



Venezuelan Community in Ireland

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

AUG 2022 EDITION

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021



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A message from our Chairperson

For most of us 2021 was a year full of fears, risks and future hope. Fear of not being able to be again in-person with people from our community. Fear of not being able to financially support the organisation and rely solely on our community to stand by. Fear of not being able to keep our volunteers motivated despite the limited physical engagement. As much as fear governed, it was also a year full of risks and creating new ways of operating the organisation. We strategically invested some funds to pursue professional training for growth and development of the team. We risked applying, once again, for charity status and going through a lengthy process of paperwork to earn the official status of charity. We risked exploring new routes to send medical supplies to Venezuela from a neighbouring country to continue supporting our partners through humanitarian aid.



During all those efforts, we always maintained a huge amount of hope. Hope that sooner or later we were going to organise in-person events with our migrant community. Hope that our efforts were going to be recognised by the Charity Regulator and that we would be given charity status. Hope that once granted, a whole new world of opportunities were going to be opened to us, for more social inclusion initiatives for our community in Ireland, as well as strengthen our humanitarian efforts in Venezuela.

Overall, a year full of challenges. Learning how to overcome barriers became our primary goal. We managed to keep the community engaged through online workshops and to build a solid internal governance structure that supported us successfully on our charity status application. We gained more than we lost and for that we are grateful.

First and foremost I wish to thank our donors, who day in and out support VCI, particularly in these difficult times. Thank you for your continued support.

I also want to thank our Board of Trustees and volunteers. Empathy, compassion and hard work are key values in what we do, you demonstrate these qualities everyday. We are always on the lookout for future leaders and volunteers for VCI, we would welcome any person who wants to join our efforts to make a difference to our communities in Venezuela and Ireland.

Looking forward to the year ahead, where we will continue promoting the Venezuelan culture, traditions and values in Ireland, our new home.

LILIANA FERNANDEZ

Chairpersonn

Our Vision for change

Our Mission

To positively influence the lives of Venezuelans living in Ireland and to support the disadvantaged and vulnerable living in Venezuela

Our Vision

To have a strong and vibrant community of Venezuelans living in Ireland and to provide humanitarian aid and poverty relief to Venezuela

Strategic Objectives

Integration of
Venezuelans
in Ireland



Promotion of
Venezuelan
culture,
custom and
values

Humanitarian
Aid to
Venezuela



Objective 1: Integrations of Venezuelans in Ireland

Migrants struggle to integrate into a new society due to cultural differences, language barriers and lack of financial stability in terms of employment, housing, and training opportunities. We believe that all migrant communities living in Ireland should have access to services and opportunities including recreational activities that support their integration into society. Participating in spaces that invite migrants, building new networks and connecting marginalised groups is a fundamental part of the work we do within the migrant communities in Ireland.

Since our creation in 2017, we have been organising and participating in public events organised by local authorities and migrant groups, as well as organising our own outdoor events for Venezuelans, other migrants and local people. Although 2021 was a challenging year to host and participate in in-person events, by shifting to online activities we managed to continue our activities to engage our audience. We developed “VCI Learning” an online platform for recreation and learning to deepen migrant’s understanding of finances, sports, entrepreneurship and mental health during the Covid-19 pandemic. We delivered 11 sessions in total with different professionals and guest speakers. We also organised two outdoors events in summer, when Covid-19 public events restrictions were lifted.

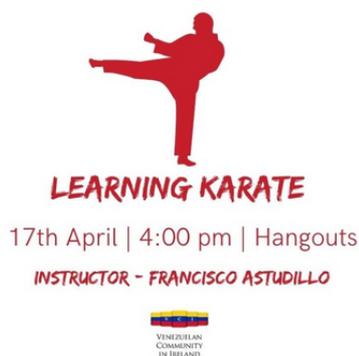
VCI Learning

As we all discovered the repercussions of isolation due to Covid-19, some of our Latin volunteers were showing signs of depression and anxiety about job prospects, financial stability, and overall health issues during the Covid-19 pandemic. We saw the need to create a platform where Latin migrants could connect online to discuss their concerns and to connect with other people who perhaps were also feeling lonely and anxious about Covid-19. For this reason, in March 2021 we launched VCI Learning to create a platform for migrants and local people with specialised information on finances, job hunting, sports and wellbeing. We connected with experts and organisations such as Bank of Ireland, Pure Finance, Psicólogos Bitácora and several other organisations from Spain and Argentina to deliver these online webinars. The sessions were delivered in English or Spanish and included:



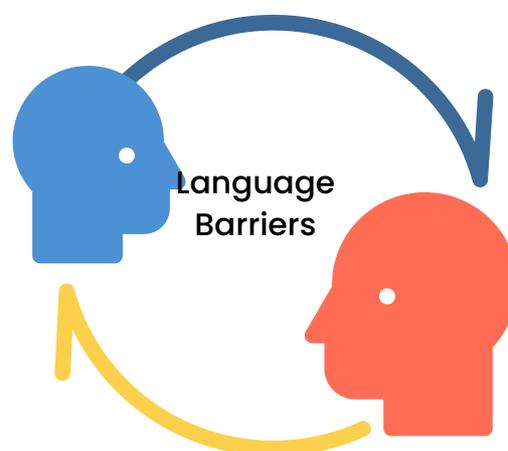
Objective 1: Integrations of Venezuelans in Ireland

