

MIGRATION TRENDS IN SOUTH AMERICA

March 2020

Currently, South America is a region of origin, transit and destination of international migrants. There are changes in the direction, intensity and composition of population movements compared to previous years.

2019 MIGRATION OVERVIEW

10M

IMMIGRANTS IN SOUTH AMERICA

2.3%

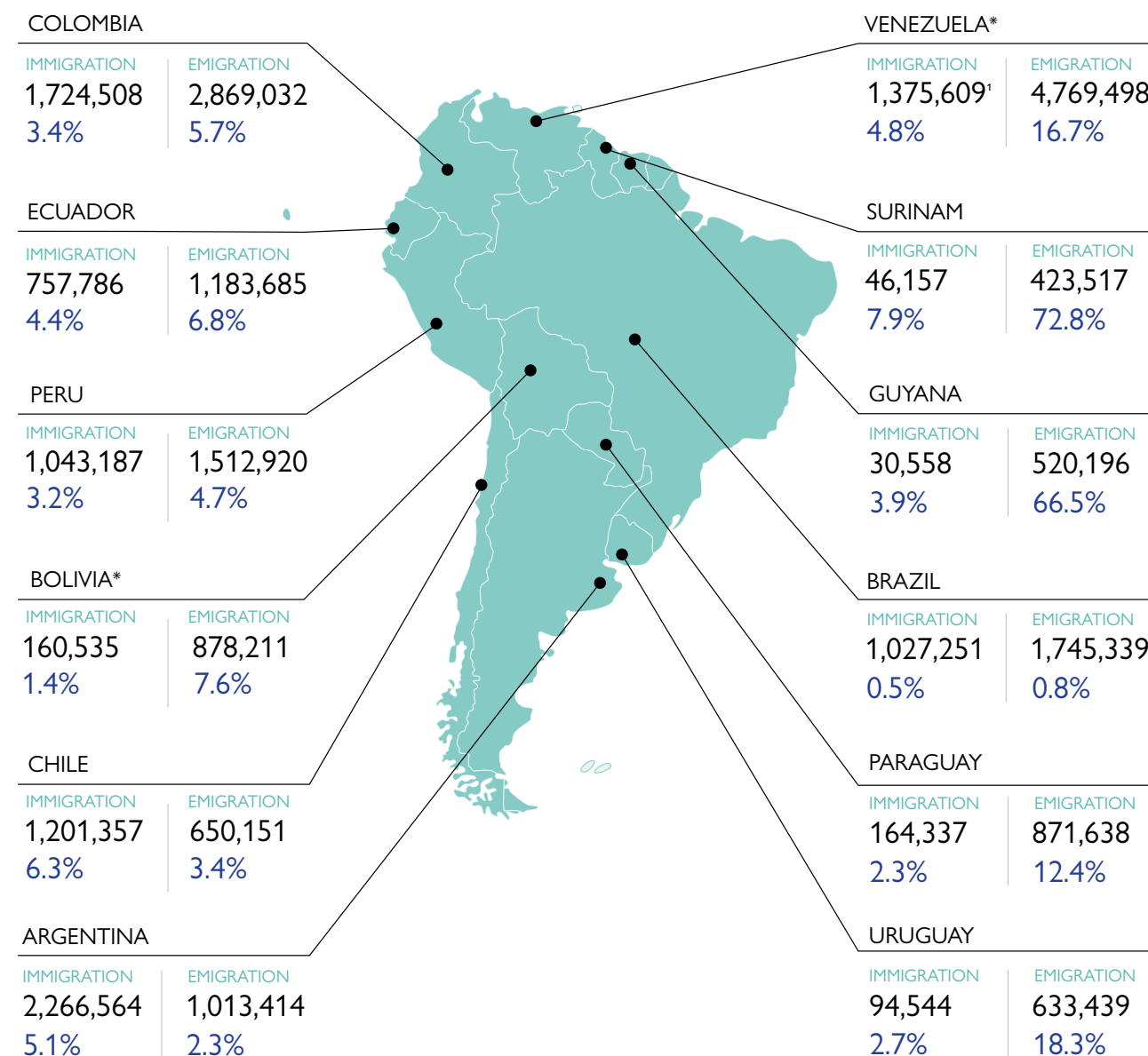
IMMIGRANTS OF THE TOTAL POPULATION

17M

SOUTH AMERICAN EMIGRANTS WORLDWIDE

4%

EMIGRANTS OF THE TOTAL POPULATION



Source: Developed by the authors based on data from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (20192) and data from Response for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (R4V3).

