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Agência da ONU para Refugiados



CATEDRA
SÉRGIO VIEIRA DE MELLO

ANNUAL Report



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Presentation

DEAR COLLEAGUES,

In this year, as we celebrate not only the 70th anniversary of both the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), but also the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, it is my great pleasure to recognize and commend the work of the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair (SVMAC) in Brazil for the 18th consecutive year.

As a partnership between UNHCR and Higher Education Institutions (HEI) that began in 2003, SVMAC stands out not only for its role in teaching and research, but also for the various actions of advocacy and outreach that directly benefit the refugee population in Brazil, such as Portuguese classes, psychosocial care, legal guidance and labor insertion. Currently, **28 institutions** in all regions of the country are part of the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair, working daily on behalf of thousands of refugees.

The work of SVMAC and HEIs on behalf of refugees is more necessary than ever. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of people fleeing war, violence, persecution, and human rights violations in 2020 rose to nearly **82.4 million**, according to the latest edition of UNHCR's Annual Report, "**Global Trends**", released in June 2021. This number is 4% higher than the 79.5 million registered at the end of 2019, the highest number verified so far, and confirms a growth trend for the 9th consecutive year. The report shows that by the end of 2020, there were 20.7 million refugees, 4.1 million asylum seekers, 3.9 million Venezuelans displaced outside

their country, and 48 million internally displaced people. These numbers indicate that despite the pandemic, persecution and human rights violations continue to drive people from their homes on a daily basis. In Brazil, the number of refugees and asylum seekers has never been so high, following the global trend. As of **August 2021, there were 61,660 recognized refugees in Brazil, of which 48,477 were Venezuelan refugees**. In addition, as of August 2021, there were approximately **115,000 asylum seekers** in the country. Thus, the advances made by the National Committee for Refugees in reducing the number of requests for refugee status in the country can be noted, including, at times, the support to universities from the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair.

In this sense, and in line with a whole-of-society-approach and the Global Compact on Refugees, the work of SVMAC and HEIs on behalf of refugees is of utmost importance. This prominent

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role is also being developed within the scope of the Global Forum for Refugees, in which one of the commitments assumed by Latin American Academia is to expand the experience of university networks in the fields of research, teaching and extension, providing direct assistance to refugees¹. Thus, it appears that the work carried out with excellence by SVMAC in Brazil is at the forefront, since it has applied since 2003 the most current principles and approaches established in the Global Compact on Refugees, being, therefore, an example to be followed by other institutions of higher education from other countries.

This moment of celebration and recognition of the work of the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair in Brazil should also be accompanied by a reflection on how its concept and performance can be expanded to other contexts. We must continue to seek the expansion of this well-articulated network of universities to other Federative Units, especially in the states in the North and Northeast of the country, as well as continue to strengthen the coordination of our partnerships, particularly to strengthen the role of the Chair as an active member of local, regional and national protection networks, supporting the socioeconomic inclusion of refugees and influencing political decisions and the fulfillment of the rights granted to these people. It is also essential to continue working to ensure the engagement of higher education institutions from other countries in activities that directly benefit refugee and host populations in their respective contexts.



It is, in fact, a great privilege to have the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair in Brazil. This multifaceted network of higher education institutions is essential so that, together, we continue to strengthen the search for protection and solutions for the thousands of refugees and asylum seekers in the country, so that they can rebuild their lives in peace and with dignity.

TO EACH AND EVERY
MEMBER OF THE CHAIR, OUR
MOST SINCERE THANKS
AND THE CERTAINTY OF THE
CONTINUOUS RENEWAL AND
STRENGTHENING OF OUR
PARTNERSHIP!

JOSÉ EGAS

UNHCR Representative in Brazil

Brasília, September 28th, 2021.

¹. Cf Pledges & Contributions, The Global Compact on Refugees | Digital Platform, available at: <<https://globalcompactrefugees.org/channel/pledges-contributions>>. Accessed on July 30, 2021.

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Introduction and Objectives



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In 2003, UNHCR initiated an academic dissemination and training program in Latin America to strengthen the learning of university professors and students in the fields of International Refugee Law, International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law. The project initiative was named “Sérgio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair” in honor of Sérgio Vieira de Mello, a Brazilian who died in Iraq in 2003 in an attack to the UN headquarters in that country, after spending a large part of his professional career in the United Nations working with refugees as a UNHCR employee.

