

VENEZUELA

Public Administration Country Profile

Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM)
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Venezuela

[Click here](#) for detailed map



Source: [The World Factbook](#) - Venezuela

Government type

Federal republic

Independence

5 July 1811 (from Spain)

Constitution

30 December 1999

Legal system

Open, adversarial court system

Administrative divisions

23 states, 1 federal district, and 1 federal dependency; the federal dependency consists of 11 federally controlled island groups with a total of 72 individual islands.

Source: [The World Factbook](#) - Venezuela

Located in Northern South America, Venezuela borders the Caribbean Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean, between Colombia and Guyana. According to 2006 estimates, the population is 25,730,435. Venezuela is the sixth-most populous country in Latin America, after Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Argentina and Peru. About 85% of the population lives in urban areas in the northern portion of the country. The population of Venezuela is comprised of a combination of European, indigenous, and African heritages. Spanish is the official language.

By the late 1920s Venezuela had become the world's largest oil exporter. However, with poverty rife and educational and health facilities in a deplorable state, a series of popular uprisings took place, culminating in the country's first democratic elections in 1947. The government's measures were designed to bring Venezuela's raging inflation and alarming currency fall under control.

In December 1998, Venezuelans elected an army colonel, Hugo Chávez, to the presidency with the largest vote margin in 40 years. Chávez was re-elected by a comfortable margin again in 2000) in generally free and fair national and local elections. Key national institutions, including the media, banks, the church, sections of the armed forces and the nationalized petrol industry, have destabilized the

government. In April 2002, following widespread demonstrations, people demanded Chavez's resignation; military officers took President Chavez into custody.

Source: [U.S. Department of State](#) - Venezuela Background Info (2006)

Venezuela continues to be highly dependent on the petroleum sector, accounting for roughly one-third of GDP, around 80% of export earnings, and over half of government operating revenues. Tax revenue is the primary source of non-oil revenue, which accounts for 53% of the 2006 budget. A disastrous two-month national oil strike, from December 2002 to February 2003, temporarily halted economic activity. The economy remained in depression in 2003, declining by 9.2% after an 8.9% fall in 2002. Output recovered strongly in 2004-2005, aided by high oil prices and strong consumption growth. Venezuela continues to be an important source of crude oil for the US market. Both inflation and unemployment remain fundamental problems.

Source: [The World Factbook](#) - Venezuela (2006)

1. General Information

1.1 People	Venezuela	Brazil	Colombia	1
Population				a
Total estimated population (,000), 2003	25,699	178,471	44,222	
Female estimated population (,000), 2003	12,928	90,560	21,845	
Male estimated population (,000), 2003	12,771	87,911	22,377	
Sex ratio (males per 100 females), 2003	101	97	98	
Average annual rate of change of pop. (%), 2000-2005	1.86	1.24	1.59	
Youth and Elderly Population				b
Total population under age 15 (%), 2003	33	28	32	
Female population aged 60+ (%), 2003	6	9	7	
Male population aged 60+ (%), 2003	8	7	8	
Human Settlements				c
Urban population (%), 2001	87	82	75	
Rural population (%), 2001	13	18	25	
Urban average annual rate of change in pop. (%), '00-'05	2.09	1.88	2.25	
Rural average annual rate of change in pop/ (%), '00-'05	-0.1	-1.93	-0.53	
Education				d
Total school life expectancy, 2000/2001	10.5	13.4	11.1	1
Female school life expectancy, 2000/2001	10.1	13.6	10.8	1
Male school life expectancy, 2000/2001	10.9	13.1	11.3	1
Female estimated adult (15+) illiteracy rate (%), 1990	8	13.2 ⁱ	8.4 ⁱⁱⁱ	2
Male estimated adult (15+) illiteracy rate (%), 1990	7	13 ⁱ	8.4 ⁱⁱⁱ	2
Employment				e
Unemployment rate (15+) (%), 1999	14.9	9.6 ⁱⁱ	14.7 ^{iv}	1
Female adult (+15) economic activity rate (%), 1999	...	54 ⁱⁱ	19.1 ^{iv}	2
Male adult (+15) economic activity rate (%), 1999	...	82 ⁱⁱ	11.6 ^{iv}	2

Notes: ⁱ 2000; ⁱⁱ 1999, Aged 10 years and over, Excluding the rural population of Rondonia, Acre, Amazonas, Roraima, Par and Amap, Month of September; ⁱⁱⁱ 1993; ^{iv} 2001.