*Due to space limitations, we will refer to the Plurinational State of Bolivia as 'Bolivia' and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as 'Venezuela'.



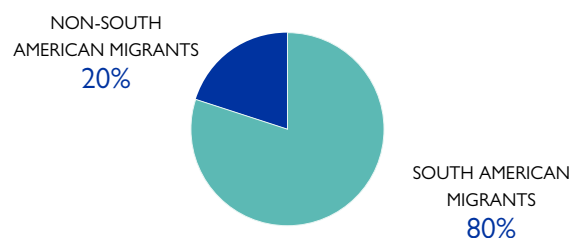
IMMIGRATION

In South America there are about 10 million immigrants from different countries of the region and the world.

RECENT DYNAMICS

Intra-regional migration has grown at a faster rate than migration to more developed countries. In comparison to 2010, the number of intra-regional migrants in South America has reached almost that of South Americans residing in other parts of the world. The relative size between these two migratory stocks was reduced from 2 (2010) to 1.1 (2019).

Currently, the intra-regional migrant population stands out above the extra-regional. This is partly explained by the lack of renewal of the massive European immigration of the twentieth century, and by the increasing regional flows of recent decades.

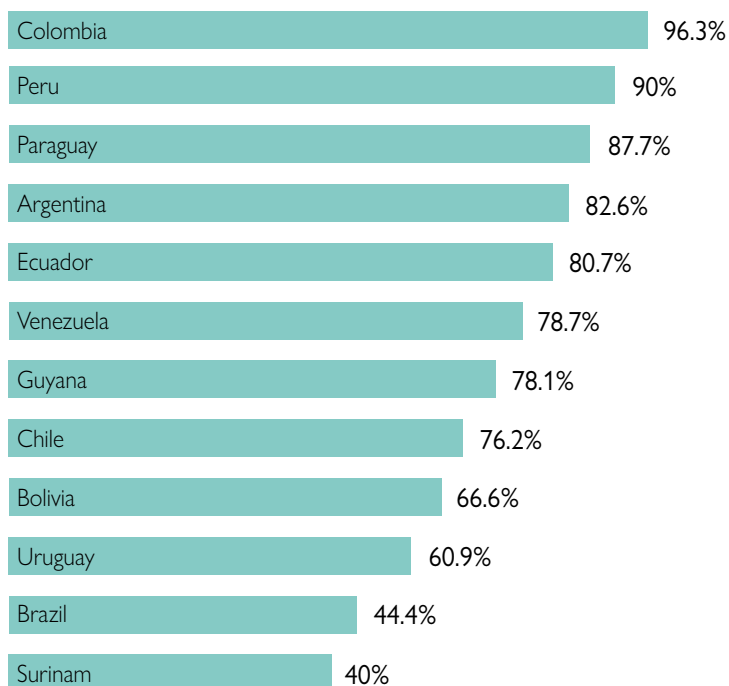


Additionally, there is a growing dynamism in the arrival of new extra-regional groups, both due to the increase in quantitative and relative terms and in the greater diversity of the countries of origin.

* This document reports the migratory situation of South American countries as of December 2019. The migratory dynamics of 2020 will be certainly affected due to COVID-19 pandemic (declared by the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020) Other measures taken by the countries include: the restriction on the entry of foreigners, extension of residence permits, new forms of immigration procedures (online), etc.

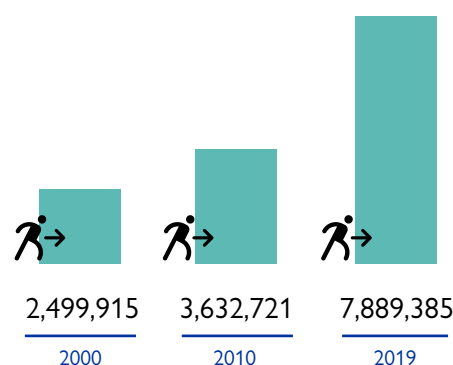
INTRA-REGIONAL IMMIGRATION

In comparison to 2015, the number and percentage of intra-regional immigration in South America increases, mainly due to Venezuelan migration.



