

COI Factsheets

Safe Country of Origin concept - Colombia

February 2025

The below factsheet on Colombia was produced in early 2025 by the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) in accordance with article 12(2) of its founding Regulation (EU) 2021/2023, and in response to a request from the European Commission (Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs - DG HOME) to support its work on the designation of safe countries of origin at Union level.

This factsheet was peer-reviewed by a range of partners, including the DG HOME (international unit), the Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) and the European External Action Service. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) also provided valuable input into this process. This factsheet was drafted in accordance with the EUAA COI Methodology, which emphasises the use of diverse sources to ensure factual, balanced and reliable information.

While this factsheet was structured around the defining criteria of a safe country of origin as stipulated in the Asylum Procedure Regulation (EU) 2024/1348, the EUAA (and its partners) played no part in assessing whether such criteria were met for Colombia to be designated as a safe country of origin at Union level. That assessment was performed entirely by the European Commission and was based on a range of relevant and available sources of information.

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COI Factsheet - Safe Countries of Origin (SCO)

Colombia

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Sources were accessed between 7 January and 6 February 2025. Some additional information was added during the finalisation of this factsheet in response to feedback received during the quality control process, until 21 February 2025. Any event taking place after this date is not included in this document.

Legal and political situation – overview

System of government and political situation

Colombia is a federal republic with a democratic representative political system and a division of powers between the executive, legislative and judicial branches. It is governed by the Constitution of 1991. The President and Vice-President are elected by direct universal suffrage by absolute majority. The Legislative branch is made up of the Congress (166 representatives) and the Senate (102 representatives), both of which are elected to four year terms.¹ The judiciary is made up of four high courts: the Supreme Court of Justice, for ordinary jurisdiction matters; the Constitutional Court, for matters of constitutionality; the Higher Council of the Judiciary, which deals with the conduct of judicial officials and conflicts of jurisdiction; and the Council of the State, which deals with administrative litigation.² See effectiveness of the judiciary [in Legal remedies against human rights violations](#). In 2023, Colombia elected Gustavo Petro, the first left-wing president in its history.³

Demographics and migration profile

The population of Colombia in 2024 was estimated to be 52.6 million.⁴ For 2023, an estimated 7.6 % of the population were Afro-descendant, Black, Raizal, or Palenquera; a further 4.1 % were Indigenous, and 88.3 % of the population were listed as not having an ethnic group,⁵ which encompasses those who are Mestizo (mixed race people of indigenous/white heritage) and White.⁶ Colombia is an upper middle-income economy and an OECD member; however, the country still grapples with one of the highest income inequality levels in the world.⁷ High levels of poverty,⁸ inequality, unemployment, and informal employment were challenges.⁹ Colombia also has one of the highest numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the world. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, there were 5.1 million IDPs in Colombia at the end of 2023.¹⁰

Colombia is an origin, transit, and destination country of asylum-seekers and migrants.¹¹ Since the signing of the 2016 Peace Agreement, Colombians have made increasing applications for

¹ OAS, Sistema Legal Colombiano, n.d., [url](#), p. 1

² OAS, Sistema Legal Colombiano, n.d., [url](#), p. 2

³ EU, EEAS, 2023 EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 29 May 2024, [url](#), p. 265; Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report – Colombia, 2024, [url](#), p. 3

⁴ Colombia, DANE, Cuantos Somos?, n.d., [url](#)

⁵ Colombia, DANE, Resultados para población negra, afrodescendiente, raizal y palenquera: Encuesta Nacional de Calidad de Vida (ECV) 2023, 14 November 2024, [url](#), p. 3

⁶ Procolombia, Colombia, a multi-ethnic and multicultural country, n.d., [url](#); US, CIA World Factbook – Colombia, n.d., [url](#)

⁷ EC, International Partnerships – Colombia, n.d., [url](#)

⁸ HRW, World Report 2025 – Colombia, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

⁹ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report – Colombia, 2024, [url](#), p. 4

¹⁰ IDMC, Colombia, 27 August 2024, [url](#)