1.2 Economy	Venezuela	Brazil	Colombia	2
GDP				a
GDP total (millions US\$), 2002	94,340	452,387	82,194	
GDP per capita (US\$), 2002	3,760	2,593	1,879	
PPP GDP total (millions int. US\$), 2002	131,142	1,311,503	265,452	
PPP GDP per capita(int. US\$), 2002	5,226	7,516	6,068	
Sectors				b
Value added in agriculture (% of GDP), 2002	2.6	5.8 ⁱ	14.0 ⁱⁱ	
Value added in industry (% of GDP), 2002	43.0	19.1 ⁱ	30.6 ⁱⁱ	
Value added in services (% of GDP), 2002	54.4	75.1 ⁱ	55.4 ⁱⁱ	
Miscellaneous				c
GDP implicit price deflator (annual % growth), 2003	37.2	12.8 ⁱ	6.6	
Private consumption (% of GDP), 2003	69.8	56.9 ⁱ	71.2	
Government consumption (% of GDP), 2003	6.4	19.3 ⁱ	14.4	

Notes: ⁱ 2004; ⁱⁱ 2003.

¹ United Nations Statistics Division:

^a [Statistics Division and Population Division of the UN Secretariat](#); ^b [Statistics Division and Population Division of the UN Secretariat](#); ^c [Population Division of the UN Secretariat](#); ^{d1} [UNESCO](#); ^{d2} [UNESCO](#); ^{e1} [ILO](#); ^{e2} [ILO/OECD](#)

² [World Bank - Data and Statistics](#):

^a [Quick Reference Tables](#); ^b [Data Profile Tables](#); ^c [Country at a Glance](#)

1.3 Public Spending	Venezuela	Brazil	Colombia	
Public expenditures				3
Education (% of GNP), 1985-1987	5	4.7	2.6 ⁱⁱⁱ	a
Education (% of GNP), 1995-1997	5.2 ⁱ	5.1	4.1 ⁱⁱⁱ	a
Health (% of GDP), 1990	2.5	3	1.2	
Health (% of GDP), 1998	2.6	2.9 ⁱⁱ	5.2	
Military (% of GDP), 1990	2	1.9	2.6	b
Military (% of GDP), 2000	1.2	1.3	2.3	b
Total debt service (% of GDP), 1990	10.3	1.8	9.7	
Total debt service (% of GDP), 2000	4.9	10.5	6.4	

Notes: ⁱData refer to a year or period other than that specified; ⁱⁱ1999; ⁱⁱⁱData refer to the Ministry of Education only.

1.4 Public Sector Employment and Wages						
<i>Data from the latest year available</i>		Venezuela 1991-1995	Venezuela 1996-2000	Latin America & Caribbean average ⁴ 1996-2000	Excluding Caribbeans average ⁴ 1996-2000	Middle income group average ⁴ 1996-2000
Employment						
Civilian Central Government ⁵	(,000)	246	109			
	(% pop.)	1.2	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.6
Sub-national Government ⁵	(,000)	182	..			
	(% pop.)	0.9	..	0.7	0.7	0.6
Education employees	(,000)	182	..			
	(% pop.)	0.9	..	0.6	0.6	1.2
Health employees	(,000)	29	..			
	(% pop.)	0.1	..	..	..	0.7
Police	(,000)	..	..	
	(% pop.)	..	..	..	..	0.3
Armed forces	(,000)	79	79			
	(% pop.)	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5
SOE Employees	(,000)	..	..	
	(% pop.)	..	..	2.2	2.2	3.6
Total Public Employment	(,000)	..	..	
	(% pop.)	..	..	..	..	6.05
Wages						
Total Central gov't wage bill	(% of GDP)	4.8	..	6.6	5.6	8.5
Total Central gov't wage bill	(% of exp)	20.7	41.0	20.3	19.7	21.6
Average gov't wage	(,000 LCU)	..	..	
Real ave. gov't wage ('97 price)	(,000 LCU)	..	..	
Average gov't wage to per capita GDP ratio		..	..	1.8	2.0	4.2

Source: [World Bank](#) - [Public Sector Employment and Wages](#)

³ UNDP - [Human Development Report 2002](#)

^a Data refer to total public expenditure on education, including current and capital expenditures.

^b As a result of a number of limitations in the data, comparisons of military expenditure data over time and across countries should be made with caution. For detailed notes on the data see SIPRI (2001).