**80% OF IMMIGRANTS IN
SOUTH AMERICA ARE
INTRA-REGIONAL**

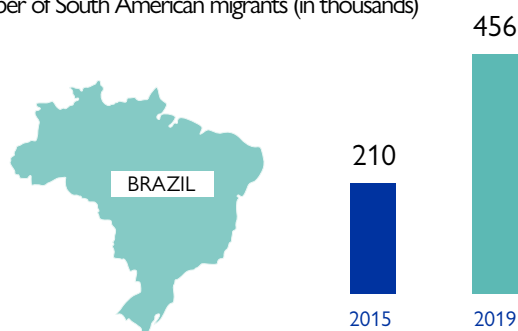
Evolution on the number of
South American migrants in the region:



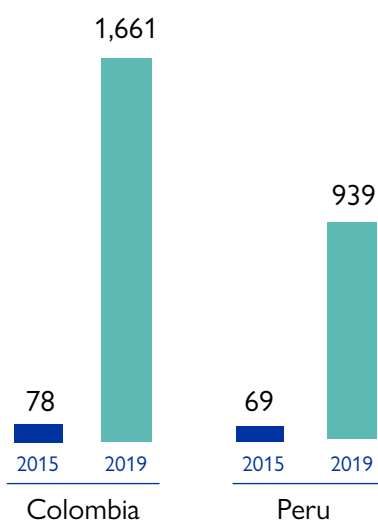
Colombia and Peru register the largest increase in absolute and relative terms of South American immigration, a situation related with Venezuelan migration in recent years⁴.

Although the number of South Americans has doubled, Brazil remains one of the countries with the lowest percentage of South American migrant population (29% in 2015 and 44.4% in 2019).

Number of South American migrants (in thousands)



Number of South American migrants
(in thousands)



MIGRATORY CORRIDORS - 2019

In South America the main migratory corridors are constituted both by bordering and non-bordering countries.

BORDERING COUNTRIES

1,630,903

Venezuelans in Colombia

690,948

Paraguayans in Argentina

205,609

Peruvians in Chile



NON-BORDERING COUNTRIES

863,613

Venezuelans in Peru

120,626

Colombians in Chile

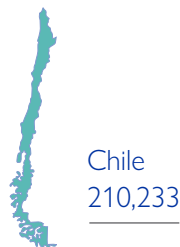
198,744

Peruvians in Argentina

REGIONAL MIGRATORY REGULATION

Intra-regional migration has been favored by the approval of new regulatory and institutional frameworks at the national level and integration agreements at the regional level facilitates residency and circulation. ⁵

RESIDENCE PERMITS GRANTED THROUGH THE MERCOSUR RESIDENCE AGREEMENT (2015-2018) ⁶



EXTRA-REGIONAL MIGRATION

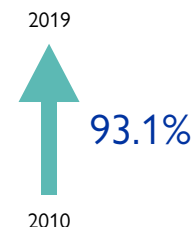
In recent years, the number of non-South American immigrants has increased as the result of growing migration from Caribbean, African and Asian countries.

SOUTH-SOUTH MIGRATION

Caribbean, African and Asian migration is highly visible and extremely vulnerable due to language barriers, cultural differences and difficult access to regularization and, consequently, to registered work.

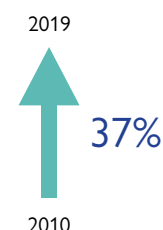
CARIBBEAN MIGRATION

In recent years, the presence of Caribbean nationals in the region has increased, mainly from Dominican Republic, Haiti and Cuba.



AFRICAN MIGRATION

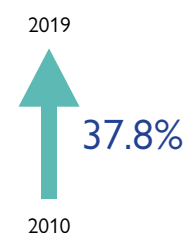
In recent years, the African population has increased and new nationalities of origin are registered (countries from Horn of Africa, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, among others).



