

COLOMBIA

The International Organization for Migration (IMO) estimates that between 3.5 and 4.7 million Colombians live abroad (around 10 percent of the population).¹ According to these figures, Colombia is the South American country with the most non-resident nationals. The latest official data provided in 2005 by the Colombian statistical office shows that the majority of Colombian emigrants are living in United States (34.6%), Spain (23.1%), and Venezuela (20%).² Scholars usually identify three waves of Colombian emigration. The first, beginning in the 1960s, was composed of highly-skilled Colombians seeking better job opportunities in the United States and Venezuela. In the 1980s, another wave of emigration was registered towards Venezuela, fundamentally encouraged by the improvement of the Venezuelan economy. The last wave, registered in the 1990s and early 2000s, was composed by Colombians moving mostly to Spain, due to the tighter immigration policies applied by Venezuela and the US.³

The causes of emigration are multiple and respond to internal as well as external dynamics. Among others, the instability of the Colombian economy throughout the years; the contested political situation and polarized political system; high degrees of political corruption and institutional inefficiency; and the generalization of violence provoked by the armed conflict with guerrilla movements such as the FARC.⁴

In the last decade, Colombia has assembled several legal texts (from policy documents to laws) that define the core of its emigrant policy. Part of the strategy developed by the Colombian government was first drafted in its so-called Integral Migration Policy (*Documento CONPES 3603: Política Integral Migratoria*),⁵ a document approved in 2009 created by the National Council for Economic and Social Policy (*Consejo Nacional de Política Económica y Social, CONPES*) that delineates the strategy to be carried out by the government in terms of migration (including the policies towards emigrants as well as towards migrants in Colombia).⁶ After the *CONPES* document, some legislation was approved, in part, to give legal basis to some of the policies that were drafted in the document. In 2011, for instance, the “National Migration

1 Ramírez, Zuluaga, and Perilla, “Perfil migratorio de Colombia 2012.”

2 Ibid.

3 Servicio de Noticias de las Naciones Unidas, “OIM estima en 3,4 millones el número de emigrantes colombianos.”

4 Maisonave, Ortí, and others, “Transnacionalismo político,” 1151.

5 The strategy was developed under the *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2006-2010 “Estado Comunitario: Desarrollo para Todos.”*

6 Consejo Nacional de Política Económica y Social, “Conpes 3603: Política Integral Migratoria.”

The right to vote in national legislative elections came into force with the enactment of the current Constitution in 1991. The Congress of Colombia is composed of two houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives. The former comprises 100 members elected in a single district by all Colombian citizens, resident or non-resident.⁷ The House of Representatives is composed of members elected in territorial districts, as well as in “special” districts (*circunscripciones especiales*). The latter group includes one district for ethnic groups, one for political minorities and one for non-resident Colombians, which is elected by all non-resident citizens.⁸ It is not possible to vote simultaneously for candidates of territorial constituencies and for candidates running for special seats such as the one reserved for non-residents.⁹

After a constitutional change in 1991, migrants had to wait seven years to vote in Senate elections (1997) and eleven to vote for special representatives in the House of Representatives (2002).¹⁰ Although the Constitutional mandate was clear, its legislative and administrative development presented some difficulties. The first two times that non-resident Colombians voted for the special representative of the international district, the result was contested. The first time, in 2002, was because resident Colombians also voted for the candidate running for the special seat of the international district: About 75% of the votes received by the candidate were cast within Colombian territory. The second time, in 2005, was because the Constitutional Court ruled the executive decree regulating elections abroad unconstitutional.¹¹

In 2003, in order to increase the non-resident turnout in the presidential and legislative elections, the cost of all consular fees, including passport issuance, were reduced by 10% and the exit tax for citizens visiting the country for a maximum of 45 days was reduced by 30%.¹²

The Constitution of 1991 does not allow non-resident citizens to vote in regional and local elections (including for regional governors, local mayors, and local councils) nor in regional referendums.¹³

7 Asamblea Nacional Constituyente, *Constitución Política de Colombia*, Art. 171.

8 Ibid. Art. 176.

9 El Congreso de Colombia, *Ley 649 de 2001 que reglamenta el artículo 176 de la Constitución Política de Colombia*, Art. 11.