- Learning Pilates by Mariana Salvioli who is a certified pilates instructor and passionate about wellness and fitness - 26th March 2021.
- Learning Karate by Francisco Astudillo to build self-confidence and improve levels of energy using the Black Belt Sensei - 17th April 2021.
- Running and Functional Training Live Session with Daniela Martucci, a certified sport coach and mountain runner. This session was given in preparation for our summer virtual challenge “Run To Feed” - 27th May 2021.
- Learning about LinkedIn and job application with Daniela Perez from Recursos en tus Manos in Argentina - 14th July 2021.
- Financial Planning, by Eoin Wilson from Pure Finance - 29th July 2021.
- Live talk: The issues in job hunting from the perspective of psychoanalysis, by Erminio Oliviero and Irene Cardona from Psicólogo Bitácora Venezuelans based in Limerick - 24th August 2021.
- Getting a Mortgage in Ireland, by Shane Byrne from Bank of Ireland - 26th August 2021.
- Mind Up: Entrepreneurship, an online workshop given by Aracelis Teran, Begnino Avila, Rena Aguirre and Orlando Estupinan, all based in Spain - 21st Oct 2021.



Social inclusion for senior Latin Migrants

In March 2019 we conducted a focus group with 15 older Venezuelans living in Ireland, aged over fifty years of age, to identify their main challenges in adapting to life in Ireland. This age group had moved to the country in recent years due to the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela. We identified that language barriers, access to the labour market and loneliness were the main issues limiting their opportunities to integrate.



Objective 1: Integrations of Venezuelans in Ireland

From that focus group, we initiated a series of free language exchanges (6 in total) and 3 outdoor activities to support them in their language learning journey and foster social interaction among them. Due to COVID-19, these initiatives stopped and technology became a challenge to continuing the social interactions due to lack of IT skills for this age group.

In July 2021 we applied to the Communities Integration Fund - CIF (from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth) to obtain financial support to continue the Language Exchange online classes for older Latin migrants. The funding application was approved for 2.053 euros and we initiated the first online classes in December 2021. Our current project consists of six months of free English lessons from December 2021 to June 2022 for Venezuelans and other Latin migrants aged fifty or older. Our proposal also includes mixing this group with elderly local people who want to practice their Spanish in a language exchange programme and outdoor gatherings to advance their language skills and promote social connections and integration in the local community.



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
agus Comhionannais
Department of Justice
and Equality



Outdoors events for integration

In Despite being very limited regarding the amount of interactions we could have with members of the community, we managed to organise two public outdoors activities when Covid-19 government restrictions were eased during summer. These initiatives aimed at providing a space for sports and wellness, food and recreational activities for migrant and local people. Venezuelan entrepreneurs were present too. The two outdoor activities were:



Objective 1: Integrations of Venezuelans in Ireland

Virtual Run Day. As part of the fundraising campaign “Run to Feed” an individual virtual fundraising challenge organised between June and July, we closed this fundraising campaign in Phoenix Park on 25th July. At the “Virtual Run Day” we asked participants to run 5km on the day and meet at the park to continue exercising throughout the day with sports and recreational activities.



World Arepa Day. To reconnect with our community we celebrated World Arepa Day, a day that commemorates the Venezuelan traditional food “Arepas”. World Arepa Day has taken place every second Saturday in September since 2012, thanks to an initiative by the organisation ‘Venezuelans in the World’ to promote the traditional dish. As part of this initiative, we organised Zumba, Yoga and recreational activities to bring together members of the latin community and Irish people. Venezuelan entrepreneurs volunteered to offer some of their products for free such as Arepas Grill, Lollipop, Healthy Tasty and Tribuna Natural.



Objective 2: Promotion of Venezuelan culture, custom and values

Since 2017 we have been participating in multicultural events organised by the different local authorities in Dublin and migrant groups. Through our dancing group "Venezuelan Roots", our aim is to spread the Venezuelan culture, traditions and values in Irish society through music and dance. We have collaborated in multiple festivals with Dublin City Council, South Dublin County Council, including multiple festivals and the St. Patrick' Day parades.

Although our dancers were not able to perform in public in 2020 and 2021 due to the restrictions on public gathering as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, they managed to continue rehearsing in outdoors or private spaces when government Covid-19 guidelines allowed it.