¹¹ FIP, ¿Colombia está dejando de ser atractiva para los migrantes venezolanos?, 28 May 2024, [url](#); Colombia, Reunión Informal de la Plenaria de la Asamblea General: Reporte Bienal del SG sobre la implementación del Pacto Global sobre Migración, 5 December 2024, [url](#), p. 1

international protection in Europe, rising from 1 050 applications in 2016¹² to 43 280 applications in 2022, 63 211 in 2023, and down again to 51 529 in 2024. Recognition rates for Colombians remained low, but varied from 6 % in 2022, to 7 % in 2023, and 5 % in 2024.¹³ In 2024, Colombia reported 400 612 irregular migrants transiting through the country, with main nationalities including Venezuela (302 185), Ecuador (22 785), and Haiti (17 329), and others such as China, India, Vietnam and Bangladesh.¹⁴ Migrants attempting to cross the Darién Gap encounter abuses and human rights violations,¹⁵ including extortion, human trafficking, kidnapping, and sexual/physical violence.¹⁶ In 2023, more than 18 800 Colombians crossed the Darién jungle heading northwards, while in 2024 as of 30 September more than 14 900 had crossed, representing 6% of the mixed movements arriving in Panama, and the second largest nationality making this treacherous journey.¹⁷ Organised crime groups such as the Gulf Clan control migration routes in and out of Colombia via the Darién Gap and Ecuador.¹⁸

Colombia is described as a ‘global leader’ in its response to the unprecedented migration of millions of Venezuelans over its borders and has ‘set new standards for integration of large flows of people in conditions of forced displacement.’¹⁹ There were more than 2.8 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants living in Colombia as of June 2024.²⁰ Temporary Protection Status (TPS) is a mechanism that was established by the Colombian government in 2021. TPS holders have access to essential goods and services and formal and legal employment under equal conditions.²¹ According to data published by the Government of Colombia as of 22 January 2025, 2 133 071 TPS permits have been authorised and there were a further 2 574 000 pre-registrations.²² Some Venezuelans encountered stigmatising narratives and acts of xenophobia.²³

International legal instruments

Colombia is a member of the UN, the Organization of American States (OAS), and has ratified both regional and international human rights instruments, including the following conventions:²⁴ Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT); International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Second Optional Protocol aiming to the abolition of the death penalty; Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED); Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against

¹² EU, EC, Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council - Seventh Report Under the Visa Suspension Mechanism (COM(2024) 571 Final, 6 December 2024, [url](#) pp. 47, 48, 49

¹³ EUAA, EPS data as of 3 February 2025

¹⁴ Colombia, Migración/Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Migración Irregular en Transito, n.d., [url](#)

¹⁵ Freedom House, Freedom in the World – Colombia 2024, 2024, [url](#)

¹⁶ EU, EEAS, 2023 EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 29 May 2024, [url](#), p. 265

¹⁷ UNHCR, Colombia situation, n.d., [url](#)

¹⁸ WOLA, Migrants in Colombia: Between government absence and criminal control, 20 June 2024, [url](#)

¹⁹ WB, Adapting public policies in response to an unprecedented influx of refugees and migrants: Colombia case study of migration from Venezuela, April 2023, [url](#)

²⁰ Colombia, Migración/Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Migrantes venezolanos(as) en Colombia, June 2024, [url](#)

²¹ UN, Implementation and socialization of the Temporary Protection Statute for Venezuelan Migrants (ETPV in Spanish) and Law 2136 of 2021 for the regulation and orientation of the Comprehensive Migration Policy (PIM) of the Colombian State, 26 September 2024, [url](#)

²² Colombia, Estatuto Temporal de Protección para Migrantes Venezolanos – ETPV, 28 January 2025, [url](#)

²³ Indepaz, La estigmatización en Colombia: una estrategia de guerra, November 2024, p. 4

²⁴ IJRC, Colombia Factsheet, 15 February 2018, [url](#)

Women (CEDAW); International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD); International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR); International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (CMW); Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and Optional protocols; and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CPRD).²⁵

Colombia has also ratified the American Convention on Human Rights, which also establishes the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.²⁶ Colombia is a State Party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, and the Cartagena Declaration, which expands the definition of 'refugee' by incorporating additional grounds including generalised violence and foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violations of human rights or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order.²⁷ In terms of domestic law upholding these obligations, Article 93 of the Constitution indicates that all treaties and international conventions that recognise human rights and prevent their violation prevail over domestic legislation.²⁸

The Constitution guarantees under Article 13 that 'all individuals are born free and equal before the law, shall receive equal protection and treatment from authorities, and shall enjoy the same rights, freedoms, and opportunities without any discrimination on account of gender, race, national or family origin, language, religion, political opinion or philosophy'.²⁹ Anti-discrimination legislation (Ley 1482) was passed in 2011 prohibiting racism and discrimination for reasons of nationality, sex, sexual orientation, under penalty of imprisonment for 12 to 36 months or fines.³⁰ Additionally, Article 58 (3) of the Penal Code (2000) provides for aggravated circumstances in the punishment of crimes on the grounds of 'race, ethnicity, ideology, religion, or beliefs, sex or sexual orientation, or any illness or disability of the victim'.³¹ See implementation in [Human rights situation](#) and [Specific profiles](#).