⁴ Averages for regions and sub regions are only generated if data is available for at least 35% of the countries in that region or sub region.

⁵ Excluding education, health and police – if available (view [Country Sources](#) for further explanations).

2. Legal Structure

Venezuela has a democratic system of government, now supported by a new and modern National Constitution passed by means of a popular referendum hold in 1999. The Constitution spelling out civic rights that address topics such as culture and education, indigenous rights, adequate housing, land distribution, worker safety, protection of family and children, and priority of the environment. Importantly, the document not only lays out the rights of the citizenry, but also the duties of the state and the public.

Source: [Embassy of Venezuela](#) – Political Overview (2005)

2.1 Legislative Branch

Unicameral National Assembly or Asamblea Nacional (167 seats).⁶

Women in parliament: 29 out of 167 seats: (17.4%).⁷

The Legislative Branch is formed by the unicameral National Assembly of 167 seats. The number of seats is determined by a "proportional representation", formula which takes into account the national population figure and establish the number of deputies in each electoral district. Its members are Deputies elected by each state (three Deputies per state) by universal, direct, personal and secret vote to serve five-year terms.

Three seats in the National Assembly are reserved for indigenous people. The National Assembly have 15 Permanent Commissions, referred to the national activity sectors. The National Assembly normally hold two sessions, the first from 5th January to the 15th of August, and the second from the 15th of September to the 15th of December.

Fact box:

elections: last held 4 December 2005 (next to be held NA 2010)

election results: percent of vote by party - NA%; seats by party - pro-government 167 (MVR 114, PODEMOS 15, PPT 11, indigenous 2, other 25), opposition 0.⁸

Source: [Venezuelan-American Chamber of Commerce](#) – About Venezuela (2006)

⁶ Source of fact boxes if nothing else stated: [The World Factbook](#) - Venezuela

⁷ [Inter-Parliamentary Union](#) - [Women in National Parliaments](#)

⁸ [Electionworld.org](#) - [Country](#)

2.2 Executive Branch

cabinet: Council of Ministers appointed by the president

elections: president elected by popular vote for a six-year term; election last held 30 July 2000 (next to be held NA 2006). Hugo CHAVEZ Frias reelected president; percent of vote - 60%

The Executive Branch is headed by the President of the Republic, the Executive Vice President, the Ministers and other officials as determined by the Constitution and the laws. The President is both the Chief of State and Head of Government. The President is elected by universal, direct and secret vote. The President serves for a period of six years, with the possibility of an immediate re-election once only. Election last held on July 30th, 2000.

The Venezuelan Constitution guarantees the freedom to create political parties when states that "competing political parties have the right to guide national policy through democratic methods". A political party can be created by submitting either a presidential candidate or a list of legislative candidates to the National Electoral Council (CNE) for its approval. The Law of Political Parties states that a party must obtain 1% of the national vote to retain its legal status.

Fact box:

chief of state: President Hugo CHAVEZ Frias (since 3 February 1999); Vice President Jose Vicente RANGEL Vale (since 28 April 2002); *note* - the president is both the chief of state and head of government.

head of government: President Hugo CHAVEZ Frias (since 3 February 1999).

Source: [Venezuelan-American Chamber of Commerce](#) – About Venezuela (2006)

2.3 Judiciary Branch

Supreme Tribunal of Justice or Tribuna Suprema de Justicia (magistrates are elected by the National Assembly for a single 12-year term)

Judicial Power is vested in the Supreme Court of Justice (Tribunal Supremo de Justicia) which is organized in constitutional, political-administrative; electoral, civil cassation; penal cassation and social cassation, and various local courts. The Judges of the Supreme Court of Justice are elected for a twelve year only period. The Supreme Tribunal of Justice is the final court of appeal and has the authority to rule on the constitutionality of executive decrees and congressional acts. The other courts created by the law, the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Public Defender, the criminal investigation agencies, the auxiliaries of justice and prison system.

Source: [Venezuelan-American Chamber of Commerce](#) – About Venezuela (2006)

In May 2004, the Congress passed the Organic Law of the Supreme Court that expanded the court from 20 to 32 members. In addition to the justices named to the 12 new seats, five justices were named to fill vacancies that had opened in recent months. Some organizations noted that the process of appointment was not transparent enough, in contradiction to the constitutional requirement for citizen participation.