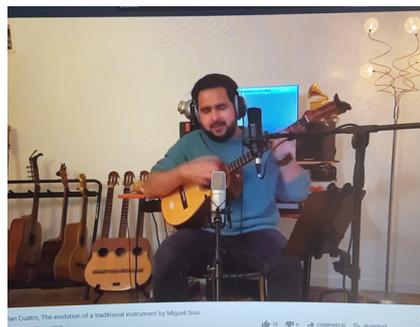
The pandemic also affected our possibility to create spaces of cultural exchange with Irish and other migrant communities. However, we did not lose the opportunity to portray our cultural heritage on the few occasions that Covid-19 public restrictions were eased for outdoor gatherings.

Dublin was formally appointed a Learning City by UNESCO in 2019. With support from Dublin City Council and other educational and community stakeholders, The Dublin City Learning Festival was held in a virtual capacity this year between 22nd - 24th March 2021. The festival specifically focused on new and existing community-based initiatives designed to promote learning among a variety of different groups across Dublin city. This year, VCI hosted three events, two are available on our YouTube channel:

Contemporary Venezuelan Art: VCI hosted an online talk with Mariana Salvioli to explore artwork produced by a number of contemporary Venezuelan artists living throughout the world. Number of attendees: 10.

Venezuelan Cuatro: In this virtual event Miguel Siso discussed the evolution of the Cuatro, a traditional Venezuelan instrument. During his talk, Siso explored the fascinating evolution of this instrument's sound and the role it played in the music industry - beginning as an accompaniment instrument before later forging a path as a soloist instrument. Number of attendees: 20.

The fragility of the tropical forests with Veronica Athanasio: In this talk, participants learned about tropical forests - usually referred to as the lungs of the Earth - and the dangers they and the planet face at the hands of deforestation. Number of attendees: 10.



Objective 3 : Humanitarian Aid to Venezuela

Given the deterioration of living conditions in Venezuela, we have made humanitarian aid our core objective to support disadvantaged communities across the country. As an organisation, we deliver projects and initiatives that aim to raise awareness of the current humanitarian situation in Venezuela and assist humanitarian work there through funding projects.

Fundraising Events

VCI's fundraising events this year took place online and included webinars, raffles, bingo and fundraising campaigns through RallyUp.

Webinars and Online Raffles

In 2020, we hosted a number of webinars where we invited members from humanitarian organisations in Venezuela to speak about their projects and the current challenges they face in delivering aid. As part of the webinars, VCI organised a raffle to raise vital funds to support medical staff in Venezuelan hospitals as they battle against Covid-19. Following the success of the webinars, we hosted an additional talk and raffle with our partner NGO *Ven Da Tu Mano* in February 2021 fundraising **€655**.



Objective 3 : Humanitarian Aid to Venezuela

Bingo

We hosted an online bingo event to benefit the school's meal programme Merienda Escolar of the school "Victor Lino Gomez" in Cabimas, Zulia, Venezuela. Participants purchased their bingo card which allowed them to play three rounds and participate for prizes. Participants included people of different nationalities living in and outside of Ireland. Members of the Venezuelan Community in Ireland kindly sponsored the prizes given during the event. A total of €365 was collected during bingo.

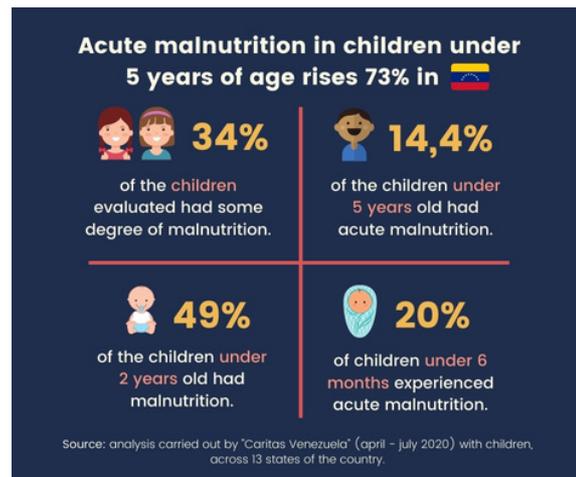
Pink is my strength! Fundraiser

We initiated a campaign in October 2021 to support the purchase and shipment of medicines and other medical supplies to organisations that are working on the prevention, early detection and treatment of cancer in Venezuela. We raised a total of €1,196 through a RallyUp fundraiser which included a raffle of a painting donated by a Venezuelan artist. Throughout the campaign, we also received donations of cancer and breast care products from private organisations. 10% of the funds collected were donated to Senosalud-Europe as part of our partnership with them



Run to Feed Fundraiser

Run to Feed was a virtual fundraising challenge. Participants set a personal challenge to run or walk (50Km or 100Km) to raise much-needed funds to provide school meals to children living in extreme poverty in Venezuela. Following the success of the first fundraising campaign in June, a second fundraising campaign was launched in July. We raised a total of €1,625, between our online fundraiser and cash donations.



Objective 3 : Humanitarian Aid to Venezuela

Supporting Causes in Venezuela

Partnership is fundamental to our values, our belief and our work both in Ireland and abroad. We have identified a number of NGO partners, each with specific knowledge and skills in humanitarianism, that are geographically located closer to Venezuela.

