



**ICYE**  
Colombia

**National Profile**

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# About Colombia



Colombia is located in the North-West corner of South America. The country borders Venezuela (East), Peru (South), Brazil (Southeast), Ecuador (South west), Pacific Ocean (West), Panama (North West) and the Caribbean Sea (North).

Colombia is one of the most diverse countries in Latin-America. It is a veritable patchwork of different regional cultures and idiosyncrasies interrelated into one nation.

# History

Before the arrival of the Spaniards, the country was occupied by a variety of Indigenous communities, most of whom were primitive hunter-gatherers. However, in the high lands of the country (specifically, the high basin of the center) existed many Chibcha-tribes who had become sedentary farmers and developed a fairly high level of civilization. They were well organized and held their land in community.

The next stage of Colombia's history is the Spanish conquest starting in 1499, during which the native communities were enslaved or exterminated by the conquerors. The first permanent Spanish settlement was the city of Santa Marta (1525) on the north Caribbean coast. Bogotá was later founded in 1538 on a beautiful high plateau in the geographical center of the country.

The Colonial Period (17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century, after the initial conquering) was relatively peaceful. The Spanish organization, the legal system, the established Church and agricultural prosperity greatly benefited the Colonists. Colombia was producing 80% of the world's gold in that period; this led to the creation of the "El Dorado" myth.



# History

The movement toward independence from Spain began in 1794, stimulated by the global political influence of the French Revolution. However, the key turning point for independence came when revolutionary Simon Bolívar and his armies defeated the Royalist troops at the Battle of Boyacá on August 7th, 1819 (there is a national holiday on August 7<sup>th</sup> in honor of this critical date, and there is a statue of Simon Bolivar in a plaza in every city in Colombia as testimony to his role in the independence process and the nation's history).

On the 17th of December 1819, Bolívar proclaimed the Republic of Gran Colombia, uniting the present republics of Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Panamá into one large independent state. Shortly after, Venezuela broke away in 1829, followed by Ecuador in 1830.

Almost from its inception, the new country was troubled with internal strife between the centralizing Conservatives and federalizing Liberals, a strife greatly complicated by the still pressing "question of the Church", which was vehemently fought for by the Conservatives.

Thus the 19th Century was a period of insurrections and civil wars. In 1886, the Conservatives imposed a highly centralized Constitution, which was modified in 1991.

In 1903, the department of Panamá declared its independence from Colombia, following pressure from the United States.



# History

Despite its turbulent past, the surprisingly stable centralization and maintenance of government in Colombia, considering its incredible physical and human diversity, is one of the most understated political achievements of the 20th century. It represents, in the words of Preston James, “an astounding victory of Man over Nature, and Man over Man”.

Colombia is a developing country, and as such suffers from some of the same problems as other countries in development. It has a dependent economy based on exports of raw materials, agricultural products and manufactured goods. The main exported products are: Bananas, sugar, coal, copper, emeralds, oil, flowers, textiles and cement (the best coffee in the world!).



# Population

Colombia is the third most populated country in Latin America (after Mexico and Brazil), currently around 45.5 million inhabitants (DANE). In the past few decades, like most Third World countries, it has experienced rapid population growth, more than doubling in population since the 1970's.

Colombia is an inherently multicultural country and this is reflected in a population constituted by a mixture of Europeans, Asians, Indigenous and Africans. Therefore, you can find Colombians with German, African, Spanish, French, Italian, Turkish, or British roots. This leads to a large variety of different cultural influences and antecedents. As a result, there exists different styles of music, dances, and an enormous range of delicious traditional plates, which you absolutely should taste.

Furthermore, people's behavior and relationships, as well as the structure of family life, often depend on regional customs .

The ultimate result of this inherent multicultural nature is a population of beautifully warm, inviting and open people who seek to learn more about the cultures of others.



# Population

## Indigenous Colombian Population

The indigenous population in Colombia is estimated at around 1.4 million, 3,4% of the total population, and they are spread amongst over 87 different tribes in various parts of the country. Approximately 50% of the indigenous peoples of Colombia live in La Guajira, Cauca and Nariño Departments.

Combined, all ethnic population speak a total of 66 different languages.





# Natural Regions

Because of its natural structure, Colombia can be divided into six very distinct natural regions. These consist of the Andean Region, covering the three branches of the Andes mountains found in Colombia; the Caribbean Region, covering the area adjacent to the Caribbean Sea; the Pacific Region adjacent to the Pacific Ocean; the Orinoquía Region, part of the Llanos plains mainly in the Orinoco river basin along the border with Venezuela; the Amazon Region, part of the Amazon rainforest; and finally the Insular Region, comprising islands in both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.



# Natural Regions

## 1. Andean Region

The Andes region, located in the center of Colombia, is the most populated region of Colombia. With many mountains contains the majority of the country's urban centers. [1] They were also the location of the most significant pre-Columbian indigenous settlements. Beyond the Colombian Massif in the south-western departments of Cauca and Nariño, the Colombian Andes divide into three branches known as "cordilleras" (from the Spanish for mountain range): the West Andes run adjacent to the Pacific coast and is home to the city of Cali.



Villa de Leyva, a small town in the Andean region

The Central Andes run up the center of the country between the Cauca and Magdalena river valleys (to the west and east respectively) and includes the cities of Medellín, Manizales and Pereira. The East Andes extend northeast towards the Guajira Peninsula, and includes the cities of Bogotá (Capital), Bucaramanga and Cúcuta.