Over the past 18 years, the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair has proven to be a key actor in ensuring that refugees and asylum seekers have access to rights and services in Brazil, being motivated by the strengthening of the inclusive approach, protective education and applied research to consolidate the reception of refugees in the university environment and host communities. The Chair’s engagement is thus multifaceted and aligned with the society-wide approach that underlies the Global Compact on Refugees. The SVMAC is currently composed of **28 higher education institutions** distributed across **13 Federative Units** in the country and its initiatives generally fall under one of the following four pillars:



TEACHING, INCLUDING ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The Sérgio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair promotes the dissemination of issues related to forced displacement of people, primarily promoting the teaching of International Refugee Law, International Humanitarian Law, and International Human Rights Law. This axis is the basis for the creation of the Chair, and it is through teaching that academic training and the strengthening of the knowledge of teachers and students in the aforementioned disciplines take place. Furthermore, the Chair also promotes through this axis the access of refugees and asylum seekers to higher education, supporting this population not only with specific admission notices and university permanence programs, but also offering support with the revalidation of diplomas.



RESEARCH

This axis of the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair is focused on research, encouraging the dissemination of themes related to the protection of refugees and their local integration in Brazil. The Chair promotes the theme of international protection through curricular and extracurricular activities, including public conferences, academic seminars, and academic publications. SVMAC has been able to generate quantitative and qualitative data and provide a greater understanding of the sociocultural dynamics that impact local integration, in the formulation of public policies aimed at this population, providing greater visibility on the topic of refugee protection for the academic community, civil society, the private sector and host community.



OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

University outreach is understood as the interdisciplinary process that promotes sharing, with the external public, the knowledge acquired through teaching and research developed at the university. It can be defined by the articulation of scientific knowledge, acquired in the academic environment, with the needs of the community in which the university is inserted, interacting and transforming social reality². This process has a direct impact on the lives of refugees, and through it the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair ensures a network of support and assistance, and promotes greater local integration and peaceful coexistence with host communities. Among the university extension projects developed by the SVMAC for the benefit of the refugee population, those relating to health services in general, and mental health and psychosocial support, teaching the Portuguese language, legal assistance and labor integration stand out.



ADVOCACY AND FORMULATION OF PUBLIC POLICIES

Universities also advocate strengthening the response of governments and the influence of authorities, non-governmental partners and society at large in adopting practices that guarantee the protection of refugees at the municipal, state and/or national levels. Experience shows the potential to discuss not only the admission and revalidation of diplomas for refugees, but also various issues such as housing and working conditions, are paramount in current institutional activities.



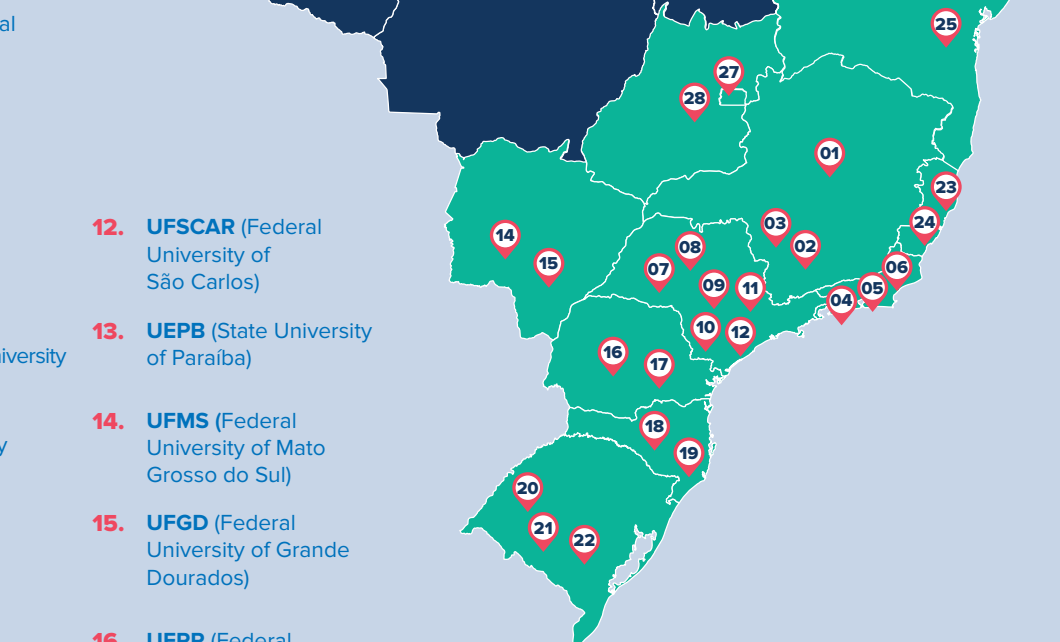
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2. UFES, Dean of Extension, available at: <<https://proex.ufes.br/o-que-%c3%a9-extens%c3%a3o-universit%c3%a1ria#main-content>>. Last accessed on May 10, 2021. For more information also check: National Policy of University Extension. Available at: <<https://proex.ufsc.br/files/2016/04/Pol%C3%ADtica-Nacional-de-Extens%C3%A3o-Universit%C3%A1ria-e-book.pdf>>. Last accessed on July 31, 2021.