Food Provision



Partnership with “Alimenta la Solidaridad”

We established a new relationship with “Alimenta la Solidaridad”, a Venezuelan nonprofit organisation and social movement that supports a network of more than 240 community kitchens throughout the country to provide daily meals to more than 16,000 children. Their approach to humanitarian work is defined by community empowerment, co-responsibility and project sustainability. As part of this partnership, we have been supporting the community kitchen located at “El Palaciero” in Lara State, Venezuela, covering 40% of the daily kilocalories' requirement for infants from birth to 12 years old. In 2021 we delivered 3,265 meals to 50 children and 5 mothers who volunteered to run this programme.



Objective 3 : Humanitarian Aid to Venezuela

This school meal programme also provides an **Educational Programme** to the children in health and education. Once a week, after school activities and classes, children are engaged in organised activities that involve Montessori techniques, alphabetisation, hygiene and children's rights.

The partnership is also building the **Female Leadership Programme**, to grow confidence, community support and raise awareness of women's rights, which is especially important to the children's mothers who might be potential victims of domestic violence, as well as offering tools for female entrepreneurship.



Objective 3 : Humanitarian Aid to Venezuela

Supporting Causes in Venezuela

Health Care



More medicines for breast cancer were delivered to @senosaludvenezuela last week!

Thank you all who contributed and made this possible during pink month #pinkismystrength and @senosaludeuropa virtual run! 🇻🇪 🇺🇸 🇮🇪 🇪🇺



@senosaludeuropa

Partnership with Senosalud-Europa

Since late 2018, VCI has been supporting Senosalud-Europa in the shipment of medicines and medical supplies to cancer patients in Venezuela. During this partnership, we have shipped humanitarian aid to three separate NGOs in Venezuela including Senosalud Venezuela (Caracas), Seno & Vida (San Cristobal) and Fundanica (Valencia). The first two work with breast cancer patients, while the third, Fundanica, works specifically in the area of paediatric oncology.

Due to the price of the medicines and the cost of shipping from Ireland, the medicines and medical supplies were purchased in Colombia and sent to our ally organisations in Venezuela early in 2022. We sent a total of 27.7 kilograms worth of medicines and medical supplies. Additionally donated medicines included everything from pain relief to chemotherapy and hormonal treatments.



Objective 3 : Humanitarian Aid to Venezuela

Supporting Causes in Venezuela

Partnership with Knitted Knockers

Knitted Knockers are special handmade prostheses for women who have undergone mastectomies or other procedures to the breast making them more comfortable and affordable than traditional breast prosthetics.

In June 2021, we received a donation of 1,000 unstuffed knitted knockers, from the founders of Knitted Knockers in the United States, that were sent to our ally NGO Seno & Vida in collaboration with Senosalud-Europa. In addition, Seno & Vida now coordinate volunteers who knit and crochet Knitted Knockers and have been added to the official directory of knitted knockers. This makes them the first and only organisation in Venezuela that provides these prostheses for free to women who request them. Up to now, this programme has benefited a total of 166 women.



Objective 3 : Humanitarian Aid to Venezuela

Supporting Causes in Venezuela

Partnership with Ven Da Tu Mano

Since 2020 we have worked closely with Ven Da Tu Mano to raise awareness about the current crisis in the Venezuelan health sector through webinars and other fundraising efforts including raffles. As such, we have raised funds to support health workers and public hospitals in Venezuela during the COVID-19 crisis. For example, with funds raised during our second raffle which took place in March 2021 (total amount: €655), Ven Da Tu Mano was able to purchase a total of 110 PPE kits. Each kit contained 10 pairs of surgical gloves, one bottle of hand-sanitising gel and 5 surgical face masks. These were donated to health workers in 5 hospitals across Venezuela dedicated to the treatment and care of Covid-19 patients.



Arca de Noé

Arca de Noé (Noah's Arc) is an NGO located in Lara, Venezuela that works with vulnerable children (including orphans) and women who have limited access to food and clothing. As part of our project that was initiated in 2020 called "Clothing for Venezuelan" we collected clothes for children and women in Ireland. 42 kilograms of clothes were shipped to Arca de Noé in April 2021 and these were distributed.



Our Work On The Ground

In Ireland

11 On Line Events Including:
Sport and Mental Wellbeing (5)
Workshops (6)

2 Outdoors Events

2 Online English Lessons for Elderly Migrant.



Meals



Provided 3,265 meals to disadvantaged communities in Venezuela.

Female Leadership Programme

A total of 32 women attended female leadership programmes.



Education Programme



28 hours of education and health sessions for children.

Medicines and Medical Supplies

27.7 kg worth of medicines and medical supplies shipped to our partner organisations in Venezuela.

110 PPE kits.



Partnerships and fundraising

In Ireland

VCI is a member of several different groups and organisations operating in Ireland. Since 2018, we have formed part of the South Dublin Migrant Integration Forum (SDMIF) and we are also a member of the New Communities Partnership (NCP) which serves as the official mailing address for VCI.

