



# Venezuela

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For further information on voluntary return and reintegration, please visit the information portal [www.ReturningfromGermany.de](http://www.ReturningfromGermany.de), or contact your local return and reintegration office.

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# 1 Health Care

## General information on health care

The Venezuelan healthcare system is comprised of a network of public and private institutions that offer health services to the population. The system's structure is based on three levels of care:

- **Primary Level:** Provides basic health-care through community clinics, Barrio Adentro (a social welfare program) modules, and outpatient clinics.
- **Secondary Level:** Offers specialized medical care in type II and III hospitals, specialized clinics, and diagnostic centers.
- **Tertiary Level:** Provides highly complex medical care in university hospitals, national and international referral centers.

Furthermore, the system is divided into public and private sectors. The public health sector in Venezuela has historically been the most important provider of health services for the population, but a widespread shortage of medical supplies, medications, and qualified personnel, negatively impacts the quality of care, and because of that the private health sector has been playing an increasingly important role in healthcare in Venezuela. The private sector consists of clinics, hospitals, laboratories, and other health centers that offer a wide range of services, from basic care to highly complex care, but its services are more expensive.

In Venezuela, there are different types of insurance that can cover medical expenses:

- **Public Social Security:** This is a public

insurance that covers workers and their dependents. This insurance offers basic health coverage, including primary medical care, hospitalization, and some medications. However, as mentioned earlier, the public health system has major deficiencies, and the options available are very limited nationwide.

- **Private Health Insurance:** There is a wide variety of private health insurance available in the Venezuelan market. These insurances offer a wide range of coverage, from basic plans to comprehensive plans that include medical care abroad. However, they are quite expensive.

Healthcare services in Venezuela can be free, low-cost, or expensive, depending on the type of service, the provider, and the location. The public sector offers some free services, such as primary medical care at community clinics and Barrio Adentro modules. On the other hand, healthcare services in private clinics have an intermediate cost, with some high-cost treatments that can be expensive. Patients must assume a significant portion of the costs of medical care in Venezuela, even when they have health insurance. This is because insurance generally does not cover the total cost of services, and patients must pay for co-payments, deductibles, and other additional charges.

## Availability of medical facilities and doctors

The availability of medical centers and doctors in Venezuela varies according to region and socioeconomic level. In major cities, there is generally a higher

# 1 Health Care

concentration of medical centers and doctors, especially in the private sector. However, in rural areas and low-income areas, access to medical care can be more limited.

## Admission to medical facilities

Admission requirements for medical centers in Venezuela may vary depending on the specific facility and the type of care sought. However, the following documents are generally requested:

- Identity card or passport.
- Health insurance (if applicable).

- Medical referral (in some cases).
- Payment for consultation or procedure in the case of private services.

In Venezuela, access to health is universal, public, and free. This means that all people have the right to use health services in all national establishments.

Availability and costs of medication

The availability of medications in Venezuela has been a significant problem in recent years due to the economic crisis. The shortage of medicines in the country is variable, and continuous availability cannot be guaranteed for certain



Photo: Medical Ramiro Aguilar Villamarín. IOM Ecuador 2021



# 1 Health Care

medications, especially for the treatment of hypertension, diabetes, HIV, and other chronic diseases.

However, the situation has improved slightly in recent years, and some medications are beginning to be more available, with highly variable prices. It is important to mention that the Venezuelan Institute of Social Security (IVSS) has high-cost pharmacies, which are specialized centers for the delivery of medications classified as high-cost in the country. These services are intended for patients suffering from high-risk and high-cost diseases.

## Access for returnees

**Eligibility and requirements:** The Venezuelan State guarantees equal treatment and access to health services, social assistance, and healthcare without any discrimination based on migratory status or return migration status. Any person will be assisted as long as they have a valid identification document.



Photo: IOM 2021 Ramiro Aguilar Villamarín

# 2 Labour market

## General information on the labour market

The Venezuelan labour market is in a critical situation due to the prolonged economic and social crisis. This has translated into a series of challenges, including a high unemployment rate and labour informality. The unemployment rate in Venezuela reached 40,3% in 2022 (Inter-American Development Bank).

