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Spotlight



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## DEMobilized EX-FARC COMBATANTS IN THE REINTEGRATION PROCESS

### GOC-FARC NEGOTIATIONS

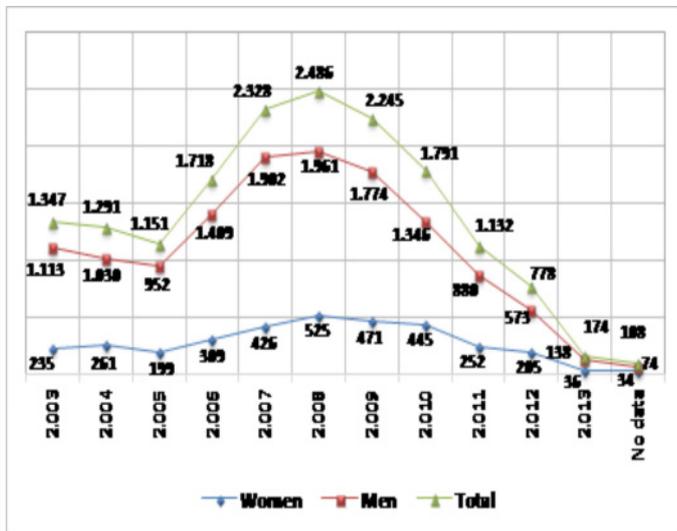
In November 2012, the GOC and the FARC began peace talks in Havana, Cuba. The third agenda point is: *Leaving weapons aside – reincorporation of the FARC-EP into civilian life*. Given the prospect that the group could demobilize, it is important to understand characteristics of the FARC and how they have previously engaged in GOC reintegration programs.

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

According to government sources, the FARC currently has 7,800 – 10,000 combatants. This estimate increases to 16,000 – 30,000 when other participants in the guerrilla group (militias and individuals in the support network) are included in the count. As of May 31, 2013, of the 55,669 people who have demobilized from illegal armed groups, 16,549 (34%) were from the FARC: 13,151 (79%) men and 3,398 (21%) women.

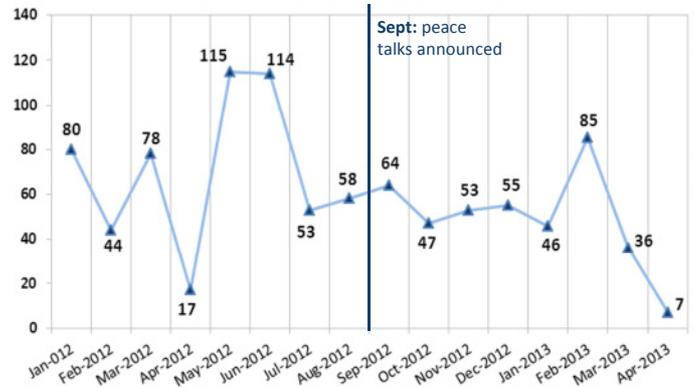
The number of FARC members to demobilize per year can be seen below. There is a peak in 2008 after increased military offensives and an increase in middle-command FARC demobilizations, probably due to the new option of legal benefits under the Justice and Peace Law.<sup>1</sup>

FARC DEMOBILIZATIONS 2.003-2.012 (annual)



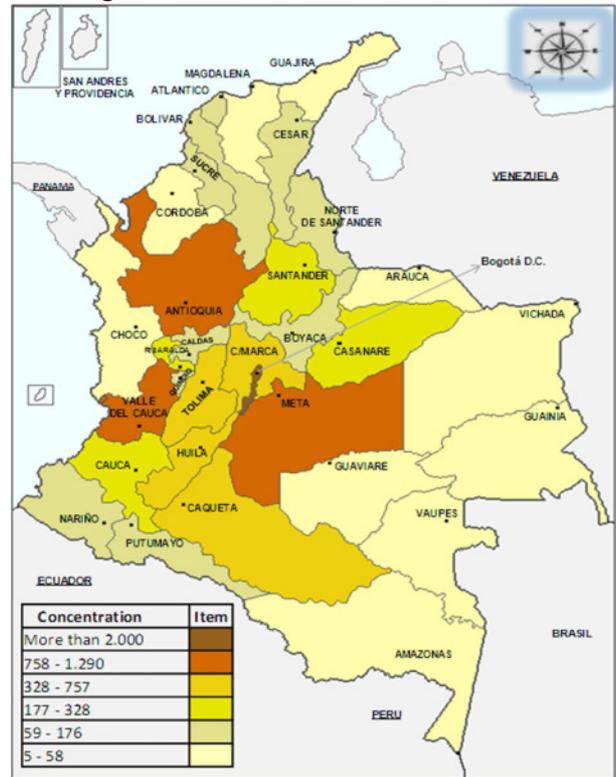
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FARC DEMOBILIZATIONS (2.012 - 2.013)



Of the 16,549 ex-FARC, 3,262 (20%) are 18-25 years old, 7,824 (47%) are 26-35 years old, 3,585 (21%) are 36-50 years old, 596 (4%) are above 50, and 1,282 (8%) did not provide their age. 8,107 (49%) did not report an ethnicity; 7,321 (44%) self-identified as mestizo, 701 (4%) as Afro-Colombian, and 420 (3%) indigenous. However, a larger portion of disengaged child soldiers from the FARC have been identified as indigenous (10%) and Afro-Colombian (5%), suggesting that ethnic status may be under-reported by adults.

