

DDR AND CHILD SOLDIER ISSUES

This monthly review, produced by IOM, provides a summary of news related to the implementation of the Peace Accord in Colombia, including disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) processes. Presented on the first two pages are a summary of statistics on former child soldiers and adults in the process of reintegration, with information provided by the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF) and the Agency for Reincorporation and Normalization (ARN).



DISENGAGED CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Reported cases of forced recruitment since 1999:

• Total: **7,539**

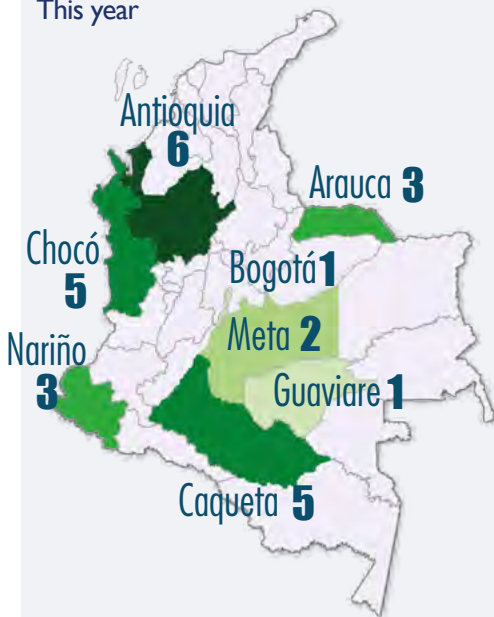
30 april

Total disengaged

- Since 1999: **6,682**
- This year: **75**
- This month: **21**
- Currently enrolled in program: **225**

Disengagement by department

This year



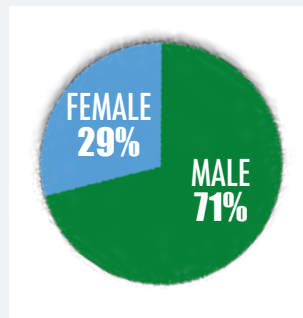
Unknown 49

Armed group



*Organized Armed Groups- splinter groups; includes FARC dissident groups

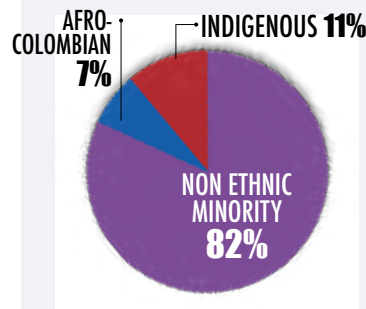
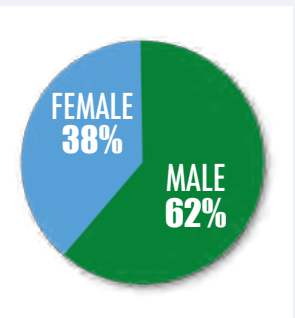
Since 1999



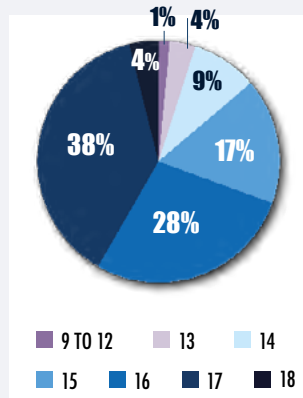
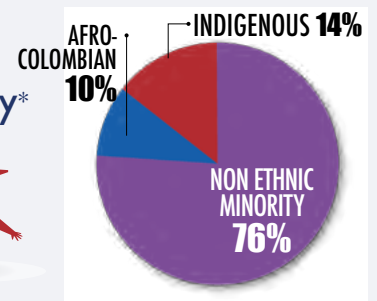
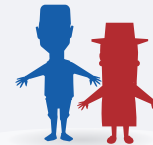
Sex



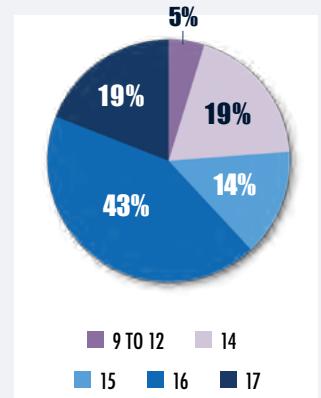
May 2019 (This month)



Ethnicity*



Age



*Note: The category of Afro-colombian has only been recorded since July 2008; thus, the proportion is expected to be higher than presented in the "Since 1999" graph.

