

# SPAIN AND THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES

## A CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIRST GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM



**SPAIN AND THE GLOBAL  
COMPACT ON REFUGEES:  
A CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIRST  
GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM**

(GENEVA, 17 AND 18 DECEMBER 2019)

# INTRODUCTION

The humanitarian tragedy of the forced displacement of persons due to persecution, conflict, violence, and human rights violations is getting worse. According to the latest report from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), published in June 2019, the world population of forcibly displaced persons rose by 2.3 million in 2018, to a total of 70.8 million people. Of these, 25.9 million are refugees—20.4 million of whom fall under the mandate of UNHCR, and 5.5 million under the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)—and 41.3 million are internally displaced persons, with another 3.5 million being asylum seekers.

To address this dramatic situation, on 17 December 2018, after two years of intense UNHCR-led consultations in an intergovernmental process also involving international organizations, civil society, refugees, and other relevant actors, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR).

The GCR is based on the current legal system regarding refugees, especially the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, and on humanitarian and human rights law. This is a non-legally binding tool to strengthen cooperation.

The GCR aspires to mobilize the international community to seek solutions to the dramatic situation of these refugees, laying the groundwork for predictable and equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing among all UN Member States, together with other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate, which may include:

- international organizations
- humanitarian actors and development cooperation entities
- international and regional financial Institutions
- local authorities
- civil society, including faith-based organizations
- academia
- the private sector
- the media
- members of the host communities
- the refugees themselves.

More specifically, the GCR seeks four objectives: 1) ease pressures on host countries; 2) enhance refugees' self-reliance; 3) expand access to third-country solutions; and 4) support conditions in the countries of origin for return in safety and dignity. Essentially, the GCR seeks to achieve these four interlinked and interdependent objectives through the mobilization of political will, a broadened base of support, and arrangements that facilitate more equitable, sustained and predictable contributions.

The GCR establishes a mechanism for monitoring compliance on the part of States, with the creation of the Global Refugee Forum. The Forum will be convened periodically at the ministerial level, and will bring together representatives from UN Member States, together with relevant stakeholders, to announce concrete pledges and contributions to achieve the GRC objectives, and study the opportunities, challenges, and ways to improve burden- and responsibility-sharing. The first Forum will be held in 2019 (in Geneva, on 17 and 18 December), and subsequent Forums will be organized every four years.

This document details the contribution of Spain to the First Global Forum; specifically, that of the ministries that are most deeply involved in the GCR's application: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Union and Cooperation and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID); the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security; the Ministry of the Interior; and the Ministry of Justice.

This document has two sections. The first explains the Spanish system for refugees, showing how Spain's legislation and policies in this area are already applying the GCR.

The second lays out Spain's commitments to the First Global Forum on Refugees, in five different areas:

- Strengthening and promoting the international protection system. This includes measures to strengthen the asylum and reception system in order to position Spain as a strategic partner for international protection in Europe.
- Complementary pathways for resettlement. This includes measures on community sponsorship, scholarships for students, family reunification, professional integration, civil society—through España con ACNUR (Spain with UNHCR, or EcA)—and the private sector.
- Spain's external humanitarian action. This includes commitments regarding assistance, gender, vulnerable groups, the environment and associations. Moreover, it includes Latin America and the Caribbean and the Middle East as priority geographic areas, with particular emphasis on the situations in Venezuela and Syria.
- Favours conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity.
- Promoting an Action Plan for applying the GCR in Spain.

In sum, Spain—which participated actively in negotiating the GCR—aims to contribute significantly to the success of the first Forum, and improve the situation of refugees and their host communities, all in consonance with our policy of responsibility and solidarity in this area.

# I. SPAIN AND REFUGEES

An analysis of the Spanish asylum system shows that our legislation and established policies on this issue have already been applying the GCR, giving priority to achieving its four key objectives.

Spain's work to support refugees has been channelled in two directions. As a domestic matter, the emphasis is on processing and deciding on applications for international protection, and providing assistance to those granted refugee status. At the international level, Spain's assistance focuses on refugees in third countries, channelled mainly through Spanish contributions to international bodies that work on refugee issues—such as UNHCR and the International Committee of the Red Cross—and Spanish Cooperation. At the regional level, Spain is a leader in forging the refugee policies, strategies and mechanisms of the European Union.

The right to apply for international protection in Spain is consecrated in Article 13.4 of the Spanish Constitution: "The law shall establish the terms under which citizens from other countries and stateless persons may enjoy the right to asylum in Spain." The exercise of this right is developed in Act 12/2009 of 30 October, known as the Asylum Act, which regulates the right to asylum and subsidiary protection, and entered into force on 20 November 2009.

Based on these laws, there are two ministries having authority with regard to these matters: the Ministry of the Interior, which processes international protection applications; and the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security, which manages the reception system for asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection (known by its Spanish acronym, SAISAR), which covers the basic needs of asylum-seekers and those with official refugee status.

