

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: **7,744**

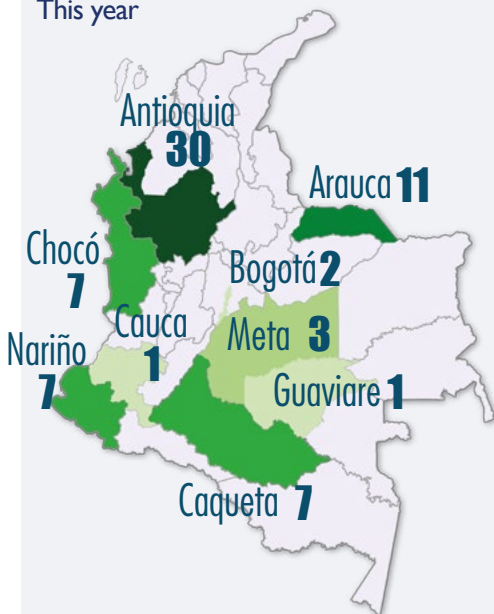
30 september

Total disengaged

- Since 1999: **6,748**
- This year: **141**
- This month: **16**
- Currently enrolled in program: **242**

Disengagement by department

This year



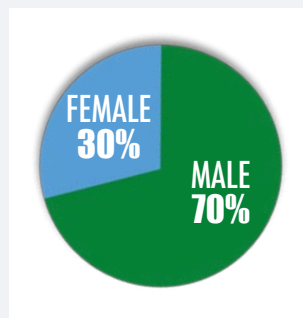
Unknown 72

Armed group



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

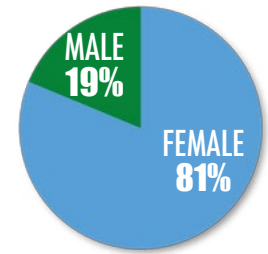
Since 1999



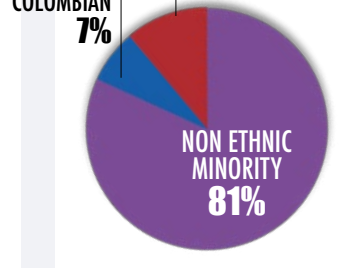
Sex



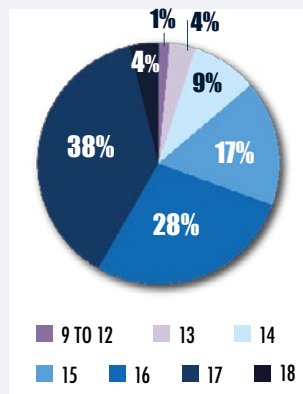
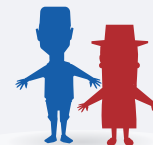
September 2019 (This month)



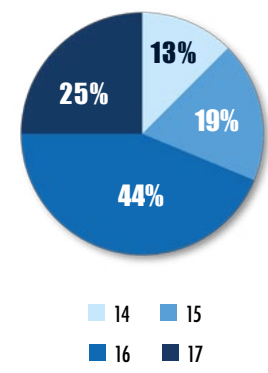
Ethnicity*



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:

▸ **6,170**

Total entered into ARN reintegration route

▸ This month: **21**

▸ This year: **309**

▸ Since 1999: **61,657**

State of all participants

Since 1999

761 **1%** Not able to locate

6,400 **10%** Not yet part of program

6,170 **10%** In process

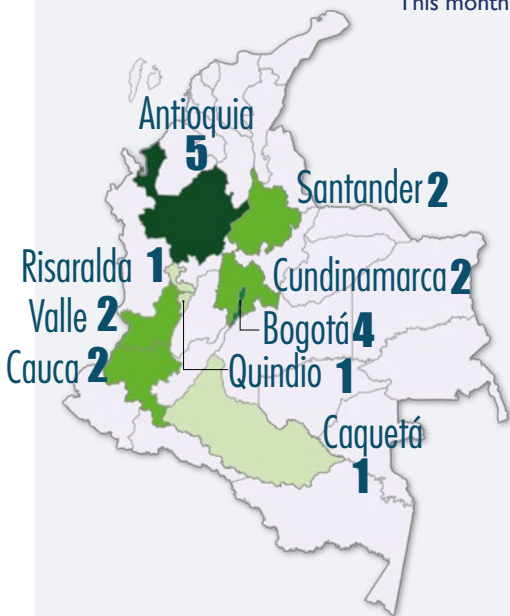
16,959 **28%** Formally removed

24,880 **40%** Successfully Completed

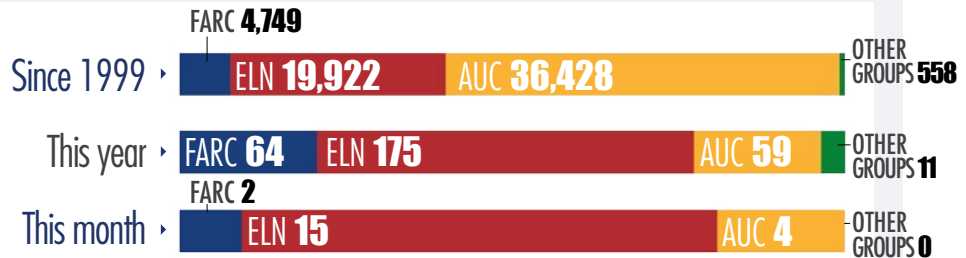
6,487 **11%** Deaths

Residence at time of registry (top 10)