Central Bogotá

The climate and vegetation of the region vary considerably according to altitude, but as a general rule the land can be divided into the tierra caliente (hot land) of river valleys and basins below 1,000 m; the more temperate conditions of the tierra templada (temperate land, approximately 1,000 m to 2,000 m) and tierra fría (cold land, 2,000 m to 3,200 m), which include the most productive land and the majority of the population; and the alpine conditions of the zona forestada (forested zone, 3,200 m to 3,900 m), páramos (3,900 m to 4,600 m) and tierra helada (frozen land, 4,600 m and above)

# Natural Regions

## 2. Caribbean Region

The Caribbean Region covers 132,218 km<sup>2</sup> adjacent to the Caribbean Sea on the northern coast of Colombia, stretching from the Gulf of Urabá in the west to the Guajira Península in the east. It includes the departments of Guajira, Bolivar, Atlántico, Cesar, Magdalena, Sucre, and Córdoba.



*Parque Tayrona, Santa Marta*

The importance of the seven port areas located on the Caribbean Coast become one of its main pillars of development, so that investments aimed at improving this are vital to the economic momentum of the Region. Physically, the Caribbean region is composed of a continental plain called Caribbean coast or Atlantic waters and Colombian island Territories in the Caribbean Sea. The plain is located to the North of the Andes and ends in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta to make way for the Guajira peninsula. There are the higher altitudes of the Colombian territory in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta (colon and Bolivar peaks). Although the Caribbean region is predominantly flat, is characterized by its variety ecological, whose ecosystems ranging from the dry forest of La Guajira to the rainforest of the Gulf of Urabá region. The region is flanked by the eastern cordillera, more exactly by the Serranía de Perijá, which serves as natural limit with Venezuela.

# Natural Regions



## 3. Pacific Region

The Pacific Region (departments of Choco, Valle del Cauca, Cauca and Nariño) covers the whole western side of the country. It goes from Panama in the north to the border with Ecuador in the south. It's where humid rainforest meets the sea, and is also home to clusters of Afro-Colombian communities; considered by many as the "hidden gem" of Colombia and a further distinct culture to explore. It is important to highlight its great hydrographic, mining and forestry wealth. It is one of the countries with the highest biodiversity and rainfall on the planet. Paradoxically very rainy but sometimes without water.

It is characterized by the great poverty of its inhabitants, state neglect, low quality of life, the scourge of violence by illegal groups and outside the law. Port terminals of great impact in the country. It is the land of Afro-Colombian culture and numerous Indo-American tribes.

# Natural Regions

## 4. Orinoco Region

Also known as the Oriental Plains from the Spanish “Llanos Orientales”, the region covers almost one quarter of the country, stretching from the Venezuelan border to the north-east, right down to the Amazonas region in the South. The region is rich in oil and the plains are suitable for extensive ranching.



Ranching in Los Llanos region

Predominance of dry tropical climate. Diversity of fauna and flora, it has been cut down to make way for agriculture and sowing grass for livestock. Indigenous groups inhabit much of this region. There are the Sierra de la Macarena and the Sierra de Chiribiteque. Populated centers: Villavicencio, Yopal, Puerto Carreño, Tame, Acacias, Puerto López. Departments of Arauca, Casanare, Vichada, Meta, conform the región.

# Natural Regions



## 5. Amazon Region

The Amazon Region is located in southern Colombia, covers 42% of Colombia's territory, and at its most southern point borders Peru and Brazil. This region, only inhabited by small indigenous groups, is marked by the huge eco-diversity and Amazonian rainforest.

It's very important in the environmental field, it's part of the Latin American Amazon. Considered the lung of the world for its extension of tropical forests.

They inhabit on average 60 ethnic groups, Ticna, Yagua, Nukak, Huitotos, Ingas, with diverse customs and own of each ethnic group or tribe.

Main urban settlements, Leticia, Florencia, Mocoa, Mitú and San José del Guaviare

# Natural Regions

## 6. Insular Region

The Insular Region is considered by some as a sixth region, comprising the oceanic islands outside continental Colombia. It includes the department of San Andrés y Providencia in the Caribbean Sea and the islands of Malpelo and Gorgona in the Pacific Ocean. The 6,000 inhabitants of Providencia have strong Caribbean identity with a large Rastafari community, mainly speaking English-based creole.



The idyllic beaches of San Andres

In 2000 UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme declared the archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina Biosphere Reserve, for the health of the planet. Population Raizal Anglo-American traditions of African descent. The Lebanese Syrians with mulatto economic power from the departments of Atlántico and Bolívar. Island population has been surpassed by immigrants. Economic activity tourism and trade



# Climate

Due to its topographical and regional diversity, Colombia has no one single climate, rather a series of micro-climates depending on the region. Instead of European climates wherein the weather changes dependent on the season, Colombian climate changes dependent on the geographical region. Due to the position of Colombia close to the equator, there aren't distinct seasons.

Every different climatic zone can be visited within a bus ride. A city like Bogotá (2600 meter high) has an average temperature of a mild 16 degrees while Girardot (2 hour ride down the cordillera) has an average temperature of a scorching 32 degrees.