THE MAIN AFRICAN NATIONALITIES IN SOUTH AMERICA ARE ANGOLAN, MOROCCAN AND SOUTH AFRICAN.

ASIAN MIGRATION

Asian immigration is long-standing, particularly from the People's Republic of China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea. Also, new nationalities of origin are observed: Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Arab Syrian Republic among others, although of low population impact in quantitative terms.

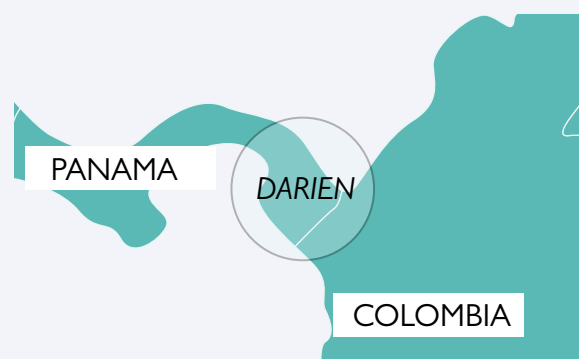


THE MAIN ASIAN NATIONALITIES IN SOUTH AMERICA ARE CHINESE, JAPANESE AND KOREAN.

TRANSIT REGION

South America is a final destination as well as a transit region for migrants. They pass through the Darien Gap (Colombia-Panama border) heading north toward USA and Canada.

DURING THE FIRST HALF OF 2019, AROUND 15,000 CASES OF SMUGGLED MIGRANTS WERE REGISTERED (MOSTLY OF NATIONALS FROM HAITI, CUBA, CAMEROON, INDIA AND ANGOLA)⁷.