Security situation

The 2016 Peace Accords ended a 50-year conflict between the government and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP); however, violence by illegal armed groups has since continued and transformed into new dynamics.³² Implementation of the 2016 Peace Accords was described as 'slow and lackluster'.³³ The Petro government re-affirmed their commitment to the Peace Accords through 2024, while acknowledging their concerns regarding implementation, particularly rural land reform, as unequal land distribution is

²⁵ UN OHCHR, UN Treaty Database – Colombia, n.d., [url](#)

²⁶ IACHR, What is the I/A Court H.R., n.d., [url](#)

²⁷ UNHCR, Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, 1984, [url](#)

²⁸ Colombia, Constitución Política de Colombia, 1991, [url](#)

²⁹ Colombia, Constitución Política de Colombia, 1991, [url](#)

³⁰ Colombia, Ley 1482 de 2011, [url](#)

³¹ Colombia, Código Penal, 2000, [url](#)

³² HRW, World Report 2025 – Colombia, 16 January 2025, [url](#); Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report – Colombia, 2024, [url](#), p. 6

³³ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report – Colombia, 2024, [url](#), p. 3; Pares, ¿Cómo va la implementación de los acuerdos de paz en los dos años de Petro?, 1 August 2024, [url](#)

one of the main underlying causes of conflict.³⁴ The state's monopoly on the use of force is described as 'limited' due to the presence of a broad range of non-state armed groups that contest territory and dominate in some areas,³⁵ particularly remote rural areas.³⁶

As of late 2024, the main armed groups in the country continued to operate and 'expand their presence' across the country.³⁷ These groups include the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN), Ejército Popular de Liberación (EPL), FARC-dissident factions, right wing paramilitary successor groups, street gangs, and organised crime groups, including the Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia (ACG) (or Gulf Clan/Clan del Golfo).³⁸

New conflict dynamics post-2016 are described as fragmented and localised.³⁹ In 2022, the armed conflict continued to cause high levels of local insecurity,⁴⁰ while Petro's Total Peace policy concluded several ceasefires in 2023, reducing violence levels that year, especially the number of clashes with government security forces.⁴¹ As of 2024, sources pointed to an increased presence of armed groups in rural areas.⁴² The ICRC identified eight armed conflicts taking place in Colombia, including between the State and the ELN, the AGC, and FARC dissident groups; and FARC dissident groups against the AGC, the ELN and other FARC dissident groups.⁴³ Areas most affected by violence tended to be those formerly controlled by the FARC, and where resources such as coca crops and illegal mining are contested.⁴⁴ The UN Verification Mission in Colombia (UN VMC) indicated that armed conflicts are concentrated in areas historically affected by violence such as Antioquia, Arauca, southern Bolívar, Caquetá, Cauca, Chocó, Meta, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Putumayo, and Valle del Cauca.⁴⁵

Between September and December 2024, the Petro government held parallel peace talks with groups that the Government deemed as 'political in nature', including the ELN and FARC dissidents; criminal organisations in Buenaventura, Medellín, and Quibdó; and the AGC and Autodefensas Conquistadoras de la Sierra Nevada (ACSN).⁴⁶ The Total Peace policy reportedly had 'faced difficulties'⁴⁷ and had limited impacts in ending abuses against civilians two years after implementation due to insufficient monitoring and failure of groups to comply with ceasefire conditions.⁴⁸ As of late 2024, truces with some criminal structures and the government remained

³⁴ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 3, 18

³⁵ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report — Colombia, 2024, [url](#), p. 6

³⁶ Freedom House, Freedom in the World – Colombia 2024, 2024, [url](#)

³⁷ HRW, World Report 2025 – Colombia, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

³⁸ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report — Colombia, 2024, [url](#), p. 6; Pares, ¿Plomo es lo que viene?: Balance y retos de la política de paz total 2022-2024, 2024, [url](#), p. 37

³⁹ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report — Colombia, 2024, [url](#), p. 6; Pares, ¿Plomo es lo que viene?: Balance y retos de la política de paz total 2022-2024, 2024, [url](#), p. 47

⁴⁰ EU, EEAS, 2022 EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 31 July 2023, [url](#), p. 288

⁴¹ EU, EEAS, 2023 EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 29 May 2024, [url](#), p. 265

⁴² HRW, World Report 2025 – Colombia, 16 January 2025, [url](#); Pares, ¿Plomo es lo que viene?: Balance y retos de la política de paz total 2022-2024, 2024, [url](#), pp. 7, 45, 221