Source: [Human Rights Watch](#) – Venezuela (2004)

2.4 Local Government

The country is divided into 23 states, a capital district, and various federal dependencies. Each state is independent in their functions but Venezuela has a National Government. Public functions are distributed among the National, States and Municipal government. The national government consists of five branches: Executive, Legislative, Judicial, Citizens' and Electoral.

The States are divided in Districts. At the level of the states, the executive power is vested in the Governors who are elected for a period of four years by direct and universal suffrage and can be re-elected for a consecutive period. The state legislative power is vested in the states Legislative Councils, integrated by a number between 7 and 15 members, elected every four years by direct and universal suffrage being able to be re-elected only for two periods. The local government is composed of the Major, the Municipal Council, and the Parishes. At the District level, the Major, as well as the members of the Municipal Council, are elected by uninominal votes. The Major is elected for a period of four years, and can be re-elected for one consecutive period.

Source: [Embassy of Venezuela](#) – Political Overview (2005)

3. The State and Civil Society

3.1 Ombudsperson

The Constitution provides for a "Citizen Power" branch of government—which includes the Ombudsman, the Public Prosecutor, and the Controller General—and an "Electoral Power" branch, the National Electoral Council (CNE).

Source: [U.S. Department of State](#) – Country Reports on Human Rights Practices (2003)

3.2 NGO participation

In 2000, there were 1,828 international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Venezuela. According to 2000 statistics, there were 76 NGOs per million population.

Source: [EarthTrends](#) - Country Profiles (2003)

Although professional and academic associations generally operate without official interference, the Supreme Court ruled in 2000 that nongovernmental organizations that receive funding from foreign governments or whose leaders are not Venezuelan are not part of "civil society." As a result, they may not represent citizens in court or bring their own legal actions. In January 2004, the Chavez government made an effort to undermine the legitimacy of reputable human rights organizations by questioning their ties to international organizations and making accusations of links to foreign governments. Freedom of peaceful assembly and association are guaranteed in the constitution, and the government generally respected these rights. Public meetings and marches, the latter of which require government permits, were generally permitted without impediment, although there are allegations that government supporters often sought to disrupt these, frequently using violence.

Source: [Freedom House](#) - Country Report (2005)

3.3 Civil Society

Civil society, as considered by the Constituent Assembly, is Venezuelan civil society, wherefrom arises the principle of its general joint responsibility with the State, and its particular responsibility toward the economic, social, political, cultural, geographical, environment, and military arenas. The consequence of this national character is that its representatives may not be foreigners or bodies affiliated with, or led, subsidized, financed, or sustained, either directly or indirectly, by states or by movements or groups influenced by states; nor by cross-border or global associations, groups, or movements that pursue political or economic goals to their own benefit. Venezuela does not historically have a strong civil society.

Source: [Inter-American Commission on Human Rights](#) – Venezuela Civil Society (2006)

Although the constitution provides for freedom of the press, exercise of that right is becoming increasingly difficult in practice. In 2003, the government proposed several measures to tighten its control over opposition newspapers and television and radio stations. A climate of intimidation and hostility against the press has been established in the past few years, in large part as a result of strong anti-media

rhetoric by the government and a significant anti-Chavez slant on the part of media owners. The state allocates broadcast licenses in a biased fashion and engages in favoritism in the distribution of government advertising revenues. In July 2004, a new law was ratified that regulates the work of journalists, provides for compulsory registration with the national journalism association, and punishes reporters' "illegal" conduct with prison sentences of three to six months. A Supreme Court ruling upheld censorship laws that effectively declared that laws protecting public authorities and institutions from insulting criticism were constitutional. The Law on the Social Responsibility of Radio and TV, giving the government control over the content of radio and television programs, was to go into effect in December 2005. The government does not restrict Internet access.

Source: [Freedom House](#) - Freedom of the Press (2005)

On December 7, 2004 the National Assembly passed the Radio and Television Social Responsibility Law (or Ley Resorte). The law establishes within the regulatory agency a Directorate for Social Responsibility, which is composed of eleven people, whose main function is to oversee compliance with the provisions of the law and to impose sanctions on offenders. Sanctions include taking cultural and educational programming off the air, fines, the suspension of business licenses which allow stations to broadcast, and revoking their concessions. According to government officials, the new law will encourage higher standards in broadcasting, protect children from inappropriate sex and violence and democratize access to the airways. The opposition, which controls most of Venezuela's private media, insists the new law on "Social Responsibility in TV and Radio" is aimed at silencing them and will threaten freedom of expression.