ADULTS IN REINTEGRATION PROCESS

Note: FARC who demobilized as part of the Peace Accord are not included in this data.

Total currently active in reintegration process:

› **5,942**

Total entered into ARN reintegration route

› This month: **30**

› This year: **187**

› Since 1999: **61,032**

State of all participants

Since 1999

6,420 **11%** Not able to locate

24,415 **40%** Not yet part of program

5,942 **10%** In process

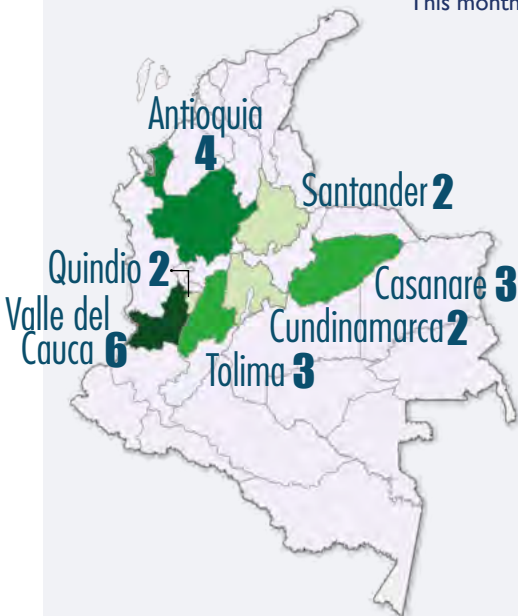
972 **2%** Formally removed

17,011 **28%** Successfully Completed

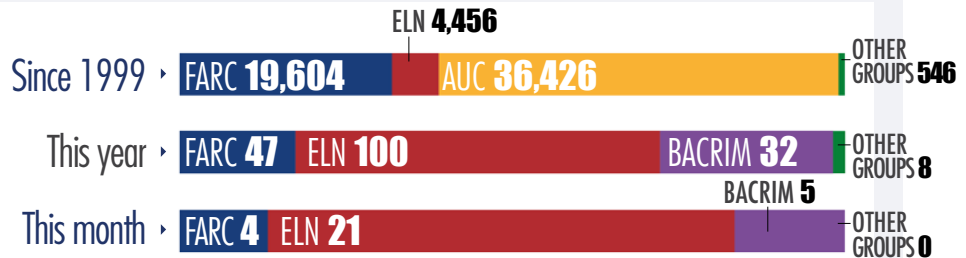
6,272 **10%** Deaths

Residence at time of registry (top 7)

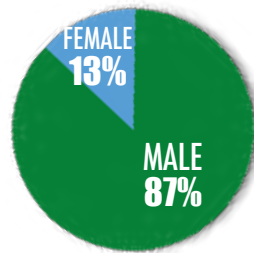
This month



Armed group



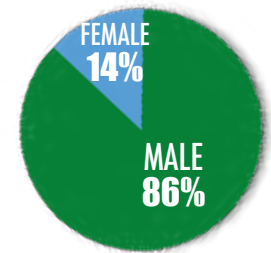
Since 1999



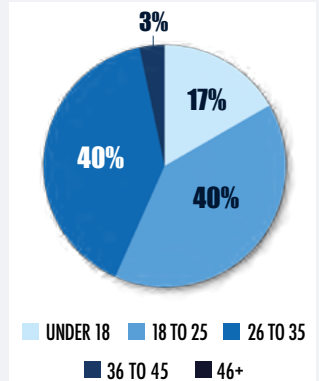
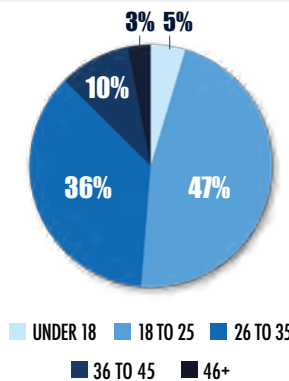
Sex



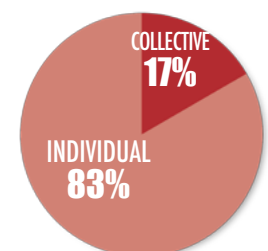
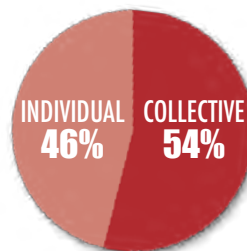
May 2019 (This month)