The central Andean region (Bogota, Cundinamarca, Boyaca) is generally the colder region – hence Bogotá's nickname “La Nevera” (the fridge); the two coastal regions (in particular Barranquilla with an average of 28 degrees), the other major cities (Medellin and Cali), and the Amazon region, all maintain much warmer climates.

Due to the powerful climates, there are occasionally natural disasters (urban floods, land-slides, storms).



Rio Caño Cristales, Macarena

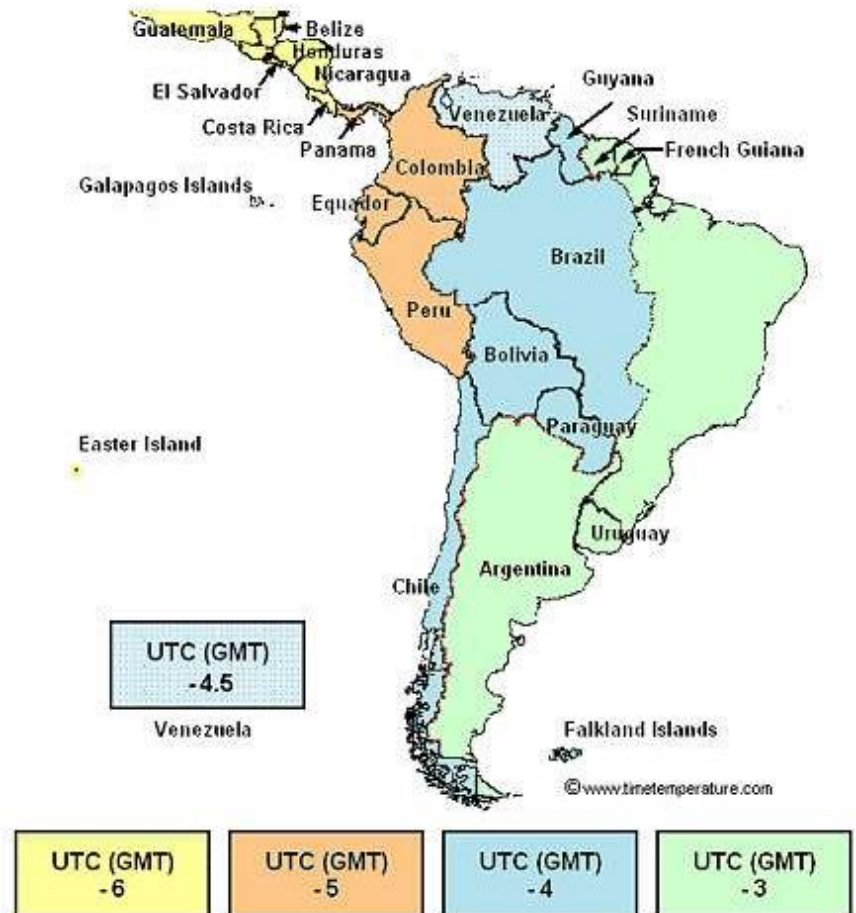
# Time

Colombia is in the time-zone GMT-5 (“standard Eastern time”), along with Peru, Ecuador and New York. It doesn’t change hour seasonally.

This means that all year round it is:

- 5 hours to the hour in UK
- 6 hours to the hour in Germany, France, Spain and Austria

Due to the aforementioned lack of seasons, day lengths are fairly regular all year round (around 12 hours, 6am-6pm, although this too varies regionally).



# Food



A typical dish from Antioquia, called “Bandeja Paisa”

Typical Colombian diet may appear monotonous at the beginning - rice, potatoes and meat – but it is made up on strong flavors and fresh ingredients, and there are many surprising variations of the typical Colombian meal. Every region has it’s own specialty based on the ingredients grown in that area. (e.g. bandeja paisa from Antioquia, tamale from Tolima, fish and patacones from the Caribbean coast) Colombia’s various climates means it grows just about everything, so there is no shortage of fresh fruits and vegetables.

In regards to vegetarianism – though the prototypical Colombian meal served in restaurants and in normal households contains meat, because of the amount of fresh fruit, vegetables, lentils, and beans, it isn’t impossible to maintain a vegetarian diet.

When outside the big cities, you should be cautious about drinking tap-water. You should also be extremely careful about buying food in the streets where hygienic conditions are unregulated.

# Fashion

There are no clear-cut rules for dressing in Colombia, but appearance is an important value in Latin society in general and as such fashion is important to the Colombian people.

For important social events (birthday parties, weddings etc.) Colombians like to go all-out formal – long dresses for women and shiny suits for men. Fashion also depends to some extent on the region and the weather. Though one obviously doesn't need to dress formally all the time, one should beware of too much eccentricity in an appearance-orientated society.

In regards to shopping, almost everywhere but mostly in the main cities one can find all the major international clothing brands, as well as national ones, in shopping centers.



# Transport

Due to the difficult terrain of Colombia (the three high Andean ranges separated by deep valleys), on-ground travel is a problem, hence the lack of national train system. Therefore there exist many internal flights between all corners of Colombia from Colombian airlines

This being said, there exists a large national bus system, and it is possible to get to most places (with the notable exceptions of the Amazonas and Pacific Coast – due to lack of roads linking these parts with other cities) via a reasonably-priced, albeit long and occasionally bumpy, bus. There are many bus companies that run regular services between most parts of Colombia, so getting a ticket on the day is rarely a problem.