## Requesting international protection in Spain

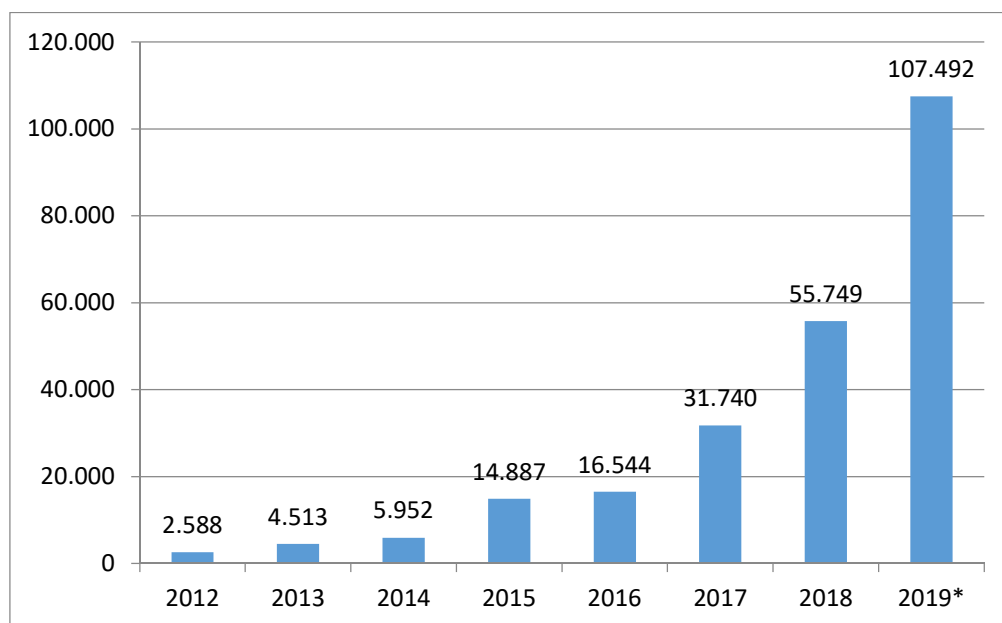
In accordance with Royal Decree 952/2018 of 27 July, regulating the basic structure of the Ministry of the Interior, the Directorate-General for Home Affairs Policy has "the powers assigned to the Ministry of the Interior with regard to (...) procedures involving the international protection of refugees, and statelessness status". The Directorate-General for Home Affairs Policy exercises this authority through the Deputy Directorate-General for International Protection, which is considered Spain's Office of Asylum and Refuge (OAR) under Article 23.1 of the Asylum Act.

Since its creation in 1992, the OAR has undergone many changes as Spain's international protection system has developed: the approval of the Asylum Act; the establishment of National Resettlement Programmes; and the construction and development of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and implementation of the Dublin system.

Over these decades, the OAR has processed many international protection applications. However, starting four years ago, the number of applications in Spain has risen sharply. This surge first became noticeable in 2013, skyrocketing after 2015, with the refugee crisis in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The number of applications for international protection in Spain increased more than twenty-fold during the 2012-2018 period. Especially noteworthy is the exponential jump in applications in 2015 (150% compared with the previous year), and the continuing rise in subsequent years. At 30 November 2019, the number of applications in Spain had risen by 92.8% compared with the previous year.

[Applications for international protection in Spain, 2012-2019](#)



*\*Provisional figures at 30 November 2019*

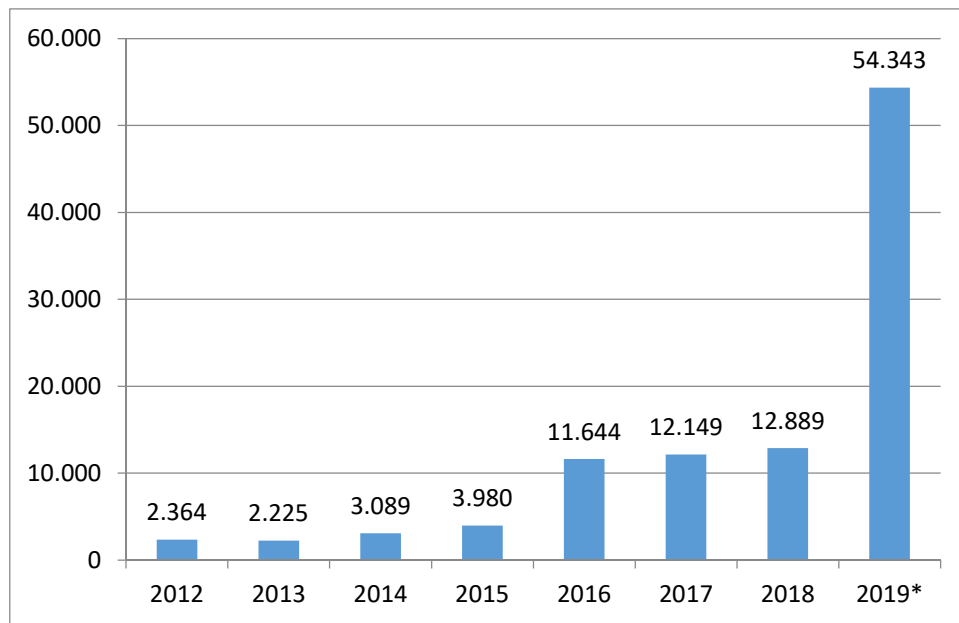
In June of 2018, after analysing the state of play of the OAR, measures to strengthen and revamp the office were launched, to provide it with the human and material resources necessary to manage the situation responsibly, efficiently, and with a high level of quality. A striking example of this effort is Royal Decree-Law 6/2018 of 27 July, which approved an extraordinary public employment plan to hire additional staff for asylum and refugee matters, multiplying five-fold the number of OAR employees.