10 González, “El voto de los colombianos en el exterior: elecciones entre disfuncionamientos y rebusque,” 66.

11 Ibid. 71.

12 El Congreso de Colombia, *Ley 815 de 2003 por la cual se aclara la Ley 403 de 1997 y se establecen nuevos estímulos al sufragante*, Art. 3.

13 Asamblea Nacional Constituyente, *Constitución Política de Colombia*, Art. 316.

Colombians abroad also have participated in national referendums. In 1990, they were allowed to vote in the plebiscite to ratify the Constitution and in a 1997 consultation regarding the peace process.¹⁴

CANDIDACY RIGHTS OF NON-RESIDENT CITIZENS

All Colombians by birth can become President of the Republic, the only requisites are being 30 years old or more and having the status of citizen (*ciudadano en ejercicio*).¹⁵ No distinction between residents and non-residents is made. Likewise, the Constitution of 1991 does not include any residence criteria to be elected as member of the Senate.¹⁶ However, the Constitution does incorporate residency criteria in the case of the members of the House of Representatives.¹⁷

Non-residents must demonstrate a minimum stay abroad of five years and have the support of a national party or political movement if they want to run for the seats reserved for Colombians abroad.¹⁸ While it was established in 2001 that non-residents would have one reserved seat in the House of Representatives,¹⁹ a 2013 modification added one reserved seat for non-residents and eliminated the one reserved for political minorities.²⁰ In the last elections (March 2014), the five special seats in the House of Representatives were distributed as follows: 2 for the international district, 2 for the afro-descendent community, and 1 for the indigenous community.²¹ Recently, however, the Congress of Colombia ruled to eliminate one of the seats of the international district.²²

VOTING METHODS AVAILABLE TO NON-RESIDENT CITIZENS

Non-resident Colombians can only vote in national elections (presidential or legislative) in embassies and consulates or in other locations authorized by the National Civil Registry and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.²³

14 Calderón Chelius, *Votar en la distancia. La extensión de los derechos políticos a migrantes, experiencias comparadas*; Escobar, “Immigrant Enfranchisement in Latin America.”

15 Asamblea Nacional Constituyente, *Constitución Política de Colombia*, Art. 191.

16 *Ibid.* Art. 171.

17 *Ibid.* Art. 176.

18 El Congreso de Colombia, *Ley 649 de 2001 que Reglamenta el artículo 176 de la Constitución Política de Colombia*, Art. 1.

19 *Ibid.* Art. 5.

20 El Presidente de la República de Colombia, *Decreto 2788 de 1972 por el cual se fija el número de representantes a la cámara que se elegirán por circunscripciones territoriales y circunscripciones especiales el 9 de marzo de 2014*.

21 *Ibid.*

22 El Congreso de Colombia, *Acto Legislativo 2 de 2015*.

23 *Decreto 4766*, 2005 Art. 19; *Decreto 2241 de 1986, Código Electoral*, Art. 116; *Ley 1475*, 2011, Art. 51.

REGISTRATION FOR THE FRANCHISE

Registration for voting is automatic. However, there are a couple of exceptions. Colombians living abroad must actively register their personal ID at the corresponding electoral authority (consulate or embassy) if their current address does not match that stated on the ID (for instance, if there has been a change in the country of residence), or if their ID was issued before 1988 and they have not voted thereafter. Once the ID is registered, they become part of the electoral register and, providing they do not change their residency, registration is automatic for subsequent elections.²⁴

MODE OF REPRESENTATION

The mode of representation differs between types of elections:

- 1) For presidential elections, the votes of non-residents are counted in the electoral polling stations and then sent to the national electoral authority to be incorporated into the totals.²⁵
- 2) For the Senate, the votes of non-residents are counted separately and then either incorporated to the national totals or to the indigenous peoples' district. This applies only for those external voters that decided to vote for the special seats reserved for the indigenous population.
- 3) For the House of Representatives, the votes of non-residents are counted separately and then incorporated to a special district with no distinction between locations.