Source: [BBC News](#) – Venezuela Media Law (2004)

4. Civil Service

The Constitution provides for a career civil service and establishes standards for performance, advancement, suspension, and retirement. The ideals, however, have been largely ignored in practice in favor of a system based on patronage. Scholars of public administration agreed that the bureaucracy was inefficient and often susceptible to corruption.

Source: [The World Factbook](#) - Venezuela (2006)

4.1 Legal basis

The Constitution as well as the 2001 national Organic Laws on Public Administration and on Civil Service provide regulations for a career civil service and establish standards for performance, advancement, suspension, and retirement of public employees (civil service).

Source: [U.S. Library of Congress](#) - Venezuela Public Administration (2006)

4.2 Recruitment

Civil Service positions are to be filled by career personnel. Exceptions are those elected by popular vote, those whose holders may be appointed and removed freely, those contracted for, laborers in the civil service and any others determined by law. Recruitment of public officials to fill career positions shall be by public competition, based on principles of honesty, capability and efficiency.

Source: [Venezuela Solidarity](#) – Constitution of Venezuela (2006)

4.3 Promotion

Promotion shall be governed by scientific methods based on the merit system, and transfer, suspension and removal shall depend on performance. Appointment to a judicial position and the promotion of judges shall be carried out by means of public competitions to ensure the capability and excellence of the participants, with selection by the juries of the judicial circuits, in such manner and on such terms as may be established by law.

Source: [Venezuela Solidarity](#) – Constitution of Venezuela (2006)

4.4 Remuneration

The Central Personnel Office has a great number of categories and weights for a semi-annual overall ranking on which salary increments, salary supplements and bonuses are determined. While each ministry or department receives a fixed sum for annual bonuses, base salary increments and supplements are based on annual budget growth. Managers therefore have strong incentives to assign their subordinates high performance evaluation scores. Moreover, while they face no penalties for inflating personnel evaluations, they risk upsetting staff relations if they assign low ratings. In the end, both salary adjustments and promotions tend to reflect nonperformance criteria, particularly seniority.

Source: [UNDP](#) – Civil Service Reform (2005)

4.5 Training

According to labor rights, states shall guarantee ongoing training, professional training, and advancement and promotion in keeping with capabilities and competence. Additionally, the Commission on Public Administration undertook the administrative reform of the upper levels of the public service and established a school in Caracas to train career civil servants, the Graduate Institute of Public Administration (Instituto de Estudios Superiores de Administración--IESA).

Source: [Permanent Mission of Venezuela](#) – Social Charter (2005)

4.6 Gender

Eighteen of the one hundred sixty five National Assembly Deputies, or about 11% are women. Two out of twenty three governors are women (8.7%) and only 20 out of a total of 335 mayors are women, a mere 5.97%. According to data produced by the National Electoral Council (CNE), women only hold a total of 10.06% of all publicly elected offices and the majority of female representation is concentrated in the individual state legislative bodies. In recognition of this explicit incongruity, the CNE passed a resolution on April 1, 2005 that legally obliges all political parties to run an equal number of men and women to any deliberating body.

Additionally, the Organic Labor Law provides regulations for gender equality and supports women's labor rights (e.g., it extends the prohibition of dismissal during pregnancy to one year after childbirth, etc). Likewise, the provisions of the Equal Opportunities for Women Act established that men and women must be equal with respect to the right to work, job opportunities, remuneration, and social security. That was reflected in greater participation of women in all spheres of society.

Source: [Venezuela Analysis](#) – Gender Debate (2005)

5. Ethics and Civil Service

5.1 Corruption

2003 CPI Score relates to perceptions of the degree of corruption as seen by business people and country analysts and ranges between 10 (highly clean) and 0 (highly corrupt).

Corruption Perceptions Index							
		2003 CPI Score	Surveys Used	Standard Deviation	High-Low Range	Number Inst.	90 percent confidence range
Rank	Country						
1	Highly clean	9.7	8	0.3	9.2 - 10.0	4	9.5 - 9.9
100	Venezuela	2.4	12	0.5	1.4 - 3.1	8	2.1 - 2.6
133	Highly corrupt	1.3	8	0.7	0.3 - 2.2	6	0.9 - 1.7

Source: [Transparency International](#) - [Corruption Perceptions Index 2003](#)

Surveys Used: Refers to the number of surveys that were used to assess a country's performance. 17 surveys were used and at least 3 surveys were required for a country to be included in the CPI.