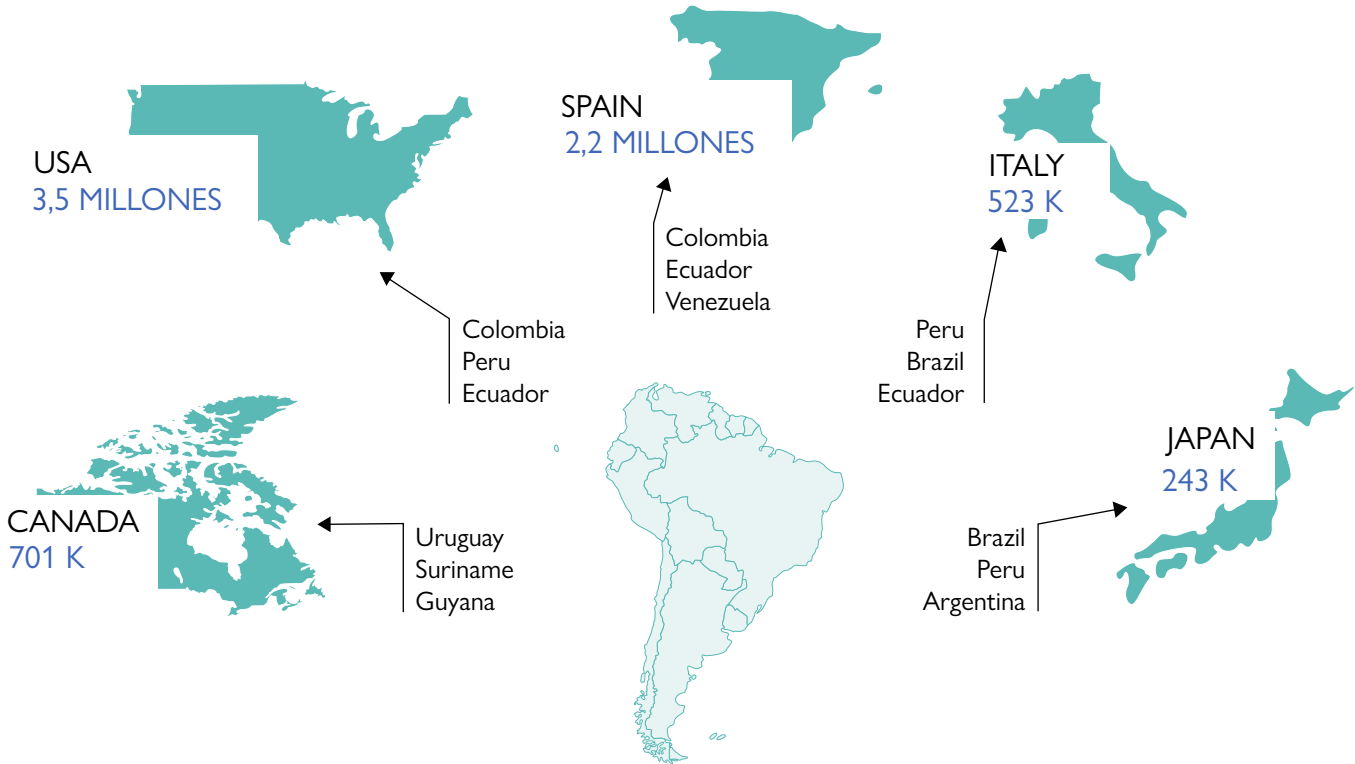




EMIGRATION

Globally, there are around 17 million South American emigrants, of which almost 8 million live in the region. Currently, three countries concentrate 55% of the emigrated population: Venezuela (4.7M*), followed by Colombia (2.8M) and thirdly Brazil (1.7M).

Destinations of extra-regional emigration and main South American countries of origin-2019



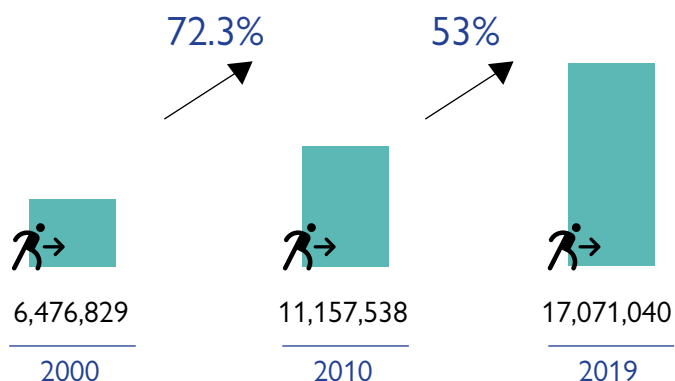
Source: Elaborated by the authors based on UNDESA, 2019 and National Institute for Statistics 2019 ⁸.

Extra-regional emigration is concentrated mainly towards already historical destinations such as the United States of America, Europe (mainly Spain and Italy), Canada and Japan.

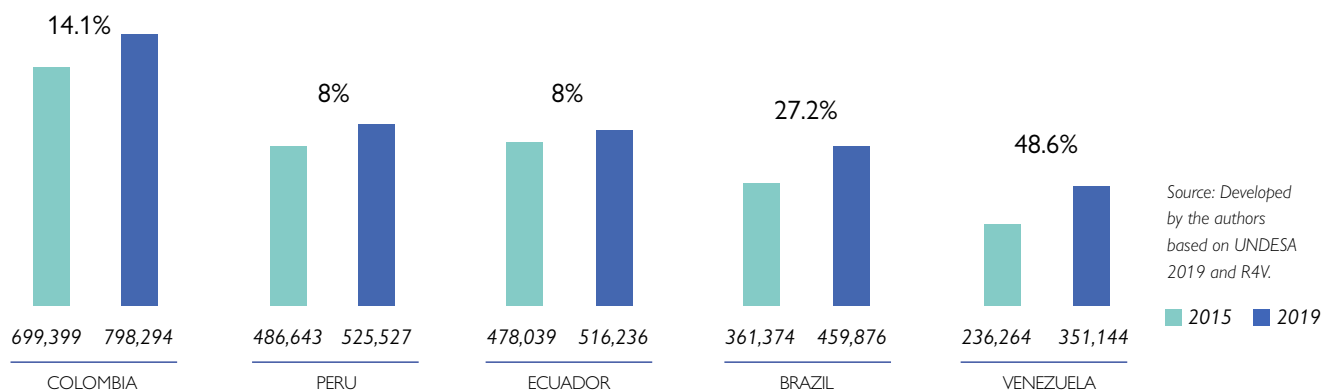
* According to R4V website, as of March 2020, the emigrated Venezuelan population amounts to 4,933,920.