The Venezuelan labour demographics are characterized by the following:

- Labour force participation by sex: Male labor force participation is higher than female. In 2021, the male labor force participation rate was 57.4%, while the female rate was 39.5%.
- Age distribution: The Venezuelan workforce is concentrated in the 25-54 age group. This group represents about 65% of the total labour force.
- Distribution by sectors of work: The sectors with the highest number of employed people in Venezuela are services (47.6%), commerce (23.2%), and manufacturing (11.7%).
- Labor informality remains a significant issue, affecting a large portion of the active population and limiting access to social benefits

## Finding employment

Despite the challenges, there are some opportunities to find employment in Venezuela, especially for those with skills and experience in in-demand private sector areas.

However, the Venezuelan State offers an opportunity for young people to access

jobs. To register for the program, it is necessary to meet certain requirements, including being Venezuelan, being between 15 and 35 years old, having an identity card, and being unemployed. The program has a web portal through which you can access more information: <https://registro.chambajuvenil.gob.ve/iniciosesion>.

## Unemployment assistance

At present, there are no organizations in Venezuela that offer support services to the unemployed or maintain job seeker databases.

## Further education and training

Venezuela offers various opportunities for professional training and continuing education, both in the public and private sectors. The Venezuelan State, through the National Institute for Socialist Training and Education (INCES), offers a series of free courses aimed at developing skills to produce goods and services. Here's the link to the official website: <https://inces.gob.ve/index.php/>

## Access for returnees

**Eligibility and requirements:** The different labour programs are open to all Venezuelan citizens without any restrictions related to returning status.

**Registration procedure:** Each program has its own minimum requirements for eligibility. More details can be found on their specific websites.

**Required documents:** Most programs require a valid ID card for enrollment.

### 3 Housing

#### General information on housing

The average rental rate in Venezuela varies significantly depending on location, type of housing, and market conditions. In general, rental prices have increased substantially in recent years due to hyperinflation and a shortage of available housing. The average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in an urban area can range from USD 350 to 600 per month, although in some cases it can be much higher.

Utility costs such as electricity, water, and gas have also risen considerably in Venezuela in recent years. Government-subsidized rates are insufficient to cover the actual costs of production, leading to an increase in unsubsidized rates. Generally, the monthly cost of utilities for an average household in Venezuela can range between USD 50 and 100. It is important to note that these values are only averages and can vary depending on consumption and location.

#### Finding accommodation

In Venezuela, there are no public organizations that offer rental search assistance. There are very few private companies providing this service, and their fees typically exceed 5 or 10% of the property value.

#### Social grants for housing

The National Government has a registration system for individuals in need of housing. Applicants must register through the official website, <https://www.minhvi.gob.ve/>, and follow the specified requirements.

#### Access for returnees

**Eligibility and requirements:** There are currently no dedicated arrival centers or shelters for returnees.

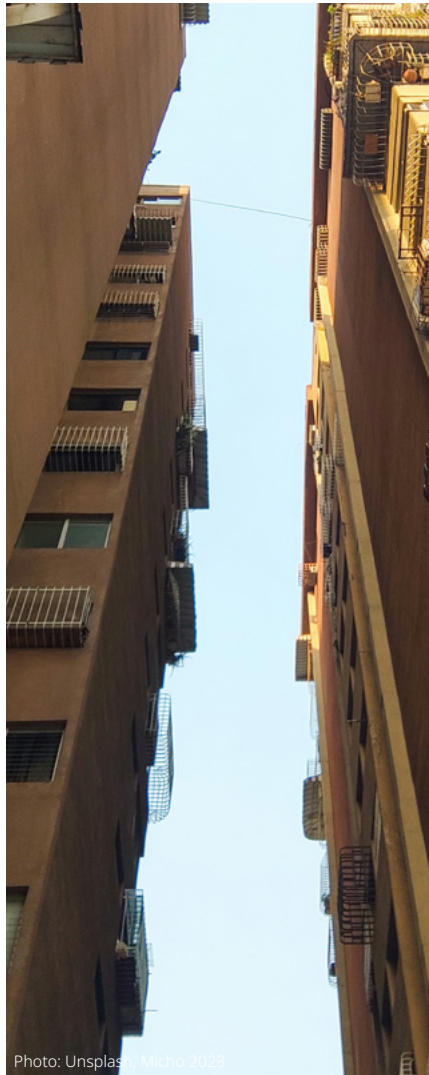


Photo: Unsplash, Micho 2023



Photo: IOM 2023 Ramiro Aguilar Villamarín



## 4 Social Welfare

### General information on housing

The social welfare system in Venezuela is based on the principle of co-responsibility among the State, family, and community, with the objective of guaranteeing a dignified life for all citizens. The system consists of a set of programs, social missions, institutions, and public policies aimed at addressing the population's basic needs in health, education, food, housing, social security, and other areas.