The largest concentrations of ex-FARC live in



Bogotá, Meta, Valle del Cauca, and Antioquia.

All of these locations are below the national average poverty rate of 34%: in Meta and Valle del Cauca around 30% of the population live in poverty; in Antioquia, 29% live in poverty; and in Bogotá, this figure falls to 13%. Unemployment rates in these areas approximate the national average of 11%: in Valle del Cauca, 14% are unemployed, while in Bogotá, Antioquia, and Meta unemployment hovers around 10%.<sup>2</sup>

In terms of recidivism, which the Colombian Reintegration Agency (ACR) defines as the commission of any crime after official demobilization, as of September 2012, 11.2% (1,771) of demobilized FARC were recidivists, although others are under investigation. This compares to 24.7% of demobilized AUC.

### FARC PARTICIPATION IN ACR PROGRAMS

#### Number of ex-FARC participants

88% of the demobilized individuals in the country entered the ACR reintegration program. Of the 16,549 ex-FARC, a slight majority (52% or 8,611 individuals) remain active in the ACR reintegration process, while 21% are guilty of or under investigation for possible recidivism; 14% never registered; 3% are dead; 3% are inactive; and 7% are suspended or have otherwise given up benefits. In total, 250 ex-FARC participants have completed the ACR program, fulfilling all of the requirements of the reintegration process.

#### Education levels of ex-FARC participants

The ACR program requires that participants finish fifth grade in order to successfully complete the reintegration process. Of the 8,611 ex-FARC members who are currently active in the ACR reintegration program, 376 (4%) are in primary education programs, 1,090 (13%) are in secondary education, 346 (4%) are in vocational or middle school, and 6,799 (79%) are not participating in educational programming at present. Of this last group, 4,856 are working.<sup>3</sup> 403 ex-FARC

participants are in technical school, and 251 of these are working while they study.

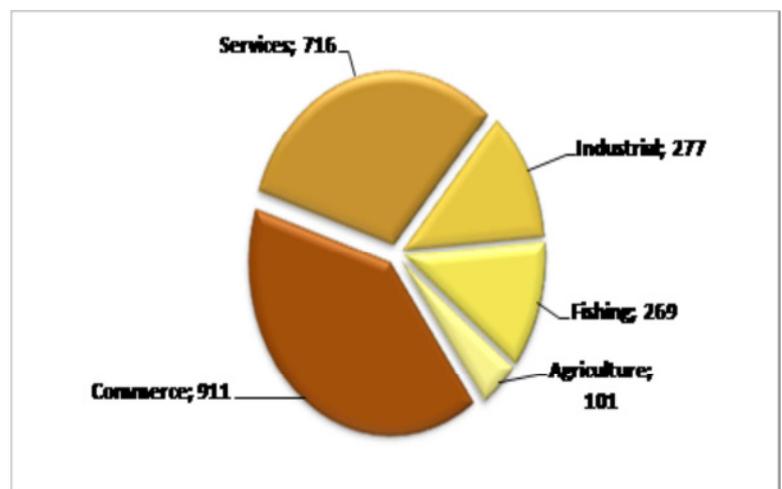
#### Time in program: ex-FARC participants

32% of ex-FARC members have participated in the ACR program for less than three years, 40% for three to six years, and 26% for more than six years (2% presented no data).

#### Employment of ex-FARC participants

Of the 8,611 ex-FARC who are active in the ACR program, 70% (6,016) are employed. 28% (2,380) report having formal employment and/or a functioning business unit, and 42% (3,636) report informal employment.

All ACR reintegration program participants are eligible to receive seed capital grants which can be used for education, housing, or a business unit. Of the 821 ex-FARC active participants who used seed capital for business purposes, 60% of their productive units are operational at this time (7% of these at risk of closing), while 40% are closed. This pie chart details the sector in which ex-FARC operate their businesses.



Document source: Internal IOM information as of June 1<sup>st</sup> 2013.

<sup>2</sup>

<http://www.portafolio.co/sites/portafolio.co/files/Pobreza%20en%20Colombia.pdf> and [http://www.dane.gov.co/files/investigaciones/boletines/ech/juventud/presentacion\\_dep\\_11.pdf](http://www.dane.gov.co/files/investigaciones/boletines/ech/juventud/presentacion_dep_11.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Some of those who are not currently participating in educational programming have completed such schooling as part of the ACR program in the past. In addition, participants tend to prioritize employment over training.