RECENT DYNAMICS

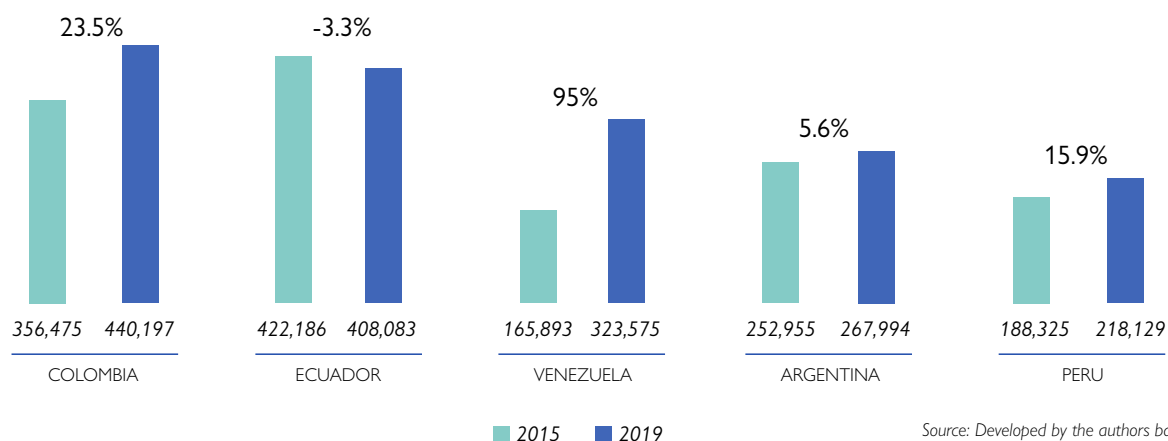
In recent years, the number of South Americans emigrating has increased. However, the growth rate slows down between 2010 and 2019.



The United States is the American country where the largest number of South American migrants reside. The growth of Venezuelan nationals stands out, which doubles in five years.



In Europe, Spain is the country with the highest number of South American migrants, with the Venezuelan population standing out, doubling between 2015 and 2019.



1- In the case of Venezuela, immigration figures remain high because the information from UNDESA (2019) would not include, for example, the half million nationals of Colombia returned from Venezuela, Information available on a Press Release: <https://www.cancilleria.gov.co/en/newsroom/news/haztevisible-llamado-cancilleria-visibilizar-colombianos-han-retornado-exterior>.

2- United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019) Available on <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates19.asp>

3- The figures of UNDESA are complemented by those of R4V to reflect the latest dynamics of the growing movements of the Venezuelan population. R4V (2019). Available on R4V web: <https://r4v.info/es/situations/platform>. Data as for December 2019.

4- IOM (2019) Migration Trends in the Americas: Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Available on: https://robuenosaires.iom.int/sites/default/files/Informes/Tendencias_Migratorias_Nacionales_en_Americas_Venezuela_EN_Diciembre_2019_WEB.pdf

5- IOM (2018) Cuadernos Migratorios N°9 Evaluación del Acuerdo de Residencia del MERCOSUR y su incidencia en el acceso a derechos de los migrantes. Available on: https://robuenosaires.iom.int/sites/default/files/publicaciones/Cuaderno_9-Evaluacion_del_Acuerdo_de_Residencia_del_MERCOSUR.pdf

6- Own elaboration based on information provided by the National Directorate of Migrations- Argentina, Foreigners and Migration Department- Chile and Ministry of Justice and Public Security-Brazil.

7- Colombia Migration (2019) Management Report. Available on: <https://www.migracioncolombia.gov.co/documentos/informes/gestion/Informe%20de%20Gesti%C3%B3n%20UAE%202019%201%20Semestre.pdf>

8- National Institute for Statistics/Spanish Continuous Register. Available on: https://www.ine.es/dyngs/INEbase/es/operacion.htm?c=Estadistica_C&cid=1254736177012&menu=resultados&secc=1254736195557&idp=1254734710990



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