizing the rights of the child and family reunification”, emphasizing the importance of providing all unaccompanied children and those separated from their parents with access to a family reunification process. The resolution expresses deep concern that millions of children worldwide are forced to grow up without parents and confirms the need to address the underlying causes of family separation, with a strong emphasis on showing support for all children and their families through necessary protection.

## **Sexual and reproductive health and rights**

Venezuela has one of the most restrictive abortion laws in Latin America, where abortion is only legal if the woman’s life is in danger. Contraceptives are considered a luxury item that can cost more than the average monthly wage. Additionally, obtaining



contraceptives such as condoms and pads is difficult. Many Venezuelans live in extreme poverty and are forced to flee. Girls and young people's health are disproportionately affected by the crisis, with teenage pregnancies being more common than the Latin American average. In Venezuela, it is legal to marry at the age of 16 with parental consent, leading to higher maternal mortality rates, where some cases may be due to unsafe abortions. Many girls are forced to flee or temporarily move to neighbouring countries to give birth, access safe abortions, buy contraceptives, or escape gender-based violence.

#### **Right to complain to the UN**

Venezuela has not ratified the Third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which allows children to complain if their rights under the convention have been violated. Venezuela also does not have a standing invitation to UN Special Rapporteurs.