The social welfare system in Venezuela offers several specific benefits for families and children, including:

- Family Allowances: Monthly financial assistance for families with minor children.
- Hogares de la Patria: A social protection program providing economic support and comprehensive care to extremely impoverished families.
- Daycares and Preschools: Free or low-cost childcare in public daycares and preschools for young children.
- Abatement Program: Free vaccination campaigns for children.
- Child Nutrition Programs: Distribution of nutritional supplements and nutritional care to children.

For the most up-to-date info, check the official websites or contact the organizations responsible for these programs.

### Access for returnees

**Eligibility and requirements:** All Venezuelan citizens are eligible for the various social welfare programs.

**Registration procedure:** For the most up-to-date information on how to register for social welfare programs, please visit the official websites of the relevant institutions or contact them directly.

**Required documents:** An ID card is the primary document required for all registrations.

### Pension system

Venezuela's pension system, managed by the IVSS, offers several types of pensions, including:

- Old-age pension: This is for workers who have reached the minimum retirement age and have contributed for a minimum number of weeks.
- Disability pension: This is for workers with a physical or mental disability that prevents them from performing their usual work.
- Survivors' pension: This is for family members of deceased workers who met the requirements for a pension.
- Service pension: This is for workers who have contributed a specified number of weeks, regardless of age.
- Other special pensions: There are other special pensions for specific cases, such as pensions for work accidents or occupational diseases

In Venezuela, the minimum retirement age is 60 for men and 55 for women. To be eligible for a pension under the

## 4 Social Welfare

mandatory social security system, you must meet the following requirements:

- To be an active member of the IVSS.
- To have a minimum number of weeks of contributions.
- To meet the minimum retirement age (in the case of an old-age pension).
- Not to be receiving another pension from the same system.
- To meet the specific criteria for each pension type (e.g., providing medical evidence for a disability pension).

### Access for returnees

**Eligibility and requirements:** All Venezuelan citizens without restrictions can access the different social welfare programs.

**Registration procedure:** It is recommended to consult the official websites of the institutions responsible for social welfare programs and services or contact them directly to obtain the most recent and accurate information.

**Required documents:** The physical ID card is the most important document required for any application.

### Vulnerable Groups

The social integration of vulnerable groups in Venezuela is a complex and challenging issue, marked by various barriers and inequalities. The level of access to public services, health insurance, and pensions for vulnerable groups in Venezuela varies considerably depending on the specific group, geographic location, and socioeconomic situation. Several factors facilitate integration, such as inclusive public policies,

access to basic services, and the fight against discrimination and stigma.

### Access for returnees

**Eligibility and requirements:** All Venezuelan citizens, without any restrictions, are eligible for the various social welfare programs.

**Registration procedure:** To register, it is recommended to check the official websites of the institutions responsible for social welfare programs and services, or to contact them directly for the most up-to-date and accurate information.

**Required documents:** ID card.

### Reintegration Support

- As indicated in the transitory mechanism, it is very difficult for the mission to make payments to infrequent suppliers, so it is requested that the reintegration support is given to the beneficiaries at the time of departure and, if possible, so that the reintegration plan can be carried out upon return. Only in exceptional cases can IOM Venezuela make payments directly to suppliers, when they have a valid account in dollars or euros, which is not very compatible with the reintegration plans of the beneficiaries that are generally directed to minimum purchases, with small suppliers who only have accounts in local currency and require cash payments.
- Another difficulty faced by the country and the office in Venezuela is the difficulty of obtaining US dollars in cash to carry out these transactions on behalf of the returnees.

## 5 Education

### General information on education

The Venezuelan education system is grounded in the principles of free, compulsory, and universal education, with the goal of ensuring access to quality education for all citizens. The system is structured into four levels: preschool, basic, general secondary, and university.

Venezuela has a significant number of schools, with an extensive network of public and private educational institutions throughout the country. However, the distribution of these schools is uneven, and there are deficiencies in the infrastructure and equipment of some institutions, particularly in rural areas and densely populated regions.