Increasing staff strength at the OAR—especially in relation to processing files—and implementing other management measures to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the asylum, enabled the rate of protection to rise by 45 points over the course of 2019, from 25.04% to 70.82%<sup>1,2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This figure includes the status being granted to Venezuelan asylum seekers on the humanitarian grounds set forth in Article 125 of Royal Decree 557/2011 of 20 April (known by its Spanish acronym, RELOEX).

<sup>2</sup>Provisional figure at 30 November 2019.

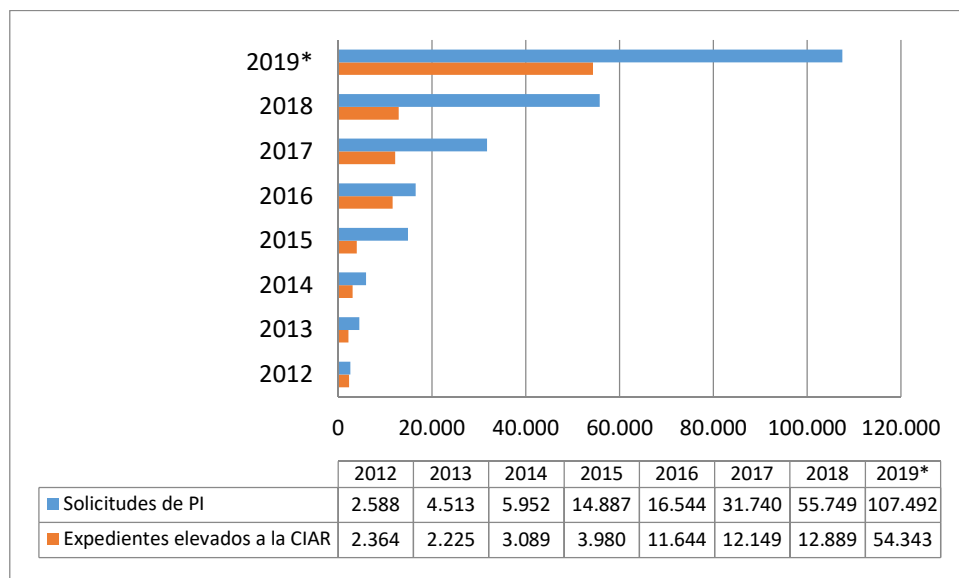
Figure 2. Proposed decisions on international protection in Spain, 2012-2019



\*Provisional figures at 30 November 2019

This increase in decisions (files receiving a ruling from the Inter-Ministerial Commission on Asylum and Refuge, or CIAR, its Spanish acronym) enables us to compare the decisions regarding international protection over the past five years, as shown in figure 3:

Figure 3. Comparison: Applications for international protection accepted for processing and sent to CIAR, 2012-2019



\*Provisional figures at 30 November 2019

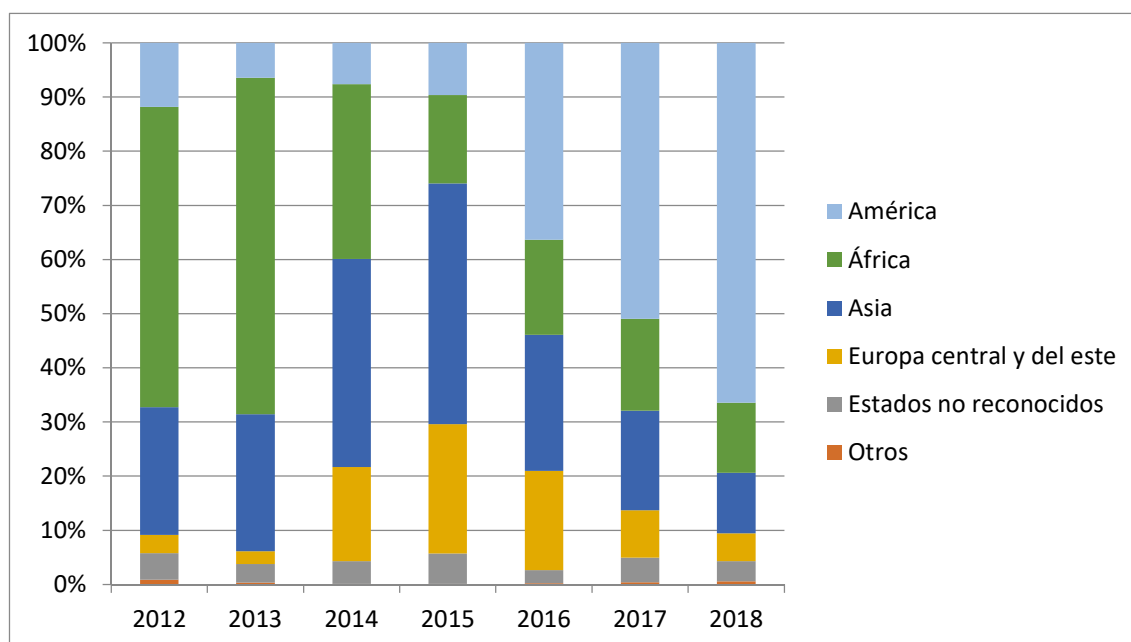
Figure 3 shows how the staff strengthening measures at the OAR focused on file processing, in particular, and on the management of international protection procedures, in general, has made it possible to exponentially increase the speed at which decisions on files are made. At 30 November 2019, 54,343 files have

been referred to CIAR (of which, more than 35,500 involved Venezuelan citizens) thus enabling the OAR to reach a decisions figure that is clearly higher than that of 2018 (fewer than 13,000) and four times higher than that of other EU countries this year.