VCI is also a proud member of the Wheel, an organisation that provides advice, training and networking opportunities for charities based in Ireland. We have been participating in online training sessions for social enterprises and we have been partaking in webinars for governance, fundraising, audit, finance, and communication strategies. Between April-June 2021, VCI's chairperson completed a Certification in Charity Law, Trusteeship and Governance organised by the Wheel and the Law Society of Ireland.

Furthermore, VCI forms part of the Tea & Chats programme which is hosted by the Dublin City Council Cultural Company and our chairperson was appointed a member of the Dublin City Council Culture Company Advisory Group to serve a two-year term beginning in May 2021.

We are currently in conversation with members of the Latin American Solidarity Centre (LASC) where we seek to work on initiatives that will enhance the wellbeing of both our memberships.

We collaborate with multiple partners in Ireland to execute our online workshops for the Latin community living in Ireland
In 2021, we partnered with:

In Venezuela

Over the years, we have been able to build and maintain relationships with different partners in Ireland and Venezuela to achieve our goals. In 2021, we gained a core partnership with "Alimenta la Solidaridad" a Venezuelan-based NGO that focuses on providing nutritional meals to children living in extreme poverty in Venezuela.

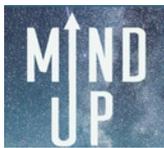
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Partnerships and fundraising

In Ireland

We collaborate with multiple partners in Ireland to execute our online workshops for the Latin community living in Ireland

In 2021, we partnered with:



SEED OF JOY YOGA



In Venezuela



Management and Governance

Structure

VCI is a non-for-profit, volunteer based organisation created in April 2017. We are a Registered Charity with the Charities Regulator - Ireland's national statutory regulator for charitable organisations. Our Registered Charity Number is: 20206241. VCI is registered as a charity with the Office of the Revenue Commissioners. Our Charity Number is CHY 3472123HH. The organisation has an Executive Committee formed by seven trustees and a volunteer base that supports the implementation of our projects.

Governance

As an unincorporated body we are governed by the VCI Constitution which sets out our mission, objectives, trustees's eligibility and the governance arrangements and internal management of the organisation.

The Board of Trustees, elected at the 2021 Annual General Meeting, are the charity's trustees. During 2021 new board members were selected through an open recruitment process, which included advertising online, and a targeted recruitment search. New appointees were given a personal induction programme tailored to their areas of expertise and governance obligations, and all trustees were provided with a range of training opportunities to help them meet their responsibilities. The Board of Trustees met monthly for scheduled meetings and held occasional ad hoc meetings for exceptional business were necessary. The balance of trustees is kept under review with regard to diversity and geographical spread. The Board of Trustees also places particular emphasis on appointing individuals who bring specific identified skills.



Management and Governance

Our Board of Directors

Our Executive Committee is formed by seven trustees that meet once a month during Board meetings. As a volunteer-based organisation, we also meet for strategic-committee meetings during these meetings to coordinate and plan the organisation's activities.

As per our current Constitution 2021, the charity's trustees have a tenure of three years with one-year re-election.

Our Board of Trustees in 2021 was formed by 4 officers and 3 co-opt officers.

The Board meets once a month and we have extra meetings in sub-committees.

In 2021 we had a total of 12 executive meetings and one extraordinary meeting.

Different members of the board and volunteers also met numerous times as part of the above committees.

We held our Annual General Meeting on the 8th May 2021.

Below is the attendance list of the Board of Trustees for 2021:

 <p>13/13</p> <p>Liliana Fernandez Mitchel Chairperson</p>	 <p>11/13</p> <p>Karen Mavare Vice-chair person</p>	 <p>9/13</p> <p>Anais Marin Treasurer</p>	<p>General Meeting</p> 
 <p>12/13</p> <p>Marianella Oropeza Secretary</p>	 <p>12/13</p> <p>Maria Isabel Meza Relations development officer</p>	 <p>10/13</p> <p>Carlos Rojas Fundraiser Officer</p>	

Extraordinary Meeting - 18/03/21

Annual General Meeting* - 08/05/21

Extra Committees Members:

Governance and Strategic Planning: Yulimar O'Grady - since November 2021

Communications and PR: Indira Fernandez, Jackeline Vazques and Patricia González

Management and Governance

Advisory committees

VCI has established four committees which cover the following remits:

Financial Audit and Humanitarian Aid

Oversees and monitors the financial position of the charity to ensure long- and short-term viability. It oversees the budgeting process and recommends the investment policy, including the charity's stance on ethical investment for humanitarian purposes. It monitors reserves and makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees on the appropriate level for reserves, taking into account the financial risks faced by the organisation.

Governance and Strategic Planning

Ensures that VCI complies with its governing documents and all relevant governance-related legislation and meets the requirements of charity regulators and best governance practice. Its remit includes strategic and succession planning, recruitment, training and development of trustees; reviewing committee terms of reference and levels of delegated authority; and ensuring appropriate performance evaluation processes are in place.