Age at recruitment



Type of demobilization



Current occupation*



*Note: Those who have died or who are without occupational registry are not included.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

President Duque's objections to the Statutory Law of the JEP failed

Fifty-one days after President Duque announced his objections to the Statutory Law of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), the much-anticipated Senate vote on 30 April erupted in a legal debate, in which both sides claimed victory. The Constitutional Court determined that the 47 "Pro-Peace" votes constituted an absolute majority at the end of the month,¹ leaving the President with no other option than to pass the law.²

Santrich is released with guarantee of no extradition

The JEP requested the release of Jesús Santrich on 15 May after more than a year in jail and hence granted him guarantee of no extradition. In response, Attorney General Néstor Humberto Martínez presented his resignation letter, while the GOC decided to launch a new prosecution process through the ordinary justice system.³ On 17 May, as Santrich exited the jail, the Technical Investigation Corps of the Attorney General's Office (AGO) announced a new arrest warrant and he was subsequently relocated to the AGO's jail.⁴ The court ruled on 20 May that the case would be sent to the Supreme Court of Justice (SCJ) to determine whether his trial will continue with the AGO and ordinary judges, or whether the SCJ should continue with the proceedings.⁵ The Criminal Court of the SCJ then ordered his release on 29 May, indicating that his case will be processed at the Trial Chamber since Santrich is an elected congressman of the FARC political party (FARC). The SCJ also stated that deprivation of liberty is contrary to his fundamental rights and his investiture as a congressman will be recognized.⁶

Armed Forces instructed to double the number of criminals and guerrillas killed or captured

In an article published on 18 May by the New York Times, it was reported that the head of the Colombian Armed Forces, General Nicacio Martínez, had ordered his troops to double the number of criminals and guerrillas killed or captured, even if an increase civilian deaths would result.⁷ The news has raised alarms as it resembles the tactic of increasing "body counts" used by the Armed Forces between 2002 and 2008, known as "false positives".⁸ As a consequence, the Armed Forces have withdrawn the controversial reporting mechanism in which officers had to detail the number of disruptions caused by their units in 2018 and a special commission has also been established to investigate the alleged facts. While human rights organizations requested the Senate to not approve the rise in rank of Martínez due to his alleged responsibility in extrajudicial executions committed under his jurisdiction,⁹ the decision was supported by the Minister of Defense who confirmed that the Army is fully committed to respect International Humanitarian Law.¹⁰

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PEACE ACCORDS

FARC-EP

Increase in assassinations of former FARC –EP members

Lieutenant Colonel Jorge Pérez Amézquita will be investigated for the crime of enhancing the cover-up of the assassination, torture, and attempted forced disappearance of the former FARC-EP combatant Dimar Torres, who was killed by the Armed Forces end of April. Communities in the region have called for investigations into other cases of civilian deaths, including what they believe to be extrajudicial executions.¹¹ According to the annual report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Secretary General of the United Nations (UN), 85 former FARC-EP combatants have been assassinated since 26 November 2017. The FARC called on the international community and Colombians to demand that the GOC comply with the Peace Accord and protect former combatants.¹²

FARC convenes first ever political debate

The debate took place in the Senate's First Commission on 27 May to examine the delays, progress, and difficulties of the Peace Accord, with special emphasis on the stigmatization and assassination of social leaders and former FARC-EP combatants. While the Minister of Interior, Nancy Patricia Gutiérrez, listed the results and processes the GOC has been working on to protect social leaders, all other parties attacked the inefficiency of the GOC in implementing the Accord. Special mentions were related to the failure to dismantle illegal armed organizations, the lack of implementation of community protection measures, and the lack of assignation of personal and financial resources meant to provide security.¹³

JEP issues arrest warrant against 'El Paisa' and case against Iván Márquez

The JEP confirmed the arrest warrant against former FARC-EP chief Hernán Darío Velásquez Saldarriaga, "El Paisa", on 15 May, issued two weeks earlier, as he failed to fulfill his commitments to the peace process.¹⁴ The JEP also opened a case of verification of non-compliance on 30 May against Iván Márquez, the former head of the negotiating team of the FARC-EP, as he repeatedly failed to appear at the JEP and comply with his obligations. The Jurisdiction will evaluate the benefits to be taken away from the former leader, including withdrawing his position as a congressman. Márquez, whose whereabouts have been unknown for almost a year, defended his absence claiming "lack of guarantees in terms of security".¹⁵