Intra-city transport depends on the city. Big cities like Bogota, Medellin or Cali have bus integrated systems with cable car up to the neighborhoods in the mountains. Medellin is the only city with Metro and Tram in Colombia. There are always taxis available in all parts of Colombia and more recently Ubers in the larger cities. Small or little towns have different systems of transport not as organized like in big cities.



Transmilenio bus,  
Bogota



Tram, Medellín

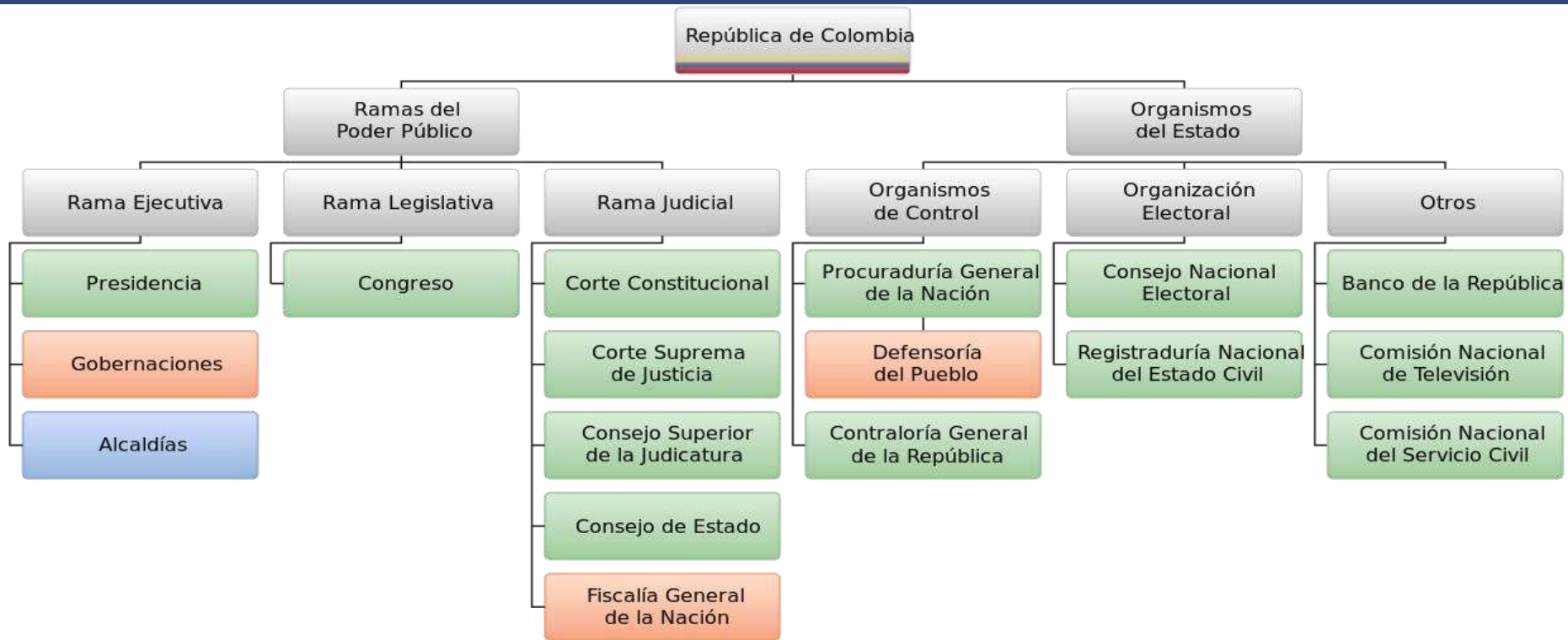


Casa de Nariño, official residence of the Colombian president

Colombia is a presidential democratic republic with decentralized government with partial autonomy of regional authorities. Executive power is carried out by the government made up of 13 ministers, and directed by a president. Elections just passed in 2018, and Iván Duque from Centro Democrático party was elected until 2022.

The political administration is organized in 32 departments and 3 districts, with Bogotá D.C. as the national capital. The 1886 Constitution was updated in 1991 to better represent neglected minorities such as indigenous nations and Afro-Colombian communities in the congress. The two predominant parties which have ruled the country since its inception are the Liberal and the Conservative. A recent movement shows indication of Colombian politics becoming more pluralist with center-right Social Party of National Unity, the left oriented Polo Democratic and ecological Green Party bucking the dualistic Liberal-Conservative trend in some areas.

# Political and Administrative Organisation



The Government of Colombia is a republic with separation of powers into executive, judicial and legislative branches. Its legislature has a congress, its judiciary has a supreme court, and its executive branch has a president.

**LEGISLATIVE** power whose function is to formulate laws, exercise political control over the Government and reform the Constitution. Congress: House and Senate.

**EXECUTIVE** Power Executes what is established in the constitution and the laws. President and his ministers. Governor in the department. Mayor in the municipality. Mayor in Bogotá D.C.

**JUDICIAL** power function, to solve conflicts between citizens and between citizens and the State. It is represented by the Courts and Tribunals.

# Peace process

After 50 years of extended civil war between government forces, paramilitaries and Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) that left 220,000 civilians dead and 6,000,000 displaced in Colombia, President Juan Manuel Santos and FARC began peace negotiations. These dialogues took place in Oslo and in La Havana, resulting in the signing of an historic Agreement for the definitive Termination of the Conflict in Bogota in June 2016 including ceasefire and surrendering of weapons.