In parallel to the increase in applications submitted in Spain, there has also been a change in the profile of asylum seekers. Whereas in 2012 asylum seekers were predominantly Africans, in 2015 and 2016, with the crisis in the Eastern Mediterranean, most asylum seekers came from the Syrian conflict zones or from Central Asia (Afghanistan and Iraq).

Since late 2016, due to geopolitical developments and international instability, Spain has become the principal destination of flows from Latin America, which today make up more than 75% of applications for international protection in our country; indeed, Spain is the destination of over 90% of Venezuelan asylum seekers in all of Europe.<sup>3</sup>

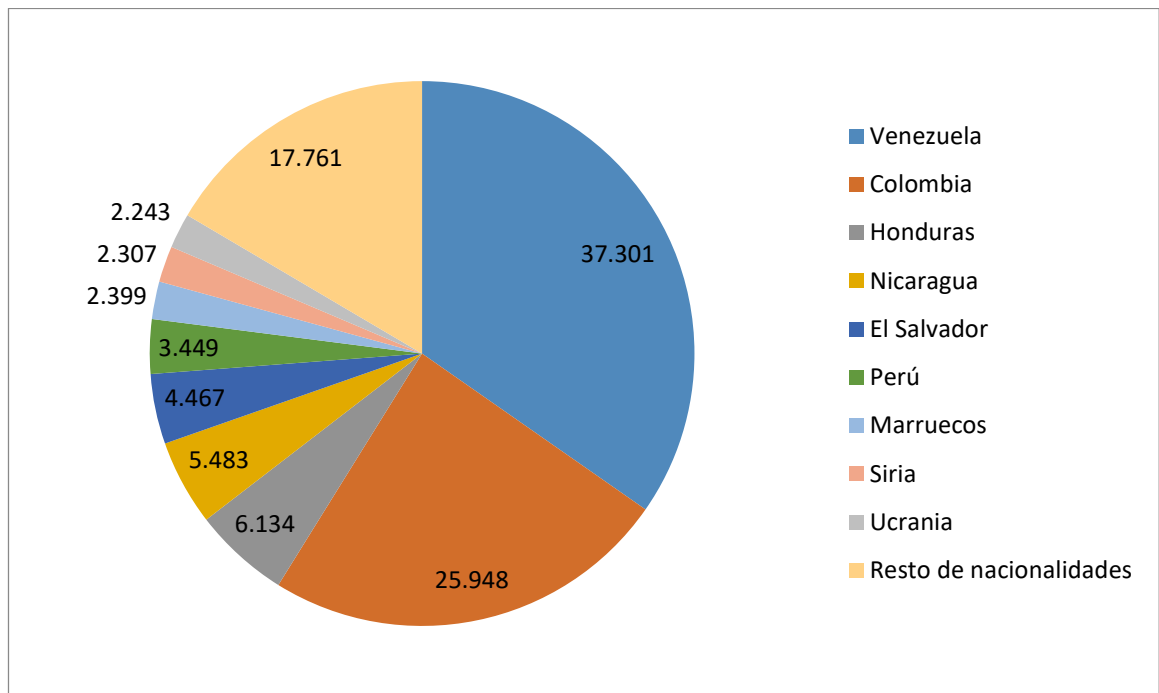
Figure 4. Asylum seekers in Spain, 2012-2018



<sup>3</sup> 92% according to ISAA Report no.190, published on 3 December 2019. Other main EU destinations are France, with 1.8% of the total Venezuelan asylum seekers, and Italy with 1.7%.



Figure 5. Asylum seekers in Spain, 2019



*\*Provisional figures at 30 November 2019*

## Reception system for asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection

In parallel to the processing of the administrative file carried out by the Ministry of the Interior, Article 30 of the Asylum Act establishes that asylum seekers who lack economic resources shall be provided with the necessary social and reception services necessary to meet their basic needs under decent conditions, while their file is being processed (and even after a decision is handed down, to facilitate their self-reliance and incorporation into the host society of the refugee or person granted international protection).

To this end, SAISAR, the reception system for asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection, was designed.

SAISAR, under the aegis of the State Secretariat for Migration, is responsible for the following:

- Reception facilities financed by the Spanish government and managed by non-profit organizations, including the Spanish Refugee Assistance Commission (CEAR, its Spanish acronym), Accem, and the Red Cross. Within this category, there were 10,272 available places at 31 July 2019.
- This network includes four public establishments, the Refugee Reception Centres (known by their Spanish acronym, CAR), with 416 places.

- Complementary projects and resources to promote measures to receive asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection, and to prepare them for integration into their new environment and access to employment, renting a home, and becoming members of their host society. As in the two previous cases, these programmes are also financed by the Spanish government.