Strategic Events and Volunteer Management

Plays a key role in the effective implementation of the VCI projects and initiative, ensuring there are realistic resources available to execute short and long term projects. In this committee, new volunteers can get involved with the planning, managing and coordination of activities, who meet twice a month to oversee assigned tasks and responsibilities. As for the volunteer management, the committee oversees the recruitment of new volunteers, to make appropriate induction and training.

Communications and Public Relations

Develop and manage the strategic communication plan for VCI which include responsibility for marketing, social media, content creation, website design and other related communications tasks.

Management and Governance

Internal Governance / Accountability

Policy infrastructure

The charity's governance is constantly kept under review by the Governance and Strategic Planning Committee to ensure that the Board of Trustees, its committees and governance structures and procedures are fit for purpose as the charity and the environment evolves. Recently the Governance committee engaged in reviewing the charity's governance arrangements, including the Policy Governance Framework, and to make appropriate recommendations to ensure that the charity's arrangements comply with VCI's governing policy documents and are consistent (as appropriate) with best practice as set out in the Charity Governance Code. VCI abides by the Charity Governance Code, which sets the principles and recommended practice for good governance.

As a result, VCI now holds relevant and practical policies to rule various areas of the organisation these include the following policies as approved by the board:

- 1. Financial.
- 2. GDPR.
- 3. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
- 4. Fundraising.
- 5. Conflicts of Interest.
- 6. Confidentiality.
- 7. Complaints.

Fundraising standards

All our fundraising activities are guided by the government official document "Guidelines for charitable organisations on fundraising from the public" (2018) which sets up the recommendations and principles to manage public funds for charitable purposes. Following the Guidelines, we provide details of the selected cause and beneficiaries, along with the logo and charity number for all our online fundraising campaigns. We also follow the recommendations provided in the Charities Institute Ireland "2017 Fundraising Guidelines for Digital Fundraising", where detailed information about fundraising campaigns for humanitarian purposes is provided, including the purpose, action plan, beneficiaries and how to contact us for feedback/complaints.



Risk Management

As a newly created charity operating in Ireland and sending aid to Venezuela, we have different risks that jeopardise the functioning of the organisation. The main risks are:

Major Risks

Operational: Volunteer-based organisation with non-paid staff. We rely mainly on volunteers to plan and execute our projects. Those volunteers have full-time jobs with limited time for our organisation, slowing projects and having to rely sometimes on trustees (more dedicated volunteers) to complete the execution of projects. This ultimately makes us less efficient than other non-for-profit organisations with paid staff, who would work full-time in their implementation of projects and initiatives. Besides, having to constantly coach or train new volunteers adds extra work for trustees who are already executing assigned tasks. We try to overcome these challenges by recruiting volunteers with specific skill sets to work on specific projects. We are also trying to reach out to volunteers with experience as board members who have already experience in policies and overseeing a non-for-profit organisation.

Financial: Lack of steady income to maintain our humanitarian efforts in Venezuela. Since our inception in 2017, we have been relying on fundraising campaigns and private donations to sustain our food and health programmes in Venezuela. Despite Covid-19, we managed to raise funds and send aid to Venezuela in 2021; however, not having a steady source of income to support those programmes, placed a big burden and responsibilities on our trustees. As part of our plans to secure steady income in the near future, we are currently coordinating a system of paid membership from our volunteers and people interested in supporting our humanitarian efforts in Venezuela. The paid membership will include monthly activities for career coaching, sports and wellness and breastfeeding support to foster community engagement and social cohesion of the Venezuelans in Ireland.

Minor Risks

Governance: Failure to monitor the implementation of VCI's policies. As we are a volunteer-based organisation, our volunteers tend to focus their work on the daily operation of the organisation, while complying with the policies that are in place. We will try to mitigate the risk of failure to comply with our policies by strengthening the Governance Committee with skilled and dedicated volunteers who focus their work in this specific area.

Strategic: Lack of implementation or change of our current Strategic Plan 2021-2024. During Covid-19 we stopped executing the actions set in our current Strategic Plan'21-24 due to the government covid-19 public restrictions guidelines. Those activities included planning and executing multicultural events such as our traditional Christmas Market, participating in the St. Patrick's Day parade in 2020 and 2021 and other multicultural initiatives that we used to participate in with Local Authorities in Dublin (mainly South Dublin and Dublin City). This year, as the pandemic restrictions were lifted, we are reviewing our current plan and we look forward to continuing the planning and implementation of set initiatives to achieve our three Strategic Objectives.

Risk Management

Operational: Absence of a CEO to oversee agreed initiatives and plans. As the organisation's legal structure is "Unincorporated Body" and volunteer-based organisation, we do not have paid staff to oversee the implementation of agreed initiatives and plans. This ultimately reduces the efficiency of our operations making the implementation of our activities slower or with less quality than those non-for-profit organisations with paid staff. We are considering changing our legal structure perhaps to a company, where we would be able to apply for funds that would potentially allow us to have 2 or 3 paid staff in future.