The decision to go ahead with the peace agreement was put to the public in the form of a referendum in October 2016 – “Do you support the final agreement to end the conflict and build a stable and lasting peace?” with a “Yes” campaign headed by incumbent president Santos, and a “No” campaign fronted by former anti-FARC president Uribe. The result was a surprising slim victory for the “NO” campaign (50.22%).

In light of this result, a new agreement was proposed to the senate in November, and ratified without opposition. The negotiations are a complicated ongoing process that mark a historical moment in Colombia’s history.





# Peace process

## Peace Agreement

**End of the Conflict:** Government and FARC agreed the end of the conflict, proclaiming the bilateral cessation of hostilities on both sides, and the total disarmament of the subversive organization. The guerrillas are concentrated in 8 camps, where they will deliver their weapons

**Political participation:** FARC leaders would have no impediment to participate in politics and be elected as Representatives to the House or Representatives.

**Policy of integral agrarian development:** "Peasant territories will enjoy political, administrative, economic, social, environmental and cultural autonomy and the administration of justice through the mechanisms of community justice."

**Mechanisms of endorsement of the agreement:** Government and FARC agreed to endorse the agreements in a plebiscite, which was approved through a bill, and endorsed by the Constitutional Court to conduct the popular consultation. 50,23% vote NO. 49,76% vote YES. For this reason there were changes

**Victims:** The agreement of this point contemplates the implementation of a Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition, a Jurisdiction Special for Peace and concrete measures of reparation, not repetition.

**Solution to the problem of illicit drugs:** FARC proposed to prioritize manual way as the main method of drug eradication, arranged with growers and producers of illicit drugs

# Peace process

## Post-Conflict Overview

The Peace Agreement between the Colombian government and the FARC-EP was signed in November 2016 after four years of negotiation. The Agreement includes: comprehensive rural reform; political participation; an end to the conflict; a solution to the problem of illicit drugs; and victims of the conflict, as well as provisions for implementation, verification and endorsement.

The Agreement was adopted in November 2016, after a few brief adjustments to it considering the vote of 50.2% of the citizens against endorsing it in September 2015, so that adjustments were established and it became effective in November 2016.

On June 27, 2017, the phase of total surrender of arms by this armed group was concluded and recognition was given to the movement under the name of Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común (Revolutionary Alternative Force of the Common) as a political party, which participated in the March 2018 elections to the Congress of the Republic without reaching the threshold (they obtained around 50,000 votes in the Senate and 30,000 in the House of Representatives), thus gaining access to 10 seats in compliance with the peace agreement.

# Peace process

## Post-Conflict Overview

In the first semester of 2018 the installation of the instances of the integral system of truth, justice and reparation was achieved with a parity conformation of the JEP and the Commission of Truth. However, even in 2019, the regulatory frameworks to guarantee its full operation are still under discussion.

People in the process of reincorporation were placed in Territorial Training and Reincorporation Spaces in about 26 rural locations in the country, where they work on productive projects and their link to the education and health system. They also receive a monthly support for two years, which will end in the second semester of 2019.

During these first years of implementation of the Agreement, the murders of social and human rights leaders and defenders increased alarmingly, and some dynamics of violence and forced displacement

in different regions of the country by the dissidents of FARC, ELN and illegal armed groups became evident. There is an international monitoring mechanism for the implementation of the Peace Agreement that shows some progress, but there are still several challenges in consolidation.

Parallel to this process, the National Government terminated the peace dialogues with the ELN in the first semester of 2019, considering that there were no conditions to conclude them successfully; and is currently raising objections to the JEP (Special Justice for Peace).

# The Program



We are the Colombian Association for Cultural Youth Exchange ICYE-Colombia a non-profit association founded in 1981 and accepted in 1982 as a member of the Federation of National Committees of the International Cultural Youth Exchange ICYE, based in Berlin, Germany.

ICYE-Colombia sponsors the exchange of young people from different countries, ideologies, beliefs and cultures, as a means of international and universal education seeking to promote a responsible commitment of youth through peace, justice and fraternity in the world. ICYE-Colombia was founded in 1981, with legal status 1812 June 1982.

ICYE Colombia has got a charter, it's got a corporate purpose.