This month

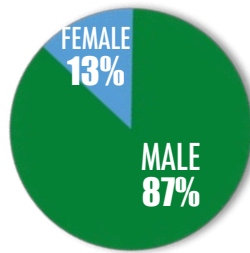


Armed group

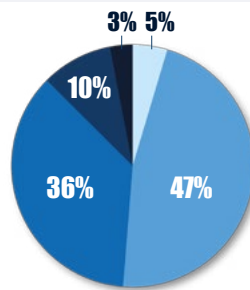
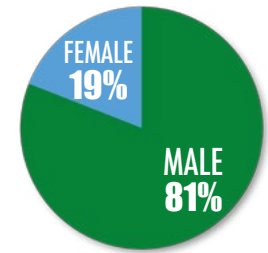


Since 1999

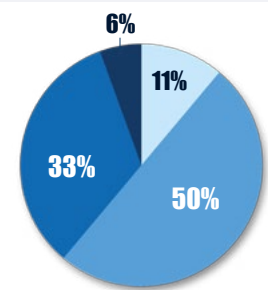
September 2019 (This month)



Sex

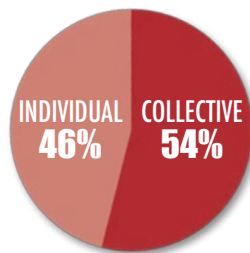


Age at recruitment

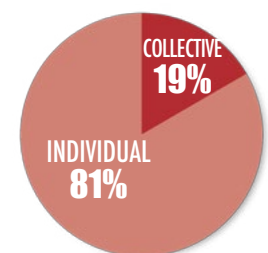


UNDER 18 18 TO 25 26 TO 35 36 TO 45 46+

UNDER 18 18 TO 25 26 TO 35 36 TO 45 46+



Type of demobilization



Current occupation*



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

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

FARC Ex-Combatants Remain Committed to Peace

Although some former commanders urged them to rearm, at Icononzo, the decision to reintegrate remains intact. Gonzalo Beltrán, a former FARC combatant in process of reincorporation, wishes the government had responded by supporting the reintegration process: “the government has not fulfilled its obligations under the agreement, it does not have the political will to implement it. I find it amazing that President Duque’s government offers a million dollars for information on dissidents, when it could use that money for our reintegration, [...] but despite all the difficulties, we remain committed and side with peace, we want to show Colombia and the world that we are keeping our word”.¹

FARC dissidents are formally left out of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP)

The Appeals Chamber of the JEP decided to expel “Jesús Santrich”, “Iván Márquez”, “el Paisa” and all former FARC members who published the video announcing their rearmament. The court room considered that by returning to arms, they had committed the most serious offense stipulated by the jurisdiction. The proceedings against them will now be within the jurisdiction of ordinary courts. As part of this decision, the various courts and the Attorney General’s Office were ordered to reverse the cancellations of the arrest warrants that had been scrapped as part of the benefits granted to them during the peace process.²

At the UN, Iván Duque vowed to stand behind the peace process and to stamp out narco-terrorists

As President of a country with over 40% of tropical rainforests, Mr. Duque said Colombia was one of the nations the most exposed to the effects of climate change. It is clear, he said, that deforestation in the Amazon is a result of illegal armed groups’ search for territories to engage in illicit activities, which in turn are financed by drug trafficking. As regards peacebuilding in Colombia, Mr. Duque highlighted the efforts to establish a “culture of legality”. However, Mr. Duque warned against those who “remain on the path of criminality.” He told the Assembly that a few weeks ago, a “group of narco-terrorists” had tried to intimidate Colombia “under false ideological prettexts.” The Colombian Government had not and would not yield to the threats of this “group.”³

The Presidential High Counsellor for Stabilization and Consolidation evokes breakthroughs and difficulties of reincorporation process

Archila, in a public hearing of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, (IACHR) explained how the public policy of Peace with Legality outlines long-term planning, is articulated with the National Development Plan and paves the way for the implementation of the Peace Accord. He also explained how the planning process was elaborated to fulfill the president’s mandate to support ex-combatants who remain under the rule of law: “We made a robust planning, we have an absolutely detailed census of ex-combatants, we know what their needs are and how to support them until they achieve their effective reincorporation into society”.⁴

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PEACE ACCORDS

FARC-EP

Workshops to prevent stigmatization of former FARC-EP members prepared

Aware of the challenges to overcome stigmatization and strengthen coexistence as part of the reintegration process, the Colombian Government is making progress in the design and implementation of early prevention actions to ensure the comprehensive and sustainable reintegration of former FARC-EP members. To address phenomena such as stigmatization, the ‘Building Peace, Territory and Life’ workshops will be held in September in different departments of the country. These workshops will be led by the Agency for Reincorporation and Normalization (ARN), the UN Verification Mission in Colombia, the FARC component of the National Reincorporation Council (CNR), among others.⁵

The dreams of 28 ex-combatants are tied to the productive Aloe Vera projects.