Operational: The absence of qualified volunteers to overtake managerial tasks. Training new volunteers places time constraints and extra responsibilities on the Board of Trustees. In the last couple of years, we have tried to identify projects that require specific volunteer skills and for a limited period of time. In this way, new volunteers will still collaborate with us without being burned out from the daily work. We are also planning to actively promote the information of our committees on our social media, so that volunteers would know in advance where and how they can volunteer with us.

Reputational: Absence of feedback/complaint channels. Our organisation still does not have a clear channel for feedback and complaints from our volunteers and the general public. In the last couple of months, we have focused on expanding our website to create this channel as well as having one day a month to receive volunteers or members of the public on a 1-1 basis to express any feedback about our work and development.

External: NGOs beneficiaries in Venezuela unable to do their work due to local government political pressures. In the last couple of years, the Venezuelan government has threatened to close NGOs that work in the humanitarian sector, because of internal political tensions. So far, our ally organisations have not received a threat of closure from the government. We hope that they can continue their operations without fear of persecution.

External: NGOs beneficiaries in Venezuela having difficulties to mobilise staff and resources due to a serious transportation crisis. The humanitarian crisis in Venezuela has worsened the transport crisis due to lack / cost of petrol. This situation makes daily life difficult for our ally organisations to mobilise our programmes, especially our school meal programme in Lara, Venezuela. For this reason, they have decided to buy the resources locally to operate the school meal programme. Also, they have a coordinator on the ground who receives support from the bigger team twice a week on their full date field visits.

Future Plans

After all that we have achieved in the last 5 years, especially in 2021 when we were granted charity status, our commitment and motivation to continue implementing our mission is growing stronger. We are hoping to initiate and strengthen current and projects by:

Launch VCI support membership. In order to fuel our first and third strategic objectives of the integration of Venezuelans and sending aid to Venezuela, from Mid-2022 we will start promoting our VCI support membership, to allow recurring monthly donations from members. Apart from bringing another income stream to the organisation to be used mainly for humanitarian purposes, this will lead to the participation of our members in free monthly activities organised by VCI volunteers. The activities will include career coaching, sports training and zumba classes among others.

Support the most vulnerable in our community, the older Latin migrants. We want to continue our Language Exchange Program that provides free English lessons to the senior Latin communities. Although this project was initiated in 2019 and stopped during 2020 and 2021 due to Covid-19 restriction guidelines, we re-launched the project online at the end of 2021 and our goal is to return to in-person lessons for better engagement and community integration. We also hope to connect the participants of this programme with older Irish people to foster inclusion among migrant and local people.

Increase training and volunteer engagement. As members of The Wheel, we have been able to participate in different training sessions for small charity organisations to strengthen different skills to execute our work as the Board of Trustees. In future, we would like to extend those trainings to other members/volunteers who will hugely benefit from the skill set offered by the Wheel. We have been offered training from GLG Social Impact Partners Program, to improve our capacities in project management, risk assessment and impact evaluation. We are hoping to actively undertake these training sessions to execute our current and future projects at a higher standard.

Increase our alliances and collaboration with other migrant groups. We would like to continue and strengthen our relationships with different migrant organisations who are working towards the same objective for community integration and sharing of culture. We have recently started a partnership with New Communities Partnership to invite migrants to attend and perform at the Abbey Theatre. With this partnership, we hope to attract more migrants to spaces that have been mainly reserved and used by local people. We also hope to increase our collaboration with the Latin American Solidarity Centre (LASC) to continue participating in multicultural events such as the Day of the Dead in November, as well as the Dublin City Cultural Company and different Migrant Forums.



Future Plans

Participate in more multicultural events organised by the local authorities in Dublin. Promoting the Venezuelan culture, traditions and values is one of our strategic objectives and we will continue organising and supporting initiatives that fulfil this goal. As part of our VCI Strategic Plan 2021-2022, we are committed to continue participating in multicultural events and festivals through our dancing group "Venezuelan Roots". From our own initiatives, we will reactivate the traditional Christmas Market for 2022, which was cancelled the previous two years due to Covid-19. During this celebration we have a display of Venezuelan entrepreneurs offering traditional food, handcraft, music, dance and much more.

Increase awareness about our humanitarian work. Having a charity status now, we are aware of the opportunities that it gives us to broaden our income streams. We are planning to reach goand seek corporate donations that support our humanitarian work in Venezuela, for food and health programmes. We will seek corporate donations by contacting new companies that have a connection with Venezuela or Latin America, for example having Venezuelan employees and that humanitarian aid has a fundamental role in their values.



Conclusion

We are deeply proud of how much we have progressed in the last five years since our conception in April 2017, especially what it has been achieved in 2021. We earned charity status, giving us the chance not only to expand the opportunities to apply for government grants but also to earn the recognition of our community, private donors and potential corporate donations. We also built up on our Governance side, where new policies and procedures were put in place to guarantee the correct execution of our daily operations. Professional training was also carried out to deepen our understanding on how to operate a charity in Governance, Risk Management, Communication and Strategic Fundraising.