⁴³ ICRC, The human cost of armed conflicts in Colombia, 3 April 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁴ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report — Colombia, 2024, [url](#), p. 6

⁴⁵ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 10

⁴⁶ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 8; Pares, ¿Plomo es lo que viene?: Balance y retos de la política de paz total 2022-2024, 2024, [url](#), pp. 40-43

⁴⁷ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report — Colombia, 2024, [url](#), p. 35

⁴⁸ HRW, World Report 2025 – Colombia, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

in force, while other groups, not party to such talks, expanded violence.⁴⁹ Disputes and clashes between public security forces and armed groups continued in 2024, after suspension and non-renewal of ceasefires.⁵⁰

The ceasefire with the ELN expired on 3 August 2024, and confrontations with the security forces increased significantly as a result, with fatalities increasing from 4 during the year-long ceasefire to at least 66 in the five-month period between its expiry and late December 2024.⁵¹ Conflict with ELN and security forces mainly occurred in Antioquia, Arauca, Bolivar, and Norte de Santander, especially Catatumbo. In January 2025, the government declared a state of emergency for the Catatumbo area (Norte de Santander) after the ELN launched a combat operation against FARC dissidents, leaving over 80 dead and displacing at least 30 000 people; the government also suspended peace talks with the ELN.⁵² Sources characterised the violence by ELN and FARC dissidents that erupted in 2025 in Catatumbo as the worst crisis that the Petro government's Total Peace policy has encountered.⁵³

Human rights situation

Despite legal guarantees against it, there were reports of discrimination on the basis of gender, and against **women, indigenous people, Afro-descendant Colombians, and people with disabilities**.⁵⁴ In relation to the conflict, armed groups are accused of committing serious abuses against civilians across the country,⁵⁵ including killings, child recruitment, forced confinement of populations, mass displacement, the use of antipersonnel mines, and extortion.⁵⁶

Violence from situations of conflict has resulted in forced displacements and confinements of communities over the years, especially for **Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities**.⁵⁷ In 2023, forced displacements reportedly dropped from 298 783 victims to 167 540, mainly in Nariño.⁵⁸ UNOCHA reported that between 27 September and 26 December 2024, 176 609 people were displaced, and 138 795 people were placed in confinement across 17 departments and 77 municipalities, representing a 60 % increase in confinements and a 20 % decrease in mass displacements compared to the same period in 2023, with the Pacific region and ethnic

⁴⁹ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 83

⁵⁰ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 10

⁵¹ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 73

⁵² France24, Crisis en el Catatumbo: ¿fracasa la "paz total" de Petro en Colombia?, 23 January 2025, [url](#); SWI, swissinfo.ch, Escalada de violencia en Colombia pone en duda la «paz total» de Petro, 22 January 2025, [url](#)

⁵³ France24, Crisis en el Catatumbo: ¿fracasa la "paz total" de Petro en Colombia?, 23 January 2025, [url](#); SWI, swissinfo.ch, Escalada de violencia en Colombia pone en duda la «paz total» de Petro, 22 January 2025, [url](#)

⁵⁴ USDOS, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2023 – Colombia, 22 April 2024, [url](#), pp. 30, 32, 34, 38, 40

⁵⁵ HRW, World Report 2025 – Colombia, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

⁵⁶ Colombia, Defensoría del Pueblo, Diagnóstico de derechos humanos en Colombia, 10 December 2024, [url](#), pp. 11-13; UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), paras. 13, 40, 42, 76

⁵⁷ EU, EEAS, 2023 EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 29 May 2024, [url](#), p. 288; UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 39288

⁵⁸ EU, EEAS, 2023 EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 29 May 2024, [url](#), p. 265

peoples being the most affected.⁵⁹ There is often a lack of sufficient government assistance for the displaced.⁶⁰

Massacres (the simultaneous extra-judicial killing of three or more civilians in one incident) have continued to be reported in recent years, including 123 alleged massacres (98 verified) in 2023, which was a 6 % increase from 2022,⁶¹ and 29 between September and December 2024.⁶²

Between 2015 and June 2022, there were 495 cases of **torture** documented, half of which were allegedly committed by state agents and the other half by non-state armed groups or unknown agents.⁶³ Torture was used as a means of social control, intimidation of social leaders and human rights defenders, and as a form of discrimination.⁶⁴ There were several documented cases of torture by armed groups in 2023, including the rape and sexual abuse of children by the ELN. There were two alleged acts of torture by security forces, and a further 68 cases of excessive use of force by police against demonstrators in the same year.⁶⁵