REGULATION OF POLITICAL COMPETITION

The regulation of political competition in Colombia is distributed among different legal documents, the most important being the Constitution of 1991, the "Electoral Guarantees Law" (Law 996 of 2005), Law 1475 of 2011 and Law 130 of 1994. Despite the increasing importance of the electoral processes held abroad, there is still a lack of explicit regulation of political competition overseas.

²⁴ Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil, *Resolución 7552 de 2009 por la cual se modifica la resolución número 5598 del 25 de agosto de 2009, por la cual se establece el calendario electoral para la elección de Congreso de la República y Parlamento Andino, Período Constitucional 2010-2014*; Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil, "Preguntas Frecuentes Sobre El Registro Electoral."

²⁵ Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil, *Decreto 2241 de 1986 por el cual se adopta Código Electoral* Art. 116; Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil, "Comunicado de Prensa No. 139 de 2010."

PARTY OFFICES IN HOST COUNTRIES

Colombian law neither forbids nor explicitly regulates party offices in foreign countries. It is highly possible that the status of these offices has not been taken into account by legislators, and therefore, no specific regulation applies. External political party offices do not receive direct public funding, but it is possible for parties to fund them by allocating part of their available general budget. Again, there is not an explicit regulation regarding this issue in the Colombian legal framework.

POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

Political campaigns abroad are also not regulated, but presumably allowed by omission of explicit prohibition. Nonetheless, two mentions of the regulation of political campaigns conducted by Colombian parties abroad were found in the Colombian legal framework. The first regards the prohibition of funding coming from foreign sources such as other governments or foreign companies.²⁶ The second is the spending ceiling for campaigns organized to elect the reserved seat for the non-resident community in the House of Representatives.²⁷

MEMBERSHIP

The Constitution of 1991 grants the right to take part in political power and, explicitly, in political parties to all citizens.²⁸ From a legal point of view, therefore, no distinction can be drawn between resident and non-resident citizens in regards to their capability to belong to political parties. Some Colombian parties do not reference non-residents members directly (e.g. the Liberal Party²⁹), but others, such as the Social Party of National Unity (*Partido Social de Unidad Nacional*), have included clauses in their statutes that refer directly to the non-resident members and their organization abroad.³⁰

26 El Congreso de Colombia, *Ley 1475 de 2011 por la cual se adoptan reglas de organización y funcionamiento de los partidos y movimientos políticos, de los procesos electorales y se dictan otras disposiciones*, Art. 27.

27 Consejo Nacional Electoral, *Resolución 0521 de 2009 por la cual se fija la suma máxima que puede invertir cada uno de los candidatos inscritos en las listas únicas avaladas por los partidos políticos, movimientos políticos, movimientos sociales y grupos significativos de ciudadanos, para las elecciones de Congreso de la República, Período Constitucional 2010-2014*.

28 Asamblea Nacional Constituyente, *Constitución Política de Colombia*, Art. 40.

29 Partido Liberal, “Estatuto Partido Liberal.”

30 Partido de la U, “Estatuto del Partido de la U”, Art. 6.

INSTITUTIONAL PARTICIPATION

CONSULTATIVE BODIES AT NATIONAL LEVEL

There is no consultative body at the national level or consular level responsible for advising the government on policies that affect the emigrant community. However, the creation of the National Migration System is worth mentioning in this section. This system was conceived as a stable coordination mechanism to improve the quality of life of Colombian emigrants and covers institutions, civil society organizations, processes, and programs that relate to the Colombian emigrant community.³¹ There is also the National Civil Society Round Table for Migrations (*Mesa Nacional de la Sociedad Civil para las Migraciones*), which was designed to gather associations of emigrant Colombians and transmit emigrant demands to the government. This body has not yet been convened and it is, at the time of writing, subject to a legislative modification that aims to transform it into a real consultative body for emigrant issues.³²

ADMINISTRATION

CONSULATES

Colombia has 110 consulates distributed in 61 countries (6 in Africa, 65 in the Americas, 23 in Europe, 13 in Asia, and 3 in Oceania). Additionally, Colombia maintains 39 honorary consulates, 4 delegations, and 59 embassies.³³ The *Colombia nos une* unit, together with the consulates, organizes mobile consulates, which deploy consular personnel to places within the consular district. Their aim is to bring consular services closer to those who cannot travel to the main offices.³⁴ Also, some Colombian consulates open on certain Saturdays, though regular office hours are not offered.³⁵

In regards to the services offered by Colombian consulates, it is worth highlighting:

31 El Congreso de Colombia, *Ley 1465 de 2011 por la cual se crea el sistema nacional de migraciones y se expiden normas para la protección de los colombianos en el exterior*.