In 2021, we managed to engage with our audience online, providing workshops and organising a number of outdoor events when Covid-19 public restrictions guidelines allowed it. We were delighted to receive government support from the Communities Integration Fund 2021, to continue delivering free English lessons to older Latin communities who are especially vulnerable within the migrants in Ireland; due to not having the language skills and professional opportunities to fully integrate into Irish society.

We welcomed new volunteers with specific skills in Governance who will strengthen our work and efforts to comply with the Charities Governance Code. Having more policies and procedures in place, we are confident that we have taken our charity work to a more institutionalised level, where more volunteers will be joining and staying in the organisation for longer to support in the execution of our VCI Strategic Plan 2021-2024.

We look forward to the years ahead, to welcome and collaborate with "new Irish " in our multicultural events, to continue listening and supporting the integration of Latin communities in Ireland and to offer essential support to the children of our chosen school meal programme in Palaciero, Lara, Venezuela.

Financial Report

Venezuelan Community in Ireland

Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 December 2021

Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 December 2021

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Trustees and other information
for the year ended 31 December 2021

Trustees	Marianella Oropeza Acosta Liliana Fernandez Mitchell Karen Mavarez Anais Marin Diaz Maria Isabel Meza Silva Carlos Eduardo Rojas Acofa Mariangel Rendon (Resigned 19/05/2021) Juan Pablo Ayala (Resigned 22/03/2021) Gianncarlo Ciampaglia (Resigned 28/02/2021)
Secretary	Marianella Oropeza
Charity Number	20206241
Registered Office	53 Upper Dorset Street Dublin 1
Bank	Bank of Ireland 2 & 3 Burnell Green Malahide Road Northern Cross Co Dublin
Accountant	Whiteside Cullinan Chartered Accountants Fleming Court Fleming's Place Dublin 4

Executive declaration
for the year ended 31 December 2021

We approve this financial information and confirm that we are responsible for it, including selecting the accounting policies and making judgements underlying them. We confirm also that we have made available all relevant accounting records and information for its compilation.

Chairperson *LILIANA FERNANDEZ*

Treasurer *Anais Marin*

Date: 16.08.2022

We have prepared for your approval the financial statements of Venezuelan Community in Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2021 comprising the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and related notes from the accounting records and information and explanations you have given to us.

Our work has been undertaken solely to prepare for your approval the financial statements of Venezuelan Community in Ireland and state those matters that we have agreed to state to you in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than Venezuelan Community in Ireland for our work, or for this report.

We have carried out this engagement in accordance with technical guidance issued by Chartered Accountants Ireland and have complied with the ethical guidance laid down by Chartered Accountants Ireland.

You have approved the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance sheet and related notes for the year ended 31 December 2021 and have acknowledged your responsibility for them, for the appropriateness of the financial reporting framework adopted and for providing all information and explanations necessary for their completion.

We have not been instructed to carry out an audit or a review of the financial statements of Venezuelan Community in Ireland. For this reason, we have not verified the accuracy or completeness of the accounting records or information and explanations you have given to us and we do not, therefore, express any opinion on the financial information.

Whiteside Cullinan
Chartered Accountants
Fleming Court
Fleming's Place
Dublin 4

Date:

Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 December 2021

	2021	2020
	€	€
<u>Incoming Resources</u>		
Fundraising Event Income	1,512	5,189
Donations income	3,206	1,194
Other Income	2,053	-
	<u>6,771</u>	<u>6,383</u>
<u>Resources Expended</u>		
Administration expenses	346	90
Fundraising expenses	2,447	850
Subscriptions	326	-
Charitable Donations	2,949	3,391
Printing, postage and stationary	-	9
Accountancy	300	300
Bank Charges	109	100
Advertising	340	260
	<u>6,817</u>	<u>5,000</u>
Net outgoing resources	(46)	1,383
Taxation credit/(charge)	(11)	-
Net outgoing resources after taxation	<u>(57)</u>	<u>1,383</u>

Balance Sheet
at 31 December 2021

	Notes	2021 €	2020 €
<u>Current assets</u>			
Bank and cash		6,088	2,695
<u>Creditors</u>			
Creditors due within one year	2	<u>(6,150)</u>	<u>(2,700)</u>
Net Current Liabilities		<u>(62)</u>	<u>(5)</u>
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		<u>(62)</u>	<u>(5)</u>
<u>Represented by</u>			
Capital Account		<u>(62)</u>	<u>(5)</u>

Notes on the Accounts
for the year ended 31 December 2021

1 Accounting Policies

Accounting Convention

applicable accounting standards.

Constitution

Venezuelan Community in Ireland is a registered charity in Ireland.

Taxation

The organisation is not exempt from income tax.

2 Creditors due within one year

	2021	2020
	€	€
Accrued expenses	600	300
Deferred income	5,550	2,400
	<u>6,150</u>	<u>2,700</u>