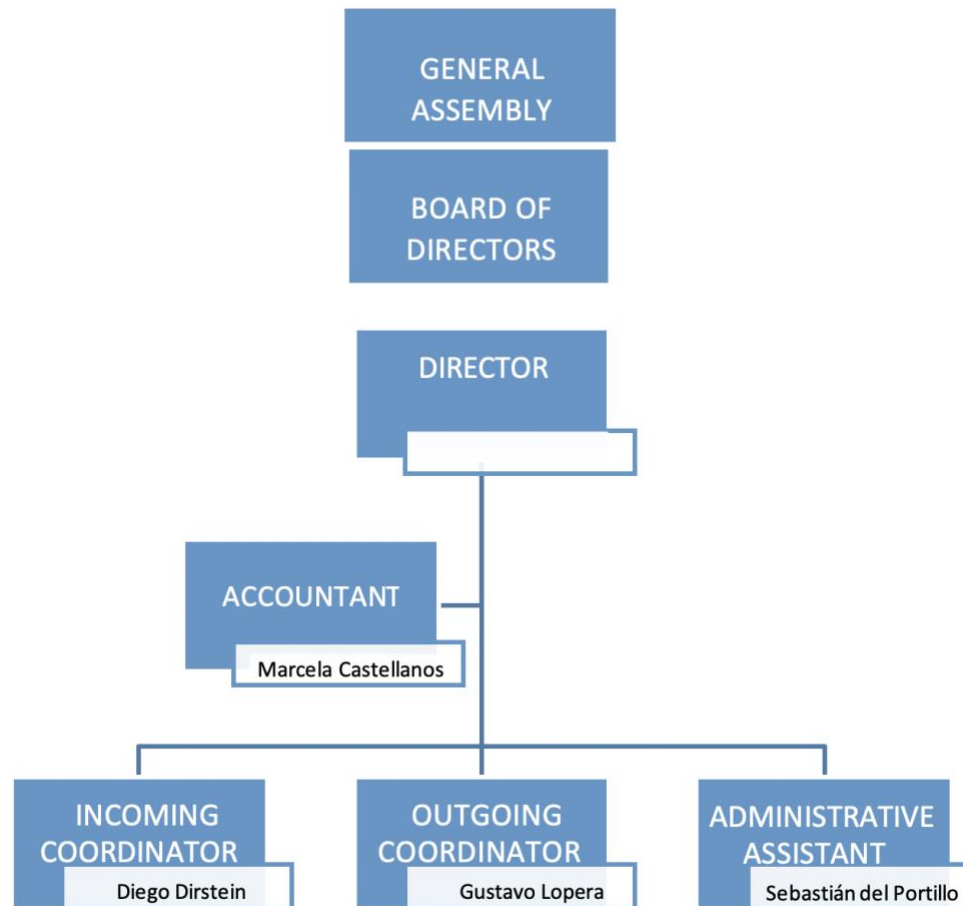
In order to comply with its corporate purpose, it has administrative and control bodies:

General Assembly, Board of Directors, Executive Committee, Legal Representative.

There is an internal regulation and a Manual of functions and procedures.

# The Program

## ORGANIZATION CHART OF THE ASSOCIATION



# The Program

## Executive Committee

It is the body in charge of planning, executing and evaluating programmes. Its members are employees of the Association

It consists of:

Diego Dirstein (*Incoming Coordinator*)

Gustavo Lopera (*Outgoing Coordinator*)

Sebastian del Portillo (*Administrative Assistant*)

## Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is the permanent management body and the top management of the Association between assemblies

Catalina Marín (*Chairwoman & Legal Representative*)

Juan David Vargas (*Secretary*)

Ilse Obwexer (*Member*)

# The Program

## The ICYE Program in Colombia

ICYE Colombia's program is a tool for appreciating one's own and others' social and cultural values. Also for self-recognition through the process of non-formal learning developing a social work in another country; in addition, the learning of a language is included. The scope of intercultural learning from an international volunteer experience is incalculable for the positive effect that the volunteer has as a life lesson learned.

All participants in the ICYE Colombia program will have:

- **On-arrival camp:** Time to meet the other participants, to get in touch with Colombian culture and food, to get to know about rules, regulations, cultural shock and to have lots of fun.
- **Spanish Course:** 30 hours Spanish course, divided in two groups, basic and intermediate.
- **Projects visits:** During the Spanish course projects will be visited. Volunteers will be introduced, will get to know transportation means and contact person in the project.



- **Night out dancing:** Get ready for your first contact with Latin dances in a club
- **Visit to La Candelaria and city center:** Colombian co-workers will take you to the city center of Bogotá, you will learn about the history of the city and will enjoy the beautiful sights of La Candelaria.
- **Fun activities around Bogotá:** Besides the official activities, programmed by ICYE Colombia, our co-workers will plan ecological, hikes, sports, cultural and fun activities.

# The Program

## The ICYE Program in Colombia

- **Mid-term camp:** Time to evaluate, to meet the other volunteers, to see the progress of the experience and to plan the rest of the year.
- **Christmas Meeting:** Time to learn about the Colombian Christmas traditions, food, drinks and music will be part of a fantastic night.
- **International Dinner:** Time to prove all the volunteer's cooking abilities. We all will share something prepared with our own hands.
- **University fairs:** Some volunteers will be invited to promote the ICYE programs in different Universities, conferences etc.
- **Workshops:** As of the different projects ICYE Colombia develop and carry out, volunteers will participate different workshops and trainings.
- **Final Camp:** Time to say goodbye. It is the final activity of the program, to evaluate and reflect the whole experience, also to prepare the return and to share and plan the future.





# The Program

## Age Limit

ICYE Colombia hosts volunteers from **18 to 26** years (with some exceptions).

## Hosting Situation

There are two hosting options: **host families** and **host projects**. *Host family* means you will be staying with a family for the year, usually they have a son / daughter who is doing or has done an international program with ICYE. *Hosting project* means you will be staying within the project itself, with beneficiaries and other members of the organization.

Most of the projects and families are located in Bogotá, however ICYE hosts volunteers in various places in Colombia.



# The Program

## Family Life

To give you an idea of what you might expect from living with family, we will describe some typical characteristics of an average Colombian family:

In general Colombian families are conservative. The family usually follows traditional religious values (respect for elders, no sex before marriage, no over-indulgence in alcohol or drugs). Generally the father is the head of the home and some wives still stay at home taking care of their children. However, you can find a lot of single mothers who are head of the family as well. Children usually live with their parents – following home rules and discipline – until they get married (usually significantly longer than in European cultures).