This week, about 15 businessmen attended a fair in Toro, where training is carried out under the Productive Environments Model (MEP) led by the Agency for Reincorporation and Normalization (ARN), with the support of USAID and IOM. A trade fair was organized, in which ex-combatants exhibited their products and demonstrated their capabilities in the cultivation of Aloe, which is characterized by its nutritional and healing powers. Ex-combatants talked about the benefits of Aloe Vera and explained how innovative products such as grape jams, milk caramel, yogurt and even cleaning products such as shampoo, gel and soap were made.⁶

PEACE PROCESS-ELN

Authorities reveal new evidence of ELN presence in Venezuela

At a press conference on Monday morning, Attorney General Fabio Espitia said the agency had several lines of investigation into ELN presence in Venezuela, all based on information extracted from devices seized and interviews with ex-combatants. According to Espitia, there is evidence that Venezuela has been “strengthening the ELN militarily, logistically and financially”, “strengthening from drug trafficking networks to illegal mining and smuggling”. In addition, the prosecutor assured that there was evidence about the exact locations of guerrillas’ camps.⁷

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

EU reminds Duque his responsibility to implement peace in Colombia

In September, the European Union's foreign minister told Colombia's President Ivan Duque he could forget about support for military intervention in Venezuela and ought to proceed with his country's peace process. EU Foreign Minister Federica Mogherini's visit couldn't have come at a more delicate moment; Duque has been under immense pressure over his government's failures to implement a peace deal with the demobilized FARC guerrillas while stirring up military tensions with Venezuela. Both the UN and the EU have made it clear they expect Duque to implement peace policies rather than turn the peace process into an international armed conflict.⁸

SECURITY

Political violence worsens in the final stretch of local elections

Bernardo Betancourt, conservative candidate for Mayor of Tibú, Norte de Santander, was assassinated.⁹ According to the Electoral Observation Mission (MOE), seven candidates have already been killed since 27 July. A month and a half from election day, there are already more candidates killed than in 2015. Violence is very localized, says the MOE. Of the 40 candidates who have been victims of some kind of attack in these elections, 38 are candidates for mayors and councils and only one for governorship and another one for assembly.¹⁰ September has had a critical start with a growing number of victims. In the first 9 days of the month, thirteen victims, including two attacks and three targeted killings, have been registered.¹¹

In Turbo, an unusual number of young people under 20 are being buried

According to residents of the municipality, month after month, boys are losing their lives in a confrontation between gangs that has been claiming victims in the periphery of the city. The control of drug trafficking by the AGCs has resulted in increased gang violence which has been affecting the youngest. In all of Antioquia's Urabá, there is no municipality with higher rates of violence than Turbo, which in 2018 outranked its neighbors Apartadó, Carepa or Chigorodó in the number homicides, with 104 cases. Never had so many minors been murdered; last year, only 13 had been killed.¹²

The top leader and founder of Colombia's Los Pelusos crime gang was killed

In an operation led by the national police, President Ivan Duque announced during statements to journalists in Washington. The gang is one of the most well-known criminal organizations in the Andean country and has been involved in fighting that endangered hundreds of thousands of people in areas along the eastern border with Venezuela. Luis Antonio Quintero, known by his alias Pacora, was a former leftist rebel who commanded some 440 gang members.¹³

DIVERSITY ISSUES

Victims of sexual violence are increasingly vocal and empowered

As in many countries, sexual violence in Colombia has been one of the most invisible atrocity: of the 8.8 million people who have been officially recognized as victims of the conflict, only 28,641 have reported sexual violence, according to the Victims Unit. However, the issue is growing, as five years ago there were only 5,997 registered victims. Victims of sexual violence are increasingly vocal and empowered. At least 10 of the 124 reports that organizations and individuals have submitted to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) focus on these types of crimes and only one lists 2,000 episodes. "We have been rising from the ashes. The victims are raising their voices and we are coming together to have gain recognition", says Yolanda Perea, a 35-year-old Afro-Colombian who was raped by a FARC guerrilla.¹⁴

Elaboration of a National Plan to search Missing Persons in Colombia has begun

For the first time, social organizations and families of victims of forced disappearance from all over the country will build with the Missing Persons Search Unit (UBPD), a National Plan to search for the nearly 120,000 disappeared as a result of the armed conflict. One of the objectives of the plan is to collect information from different territories, to establish a more precise number of cases of forced disappearance and, while, defining strategies to search for these persons. In October, eight meetings will be held with indigenous and Afro-descendant organizations, LGBTI populations and women, associations of relatives of forcibly disappeared persons, victims of kidnapping and members of the Public Force who have disappeared, as well as Colombians in exile and NGOs.¹⁵

FURTHER READING

Fundación Ideas para la Paz (FIP) designs a toolbox for citizen safety and coexistence

With the support of USAID's Regional Governance Program, the FIP designed a set of tools that will allow small municipalities to formulate and implement strategies and actions focused on coexistence and citizen safety.¹⁶