ARN launches projects with former combatants of FARC-EP

The Agency for Reincorporation and Normalization (ARN) in conjunction with the Alliance for Peace announced the launch of a project on “Resilience and prevention of victimization and stigmatization of communities and populations in the process of reincorporation (PREVER)”, in La Guajira, Tolima and Caquetá, benefitting 416 people participants of Territorial Spaces for Training and Reincorporation (ETCR).¹⁶ In the ETCR of La Variante, in Tumaco, 73 former FARC-EP combatants organized the ‘First Festival for Memory, Life and Hope’, with the support of the nearby communities. The cultural, artistic and sport events promoting coexistence and reconciliation were also supported by the ARN, the National Learning Service, FAO and the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia.¹⁷

PEACE PROCESS-ELN

ELN denies presence in Venezuela

ELN has denied that it has troops in Venezuela or that it maintained alliances with the government of Nicolás Maduro. This statement comes as a contradiction to the Armed Forces claim that at least 1,100 of ELN’s troops are in the neighboring country.¹⁸

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

EU Trust Fund project presented in European fair

Two women from Valle del Cauca, members of the Association of Agricultural Producers of Algeria project, made up mainly of victims and funded by the EU Trust Fund for Colombia (EUTF) in Colombia, presented their product, the plantain, in the Macfrut Fair in Italy, one of the most important agricultural fairs in Europe. This project is part of the 125 million euros allocated for 24 projects in 73 municipalities of Colombia by the EUTF.¹⁹

SECURITY

Increase in violent attacks against social leaders

The attempted assassination of four social leaders, including Francia Marquez- winner of 2018 Goldman Prize for her environmental activism- on 4 May once again raised flags on the continued insecurity that social leaders face. According to Center for Popular Education and Research (CINEP), of the 1418 social leaders who were victims of acts of aggressions in 2018, 800 cases remain in impunity. The aggressions included 648 murders, 48 attacks, 1,151 threatened, 304 wounded, 66 tortured, 3 victims of sexual violence and 22 disappeared.²⁰ Afro-Colombian communities, as well as leaders of the local Community Action Committees, who are often at the forefront of substitution of illicit crops, land restitution and environmental protection, top the list of victims. The alarming rate of one assassination every three days is predicted to worsen with the upcoming local elections. While communities have requested the GOC to provide integrated protection measures, those launched by the GOC, such as the Timely Action Plan, have received strong criticism for duplicating previous dysfunctional structures.²¹

Increase in the ranks of illegal armed groups

All of the illegal armed groups in Colombia have increased their ranks since the Peace Accord was signed, taking advantage of the lack of presence of State institutions and the power vacuums created following disarmament of the guerilla. However, the figures differ: according to the National Security and Defense Plan of the GOC, FARC-EP dissidents number 3,000 members including their militias; the ELN has increased to 4,000, a figure similar to that reported by Insight Crime; the Clan de Golfo to 1,600; among other groups, such as the Caparrapos and the Pelusos. According to the International Crisis Group, the GOC exaggerates the numbers as a strategy to endorse its defense policy and ensuring future support for the Armed Forces. With the possible exit of Iván Marquez and “El Paisa” from the Peace Accord, some question whether thousands of former guerillas might follow suit.²²

DIVERSITY ISSUES

Siona communities threatened by drug trafficking

Siona Indigenous communities of southern Putumayo near the Ecuadorian border have warned that their territories are being threatened by the emergence of drug trafficking routes and cocaine processing facilities in the vicinity, as well as the presence of anti-personnel mines. They report that 1,000 people from three of their six resguardos are confined due to threats and confrontations between the armed groups operating in the area.²³

FURTHER READING

CINEP Annual Report on human rights violations

The Human Rights and Political Violence Database of the Center for Popular Education and Research (Cinep/ Peace Program) presented the annual report on human rights violations in the country in May. The main goal of this report is to warn about the complex dynamics of socio-political violence, with special emphasis on cases associated with the assassinations of social leaders and members of the Community Action Committees. Of the 1418 cases registered in 2018, 334 are in impunity. The AGO had issued 34 judgments against perpetrators who have murdered community leaders, but none were against those behind the crimes. The most affected department was Valle del Cauca with 224 victims, followed by Cauca with 182 and Santander with 182. The report states that between October 2016 and 2018 there was a significant increase in the murders of community leaders who are committed to the substitution of illicit crops.²⁴