Host families usually belong to the urban middle class; it means most of them live on the resources provided by a salary, parents usually have control over their children living at home no matter how

old they are. Exchangees should keep this in mind because they will be considered another member of the family, and as such subject to the same house rules. Their integration to their families depends primarily on themselves, and on how they try to adapt to their daily life.

There is an important detail to be remembered: formality and kindness are important parts of the culture. Colombians are very mindful of little compliments, smiles and politeness.



# The Program

## Social Projects

Throughout the program you will be working within a local social project. Inside the project there will always be a contact person to support you. You can find an overview of our projects in the work profile.

Social projects are very interesting, fun and very important for the community; however is important to take in consideration ICYE Colombia cooperates with a wide range of different organizations some of the Institutions have few resources, not enough personal, without luxuries, with needs, where international volunteering is a great support. All organizations have rules and regulations which must be respected by volunteers, as well as you have to be prepare to adapt yourself to the project and to the dynamic and culture of the organization and the community.



# The Program

## Social Projects

Projects do a magnificent job changing people's lives, so they need creative, active and open mind volunteers full of ideas to accomplish their goals. Some projects provide the opportunity for volunteers to live in the project.

### What hosting projects expect from volunteers:

- Reliability, punctuality, responsibility
- Willingness to adapt to the project, the community and the city
- Willingness to learn Spanish
- Initiative, good attitude and a lot of energy
- Respect for the internal rules of the Project
- Willingness to understand cultural differences and different dynamics of a social project in Colombia



# The Program

## Health



Before your arrival to Colombia you will be insured by the ICYE International Office or your sending Committee through the information received by your sending committee. During your preparation camp in your home country you will receive all the instructions related to the use and procedures of the international insurance. Although, also during the on-arrival camp in Colombia you will be given instructions as to what to do in a medical emergency and how to use your medical insurance, to use it is very simple: whether is an emergency or a routine medical appointment, families, project members or volunteers their selves will have to go to the closest and better medical service required, medical costs must be covered, then the respective claim to the insurance will be done adding all original receipts. If the cost of the service is to high, if it is an emergency or if there are any questions or support needed, ICYE-Colombia has to be contacted, a member will immediately assist you.

You do not need any vaccinations to come to Colombia. This being said, if you wish to travel to the Amazonas region, it is encouraged you are vaccinated against yellow fever – there is a free and easy vaccination service at the airport and bus terminal in Bogotá.

# The Program

## Vacations

Colombia is an amazing big country to be discovered. Even though the most important activity of volunteers in Colombia is Social Voluntary Work, traveling is a big part of the cultural learning process. We expect volunteers to go out and experience and discover the second most diverse country in the world, always with responsibility and following the ICYE Colombia travelling and security rules. During the on-arrival camp travelling procedure together with the security protocol will be explained and discussed.

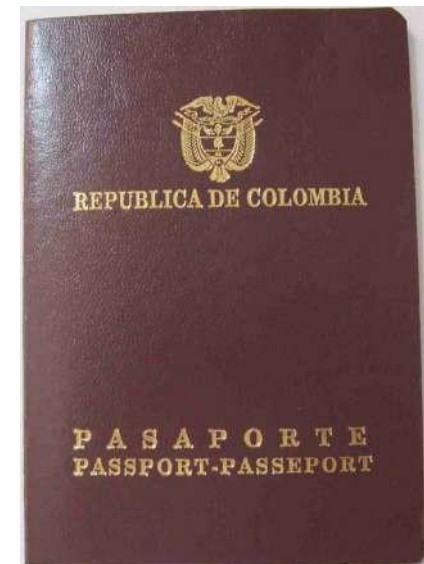
ICYE Volunteers have 30 working days off, and volunteers from the financed German programs 24 days, EVS volunteers 2 days off per participated month. Besides these official days, volunteers will enjoy as many as holidays possible, since in Colombia there are between 15 to 20 religious and national holidays per year. So get ready to travel and discover our beautiful country.



# Visa

## General Information

- A visa is the authorization granted to a foreigner to enter Colombian territory and is issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- The permanence is the time allowed for a foreigner to be in Colombian territory.
- The validity of the visa is the time comprised between the date of issue and the date of expiry printed on the visa.
- The requirements for the issue of visas have been established by ministerial resolution.
- The Visa Online service allows you to apply from your home or office.
- This service is available 24/7 and may be accessed from any location worldwide.
- You will only have to visit the Consulate to get the stamp of your visa on your passport if your application has been accepted.



Third person: Remember that in the event that the application is made through a third person, it should include the corresponding power of attorney granted before the relevant authority, and he/she must appear personally with the corresponding identity document and the passport of the applicant.

## Visa Procedure

Visa Type: **VISITOR (TYPE V) Volunteer/Cooperant**

**When you start the application online, to get to know the requirements you click on:**

**[http://www.cancilleria.gov.co/tramites\\_servicios/visa/requisitos](http://www.cancilleria.gov.co/tramites_servicios/visa/requisitos)**

**Then you have to choose from the options: Nationality, Type of passport and travel purpose.**

**Or you click directly for visa process link (in English):**

**<https://tramitesmre.cancilleria.gov.co/tramites/enlinea/solicitarVisa.xhtml>**

For the foreigner that wishes to enter Colombian territory as a volunteer or cooperation agent of an NGO or non-profit organization recognized as such by the Colombian State.

