

# 2022 IN REVIEW:

VIA's Work Kept  
Increasingly Challenging





Venezuelans and  
Immigrants Aid

## OUR MISSION:

The mission of Venezuelans and Immigrants Aid (VIA) is to support all community members by informing and empowering them. We advocate for people affected by the deep crisis in Venezuela, especially those seeking protection, and build bridges between them and local organizations that can help find better opportunities to establish in New York City



Venezuelans and  
Immigrants Aid

"Dando Una Mano" EL Bronx 2022

Venezuelans and Immigrants Aid, Inc. • 501(c)(3) | First Semester 2022 review | [www.via.org](http://www.via.org)

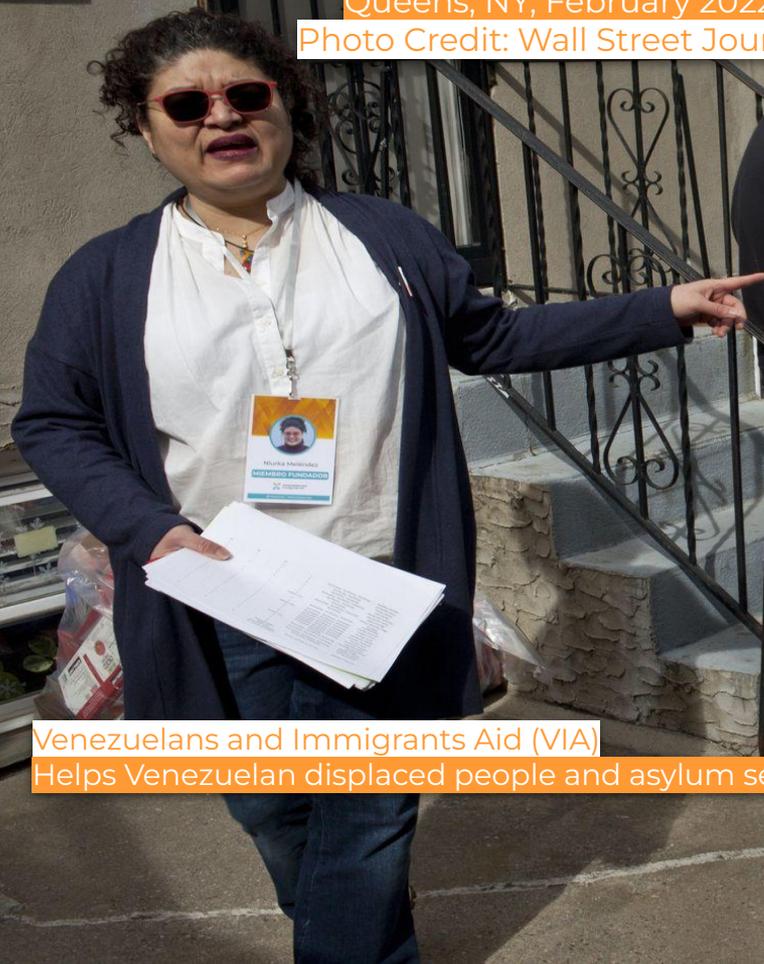
In July 2022, the coordinator of the Observatory of the Venezuelan Diaspora, Tomás Páez, revealed that the number of Venezuelan displaced people rose to 7.2 million, keeping this the largest migration crisis in the world, rivaling the scale of Syria.

VIA's humanitarian emergency assistance activity,  
Queens, NY, February 2022

Photo Credit: Wall Street Journal



Venezuelans and  
Immigrants Aid



Venezuelans and Immigrants Aid (VIA)  
Helps Venezuelan displaced people and asylum seekers in New York City.

## VENEZUELAN FORCED MIGRANTS & ASYLUM SEEKERS

aided by VIA

IN 2021

35%

New-arrivals who had crossed the US southern border

IN 2022

92%

Were newly arrived, and according to our estimates, it will continue growing.

## CBP Migrant Encounters at the U.S.-Mexico Border, by Country of Origin

August 2022	September 2022	October 2022	% Chg
Mexico 60,772	Mexico 63,431	Mexico 65,788	+14%
Venezuela 25,361	Venezuela 33,804	Cuba 28,848	+15%
Cuba 19,060	Cuba 26,178	Venezuela 22,044	+12%
Honduras 16,219	Nicaragua 18,199	Nicaragua 20,917	+19%
Guatemala 15,681	Guatemala 15,331	Colombia 17,195	+10%
Colombia 13,497	Honduras 14,417	Guatemala 14,806	+4%
Nicaragua 11,749	Colombia 13,807	Honduras 14,003	+14%
Peru 7,782	Other 8,612	Other 9,509	+12%
El Salvador 6,675	Peru 8,231	Peru 9,081	+11%
Haiti 6,551	El Salvador 6,247	Ecuador 7,011	+10%
Other 6,258	Ecuador 5,379	Haiti 6,717	+15%
Brazil 5,747	Haiti 5,163	El Salvador 6,042	+7%
Ecuador 3,681	Russia 2,617	Russia 3,879	+110%
Russia 1,645	India 2,021	India 2,044	+10%
India 1,597	Brazil 1,732	Turkey 1,405	+10%
Turkey 1,172	Turkey 1,632	Brazil 762	+47%
China 375	China 399	China 431	+15%
Romania 215	Romania 278	Romania 151	-30%

WOLA

Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection <https://bit.ly/3LMNYWJ>

According to the WOLA data  
Largest increases in US-Mexico  
border migration, August-October:  
citizens of Nicaragua (78%) and  
Cuba (51%)

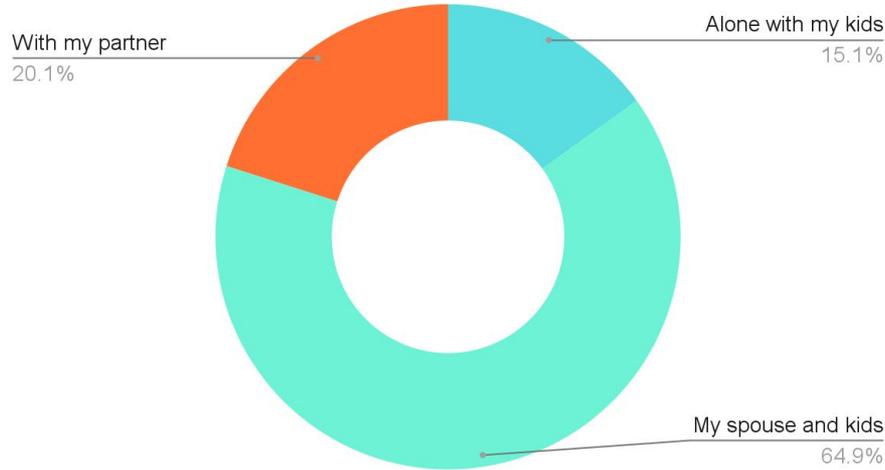
Largest decreases: citizens of  
Honduras (14%) and Venezuela  
(13%)

# DEMOGRAPHY

*Humanizing the numbers:*

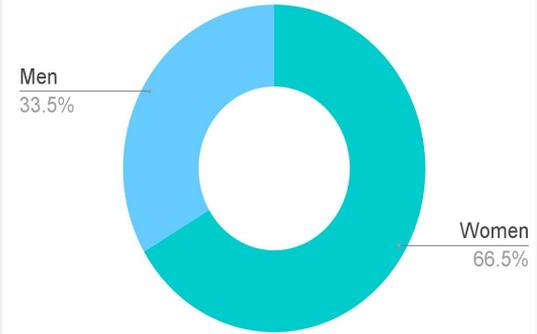
*"I left Venezuela because my kid was just a baby back then. He would get sick a lot. He would get these high fevers and asthma, and many infections. It was challenging to find the antibiotics or any medicine he needed. It was rough. So I left: I found no other solution." - Testimony of Jobeiny R., VIA member since 2022.*

Who did you come to the US with?



Only in the first semester of 2022, **we supported directly 1,200+ people, 80% of these were families or adults with children.**

Gender



**67% are women** between the ages of **25-34**. This data marks a change in the demography of the community VIA serves if we consider that in previous years, the majority were between 35-45 years old.

# DEMOGRAPHY

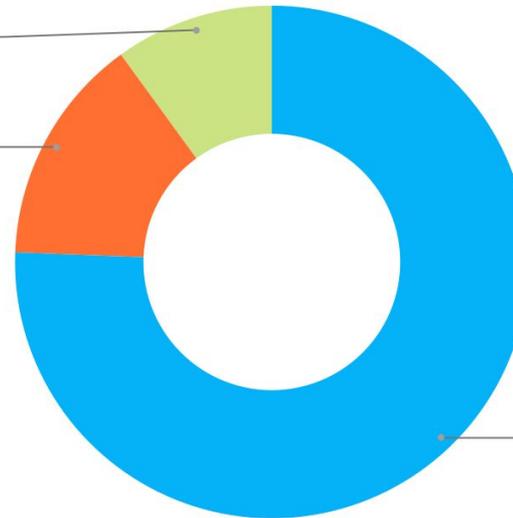
## Humanizing the numbers:

*“What if I had lost one of my children in the river? What if I had lost my life, and my kids would have ended up without a mother? I wouldn’t have been able to heal that or recover with any resource I could have obtained. I can say from experience that many of our Venezuelan sisters and brothers have tragic stories to share that they will never be able to heal with action, only with humility and God in their hearts. It is not easy for someone to cross the border.”*  
-Testimony of Iraima R., VIA member since 2021.

### Where are you staying?

In a relative home  
10.0%

In a friend's home  
14.4%



Shelter  
75.6%

As per our figures, in 2022, 76% of newly arrived immigrants we served are staying in NYC homeless shelter system, primarily in Brooklyn (45.6%), Queens (33.3%), The Bronx (18.9%), and Manhattan (2.2%).

# DEMOGRAPHY

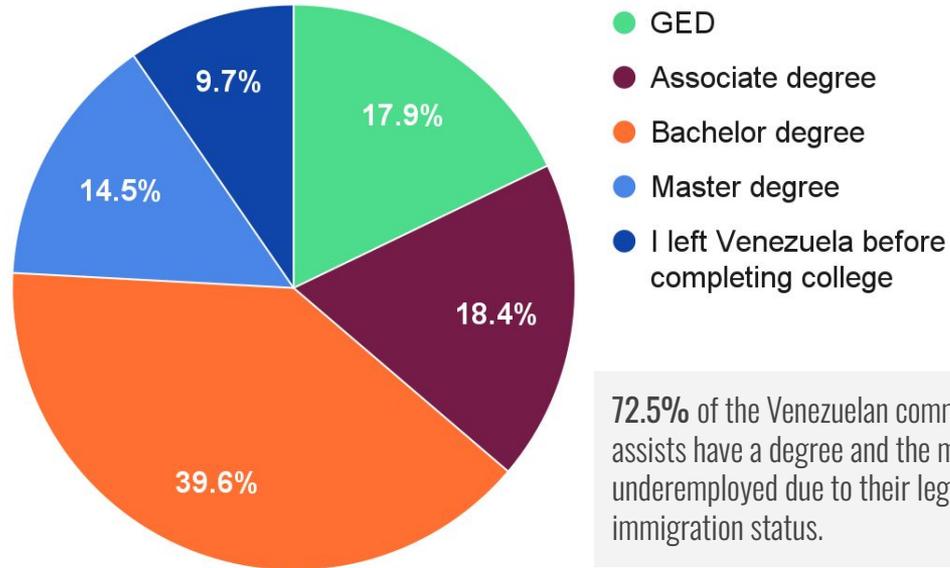
*Humanizing the numbers:*

*“Not knowing that I have an immigration status and not being able to contribute in the way I would like to contribute to the host country produces much anxiety.”  
-Testimony of Carlos P. VIA’s member since 2021.*

###

*According to the Migration Policy Institute, at least two million college-educated immigrants and refugees are unemployed or underemployed in the U.S.; 60 percent hold international credentials.*

Level of education



72.5% of the Venezuelan community VIA assists have a degree and the majority are underemployed due to their legal limbo immigration status.

On July 11, 2022, the Department of Homeland Security announced the extension of the initial designation of TPS for Venezuela.

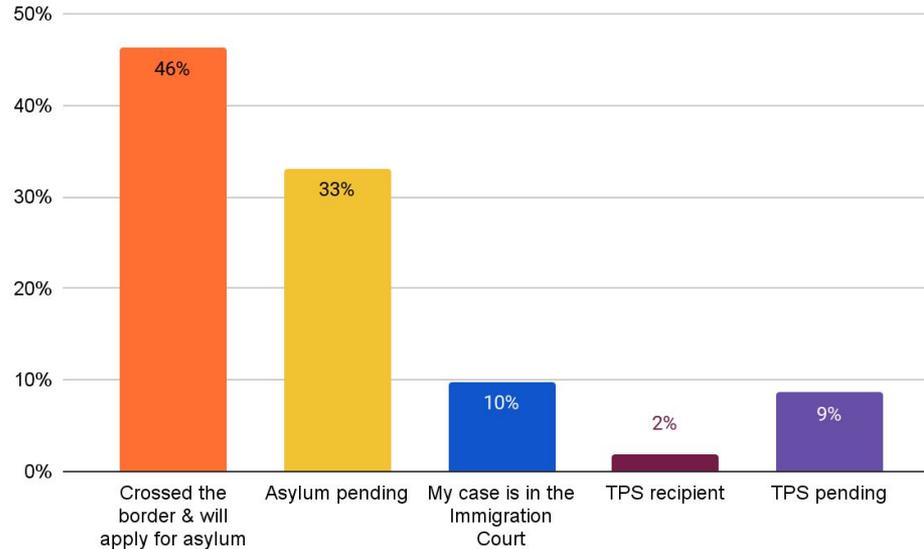
On the same date, USCIS disclosed that 83k Venezuelans had been approved for their TPS. Simultaneously, more than 160k were still awaiting a response to their application.

# IMMIGRATION STATUS



*Humanizing the numbers:*

*"Due to the delays on my asylum case, it has impacted me emotionally because of the uncertainty. There is distrust in the US immigration system, which is neither expedited nor empathetic toward those that don't have definite immigration status. I wish we, Venezuelans, could have a more permanent international protection that conforms to human rights standards." - Testimony of Yanatan M., VIA's member since 2016.*



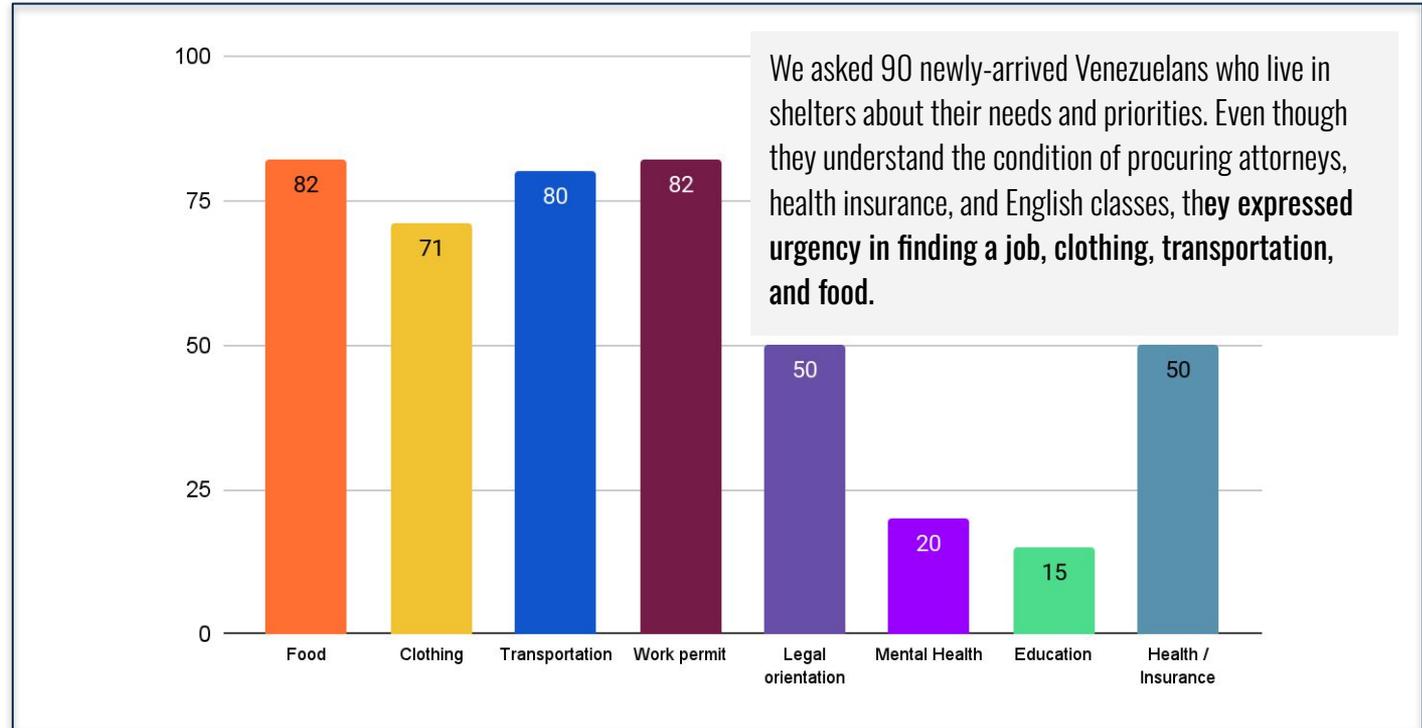
**More than 90%** of the community we have served applied or claimed international protection statuses such as Asylum or Temporary Protection Status (TPS).

# NEEDS & PRIORITIES

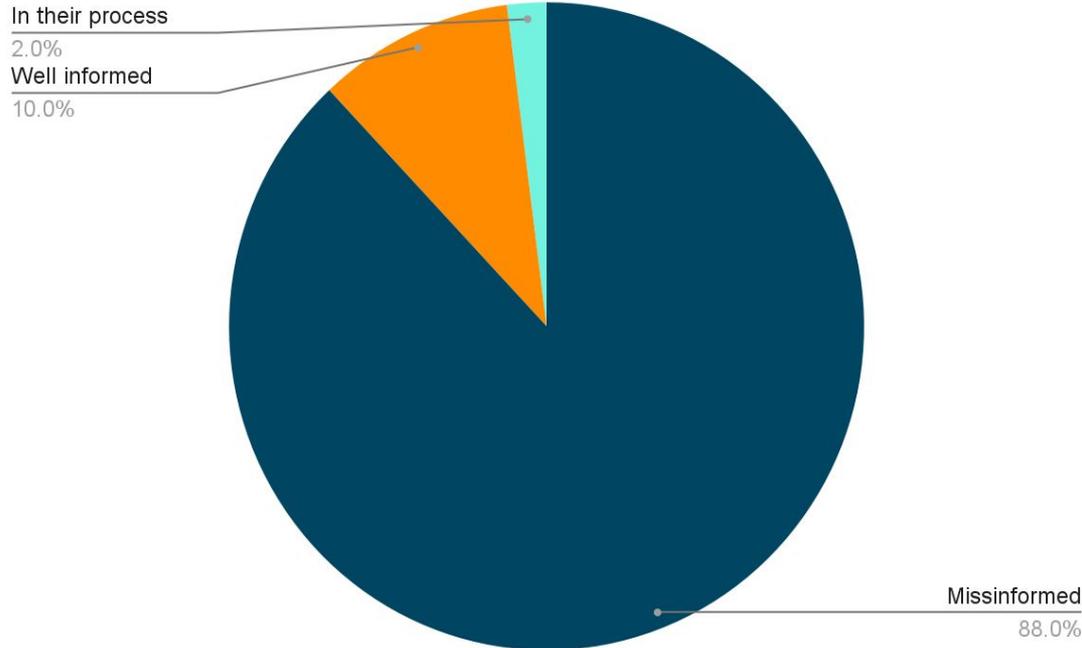


*Humanizing the numbers:*

*“The increase of the migrant and refugee population arriving in New York reveals a much larger problem that VIA and other organizations have warned about for some time. It is imperative to take this opportunity to multiply the message and act not only for Venezuelans but all migrants and refugees in need of protection.”  
Cristina C., REDAC’s Coordinator and VIA volunteer.*



# ACKNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE US IMMIGRATION LAWS



In 2022, At VIA, we found significant misinformation within the community we serve, about their immigration process, including when to apply for asylum, what to expect regarding finding a lawyer, how long the process might take, and how much it costs.

# CHALLENGES ONCE IN A SHELTER



# 1

- Find a pro-bono attorney
- Understanding ICE paperwork
- Understanding the asylum process

- Scammers
- Affordable legal representation
- Accurate info for immigration process



Others

- Work permit
- Language barrier
- Scammers

- Assistance for schools enrollment
- Understanding public transportation
- Affordable Spanish psychotherapies

Even if these immigrants have the funds to pay for an attorney, the attorneys may not have space in their schedule to help.

VIA gives information about public and official legal resources that can guide them. Twice a month VIA's one of the main attorney comes on her lunch break. She sits with one member for 15 minutes. She can help a maximum of 5 people per week in those 15 minutes.

“The transformation of the migrant and refugee population arriving in New York reveals a much larger problem that VIA and many organizations in this space have been warning about for some time. It is imperative to take this opportunity to multiply the message and act not only for Venezuelans but for all migrants and refugees in need of protection.” -Cristina C., REDAC Coordinator and VIA volunteer

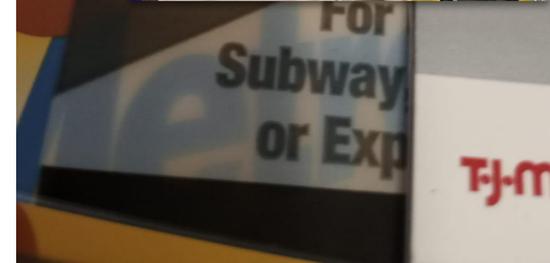
# “DANDO UNA MANO” A CHARITABLE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

This direct one-time assistance program which began in August 2021, provides guidance, cultural & legal orientation, and help with food, transportation (MetroCards), Gift Cards, and clothing for Venezuelan newly-arrived migrants in New York.

**In 2022, 325 migrants from Venezuela and other nationalities benefited from this program.**

The current Southern border crisis shows us that this is a growing ongoing duty, and with your help, we will continue providing emergency aid to those displaced people in need.

[www.vianyc.org/donate](http://www.vianyc.org/donate)



In 2022, VIA was proud to have been able to offer **40** community presentations (online and in-person mode) that provided general information on Asylum, TPS, Humanitarian Parole, and other US immigration matters from reputable and accredited attorneys.