### Cost, loans, and stipends

General education in Venezuela is free. This is a constitutional right to nationals from early childhood education through to university. However, it's important to note that while tuition is free, there may be additional costs for materials, uniforms, and other resources, which can burden families. There are also private education options available, with monthly tuition fees ranging from 200 to 500 USD. Additionally, there are scholarship programs specifically designed for low-income students, those with high academic achievement, or those belonging to vulnerable groups.

### Approval and verification of foreign diplomas

Foreign degrees, diplomas, and certificates can be validated in Venezuela.

However, this requires meeting specific requirements and completing the necessary paperwork.

#### Access for returnees

**Registration procedure:** The process of validating foreign academic credentials in Venezuela may vary slightly depending on the educational institution where you wish to work or continue your studies, as well as the specific field of study or profession.

**Registration procedure:** Interested individuals should visit the official website of the Ministry of Popular Power for Education: <https://www.mppe.gob.ve/>.

#### Required documents:

- Certified transcripts: Academic documents must be translated into Spanish by a certified public translator.
- Legalization: Documents must be legalized by the competent authorities in the country where they were issued and by the Venezuelan Consulate in that country.
- Application for validation or revalidation: A formal application must be submitted to the university or institution where you wish to work or continue your studies, along with all required documentation.
- Curriculum evaluation: The educational institution will evaluate the equivalence of the foreign degree with Venezuelan academic programs.
- Proficiency exam (if applicable): In some cases, a proficiency exam may be required to demonstrate mastery of certain competencies or knowledge.



Photo: IOM 2019



## 6 children

### General information on children and infants

The Venezuelan State must guarantee that all children within its territory effectively enjoy their rights. Several government entities offer care and protection services, including the Children and Adolescents' Rights Councils, and Children and Adolescents' Social Protection Councils; Children and Adolescents' Protection Courts; the Public Ministry; the Ombudsman's Office and Children and Adolescents' Ombuds Offices; Communal Councils and other forms of popular organization.

### (Non-) governmental actors dealing with children's well-being and rights

Some of the most prominent NGOs working in favor of children's rights in Venezuela are:

- **Save the Children:** This international organization has a significant presence in Venezuela, where it develops programs focused on child protection, education, and health.
- **UNICEF:** The United Nations Children's Fund works closely with the Venezuelan government and other organizations to improve the living conditions of children.
- **Cáritas Venezuela:** This Catholic Church institution develops social and humanitarian assistance programs, with a special focus on vulnerable children and adolescents.
- **Red por los Derechos Humanos de los Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes (REDHNNA):** This network brings together various organizations working to defend the rights of children

and adolescents in Venezuela.

- **Fundabit:** This foundation works to promote and defend the rights of children and adolescents, with a special focus on preventing violence and promoting civic participation.
- **Cecodap:** The Center for Communication and Development of High Technology is dedicated to research, documentation, and dissemination of information on the human rights situation in Venezuela, including children's rights.

In addition to these national and international organizations, there are numerous local NGOs working in specific communities to address the needs of children and adolescents. These organizations typically have headquarters in major Venezuelan cities such as Caracas, Maracaibo, Valencia, and Barquisimeto. However, many of them also have a presence in other cities and states throughout the country through programs and projects implemented in local communities. To find the exact location of each organization's offices and the programs they develop, please visit their official websites.

### Access for returnees

**Eligibility and requirements:** Entry requirements for Venezuela may vary depending on the child's nationality and the circumstances of the trip. However, some general documents commonly required include:

- **Valid passport:** The passport must be in good condition and have sufficient validity for the stay.

## 6 children

- **Visa (if required):** Some foreign citizens need a visa to enter Venezuela. It is important to verify the specific requirements for each nationality.
- **Birth certificate:** This document is essential to prove the child's identity and relationship to their parents or guardians.
- **Travel authorization:** If the child is traveling alone or accompanied by someone other than their parents, a notarized authorization from both parents or the parent with legal custody is required.
- **Vaccination certificate:** This might be specific to certain health situations or countries. While it's a common document to include in travel requirements, it's essential to verify if a vaccination certificate is specifically required. The requirements can change, and it's always best to check with the Venezuelan embassy or consulate in the traveler's home country for the most up-to-date information.

**Registration procedure:** All returned children, without distinction, are guaranteed their right to life, education, and health. They can access services without major difficulties, as long as they have their birth certificate and are accompanied by their legal representatives.

**Required documents:** The required documents are a birth certificate and, from the age of nine, a Venezuelan ID card. The accompaniment of their parents or legal representatives is essential to access any service.



Photo: Ramiro Aguilar Villamarín. IOM Ecuador 2021



## 7 Contacts

**Servicio Administrativo de Identificación, Migración y Extranjería (SAIME)**  
*Application or renewal of identity documents*  
 Avenida Baralt, Edificio 1000, Sede SAIME, Planta Baja 1010, Caracas, <https://www.saime.gob.ve/>

**Sistema Nacional de Registro Civil**  
*Requests for birth certificates*  
 Av. San Felipe. Sede Principal del Saren. La Castellana. Altamira, 1060, Distrito, Capital, +58 (0212) 277 94.11 [directorgeneral@saren.gob.ve](mailto:directorgeneral@saren.gob.ve), <https://www.saren.gob.ve/>

**Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Salud**  
*Information and access to the healthcare system*  
 Av. Baralt, Centro Simón Bolívar, Edif. Sur, El Silencio, Caracas, Distrito Capital 1010, Caracas, <http://mpps.gob.ve/>

**Ministerio Público Denuncias y asesorías legales gratuitas**  
 Esquinas de Misericordia a Pele El Ojo, Avenida México, Caracas, Venezuela (58+) 212 509 7244 / 509 7464, <http://www.mp.gob.ve/>

**Defensoría del Pueblo Defensa y Vigilancia de los Derechos Humanos**  
 Plaza Morelos Avenida México, Caracas, Distrito Capital (0212) 507.70.06 – 507.70.40, [ddpmorelos@gmail.com](mailto:ddpmorelos@gmail.com) / [dmetropolitana@defensoria.gob.ve](mailto:dmetropolitana@defensoria.gob.ve)

**Servicio Autónomo de Registros y Notarías (SAREN)**  
 -Protocolization of university degrees, Authentication of legal documents, such as powers of attorney and marriage certificates and Registration of movable and immovable property. Edificio Monte Ararat, Avenida Francisco de Miranda, Caracas. <https://www.saren.gob.ve/>

## 8 At a glance

### Measures to be undertaken before return

- **Documentation:** Venezuelan citizens wishing to return to the country may enter with an expired passport. If they do not have this document, citizens may request a travel permit from the official consular mission with a sole destination to Venezuela. The travel permit must be requested 7 to 10 days before the flight date.
- Regarding the **entry of children** and adolescents, it is mandatory that they have a birth certificate and a passport or travel permit.
- In the case of **traveling** with children, they must have a birth certificate. For cases of children traveling with only one of their representatives, a travel permit must be obtained from the parent or legal representative. If the father or mother is absent from the child's life or has died, it is important to have a certificate.
- **Education:** Returnees should bring the education certificate of minors, indicating the level of education reached. Additionally, returnees must also bring the education certificate for technical and university levels completed.
- **Health:** Always have up-to-date medical records. It is relevant to bring medical prescriptions. IOM recommends that beneficiaries with medical needs bring a supply of the necessary medications for at least six months, accompanied by the medical report and prescription.

### Measures to be undertaken immediately upon arrival

- **Transportation logistics:** All return cases must be reviewed and approved by the IOM Regional Office according to Transitory Mechanism. Returns will be carried out through Maiquetía International Airport.
- **Domestic Flights:** It is important to check availability and make the request two weeks before the flight. The cost of a domestic ticket usually ranges around USD 100-110. On October 8, 2022, the Administrative Service of Identification, Migration and Foreigners (SAIME) established that only those individuals who present (mandatory) a laminated identity card (valid or expired) issued in 2016 or later will be able to board their domestic flights. Passports or identity cards issued prior to 2016 will not be allowed as a document to request an airline ticket. This rule applies to all persons over the age of 9, making it a mandatory requirement to have an identity card issued from 2016 onwards to board domestic flights. The requirements already established by the Organic Law for the Protection of Children and Adolescents for children and adolescents traveling alone or with third parties are maintained. If a minor under the age of 18 travels alone or is not accompanied by both parents, they must travel with a travel permit. This permit is valid for only one (1) trip.