There were approximately 100 to 200 victims of antipersonnel mines in 2023, and 34 between January and March 2024.⁶⁶

Despite numerous laws and regulations to guarantee the respect for human rights in prisons, **prison conditions** remain poor due to lack of infrastructure, overcrowding, inhumane and degrading settings, and deficient physical and mental health services for prisoners.⁶⁷

Colombia has bilateral agreements on **extradition** with numerous countries, including with the US, France, Belgium, UK, Spain, and Mexico.⁶⁸ In 2022, the government authorised the extradition of 190 Colombians, most of them to the US.⁶⁹ The death penalty is prohibited under Article 11 of the 1991 Constitution.⁷⁰

Specific profiles

The overview below is not an exhaustive list of profiles that may face specific human rights concerns.

⁵⁹ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 39

⁶⁰ HRW, World Report 2025 – Colombia, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

⁶¹ UN OHCHR, Situation of human rights in Colombia (A/HRC/55/23), 12 July 2024, [url](#), para. 11

⁶² UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 39

⁶³ Colombian Coalition Against Torture, Alternative Report on the Sixth Periodic Report before the United Nations Committee against Torture, March 2023, [url](#), pp. 7, 12

⁶⁴ Colombian Coalition Against Torture, Alternative Report on the Sixth Periodic Report before the United Nations Committee against Torture, March 2023, [url](#), pp. 13-14

⁶⁵ USDOS, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2023 – Colombia, 22 April 2024, [url](#), pp. 5, 6, 18

⁶⁶ Colombia, INS, Protocolo de vigilancia en salud pública: Lesiones por MAP/MUSE, 26 June 2024, [url](#), p. 5

⁶⁷ Comisión de Seguimiento de la Sociedad Civil a la Sentencia T-388 de 2013, Décimo Primer Informe de Seguimiento al Estado de Cosas Inconstitucional del Sistema Penitenciario y Carcelario de Colombia, December 2023, [url](#), pp. 96-97

⁶⁸ Colombia, Cancillería, n.d., [url](#)

⁶⁹ SWI swissinfo.ch, El Gobierno colombiano ha firmado 190 órdenes de extradición en 2022, 23 December 2022, [url](#).

⁷⁰ Colombia, Constitución Política de Colombia, 1991, [url](#)

Colombia has the highest rates of assassinations, threats, and stigmatisation of human rights defenders and social leaders in the world.⁷¹ Although the government 'made concerted efforts' to address violence, the targeting of **social leaders and human rights defenders** continued. Killings, violent attacks, and threats to human rights defenders, social leaders, and former FARC combatants remained 'important human rights concerns' in 2022,⁷² 2023, 2024,⁷³ and such targeting continued in 2025.⁷⁴ The UN Verification Mission in Colombia noted in its most recent report covering September to December 2024, that attacks and threats against social leaders and former FARC combatants continued; however, the number of killings reportedly decreased.⁷⁵ Sources indicated that 188 human rights defenders were killed in 2023.⁷⁶ OHCHR received reports of 37 social leaders assassinated between 27 September and 26 December 2024.⁷⁷ Human rights monitoring NGO, Indepaz, reported that 173 social leaders were assassinated in 2024, and 12 in January 2025.⁷⁸ Attacks against human rights defenders, including Afro-Colombian leaders, peasants involved in implementing the Peace Agreement, and environmental and land restitution leaders, were mainly concentrated in the departments of Antioquia, Arauca, and Cauca.⁷⁹ Social leaders, human rights defenders and other profiles related to advocacy for indigenous and afro-descendant rights, land/territorial and environmental rights,⁸⁰ conflict victims' rights, union/labour rights, and those involved in illicit crop substitution, were also targeted,⁸¹ as well as farmers in coca-growing areas, and political figures.⁸²

Many **former FARC combatants** who signed on to the 2016 Final Agreement have been killed and 'thousands' displaced.⁸³ Since the signing of the Final Agreement, 441 former FARC combatants have been assassinated, 158 have been victims of attempted homicide, and 45 have gone missing.⁸⁴ There were 48 former FARC combatants who were killed in 2023, 33 in 2024,⁸⁵ and 9 in January 2025.⁸⁶ The departments most affected are Arauca, Cauca, Guaviare, and Meta,

⁷¹ CIDH, Observaciones Preliminares: Visita in loco a Colombia 15-19 abril 2024, [url](#), p. 4

⁷² EU, EEAS, 2023 EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 29 May 2024, [url](#), p. 265