## Prices

(may vary)

<b>Currency</b>	<b>Study</b>	<b>Visa</b>
Euros	40	131
Dollars	52	170



## Requirements

All the following documents to apply for your Visa have to be uploaded online and must be in PDF format and the combined size of all scanned or uploaded documents **must not exceed 3 MB.**

Valid passport

Fill out online application

All documents presented must be less than 3 months old

**Invitation letter of acceptance in the program including:**

**-Name of the institution, NIT (Número de Identificación Tributaria/Tributary Identification Number) included**

**-Identification of the volunteer as it is in the passport**

**-Volunteer's activities, duration and tentative agenda**

**-Relationship of the organization with the volunteer**

**-Financial responsibility statement of the organization regarding the volunteers, national and international travels and living expenses.**

**Certificate of existence and legal representation of the HO**

**Standard declaration form on eligibility of the VOL**

**Weekly schedule of the VOL at the social project**

### **Note:**

If you make your request in person, you are not required to hand in photographs. They will be taken in the dispatching office



# Colombian ID

During the first 15 days in Colombia you will have to go to “Migración Colombia” office to apply for ID card for foreigners called Cédula de Extranjería, someone from ICYE will join you.

If the volunteer will live or will be in Bogotá the first weeks they can do it at:

**Calle 100 No 11B-27, Edificio Platinum, Bogotá** (otherwise, one can go to any of the 27 migratory service centers around the country)

The ID will be given to you after roughly one week. ID CARD costs: COP \$206.000.00 (approx. 50 Euros) to be **paid by credit or debit card only.**

Due to COVID-19, every previous process must be done via online, so before applying for the Colombian ID, you have to fill the Formulario Único de Trámites format found in this link:

<https://apps.migracioncolombia.gov.co/registro/public/formularioRegistro.jsf>

Then you have to ask for the Colombian ID's appointment here:

<https://www.migracioncolombia.gov.co/tramites-y-servicios/58-servicios/agendar-su-cita>

# Colombian ID

When you have selected the date (previously agreed with the Incoming Coordinator), Volunteers should take the following documents on that day:

- Passport
- Photocopy of visa
- Photocopy of the first page of passport
- Photocopy of the stamp given at the immigration desk at El Dorado Airport
- Registration number generated on the website for the Formulario Único de Trámites (FUT)
- Registration number generated for the Colombian ID's appointment application

# Visa

## Visa Extension

If by any chance the visa will expire some days before going back to your country (less than 30 days), it is not necessary to get a new visa. There is a very simple procedure called Salvo Conducto (Safe Conduct) You must perform this process **before** your visa expires.

The volunteer has to click here:

<https://www.migracioncolombia.gov.co/prorroga-de-permanencia/requisitos-prorroga-de-permanencia>

### Requirements

- Passport
- Photocopy of the first page of passport
- Photocopy of visa stamped
- Cédula de Extranjería (Colombian ID)
- Copy of the plain ticket return
- Fill the FUT document via online
- \$ 105.000 COP



# Money

## Currency and Pocket Money



The currency of Colombia is **EL PESO COLOMBIANO (\$, COP)**. The bills are in denominations of 1,000, 2,000, 5,000, 10,000, 20,000, 50,000 and 100,000 pesos. The coins are in denominations of 50, 100, 200, 500 and 1,000 pesos.

Giving precise information on the rate of exchange is quite difficult, due the peso's fluctuation in relation to the U.S. dollar or euro. In November 2021:

**1 USD = 3.986 COP / 1 EUR = 4.461 COP / 1GBP = 5.313 COP**

It is advisable to bring a credit or debit card (Visa, Master Card, etc.). This is will be very useful as you can get cash withdrawals from most banks and bank machines around the country, avoiding expensive money transfers.

The Committee will give you COP \$210,000.00 at the beginning of each month. This discriminates as follows: Pocket Money COP \$100,000, and transportation to your voluntary work COP \$110,000.

# Money

## Rough Prices of Items in Colombia

**Meal, cheap Restaurant** - 14.000 COP

**Meal, expensive Restaurant** - 40.000 COP

**Meal for 2, Mid-range Restaurant, Three-course** - 55.000 COP

**Domestic Beer (0.7 liter draught)** – 3.000 COP

**Imported Beer (0.33 liter bottle)** - 7.000 COP

**Cappuccino (regular)** - 5.500 COP

**Coke / Pepsi** - 2.500 COP

**Bottle of Water** - 2.000 COP

**A bus to a Medellin/Cali** – 60.000-80.000 COP (depending if booking in advance)

**A bus to nearby town** – 10.000- 30.000 COP (depending if booking in advance)

**A one-way national flight** – 80,000 to 500.000 COP (depending if booking in advance)

**A movie at the cinema** – 9.000 COP – 25.000 COP

**Entry into a “fancy” nightclub in Bogota** – 20.000 COP up to 60.000 COP

**Transport in Bogota** – a ride on the TransMilenio costs 2.500 COP and you can go as far as you need.

**Taxi** – obviously depends on the distance, but usually about 10,000 COP for a 20 minute journey.

Prices are generally higher in the more touristic places – Candelaria in Bogotá, large cities like Medellin, Caribbean coast, Cartagena – and generally lower in rural towns.



¡Nos vemos en Colombia!



ICYE  
Colombia