

Greetings colleagues in immigration ministries,

Recently, many shifts have occurred in migration patterns from Venezuela. Since 2014, Venezuela is the #3 highest country of forced migration output worldwide with 20% of the population fleeing their homeland under duress at this time. For more information on what's causing forced migration from Venezuela, please read here: [Venezuela Crisis: Aid, Statistics and News | USA for UNHCR \(unrefugees.org\)](https://www.unrefugees.org/usa-for-unhcr)

In recent weeks, border reports have documented a rapid increase of Venezuelan migrants approaching the Southern border seeking asylum in the United States. In a very unusual pattern, many of these asylum seekers **do not have sponsor destinations in the United States**, when generally most asylum seekers approaching the border do have a place to land when they cross the border and complete CBP/ICE processing. This has caused some shifts in both strategy for welcoming from non profits and border shelters, as well as shifts in public policy.

On October 12, 2022, the United States made it both more difficult for Venezuelans to claim asylum at the border and simultaneously created a specialized Humanitarian Parole process for Venezuelans seeking safety. More difficult – because they have to enroll in this program instead of claim traditional asylum. Easier (for USCIS) -- because it requires that Venezuelans have a sponsor ready to receive them in the US when their visas are processed. For more information about the Venezuelan sponsorship program, please visit here: [Process for Venezuelans | USCIS](https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian-parole)

This process of sponsorship for Humanitarian Parole for Venezuelans also applies to Ukrainians under the [Uniting for Ukraine | USCIS](https://www.uscis.gov/unite) campaign, and no other nationality other than these two are currently eligible for this specialized sponsorship program. Our partner, Church World Service, is hosting a special

training and placement matching program for the Uniting 4 Ukraine sponsorship program. If you would like more information, please register here: [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

**\*\*\*\*This essentially means that you can apply to expedite a visa and host a Venezuelan or Ukrainian individual or family for 2 years. This is an essential need, especially for Venezuelans who have no other recourse for seeking safety at this time. This message is primary to request your church to discern your capability to host a Venezuelan family.\*\*\*\***

If you would like more information or connect with a matching Venezuelan family, please contact [hassani@ucc.org](mailto:hassani@ucc.org). Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

**Rev. Irene Willis Hassan**

Minister for Refugee and Migration Ministries

Global H.O.P.E. – *Humanitarian. Opportunities. Progress. Empowerment.*

United Church of Christ, National Ministries

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