⁷³ EU, EEAS, 2021 EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 19 April 2022, [url](#), p. 290; Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report — Colombia, 2024, [url](#), p. 32

⁷⁴ Breda, T., ACLED, Civilians in Colombia face less deadly — but more pervasive — violence during Petro's presidency, 17 February 2025, [url](#)

⁷⁵ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 13

⁷⁶ EU, EEAS, 2023 EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 29 May 2024, [url](#), p. 265; CIDH, Observaciones Preliminares: Visita in loco a Colombia 15-19 abril 2024, [url](#), p. 4

⁷⁷ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 45

⁷⁸ Indepaz, Líderes sociales, defensores de DD.HH y firmantes de Acuerdo asesinados en 2024 y 2025, 26 January 2025, [url](#)

⁷⁹ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 45

⁸⁰ EUAA, Country Focus — Colombia, December 2022, [url](#), pp. 101-102; UN OHCHR, Situation of human rights in Colombia (A/HRC/55/23), 12 July 2024, [url](#), para. 58, 59, 60

⁸¹ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2024, 2024, [url](#); Breda, T., ACLED, Civilians in Colombia face less deadly — but more pervasive — violence during Petro's presidency, 17 February 2025, [url](#)

⁸² Breda, T., ACLED, Civilians in Colombia face less deadly — but more pervasive — violence during Petro's presidency, 17 February 2025, [url](#)

⁸³ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 3

⁸⁴ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 40

⁸⁵ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 41; EEAS Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World 2023 indicates 50 were killed in 2022 and 44 killed in 2023.

⁸⁶ Indepaz, Líderes sociales, defensores de DD.HH y firmantes de Acuerdo asesinados en 2024 y 2025, 26 January 2025, [url](#)

and threats have driven instances of mass displacement.⁸⁷ Five convictions have been issued for assassinations of former FARC members and the government launched a new security plan for this profile in 2024.⁸⁸

People involved in the justice system, including **justice officials and crime witnesses** were also targeted.⁸⁹ Colombia is one of the most dangerous places in South America for **journalists**.⁹⁰ Journalists encounter intimidation, violence, and retaliation for their work.⁹¹ Five journalists were killed in 2024.⁹² Those working in professions susceptible to extortion were also targets of violence.⁹³

Gender-based violence is a 'critical problem,' and indigenous, Afro-descendant, and rural/peasant women, as well as female former combatants were particularly susceptible to sexual violence in rural areas and areas controlled by armed groups.⁹⁴ **Sexual violence** remains among the human rights violations of concern,⁹⁵ particularly against women, children, and youth, and especially in post-conflict reintegration areas.⁹⁶ In November 2024, Colombia launched its first national action plan on women, peace, and security aimed at access to justice and gender-based violence (GBV) prevention with specific assistance for displaced, indigenous, and Afro-Colombian women.⁹⁷

Children continued to experience 'grave' human rights violations in the context of the conflict, including instances of child recruitment (348 children in the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2023), killing and maiming (133), sexual violence (33), child abduction (44), and attacks on schools and hospitals; Afro-descendant and indigenous children were the majority of victims.⁹⁸ **Child recruitment** into armed groups continued, with 86 cases reported in 2023⁹⁹ and 159 between January and June 2024,¹⁰⁰ marking an increase compared to previous years.¹⁰¹

Colombia has a 'solid and advanced' legal and jurisprudential framework that recognises and protects the human rights of **indigenous peoples and black, Afro-Colombian, Raizal and**

⁸⁷ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 41

⁸⁸ CIDH, Observaciones Preliminares: Visita in loco a Colombia 15-19 abril 2024, [url](#), p. 7

⁸⁹ EUAA, Country Focus – Colombia, December 2022, [url](#), pp. 121-122

⁹⁰ RSF, Colombia – Index 2024, n.d., [url](#)

⁹¹ Freedom House, Freedom in the World – Colombia 2024, 2024, [url](#); RSF, Colombia – Index 2024, n.d., [url](#)

⁹² CIDH, La RELE condena el asesinato del periodista Jorge Méndez y urge al Estado colombiano a investigar diligentemente, 15 July 2024, [url](#)

⁹³ EUAA, Country Focus – Colombia, December 2022, [url](#), pp. 111; Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2024 - Colombia, 2024, [url](#); Breda, T., ACLED, Civilians in Colombia face less deadly — but more pervasive — violence during Petro's presidency, 17 February 2025, [url](#)

⁹⁴ CIDH, Observaciones Preliminares: Visita in loco a Colombia 15-19 abril 2024, [url](#), p. 3