SAISAR provides asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection with personalized itineraries to enable them to steadily gain in self-reliance until they become integrated into the workplace and their host society. These itineraries have three stages, lasting a total of 18 months, which may be expanded to 24 months in the case of especially vulnerable individuals:

- Stage 1. Evaluation and Referral / Emergency reception (estimated duration: 30 days). During this stage, a preliminary evaluation is made of the individual's needs, and, if appropriate, they are referred to the resources best adapted to their situation as soon as possible. According to figures from the first half of 2019, 7,473 people were assisted in this stage. By the end of 2019, that figure is expected to reach more than 15,000 people.
- Stage 2: Reception (estimated duration: 6 to 9 months). This stage begins with the person entering a reception centre or facility. The aim is to cover their basic needs and assist them in acquiring the necessary skills to lead an independent life once they leave the centre. According to figures from the first half of 2019, 17,827 persons were assisted in this stage. By the end of 2019, that figure is expected to reach more than 36,000 people.
- Stage 3: Preparation for self-reliance (estimated duration: 12 to 18 months). This stage begins after leaving the reception centre, and involves actions enabling beneficiaries to attain self-reliance in order to facilitate their social integration in Spain. According to figures from the first half of 2019, 16,621 people were assisted in this stage. By the end of 2019, that figure is expected to reach more than 34,000 people.

The ultimate goal of this reception system is for refugees to become integrated in Spain. Our country's integration policy is based on the following principles:

- Equality and non-discrimination, meaning that the immigrant and native-born populations enjoy equal rights and obligations.
- Citizenship, meaning recognition of immigrants' full civic, social, economic, cultural, and political participation.
- Inclusiveness, meaning the creation of processes for immigrants to overcome social, economic, personal and cultural disadvantages, enabling them to enjoy their social rights and engage in citizen participation.
- Interculturality, as a mechanism for positive interaction between people of different origins and cultures, valuing and respecting cultural diversity.

## Resettlement policies in Spain

Spain forms part of a group of countries that have created national resettlement programmes, showing their commitment to seeking durable solutions for refugee protection and offering an unequivocal sign of solidarity and responsibility-sharing to countries that receive major refugee flows.

In 2012, Spain launched its first National Resettlement Programme. Over the next few years, a number of plans were approved to meet Spain's resettlement commitment, which rose from 130 persons in 2014 to the 1,200 to be resettled as part of the programme approved in 2018.

The implementation of the National Resettlement Programmes was carried out jointly by the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security. When appropriate, they may ask for collaboration from other ministries, especially the Foreign Ministry.

The implementation of these National Resettlement Programmes has contributed to consolidating Spain's status within international organizations and forums, which recognize our country's efforts to promote international solidarity and durable protection for refugees.

Spain—along with Argentina, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom—subscribed to the London Declaration of 16 July 2018, supporting community sponsorship programmes and the work being carried out by the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (GRSI), of which UNHCR is a part. Community sponsorship programmes are a model of responsibility and shared effort. They enable individuals, groups and organizations to get directly involved in refugee resettlement, providing financial, emotional and integration support to facilitate refugees' inclusion in a new country and a new community.

In 2018, the Spanish Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security, the Government of the Basque Country, and UNHCR agreed to launch the first pilot programme on community sponsorship in the Basque region.

## Spanish Cooperation and humanitarian action

Humanitarian action is a national priority for Spain, addressing the consequences of conflicts that generate displacement, whether internal or to other countries. AECID's humanitarian action budget has grown steadily, from 40.09 million euros in 2017 to 43.8 million euros in 2018. The definitive figures are still unavailable, but total budget execution for 2019 is expected to be even higher.

One of the pillars of Spain's humanitarian action is, precisely, assistance for refugees, which in 2018 represented nearly half (48.12%) of all humanitarian assistance.<sup>4</sup> These contributions were channelled through many stakeholders, including international organizations (with UNHCR as a key partner) such as the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and non-government

---

<sup>4</sup> **Source:** prepared by the authors, approximate figures. Only a portion of those contributions not earmarked for refugees has been considered in these calculations, so the actual figure could be significantly higher.

organizations (NGOs) working with Lebanon, Colombia, Venezuela, Sahrawi refugee camps, northern Central America, Niger and Ethiopia, among others.

Also noteworthy is the impact on refugees of other humanitarian assistance: by covering the needs of internally displaced persons, it avoids creating new refugees. Moreover, humanitarian action is always aware of local communities, and increasingly addresses their needs from a humanitarian-development nexus approach. Noteworthy here is Spain's support from the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (CRPSF) for Central America and the Caribbean, which goes beyond refugee assistance *per se*, as well the project Shire Alliance in Ethiopia.

## Combating statelessness

The Spanish model for combatting statelessness is based on legislative measures, a specific procedure for the recognition of statelessness status (from a regulation passed in 2001) and adherence to international conventions, which places Spain at the vanguard of global efforts in this area.

Spain fully supports the UNHCR "I Belong" campaign to eradicate statelessness by 2024. Aware of the UNHCR campaign, and desirous of strengthening the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, Spain deposited the instrument of ratification for that Convention with the Secretary-General of the United Nations in September 2018, a decision that was mainly symbolic and aimed at encouraging other States, since Spanish legislation already featured the mechanisms set forth in the Convention.