2.1. Higher Education Institutions associated with the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair in Brazil



UNTIL AUGUST 2021, SVMAC HAD AGREEMENTS WITH THE FOLLOWING 28 INSTITUTIONS:

- 
1. **PUC-Minas** (Pontifical Catholic University of Minas Gerais)
 2. **UFMG** (Federal University of Minas Gerais)
 3. **UFU** (Federal University of Uberlândia)
 4. **PUC-Rio** (Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro)
 5. **UERJ** (State University of Rio de Janeiro)
 6. **UFF** (Fluminense Federal University)
 7. **PUC-SP** (Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo)
 8. **UFABC** (Federal University of ABC)
 9. **UNISANTOS** (Catholic University of Santos)
 10. **UNIFESP** (Federal University of São Paulo)
 11. **UNICAMP** (State University of Campinas)
 12. **UFSCAR** (Federal University of São Carlos)
 13. **UEPB** (State University of Paraíba)
 14. **UFMS** (Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul)
 15. **UFGD** (Federal University of Grande Dourados)
 16. **UFPR** (Federal University of Paraná)
 17. **UNICURITIBA** (University Center of Curitiba)
 18. **UFSC** (Federal University of Santa Catarina)
 19. **UNIVALI** (University of Vale do Itajaí)
 20. **UNISINOS** (University of Vale do Rio dos Sinos)
 21. **UFRGS** (Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul)
 22. **UFSM** (Federal University of Santa Maria)
 23. **UFES** (Federal University of Espírito Santo)
 24. **UVV** (University of Vila Velha)
 25. **UNIFACS** (University of Salvador)
 26. **UFRR** (Federal University of Roraima)
 27. **UNB** (University of Brasília)
 28. **UFG** (Federal University of Goiás)

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Teaching



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As mentioned before, through the Teaching Axis, the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair aims to disseminate issues of international protection of human rights and refugees, with the teaching of International Humanitarian Law, International Human Rights Law and International Refugee Law. It is through teaching that academic training and qualification of teachers and students in these disciplines are possible. It is also within this scope that refugees and asylum seekers can have access to higher education, with the promotion of specific admission and reentry notices aimed at the refugee population and, for example, support with the revalidation of diplomas.

3.1. Subjects

Between 2020 and 2021, even with the impacts brought to access to education by the pandemic, the Chair offered in its undergraduate and/or graduate curricula 55 subjects related to the theme of forced displacement of people. Approximately **44** courses

were or are offered at undergraduate level and 11 more at the graduate level, reaching approximately **700 students**.

Through the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair, it is possible to reach a wide range of students and courses, showing not only the transdisciplinarity of the subject of forced displacement, but also the efforts of SVMAC in promoting the subject. Currently, there are courses related to the theme offered in the courses of Anthropology, Arts, Political Science, Social Sciences, Communication, Law, Economics, Education, Geography, History, Languages and Literature, Public Policy, Psychology, International Relations, and Social Work.

Even with the difficulties brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, all SVMAC higher education institutions offered courses in their undergraduate courses, with **85%** of them offering graduate courses.

FIGURE 1. Chairs with subjects related on the theme in Undergraduate and Graduate courses

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_17065