⁹⁵ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 44; UN OHCHR, Situation of human rights in Colombia (A/HRC/55/23), 12 July 2024, [url](#), para. 14, 15

⁹⁶ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 44

⁹⁷ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 7

⁹⁸ UN Secretary-General on children and armed conflict, Children and Armed Conflict in Colombia – Report of the Secretary-General (S/2024/161), 13 February 2024, [url](#), para. 19-20

⁹⁹ EU, EEAS, 2023 EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 29 May 2024, [url](#), p. 265

¹⁰⁰ Colombia, Defensoría del Pueblo, 51% de casos de reclutamiento conocidos por la Defensoría corresponde a niñas, niños y adolescentes de pueblos indígenas, 31 July 2024, [url](#)

¹⁰¹ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 11

Palenquera communities. However, these ethnic peoples encounter 'differentiated impacts from the internal armed conflict and face obstacles in accessing and enjoying their economic, social, cultural and environmental rights', as armed groups take advantage of the lack of state presence in rural areas. Areas where these groups experienced the most mass displacement and confinements were in Antioquia, Cauca, César, Chocó, La Guajira, Magdalena, Nariño, Putumayo, and Valle del Cauca.¹⁰² There are approximately 30 indigenous groups at risk of extinction that are protected under orders of the Constitutional Court.¹⁰³ Indigenous people have been targeted 'by all sides of the country's various conflicts.'¹⁰⁴

LGBTIQ persons' rights are legally protected, but they are often targeted for social discrimination and abuse, facing impunity for crimes committed against them.¹⁰⁵ The CIDH reported that they are especially at risk of gender-based violence in areas controlled by armed groups and rural locations.¹⁰⁶ The NGO Colombia Diversa reported 159 homicides of LGBTIQ people during 2023, compared to 148 in 2022, most of whom were gay men and trans women.¹⁰⁷ The Attorney-General's office created a special group for investigating crimes against LGBTIQ populations in 2024.¹⁰⁸

Legal remedies against human rights violations

Sources described access to justice as limited,¹⁰⁹ particularly for victims of GBV.¹¹⁰ Also, citizen confidence in the judiciary is impacted by corruption, lack of efficiency, and 'limited territorial operability'.¹¹¹ The Petro administration made 'concerted efforts' to address violence against social leaders and human rights defenders,¹¹² and Colombia has a number of policies, mechanisms, and laws to prevent abuses against profiles of targeted persons such as human rights defenders, former combatants and other individuals at risk; however, implementation of these measures is often 'poor'. Colombia also has more than 14 relevant laws and decrees and 18 institutional bodies involved in protecting human rights defenders. The government's strategy has 'primarily focused on physical security of individuals at risk,' but has evolved to take 'greater account of prevention and accountability.'¹¹³

National Protection Unit (Unidad Nacional de Protección, UNP) - Colombia has been regarded as a pioneer in protecting human rights defenders with the creation of a protection programme in

¹⁰² CIDH, Observaciones Preliminares: Visita in loco a Colombia 15-19 abril 2024, [url](#), pp. 8-9

¹⁰³ ODHAC, Context of the population of ethnic peoples in Colombia, September 2024, [url](#)

¹⁰⁴ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2024 - Colombia, 2024, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵ Freedom House, Freedom in the World – Colombia 2024, 2024, [url](#)

¹⁰⁶ CIDH, Observaciones Preliminares: Visita in loco a Colombia 15-19 abril 2024, [url](#), p. 3

¹⁰⁷ Colombia Diversa, La realidad de la discriminación - Boletín de homicidios contra personas LGBTIQ+ 2023, [url](#), pp. 13-14

¹⁰⁸ El Tiempo, Fiscalía crea grupo para investigar delitos cometidos contra población LGBTIQ+, 28 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁰⁹ HRW, World Report 2025 – Colombia, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

¹¹⁰ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), paras. 6, 44

¹¹¹ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report — Colombia, 2024, [url](#), p. 13; See also: Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2024, 2024, [url](#)

¹¹² EU, EEAS, 2023 EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 29 May 2024, [url](#), p. 265

¹¹³ Wesche, P., Post-war Violence Against Human Rights Defenders and State Protection in Colombia, July 2021, [url](#), p. 324

1997.¹¹⁴ However, the state lacks a comprehensive protection policy for human rights defenders, and relies on the National Protection Unit to guarantee the security of persons-at-risk.¹¹⁵ The Unit is hampered by a lack of timely and transparent risk analysis, differentiation for ethnic and regional variations, and protections that take into account gender.¹¹⁶ Reporting in 2024, the UN indicated that emergency procedures were in place to evacuate and provide emergency protection measures to former combatants in high-risk areas; however, since the signing of the Final Agreement in 2016, 45 former combatants were killed while awaiting protection, and 14 were killed despite having protection measures in place.¹¹⁷