Also within the "I Belong" campaign, Spain hosted the International Conference on Statelessness in Europe, held on 25 and 26 April 2019 in Madrid. This Conference provided an opportunity to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the situation of statelessness in the European Region, facilitating the exchange of good practices among its States.

## The prominent role of civil society: España con ACNUR

According to a 2017 report on the Spanish non-profit sector, Spain's Development NGO Coordinator platform encompasses 17 NGOs raising funds and carrying out humanitarian assistance and emergency actions; however, there are probably more working on a smaller scale. Spanish civil society is very active in the humanitarian sphere, having raised and allocated 129.5 million euros in 2017.

A paradigmatic case is that of EcA, a national association created in 1993, which supports UNHCR in raising awareness in Spain about forced displacement in third countries, and mobilizes financial resources for emergencies.

Spanish society's support for UNHCR's mandate and operations is largely channelled through EcA, which has steadily increased its financial contribution to the association year after year, to over 93.66 dollars in 2018 (placing it eighth in the ranking). In fact, EcA has more than 500,000 regular donors, and is UNHCR's top private donor. Over the years, EcA has become the most successful national association within UNHCR, with over 800 employees and volunteers working

across the country. Headquartered in Madrid, the association also has official delegates and committees in Catalonia, the Basque Country, Andalusia, Valencia, Navarra and Castilla-La Mancha. This regional presence is key to mobilizing decentralized government cooperation funds.

EcA's main sources of funds are individual donors, corporations and foundations, regional governments, legacies, and large private donors. Approximately 93% of its contribution to UNHCR comes from regular individual donors, and the rest comprises leadership gifts and decentralized funds.

Of particular note is the Befriending project, which matches refugees with private donors to EcA who, under the guidance of a social worker, support the refugees' integration. During the pilot stage, over 55 refugees benefited from this initiative, expanding their social support network; improving their cultural knowledge; developing their language skills; and, therefore, accessing an itinerary for integration that is robust, comprehensive, and probably more sustainable.

A large number of private Spanish companies have repeatedly demonstrated their firm commitment to the refugee cause. Some of them, including ZARA-Inditex, Movistar, Vodafone Spain, Banco Santander, Iberdrola, La Caixa, Iberia and Naturgy, already work with UNHCR and support its activity through their corporate social responsibility (CSR) plans.

Also deserving of special mention are Spanish sports institutions and companies. Spain's Professional Football League, the Real Madrid and FC Barcelona teams, and the Spanish Basketball Federation. Together with many other sports entities, their ongoing collaboration with UNHCR has made them a global reference, both for their leadership in the sector and for the solidarity they have shown in different areas, mainly towards refugees and displaced persons.

## II. SPAIN'S COMMITMENTS FOR THE FIRST GLOBAL FORUM

On the basis of the goals of the GCR, which Spain has been applying actively, the Spanish government's specific contribution to the First Global Forum in five priority areas is detailed below.

### 1. Strengthening and promotion of the international protection system

The Spanish government's main objective is to continue implementing responsible management measures to strengthen the asylum and reception system in order to position Spain as a strategic partner for international protection in Europe.

Spain will promote the following measures (planned with medium- and long-term effects):

- Draft a bill on international protection that is in line with the actual needs and current demands of the international protection system, as well as with changes in EU legislation, and which, among other objectives, strengthens and optimizes the asylum system with efficient improvements to procedural aspects, defines the asylum-related powers of the different ministries (and where applicable, regional governments in Spain) involved, and establishes mechanisms for coordination between the different actors.
- As soon as the aforementioned bill has been adopted, draw up the corresponding implementing regulation and any instructions and action protocols necessary to facilitate implementation.
- Consolidate the action plan aimed at speeding up decisions on open applications for international protection and at increasing the OAR's efficiency and effectiveness, enabling it to adapt to the changing circumstances of the international environment so as to manage applications with a high level of quality and optimal timeliness through the implementation of accelerated and simplified procedures.
- Design an appropriate staff structure so as to enable the maximum effectiveness of the OAR's new organization which, since September 2018, has encompassed 231 new posts—five times the number of public employees that it had in 1992.
- Promote the ongoing training of OAR professionals, focusing on all stages of the international protection process, and especially promoting knowledge and capacities in relation to vulnerable groups such as women and children, as well

as the LGBTI community. Entities such as UNHCR and the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) will participate in this training, together with NGOs and other key actors from the sector. The content of the training programmes will be aimed at and in line with the specific functions performed by OAR staff in different areas.