Standard Deviation: Indicates differences in the values of the sources. Values below 0.5 indicate agreement, values between 0.5 and c. 0.9 indicate some agreement, while values equal or larger than 1 indicate disagreement.

High-Low Range: Provides the highest and lowest values of the sources.

Number Institutions: Refers to the number of independent institutions that assessed a country's performance. Since some institutions provided more than one survey.

90 percent confidence range: Provides a range of possible values of the CPI score. With 5 percent probability the score is above this range and with another 5 percent it is below.

On April 7, 2003, the Law against Corruption was put into effect. It establishes a citizen's right to know, and sets out the state's obligations to provide, a thrice-yearly rendition of public goods and expenses, except those security and national defense expenditures as exempted by law. The law also requires most public employees to present a sworn declaration of personal assets within 30 days of assuming a post, as well as 30 days after leaving it; allows for the extradition of corrupt officials and their prohibition from holding office in the future; and includes a prohibition on officials holding secret foreign bank accounts.

Source: [Freedom House](#) - Country Report (2005)

5.2 Ethics

According to the Global Competitiveness Report (2004/2005), Venezuela's average score is 12.9 (out of 100) on Public Sector Ethics Index (PSEI). PSEI: Percentage of firms in the country that give satisfactory ratings (answers 5, 6 or 7) to the questions on honesty of politicians, government favoritism in procurement, diversion of public funds, trust in postal office and the average of bribe frequencies for permits, utilities and taxes. A higher value implies a higher ethical standard rating. On Corporate Ethics Index (CEI), Venezuela averages 24.6 (out of 100). CEI: Percentage of firms in the country that give satisfactory rating (answers 5, 6 or 7) to the questions on index calculated as the average of the percentage of firms' Corporate Illegal Corruption Component and the Corporate Legal Corruption Component.

Source: [World Bank](#) – Country Corruption/Ethics Indices (2004/2005)

6. e-Government

e-Government Readiness Index:

The index refers to the generic capacity or aptitude of the public sector to use ICT for encapsulating in public services and deploying to the public, high quality information (explicit knowledge) and effective communication tools that support human development.

The index is comprised of three sub-indices: Web Measure Index, Telecommunications Infrastructure Index and Human Capital Index.

Web Measure Index:

A scale based on progressively sophisticated web services present. Coverage and sophistication of state-provided e-service and e-product availability correspond to a numerical classification.

Telecommunications Infrastructure Index:

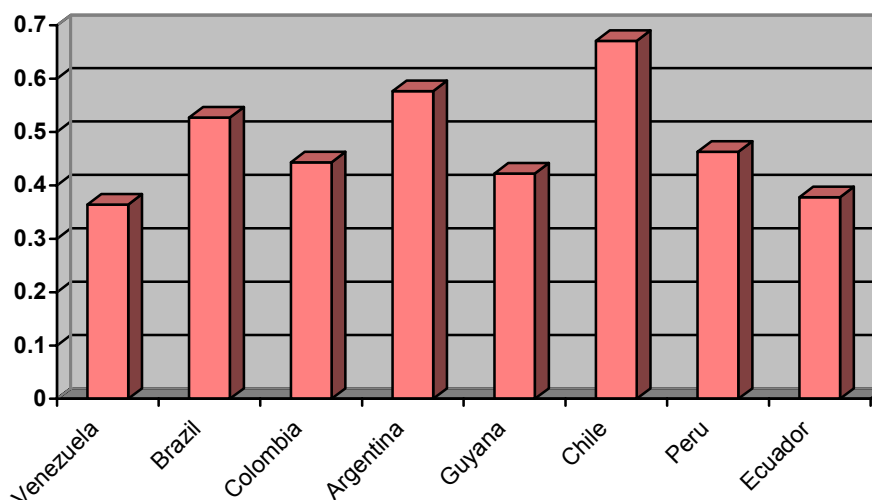
A composite, weighted average index of six primary indices, based on basic infrastructural indicators that define a country's ICT infrastructure capacity.

Primary indicators are: PC's, Internet users, online population and Mobile phones. Secondary indicators are TVs and telephone lines.