32 El Congreso de Colombia, *Proyecto de Ley No 73 de 2014 por medio del cual se fortalecen los mecanismos de participación de los colombianos en el exterior, se reforma la Ley 1465 de 2011, y se dictan otras disposiciones*.

33 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, “Consulta de misiones de Colombia en el exterior.”

34 Colombia Nos Une, “Consulados móviles.”

35 Redes Colombia, “Sábado Consular.”

- The attention paid to victims of human trafficking in terms of psychological support, medical assistance, or provision of accommodation,³⁶
- The services that consulates and diplomatic missions must provide to victims of armed conflict. Colombia grants victims living abroad the possibility of accessing the services and policies designed for the victims of the conflict (e.g. identification as victims, economic compensations). Moreover, the Law regulates the creation of a return program for forced emigrants (see “Economic Policies” section).³⁷
- Judiciary and social services, such as the protection of minors, labor consultancy, or supervision of potential trials in which a Colombian national is involved, which by law must be offered by consulates that have more than 10,000 registered Colombians.³⁸
- The auxiliar jurídico ad honorem legal service in branches of the national executive, including diplomatic missions. This service allows students in their last year of law school to offer their services for nine months.³⁹

HOME COUNTRY ADMINISTRATION

The Directorate of Migrant Affairs, Consulates and Citizen Services, within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs manages the *Colombia nos une* program. Among other functions, *Colombia nos une* aims at supporting the designing of public policies and strategies addressed to the emigrant community, such as return policies or cooperation with emigrant organizations.⁴⁰

Furthermore, Colombia operates the National Intersectorial Commission on Migration (*Comisión Nacional Intersectorial de Migración*).⁴¹ This commission connects ministries involved in the execution of migration policy (e.g. Ministry of Education, Ministry of Defense) and its main functions are: to suggest

36 Consulado de Colombia en Madrid, “Asistencia a Connacionales.”

37 El Congreso de Colombia, *Ley 1448 de 2011 por la cual se dictan medidas de atención, asistencia y reparación integral a las víctimas del conflicto armado interno y se dictan otras disposiciones*.

38 El Congreso de Colombia, *Ley 76 de 1993 por medio de la cual se adoptan medidas de protección a los colombianos en el exterior a través del servicio consular de la República*, 76; El Congreso de Colombia, *Ley 991 de 2005 por la cual se modifica parcialmente la ley 76 de 1993 y se dictan otras disposiciones*, 991.

39 El Congreso de Colombia, *Ley 1322 por la cual se autoriza la prestación del servicio de auxiliar jurídico ad honorem en los organismos y entidades de la rama ejecutiva del orden nacional, territorial y sus representaciones en el exterior*.

40 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Resolución 5813 de 2011 por la cual se crean grupos internos de trabajo del ministerio de relaciones exteriores*.

41 Cancillería, “Comisión Nacional Intersectorial de Migración.”

changes in the design or coordination of migration policy (including policies addressed to the emigrant community); to coordinate studies on migration; to present proposals to increase the return of Colombian emigrants; and to educate Colombians living abroad about the services they can access and their rights.⁴² Since its creation in 2003, the commission has been convened only a few times and at the moment of publishing this book is in need of reform, since some of its member institutions do not exist anymore.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with departmental governments, local entities, and the International Organization for Migration has created the Migrant Service Offices (*Oficinas de Atención al Migrante, OAM*) to provide information to returnees, families of Colombian migrants, and Colombians interested in moving abroad. The *OAM* aim to protect the rights of migrants, provide information (about government services or investment strategies) to emigrants and returnees, or prevent the risks of migration.⁴³ The offices also offer orientation on health issues, job placement, legal consultancy, or psychological support.⁴⁴

ECONOMIC POLICIES

REMITTANCES

Fear of not being able to ascertain the origin of remittances led the Colombian government to close most of the remittances channels. In the last years, however, some changes have been made to this policy. The first is the possibility to use remittances to invest in the real-estate market (see next section). The second is the possibility of opening a *Cuenta de Ahorro de Trámite Simplificado (CATS)* account. A council on remittances was created in 2009 in order to incorporate new public and private actors in order to increase the productive use of remittances. At the time of writing this report, this council had not been convened.⁴⁵

INVESTMENT

The *Mi casa con Remesas* program, managed by the Inter-American Development Bank, *COMFAMA* and several Colombian *Cajas de compensación* funds, allows families to pay their mortgages with the remittances they receive from their relatives living abroad. All Colombians that receive remittances on a

42 Ibid.

43 Colombia Nos Une, “Oficinas de atención al migrante.”

44 Ibid.

45 Asobancaria, “Las remesas internacionales como elemento dinamizador de la inclusión financiera.”

regular basis can apply to the program. Both the receiver and sender of remittances will be owners of the property purchased.⁴⁶

Furthermore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the *Colombia nos une* program organizes real-estate exhibitions abroad (e.g. Madrid, New York City, London) with the goal of attracting Colombians living abroad to invest in the Colombian real-estate market. The idea behind these programs is to channel remittances into investments and not only individual consumption.⁴⁷

BRAIN-CIRCULATION NETWORKS AND BRAIN-GAIN PROGRAMS

The Colombian government has created the *Colombianos destacados en el exterior* network, which is a brain-circulation network, managed directly by *Colombia nos une*. The network is conceived as a tool to develop the country and aims at fostering knowledge exchange between ‘outstanding’ Colombian emigrants and Colombia.⁴⁸

RETURN POLICIES

The Ministry of Education handles the recognition of academic and professional qualifications acquired abroad. There are different mechanisms to recognize foreign academic titles depending on the country or the institution awarding the qualification. The aim of the process is to assess equivalency to official qualifications in Colombia. The resolution establishes different criteria for recognition, according to international accords, existing committee rulings. If no accord or previous ruling exists, the case is submitted to an academic committee.⁴⁹

Recognition can take up to 2 months when a recognition agreement already exists, the program is already recognized, or if there is a similar case. If an academic evaluation of the qualification is needed, the process could take up to 5 months.⁵⁰

In addition, the Law of Return regulates a program to foster the return of emigrants. The administration responsible for implementing the law is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Interdepartmental Commission for Return. The general goal of the program is to incentivize the return of Colombian emigrants from a multidimensional perspective. The Law differentiates

46 Grupo Bancolombia, “Conozca sobre mi casa con remesas.”

47 Consejo Nacional de Política Económica y Social, “Conpes 3603: Política Integral Migratoria.”

48 Colombia nos une, “Colombianos Destacados en el Exterior.”

49 Ministerio de Educación Nacional, *Resolución 5547 de 2005 por la cual se define el trámite y los requisitos para la convalidación de títulos otorgados por instituciones de educación superior extranjeras o por instituciones legalmente reconocidas por la autoridad competente en el respectivo país, para expedir títulos de educación superior.*

50 Ibid.

between four categories of return:⁵¹ Solidarity return, reserved for victims of the armed conflict; Humanitarian return, for Colombians facing threats to their physical safety; Return to work, for Colombians intending to use their qualifications and experiences in Colombia; and Productive return, for Colombians intending to co-fund productive projects linked to the development of their department or municipality.

Finally, the Colombian government has a program to foster the return of scientists working abroad. This program, called *Es tiempo de volver*, is managed by the Administrative Department of Science, Technology, and Innovation and seeks to encourage the incorporation of Colombian scientists educated or working abroad into Colombian universities and research institutes. The program offers funding for the costs of return and social benefits.⁵²

OBLIGATIONS

MILITARY SERVICE, SOCIAL SERVICE, TAXES

Military service is mandatory for all male Colombians; however, military service is not mandatory for non-residents, providing men between 18 and 28 certify that they live abroad at their nearest consulate⁵³ and demand their military identification, where the exemption is stated.⁵⁴

Another exception to the obligation of military service concerns the victims of the armed conflict living abroad.⁵⁵

CULTURAL POLICIES

Since 2005, Colombia has run special promotion programs, intended to promote Colombian culture, arts or, sports within emigrant communities.⁵⁶ Its strategic goals are to preserve and consolidate values related to the nation-

51 El Congreso de Colombia, *Ley 1565 de 2012 por medio de la cual se dictan disposiciones y se fijan incentivos para el retorno de los colombianos residentes en el extranjero*.

52 Colciencias, “Convocatoria ‘Es tiempo de volver 2014.’”

53 El Congreso de Colombia, *Ley 48 de 1993 - Ley de Reclutamiento*, Art. 23.

54 Jefatura de reclutamiento, “Instrucciones para los colombianos residentes en el exterior.”

55 El Congreso de Colombia, *Ley 1448 de 2011 por la cual se dictan medidas de atención, asistencia y reparación integral a las víctimas del conflicto armado interno y se dictan otras disposiciones*.

56 Ministerio de relaciones exteriores, *Decreto 333 de 1995 por medio del cual se adoptan medidas de protección y promoción de las comunidades colombianas en el exterior*; Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Resolución 4065 de 2005 por medio de la cual se definen y reglamentan los programas especiales de promoción de las comunidades colombianas en el exterior*.

al identity (especially among second- and third-generation migrants); foster integration in the state of reception; help to build emigrant networks; and promote Colombians living abroad.⁵⁷ The programs must be proposed either by the consulates or the emigrant community to the Committee for the Promotion of Colombian Communities Abroad, dependent on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Once the Committee has approved the activities, they are managed by the respective consulate.⁵⁸

EXIT AND TRANSIT POLICIES

Colombia imposes an exit fee of \$USD 38 that is applicable to all international exits and, therefore, must be paid by all Colombian citizens wanting to exit the country, as well as by foreigners that stay in the country more than 60 days. Emigrant Colombians must not pay the fee when they visit Colombia, but only if they do not stay more than 180 days.⁵⁹

The Colombian government, through *Colombia nos une*, has launched several communication campaigns in recent years to inform potential emigrants about their rights and obligations. For example, the *Con la trata no hay trato* campaign intends to prevent human trafficking by providing information on how to avoid becoming a target of human trafficking using a website, a free phone number, and an e-mail address; and by offering assistance to victims of human trafficking.⁶⁰ *Colombia nos une* has also launched a website to assist in finding a job outside Colombia and raise awareness of fraudulent job opportunities.⁶¹

Colombia does not, however, conduct any systematic communication campaigns to discourage emigration or promote safe transit.

SOCIAL POLICIES

Legislation regulating unemployment benefits in Colombia does not specifically mention the situation of emigrants. However, the requirements to access the protection mechanism make it impossible for nonresidents to enjoy the

57 Colombia nos une, "Programas Especiales de Promoción."

58 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Resolución 4065 de 2005 por medio de la cual se definen y reglamentan los programas especiales de promoción de las comunidades colombianas en el exterior*, Art. 7.

59 Proexport Colombia, "Impuesto de Salida."

60 Colombia nos une, "Con la trata no hay trato."

61 Colombia nos une, "Evite engaños a la hora de aplicar a ofertas laborales fuera de Colombia."

unemployment insurance. These requirements include actively searching for a job and being enrolled in vocational training,⁶² impossible in the case of nonresidents.

The social security system in Colombia is designed to ensure health and financial aid to guarantee the individual well being of all Colombian residents.⁶³ The social security system is composed of two pillars: healthcare and pensions. On one hand, the *Colombiano seguro en el exterior* program allows emigrant Colombians to access the pension scheme by means of paying a monthly contribution.⁶⁴ On the other hand, the healthcare scheme included in the social security system only covers nationals within Colombian territory. The Institute for Social Security (ISS) signed an agreement with *Giros y Finanzas S.A.* (Western Union) to facilitate the payment of contributions to the ISS from abroad.⁶⁵ Furthermore, Colombia has signed bilateral agreements with some countries in order to facilitate the their nationals' access to social security schemes (e.g. the agreement signed with Spain in 2006).⁶⁶

Moreover, Colombia participates in the *Semanas binacionales de salud*, a strategy created by the University of California's Health Initiative of the Americas, whose main goal is to offer health services to migrant populations in the US and Canada. Other countries such as Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Peru also participate in the program.⁶⁷

Colombia also offers several educational programs for its emigrant community:

- Organized by the National Learning Service (*Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje*), the *Cursos virtuales para colombianos en el exterior* program offers online courses on topics such as health, art, culture, entrepreneurship, or sports. The courses are open to residents as well as emigrants.⁶⁸
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the *Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia* have signed an agreement to promote the development of human capital among the emigrant community. The agreement includes access to online education programs that cover primary and secondary education, as well as graduate and postgraduate studies.⁶⁹

62 El Congreso de Colombia, *Ley 1636 de 2013 por medio de la cual se crea el mecanismo de protección al cesante en Colombia*, Art. 13.

63 El Congreso de Colombia, *Ley 100 de 1993 por la cual se crea el sistema de seguridad social integral y se dictan otras disposiciones*.

64 Colombia nos une, "Tarjetón de servicios para colombianos en el exterior."

65 Consejo Nacional de Política Económica y Social, "Conpes 3603: Política Integral Migratoria."

66 Ramírez, Zuluaga, and Perilla, "Perfil migratorio de Colombia 2012," 100.

67 Colombia nos une, "Semana binacional de salud en Estados Unidos y Canadá."

68 Consulado de Colombia en Orlando FL, "Cursos Virtuales del SENA para colombianos en el exterior."

69 Colombia nos une, "Tarjetón de servicios para colombianos en el exterior."

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the *Escuela de Administración y Negocios (EAN)*, and the International Organization for Migration have an agreement to offer Colombian migrants and their families a 20% reduction in the tuition fees of several e-learning programs taught through the *EAN*. To benefit from the discount, emigrants must be registered in the *Redes Colombia* platform.⁷⁰
- The *Instituto Colombiano de Crédito Educativo y Estudios en el Exterior (ICETEX)* offers emigrant Colombians and their families the possibility to access loans and scholarships to fund studies abroad. For some of the programs offered by the *ICETEX*, only resident citizens can apply. However, the main credit lines, such as the one to pursue a postgraduate degree abroad, are also open to emigrants.⁷¹

SYMBOLIC POLICIES

Colombia nos une has created the *100 Colombianos* award to honor emigrant Colombians who have excelled at the international level. The eligibility requirements are residence outside Colombia, Colombian nationality by birth, professional excellence, and contributions to the community of origin or adoption.⁷²

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70 Colombia nos une, “Descuentos en programas de educación virtual de la Universidad EAN.”

71 Colombia nos une, “Becas y créditos en educación para colombianos en el exterior.”

72 Colombia nos une, “100Colombianos.”

- El Congreso de Colombia. *Acto Legislativo 2 de 2015*, 2015. http://www.secretariassenado.gov.co/senado/basedoc/acto_legislativo_02_2015.html.
- . *Ley 39 de 1961 por la cual se dictan normas para la cedulaación, y otras de carácter electoral*, 1961. https://www.cancilleria.gov.co/sites/default/files/Normograma/docs/ley_0039_1961.htm.
- . *Ley 43 de 1993 por medio de la cual se establecen las normas relativas a la adquisición, renuncia, pérdida y recuperación de la nacionalidad colombiana; se desarrolla el numeral 7 del artículo 40 de la Constitución Política y se dictan otras disposiciones*, 1993. <http://www.alcaldiabogota.gov.co/sisjur/normas/Norma1.jsp?i=286>.
- . *Ley 48 de 1993 - Ley de Reclutamiento*, 1993.
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