A total of **54 hours donated** by the lawyers benefited **4360+** people connecting not only from New York state but from other states and countries around the world.



**PUNTOS CLAVES DE ASILO**

- Victima de violencia en el pasado y/o tiene miedo de regresar a su país de origen.
- Es víctima de violencia o amenaza por una característica protegida.
- Se le prohíbe la entrada al país de origen.
- Se le prohíbe la entrada al país de origen por una aplicación frívola a la que quiere decir presentar una solicitud de asilo, sabiendo que no es cierto. Se le prohibirá permanentemente.

Participants:

eliecer furtado	iPhone de Richard	Eliana silva	Andrixon Zerpa
eliecer furtado	iPhone de Richard	Eliana silva	Andrixon Zerpa
oz	Sweet Castle Tu Pastel Creati...	Nelsy Sarmiento	YONATAN
Play (k)	Sweet Castle Tu Pastel Creativo	Nelsy Sarmiento	YONATAN
PVIA	María Colina	Ysbella Rondón	José Antonio

## VIA'S COMMUNITY PRESENTATION GIVEN

**12**

**SHELTERS VISITED**

**05**

**PUBLIC SCHOOL  
VISITED**

**08**

**RESOURCES FAIR**

**03**

**COMMUNITY CENTERS  
VISITED**

Resulting in 2022,

**1400**

migrants assisted.

**80**

advocates and  
community supporters  
trained.

[www.vianyc.org/donate](http://www.vianyc.org/donate)



ONLINE MEETINGS

24

HOURS ONE-ON-ONE SESSIONS

16

WEBINARS

03

IN-PERSON GATHERINGS

02

**Seventy hours were donated** by a team of psychology professionals who led our program, **which benefited 350 people.**

**The WhatsApp group grew to 73 members** who remain active and connected to the community and through mutual support information sharing 24/7.

## Situaciones difíciles y migración

Una situación será difícil de acuerdo a la valoración y la interpretación que le damos, es decir, a la percepción de la situación en un momento determinado en el tiempo.



NUMBER OF CLASSES

90

454

PEOPLE BENEFITED

158 hours in total

donated by VIA's volunteer teachers Tilla Alexander, James Niss, Massimo Guglietta, and the tutors of the NGO Estamos Contigo.



## VIA ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Our goal is to help our members stay connected to the community and us as a whole by accessing critical information when engaging with our social media platforms. Also, to attract those who might benefit from our content by informing them about the US immigration laws, the health and education systems in NY, peer support, building bridges, cultural matters, etc. We focus on our mission to educate and inform rather than promote.

In 2022:

- We reached **300k** people through the informative content shared.
- We shared over **400** posts and resources with critical information they can trust.
- Had **30** Live informative events.

# MORE UPDATES

## COMMUNITY ADVOCACY:

VIA continues working  
in collaboration with  
the TPS-DED  
Administrative  
Advocacy Group and  
WES Global Talent  
Bridge Group

In 2022:

- We helped **98** asylum seekers, and TPS applicants apply for health insurance and understand their coverage options.
- **12** Community education workshops/webinars.
- We had **10** summer field trips, “Paseos de Verano con VIA.” with **12 families, 36 children** 2 - 13 years old who joined us in person.

VIA has the capacity and the reach to handle cases with a sense of honor, humanity, ethics, and compromise. But the resources and personnel available are limited in comparison to the demand.

“We ask ourselves how we can do more and in what way your organization can collaborate, given that this situation is not limited to Venezuelans, and by our projections, it will only continue to grow.” -Héctor Arguinzones. VIA’s founder

[WWW.VIANYC.ORG/DONATE](http://WWW.VIANYC.ORG/DONATE)



## WANT TO BE A PART?

“Contributing your part, a tiny grain of sand in a vast world of need, without underestimating the impact of your actions.”

Niurka Melendez,  
VIA co-founder