Human Capital Index:

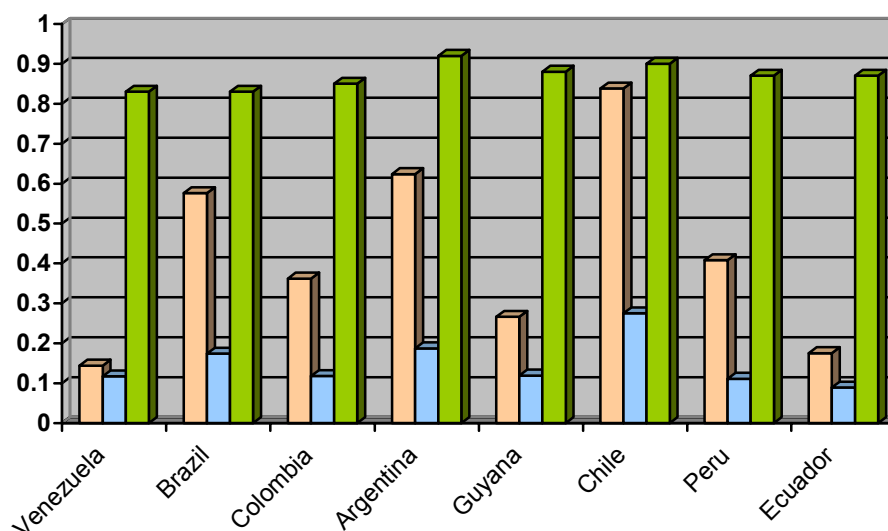
A composite of the adult literacy rate and the combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio, with two thirds of the weight given to adult literacy and one third to the gross enrolment ratio.

e-Government Readiness Index



Source: United Nations – World Public Sector Report 2003

Web Measure Index Telecom. Infrastructure Index Human Capital Index



Source: United Nations – World Public Sector Report 2003

e-Participation Index:

Refers to the willingness, on the part of the government, to use ICT to provide high quality information (explicit knowledge) and effective communication tools for the specific purpose of empowering people for able participation in consultations and decision-making both in their capacity as consumers of public services and as citizens.

e-information:

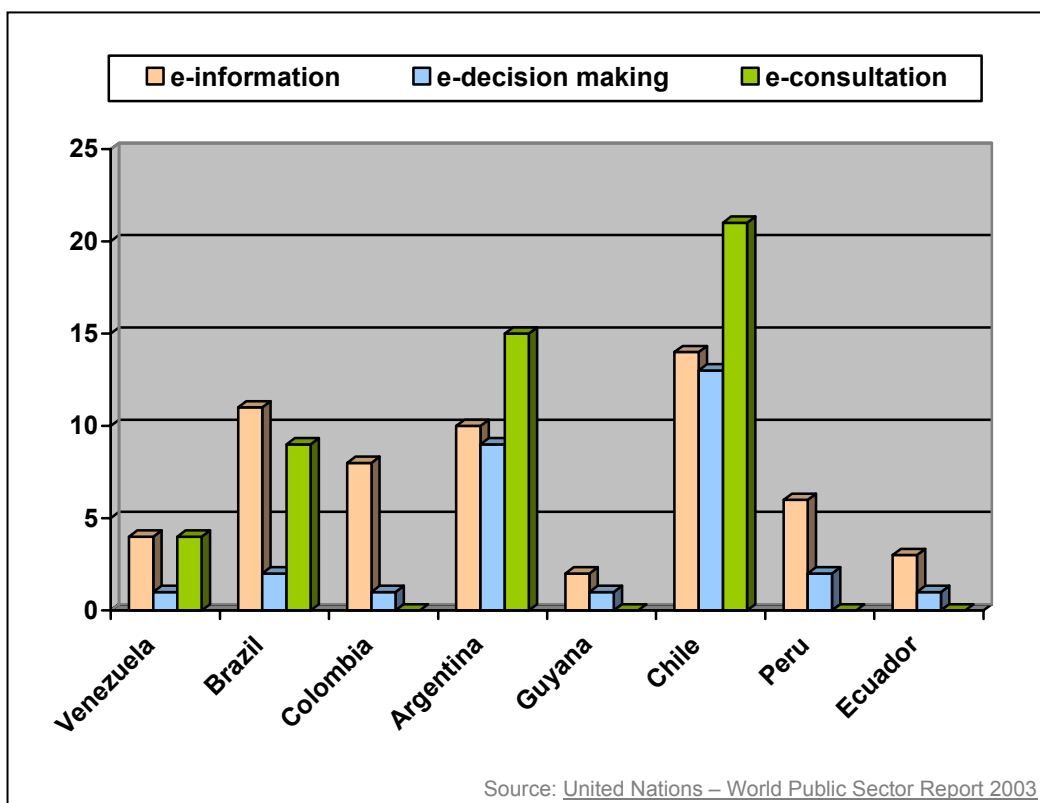
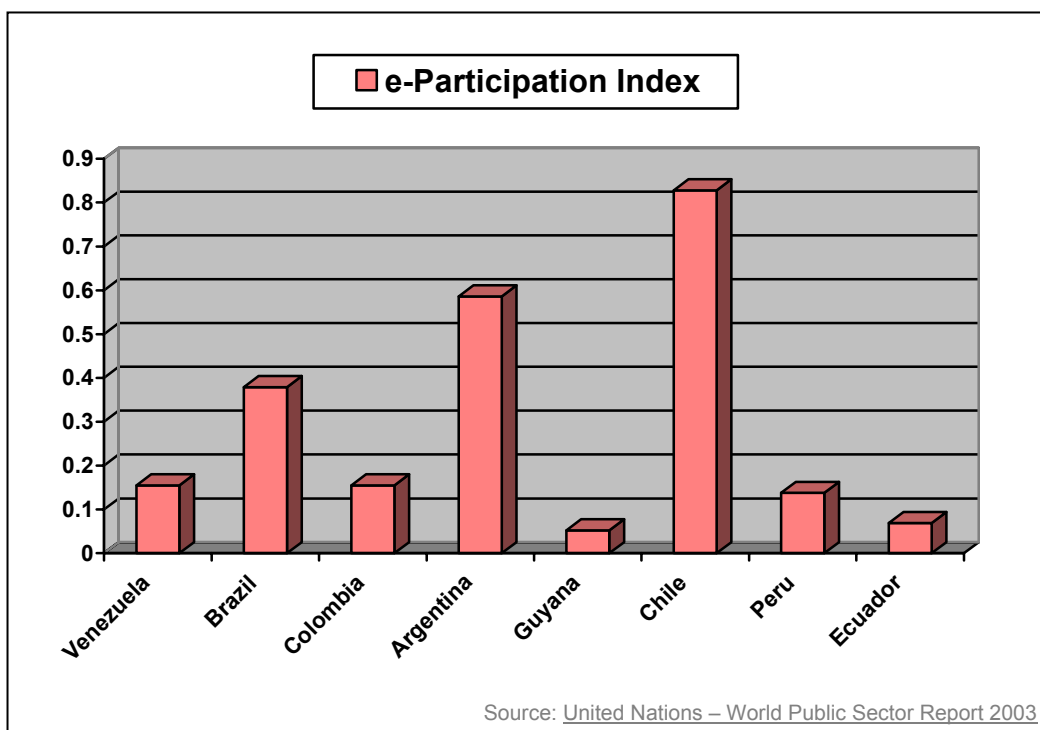
The government websites offer information on policies and programs, budgets, laws and regulations, and other briefs of key public interest. Tools for disseminating of information exist for timely access and use of public information, including web forums, e-mail lists, newsgroups and chat rooms.

e-decision making:

The government indicates that it will take citizens input into account in decision making and provides actual feedback on the outcome of specific issues.

e-consultation:

The government website explains e-consultation mechanisms and tools. It offers a choice of public policy topics online for discussion with real time and archived access to audios and videos of public meetings. The government encourages citizens to participate in discussions.



7. Links

7.1 National sites

Authority	Topic
Embassy of Venezuela in Australia – Political Overview	http://www.venezuela-emb.org.au/political_overview.html
Embassy of Venezuela in the U.S.	http://www.embavenez-us.org/
Government of Venezuela - Official Website (in Spanish)	http://www.venezuela.gov.ve/
National Assembly of Venezuela (in Spanish)	http://www.asambleanacional.gov.ve/ns2/index.asp
Supreme Court of Justice (in Spanish)	http://www.tsj.gov.ve/

7.2 Miscellaneous sites

Institution	Topic
Venezuelan-American Chamber of Commerce	http://www.venezuelanchamber.org/VACC_venezuela.asp
Inter-American Commission on Human Rights	http://www.cidh.oas.org/
Freedom House	http://www.freedomhouse.org
World Resources Institute	http://earthtrends.wri.org
Women in National Parliaments	http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm