

October 2022

Country – capital	Republic of Colombia - Bogota ¹
Population	Mestizo and White 87.6%, Afro-Colombian (includes Mulatto, Raizal, and Palenquero) 6.8%, Amerindian 4.3% (est. 2022). Total population 49 million (est. 2022) ²
Geography	Northern South America, bordering the Caribbean Sea, between Panama and Venezuela, and bordering the North Pacific Ocean, between Ecuador and Panama. ³
Languages	Spanish (official) and 65 Amerindian languages ⁴
Writing system	Latin ⁵
Education and literacy	95.6 % is literate – women and men alike. ⁶ Average school dropout is 3% per year. ⁷ From age 1 onwards children are seen in community daycare and nursery schools sponsored by the National Institute for Family Welfare. At age 6 they enroll at elementary school for 6 years. Standards in rural areas compare badly with city ones where teachers are far better qualified. Secondary education is divided into 4 years of compulsory basic secondary education, grades 6 to 9, and 2-year non-compulsory stage known as Middle Vocational Education (Educacion Media Vocacional), grades 10 and 11. Vocational Education offers different specializations (technical, business, arts, and others, including academic programs), and mostly available in urban areas. Access to tertiary education remains restricted to children of wealthy city dwellers. ⁸
Religions	Christian 92.3% (predom. Roman Catholic), other 1%, unspecified 6.7% (2020 est.) ⁹
Conflict history and overview	A five decades-long conflict occurred between government forces, paramilitary, and anti-government insurgent groups, heavily funded by the drug trade, principally the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). A peace accord between FARC and government was signed in November 2016. Colombia maintains relatively strong and independent democratic institutions, characterized by peaceful, transparent elections and the protection of civil liberties. ¹⁰ However, the peace agreement did not stop the criminal violence by local gangs and paramilitary groups aiming to control illegal drug-related crimes. The ongoing violent situation led to a total 5.2 million IDPs, in 2021 134,000 new IDPs. ¹¹ Violent armed groups include dissidents of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, National Liberation Army, and drug-trafficking gangs. ¹²
Humanitarian situation	Life expectancy at birth: 74.9 yrs (male 71, female 78.7). Population below poverty line: 35.7 % (2019 est). ¹³ Poverty post-COVID increased to 21 million (42% of pop.). In 2022, 7.7 million are in need of humanitarian aid, due to violence, natural disasters, post-covid deaths/poverty, and the 2 million Venezuelan migrants. ¹⁴
Human rights situation	Armed groups, as well as narcotics traffickers, were significant perpetrators of human rights abuses and violent crimes and committed acts of extrajudicial and unlawful killings, extortion, and other abuses, such as kidnapping, torture, human trafficking, bombings, restriction on freedom of movement, sexual violence, recruitment and use of child soldiers, and threats of violence against journalists, women, and human rights defenders. ¹⁵ Human rights defenders, journalists, Indigenous and Afro-Colombian leaders, and other community activists face pervasive death threats and violence. The government has taken insufficient and inadequate steps to protect them. ¹⁶
Situation of women FGM – early marriages	Maternal mortality rate: 83 per 100,000 live births (2017). ¹⁷ The legal minimum age is 18 years. However, girls older than 14 years can enter into marriage when approval of their legal representatives is provided. 23% of girls in Colombia are married or in a union before the age of 18 and 5% before 15. In rural areas 40% of girls are married before the age of 18. ¹⁸ Gender-based violence, incl. by armed groups, is widespread. ¹⁹
Situation of LGBTI	Legal same-sex activities and relationships, judicial recognition of civil partnerships and adoption, strong legal protections against discrimination on basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. ²⁰ But high levels of violence against LGBT people. ²¹
Asylum / migration / internally displaced persons (IDPs)	IDPs (within Colombia) total 5.2 million since 2008. ²² In 2022, 2 million Venezuelan refugees/migrants live in Colombia. ²³ In 2021, 34,380 Colombians applied for asylum abroad. ²⁴ A large portion (11,555 in 2021) applied for asylum in Spain. ²⁵ Malta: sea arrivals unknown. ²⁶ In 2021 Malta received 12 asylum applications. ²⁷

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- ¹ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/colombia/>
 - ² <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/colombia/>
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 - ⁴ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/colombia/>
 - ⁵ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/colombia/>
 - ⁶ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/colombia/>
 - ⁷ <https://economiadelaeducacion.org/what-is-the-outlook-on-the-repetition-and-dropout-rate-in-colombia/>
 - ⁸ <https://www.scholaro.com/db/Countries/Colombia/Education-System>
 - ⁹ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/colombia/>
 - ¹⁰ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/colombia/>
 - ¹¹ <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/colombia>
 - ¹² <https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/colombia/>
 - ¹³ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/colombia/>
 - ¹⁴ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/latin-america-and-caribbean/colombia_en
 - ¹⁵ <https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/colombia/>
 - ¹⁶ <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2022/country-chapters/colombia>
 - ¹⁷ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/colombia/>
 - ¹⁸ <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/child-marriage-atlas/regions-and-countries/colombia/>
 - ¹⁹ <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2022/country-chapters/colombia>
 - ²⁰ <https://ilga.org/state-sponsored-homophobia-report>
 - ²¹ <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2022/country-chapters/colombia>
 - ²² <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/colombia>
 - ²³ <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2022/country-chapters/colombia>
 - ²⁴ <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=1KmWh8>
 - ²⁵ https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/AIDA-ES_2021update.pdf
 - ²⁶ <https://www.unhcr.org/mt/figures-at-a-glance>
 - ²⁶ <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=1KmWh8>

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This factsheet was compiled by Adri van den Berg for BDE. Adri worked for many years as a Country of Origin Information (COI) researcher, her final post before retiring being with the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) in Malta.