Attorney-General's Office (Fiscalía General de la Nación, FGN) -The FGN has a Special Investigation Unit and has implemented a new investigation model to identify linkages between attacks against former FARC combatants and human rights defenders. Writing in 2024, the UN reported that to date, 92 sentences have been issued out of a total of 564 cases under investigation.¹¹⁸ However, impunity remained a problem due to the Unit's weakness in prosecuting those materially and intellectually responsible for the attacks.¹¹⁹

Constitutional Court - The Constitutional Court often intervenes to order the state to provide for the equal rights of marginalised groups.¹²⁰ For instance, in December 2023, the Court ordered the government to better protect human rights defenders and bring to justice those involved in the killings.¹²¹ In 2022, a similar ruling was made regarding the human rights violations of former combatants and signatories to the Peace Agreement.¹²²

Office of the Ombudsperson - The Office of the Ombudsperson (Defensoría del Pueblo) established the Early Warning System (Sistema de Alertas Tempranas, SAT) to warn the government on the potential or actual risk or actions of human rights violations committed against a segment of the population.¹²³ In 2024, it issued 27 such alerts, and in 2025, two have been issued to date.¹²⁴ The Victims Unit also reported in 2022 that, although alerts were being issued, there was a low level of compliance with the recommendations of the SAT by national

¹¹⁴ Wesche, P., Post-war Violence Against Human Rights Defenders and State Protection in Colombia, July 2021, [url](#), p. 324

¹¹⁵ CIDH, Observaciones Preliminares: Visita in loco a Colombia 15-19 abril 2024, [url](#), pp. 5-6

¹¹⁶ CIDH, Observaciones Preliminares: Visita in loco a Colombia 15-19 abril 2024, [url](#), pp. 5-6; the UNVMIC also mentions in its December 2024 reporting that the Unit still lacks internal protocols on GBV. UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 44

¹¹⁷ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 43

¹¹⁸ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), para. 47

¹¹⁹ CIDH, Observaciones Preliminares: Visita in loco a Colombia 15-19 abril 2024, [url](#), p. 6

¹²⁰ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report — Colombia, 2024, [url](#), p. 7

¹²¹ Colombia, Corte Constitucional – Sentencia Su.546/23, December 2023, [url](#); HRW, World Report 2025 – Colombia, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

¹²² Colombia, Corte Constitucional – Sentencia SU020/22, 2022, [url](#)

¹²³ Colombia, Decreto 2124 de 2017, [url](#), Art. 4

¹²⁴ Colombia, Defensoría del Pueblo, Delegada para Prevención de riesgos y SAT, n.d., [url](#)

and territorial entities.¹²⁵ Updated information on the efficiency of the state in responding to SAT could not be found within the time constraints of this factsheet.

Transitional justice mechanisms - The Special Jurisdiction for Peace (Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz, JEP), continued to work 'despite significant challenges' to deliver justice for victims of the conflict. In the six years of its operation, JEP has charged 158 individuals with war crimes and crimes against humanity, mainly from the FARC-EP and security forces,¹²⁶ and continues to investigate cases of kidnapping, extrajudicial killings, and child recruitment.¹²⁷ The JEP has yet to convict or sentence any individuals.¹²⁸ In 2011, then-President Juan Manuel Santos signed into law the Victims and Land Restitution Law (Ley de Víctimas y Restitución de Tierras) or Law 1448 of 2011 to provide protection and restitution for victims of the armed conflict and survivors of human rights violations, including state abuses, since 1985.¹²⁹ Out of the 7.7 million people recognised as 'victims', over 1.7 million have been compensated by the government.¹³⁰

¹²⁵ Colombia, Comisión de Seguimiento y Monitoreo a la Implementación de la Ley 1448 de 2011, "Ley de Víctimas y Restitución de Tierras", Noveno informe de seguimiento al Congreso de la República 2021-2022, 22 August 2022, [url](#), p. 104

¹²⁶ UN, VMC, Report of the Secretary-General, 26 December 2024, [url](#), paras. 48-50

¹²⁷ HRW, World Report 2025 – Colombia, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

¹²⁸ HRW, World Report 2025 – Colombia, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

¹²⁹ AI, Colombia: The Victims and Land Restitution Law, April 2012, [url](#)

¹³⁰ Colombia, Unidad para las Víctimas, Informe de gestión 2024, January 2025, [url](#), p. 33

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