- Ensure that, pursuant to the exercise of the powers conferred in this area, the services of the different units that interact with or provide services to asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection with special needs have the necessary resources and procedures to identify and meet the specific needs of these persons, and in particular, the needs of minors and victims of gender violence.
- Implement a new software application that enables traditional paper files to be digitized, and improve the quality of the procedure and of recordkeeping.
- Maintain the improvement in quality both in the production of data and statistical information as well as the maximum level of transparency of its periodic dissemination, which will serve as the basis for decision-making in this area, applying a strategic and rigorous vision.
- Collaborate with regional governments across Spain, with a view to increasing the number of reception places.
- Work to adapt the reception system so that those individuals who reach stage 3 (described in Section I) are those who already have refugee status or have been granted international protection.
- Work to develop and implement an effective integration policy.
- Promote the drafting of a new Strategic Plan on Citizenship and Integration (Spanish acronym, PECl), which, while continuing the 2004, 2011 and 2017 Plans, responds to the new migration scenario in Spain. The fundamental goal of the PECl will be to promote the integration of immigrants, asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection, seeking to reincorporate the integration and diversity management approach into Spain's policy agenda.
- Promote the strategic use of financial instruments such as the European Social Fund (ESF) in the area of employment, or the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) to launch projects aimed at the acquisition of basic knowledge of the language, history, institutions, regulations, culture, framework of co-existence, and democratic values of Spanish society.
- Promote collaboration with Spain's regional governments and city councils on integration. To this end, pathways will be explored for appropriating resources to the State Fund for Integration so that all the territorial levels of the Spanish State can work towards the goal of integration.

## 2. Third-country solutions

As UNHCR has acknowledged time and again, the solidarity of institutions and civil society towards refugees is one of the values of the Spanish system.

This solidarity is shown not only towards those who reach our country seeking a safe place to start a new life, but also towards third countries which need our support and that of the international community. Spain is aware of the effort made by those States, which, due to their proximity to conflict zones or for political or geographic reasons, have a very high number of refugees on their borders.

This is why Spain is particularly focused on the third goal of the GCR: expanding access to third-country solutions. To this end, Spain will work actively to perfect the resettlement system and to promote the search for complementary pathways, following the recommendations of the UNHCR Three-Year Strategy for 2019-2021.

### National Resettlement Programmes (NRP)

As regards the next two years, Spain will promote the following measures:

- Design multi-year resettlement plans to allow for greater flexibility in their annual implementation and optimize their coordinated implementation through the application of a Protocol for implementing the PNR that enables improved efficiency and quality in meeting the commitments adopted.
- Foster a steady increase in the number of people resettled in our country.
- Study the possibility of resettling people from a broader range of countries of provenance.
- Ensure that the preliminary information provided to those individuals who choose or are assigned Spain as their country of resettlement, as well as the cultural orientation package delivered by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), is appropriate to the profile of the future resettled person, so that their decision to come to Spain may be as informed as possible.
- Continue working actively so that refugees who have been resettled in Spain continue to benefit from current family reunification programmes.

### Complementary pathways for resettlement

#### Community sponsorship programmes

Here, Spain will promote the following measures:

- Develop new pilot community sponsorship programmes in other Spanish regions.
- Undertake efforts to ensure that a total of 500 refugees are received over two years through community sponsorship programmes. The number of



places in the Basque Country will be increased, and new programmes will be opened in the regions of Valencia, Madrid and Catalonia.

- Work with other States and relevant partners in the 2019-2021 period to share the experiences acquired in this area and to improve the quality and effectiveness of community sponsorship programmes.

### Scholarship Programme for Students

Creating educational opportunities for refugees is key to strengthening their self-reliance, their futures and those of their families. Experience tells us that many refugees are forced to interrupt or abandon their higher education due to forced displacement. In fact, it is important to stress that only 1% of all young refugees are engaged in university studies, compared with 36% of all young people at the global level.

In Spain, in 2016, UNHCR met with Spanish universities to discuss possible scholarship programmes for refugees, and confirmed the great interest of many universities in supporting programmes of this kind.

This is why, with a view to the 2019-2021 period, Spain will undertake efforts to apply the following measures:

- Design a scholarship programme for refugees in collaboration with UNHCR and the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities (Spanish acronym, CRUE) that will enable beneficiaries to pursue their studies in Spain.
- Promote actions to grant 300 scholarships over 2019-2021.

### Family reunification programmes

Spain will promote the following measures:

- Continue along the path already taken towards promoting an active policy on the reunification of refugee families, speeding up procedures to apply for extensions or family reunifications.
- Scale up efforts to ensure that the multi-year resettlement plans continue to provide a response to these specific situations involving the reunification of refugee families.

### Alternative models of job market integration for refugees

Ensuring access to the job market is a crucial priority in terms of properly integrating refugees into the host society. Establishing mechanisms to incentivize the hiring of refugees is one pathway to be explored, as is the design of training modules that enable refugees to acquire the vocational qualifications that are especially in demand on the job market.

In the 2019-2021 period, the State Secretariat for Migration will collaborate with the State Secretariat for Employment on drawing up a plan of specific measures aimed at refugees in Spain, to ensure their access to the job market.

Specifically, the actions to be carried out in the framework of this Plan are as follows:

- Prepare comprehensive, personalized itineraries for the job market integration of refugees.
- Prepare and follow up on self-employment initiatives.
- Promote the job market integration of refugee families in sparsely populated rural areas, through personalized recruitment, training and support processes.

### Collaboration of all Spanish public administrations

The holistic approach to asylum promoted by Spain requires the collaboration of all public administrations at the central, regional and local levels. In this regard, collaborating and generating synergies must be a priority for the public actors working on international protection.

To strengthen this collaboration, Spain will promote the following measures:

- Cooperate with the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces to identify resources and means to incorporate asylum seekers in the reception system.
- Relaunch the project to create a network of major Spanish cities committed to supporting refugees, who wish to participate in promoting a positive political narrative on asylum, through public-awareness campaigns.
- Pay particular attention to the incorporation of the regional administrations into the national reception system, by seeking new formulas that enable them to participate directly in providing goods and services to asylum seekers.

