

Country – capital	Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela - Caracas ¹
Population	Indigenous, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Arab, German, African. Total population 30.5 million (est. 2023) ²
Geography	Northern South America, bordering the Caribbean Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean, between Colombia and Guyana ³
Languages	Spanish (official), numerous indigenous dialects ⁴
Writing system	Latin ⁵
Education and literacy	97.4 % is literate, female slightly higher than male (97.7% resp. 97.4% est. 2021). ⁶ Though Venezuela net enrolment rate in primary education fluctuated substantially in recent years, it tended to increase through 2001 - 2015 period ending at 89.9 % in 2015. ⁷ Enrollment in secondary education is 89.7% (2015). ⁸ The first 9 years of education are compulsory. Many children attend preschool too, before enrolling for 6 primary grades through to age 11. After receiving their basic education certificate, pupils move on to middle school to complete their mandatory education comprising 3 more grades. Around age 14 / 15 (9th grade) they must choose between following either humanities or sciences under the nation's diversified education policy. Two years of non-compulsory secondary school may follow. Some schools include professional education too. ⁹
Religions	Roman Catholic 96%, Protestant 2%, other 2% ¹⁰
Conflict history and overview	For most of the first half of the 20th century, Venezuela was ruled by military strongmen who promoted the oil industry and allowed for some social reforms. Although democratically elected governments largely held sway since 1959, the executive branch under Hugo Chavez, president from 1999 to 2013, exercised increasingly authoritarian control over other branches of government. This undemocratic trend continued in 2018 when Nicolas Maduro claimed the presidency for his second term in an election boycotted by most opposition parties and widely viewed as fraudulent. ¹¹ Juan Guaidó, the president of the opposition-controlled national assembly claimed election victory and proclaimed himself "interim president of Venezuela, which was recognised by over 60 countries. ¹² However, Maduro has remained in power and continues to repress opponents, HR defenders and ngos. ¹³
Humanitarian situation	Life expectancy at birth: 74.2 yrs (male 71.2, female 77.5). Population below poverty line: 33.1 % (2015 est). ¹⁴ In the past 9 years, 7 million Venezuelans have fled from economic poverty and political repression. The country faces a severe humanitarian emergency. In 2022-23 5.2 million people are in need of support (health, water, food, sanitation, hygiene). ¹⁵ Total nr of IDPs is 22,145 of whom 30,000 new in 2021. ¹⁶
Human rights situation	Increasingly unpopular with citizens, the Maduro regime depended on civilian and military intelligence services, and to a lesser extent, pro-regime armed gangs known as <i>colectivos</i> , to neutralize political opposition and repress the population. Numerous abuses are reported by government/security forces/intelligence services: arbitrary/ extrajudicial killings; forced disappearances; torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment by security forces; harsh and life-threatening prison conditions; political prisoners, arbitrary arrest or detention; and many more issues. ¹⁷
Situation of women FGM/C – early marriages	Maternal mortality rate: 259 per 100,000 live births (2020). ¹⁸ FGM/C is not reported. ¹⁹ The minimum age of marriage is 18 years for women and men, but marriage at 16 is possible with parental consent. ²⁰
Situation of LGBTI	Consensual same-sex activities were never been criminalised, except in the military. ²¹ Venezuela has no comprehensive civil legislation protecting people from discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, apart from specific provisions in the Labor Code and the housing law. There are no legal protections for same-sex couples. ²²
Asylum / migration / (IDPs)	Malta: Venezuela arrivals unknown. ²³ In 2021 25 persons lodged asylum applications in Malta; in 2022: 12. ²⁴

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- ¹ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/venezuela>
 - ² <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/venezuela>
 - ³ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/venezuela>
 - ⁴ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/venezuela>
 - ⁵ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/venezuela>
 - ⁶ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/venezuela>
 - ⁷ <https://knoema.com/atlas/Venezuela-Bolivarian-Republic-of/topics/Education/Primary-Education/Net-enrolment-rate-in-primary-education>
 - ⁸ <https://knoema.com/atlas/Venezuela-Bolivarian-Republic-of/topics/Education/Secondary-Education/Gross-enrolment-ratio-in-secondary-education>
 - ⁹ <https://www.scholaro.com/db/countries/venezuela/education-system>
 - ¹⁰ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/venezuela>
 - ¹¹ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/venezuela>
 - ¹² https://d2071andvip0wj.cloudfront.net/079-venezuela-peace-plan_0.pdf ; https://www.voanews.com/a/americas_sources-guaido-allies-take-slice-first-venezuela-budget/6188105.html
 - ¹³ <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/venezuela/> ; <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2023/country-chapters/venezuela>
 - ¹⁴ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/venezuela>
 - ¹⁵ <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2023/country-chapters/venezuela>
 - ¹⁶ <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/venezuela>
 - ¹⁷ <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/venezuela/>
 - ¹⁸ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/venezuela>
 - ¹⁹ <https://data.unicef.org/resources/fgm-country-profiles/>
 - ²⁰ <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/child-marriage-atlas/regions-and-countries/venezuela/>
 - ²¹ <https://database.ilga.org/criminalisation-consensual-same-sex-sexual-acts>
 - ²² <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2023/country-chapters/venezuela#e81181>
 - ²³ <https://www.unhcr.org/mt/figures-at-a-glance>
 - ²³ <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=2Mkt9Z>

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