### España con ACNUR

In the 2019-2021 period, Spain undertakes, through the State Secretariat for Migration, and in coordination with other ministries with powers in this area, to:

- Prepare a Work Plan with EcA that enables it to work towards the GCR goals, implementing good practices.
- In particular, heighten EcA's participation in campaigns and efforts aimed at raising civil society's awareness of the refugee cause, as well as the participation of their donors in the pilot community sponsorship projects that will be carried out in the coming years.

### Private sector

As regards the private sector, Spain will promote the following measures:

- Pay particular attention to the integration of sport into the programmes for child and adolescent refugees designed by UNHCR.
- Ensure the visibility of private sector collaboration, increase it, and give it a narrative of its own.
- Work in the 2019-2021 period on drawing up an Action Plan with Spain's private sector that enables companies, entities and foundations to work towards the GCR goals, implementing good practices.
- Pay particular attention to companies linked to renewable energy, infrastructure, employment, and quality of life.
- Collaborate with private sector entities to organize events for identifying, recognizing and exchanging good practices in CSR as regards diversity management, and promoting and raising awareness of the refugee cause.

### 3. Spain's external humanitarian action

Spanish Cooperation's external humanitarian action will work to promote a number of measures from both a mainstreaming and a geographical perspective.

#### Mainstreaming perspective

- Maintain the trend, subject to budgetary limitations, of increasing the humanitarian budget.
- Remain committed to resettlement and to boosting assistance to refugees in third countries and to supporting multilateral bodies and NGOs, thus contributing to equitable, predictable and sustainable burden- and responsibility-sharing.
- Advance towards the full incorporation into its projects of the age and gender perspective, in accordance with the IASC/ECHO gender with age markers.
- Promote the incorporation of protection into open calls for proposals for humanitarian actions, and mainstream actions conducive to the protection of people in vulnerable situations, including women, children, older adults, people with disabilities, and LGBTI people.
- Take protection measures against gender-based violence in humanitarian crises, and especially within programmes whose direct beneficiaries are refugees and displaced persons in refugee camps and host communities, in line with the State Pact against Gender-based Violence (measures 53 and 54).
- Reflect on how to improve the impact of humanitarian interventions on the environment. An indication of this commitment will be the preparation of a guide on how to incorporate environmental concerns into AECID's humanitarian action.

- Further the consolidation and exploration of partnership models that bring diverse actors together, including the private sector, ensuring the participation of local communities and actors.

#### **Geographical perspective.**

- Support the CRPSF in Central America and the Caribbean through active participation in the Group of Friends and in the efforts of the Risk, Emergency & Disaster Task Force for Latin America and the Caribbean (Spanish acronym, RED-LAC), aimed at improving the participation of the international community in the follow-up mechanisms to implement CRPSF commitments.
- Continue to provide economic and institutional support to interventions that are in line with the CRPSF national plans, including lines of action related to the integration of displaced persons and the reincorporation of returnees, giving priority to those in the most vulnerable situations.
- Contribute 50 million euros between 2020 and 2022 to respond to the Venezuelan crisis, funding interventions to mitigate its impact, and acting in line with the plans defined in the framework of the UN.
- Continue supporting UNHCR to meet the protection challenges of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees and support their return to Syria only when the necessary conditions are in place for voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return.

## **4. Favouring conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity**

The safe return of refugees to their countries of origin must be the international community's goal. These displacements not only have negative effects on refugees, but also represent a drain on the human resources of their countries of origin, both in terms of workforce and generational replacement. However, this return will only be possible when minimum conditions of safety and dignity are in place, and the principles and safeguards of international law are met.

Without prejudice to the measures and solutions that could be adopted to address the emergency situations generated by the mass influx of refugees, the main goal must be to ensure that the current circumstances in their countries of origin allow for the safe return of those who have been displaced.

To this end, Spain will promote, in particular, the following measures:

- Strengthen political commitment to contributing to the efforts undertaken at the global, regional and local levels to find solutions to the root causes of asylum; in particular, although not exclusively, those related to security, restoring harmonious relations, and rebuilding and consolidating peace.
- Strengthen commitment to international peace and security, respect for human rights, and effective multilateralism, both as a State that acts in a responsible and solidary manner with respect to international protection, and as an EU Member State.

- Actively support UN efforts to maintain international peace and security, in particular, the preventive role of the United Nations Security Council.

## **5. Promotion of an Action Plan for the application of the GCR**

In order to further the application of the GCR with the greatest possible effectiveness and coherence, it is deemed advisable to prepare a framework at the national level with the participation of the relevant actors, especially the central government, Spain's regional governments and city councils, civil society, the private sector and international bodies such as UNHCR, among others.

Taking this into account, Spain will promote the following measure:

- Draft a National Action Plan for the Application of the GCR with the collaboration of the different administrations with powers in the area of reception, and on the basis of a broad process of consultation with civil society, international bodies such as UNHCR, the private sector and other relevant actors. The Plan would cover a four-year period, and therefore be in line with the expected timeline of the Global Forum. Its principal objective will be to orient government action towards fulfilment of the commitments presented at the first Global Forum.

