

# Venezuela



## Introduction

The population of Venezuela is 20.2 Million with an ethnic makeup of 70 percent mestizo, and the rest – Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Arab, German, and African. Only 2 percent of the population is pure-blooded Amerindian. The capital of Caracas, has approximately 3.2 Million people within its city limits.

Venezuela is a federal multiparty republic, with a president who is both chief of state and head of government. The cabinet, or Council of Ministers, has twenty-six members. There is a bicameral congress, composed of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, and the judiciary is represented by the Supreme Court. Elections are held every five years.

The official language is Spanish. English and a variety of Amerindian dialects are spoken. There is no official religion, but the vast majority of people are Roman Catholic (96 percent).

## Fun Fact

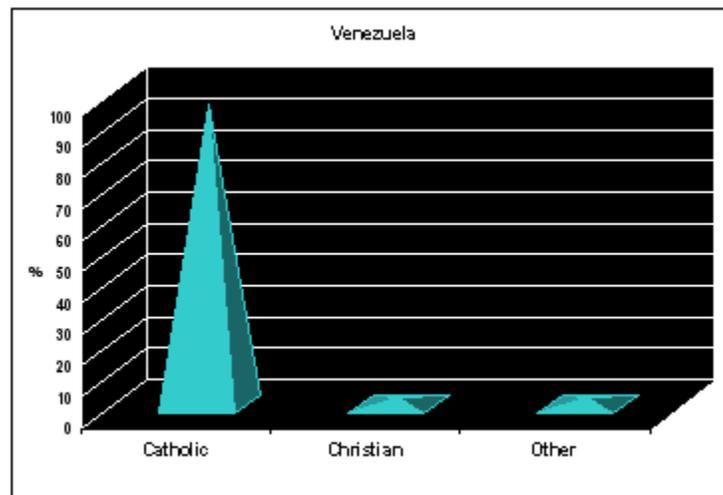
In Venezuela, there are two generations with distinct differences doing business. The older generation will want to get to know you personally first, rather than your company or firm. The younger generation may have been educated in the United States and will typically want to relate more to your business dealings or company, rather than to you personally. Columbus discovered the area of Venezuela in 1498.

# Geert Hofstede Analysis Venezuela

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The Geert Hofstede analysis for Venezuela is similar to other Latin American countries where there is very strong uncertainty avoidance, large power distance, and low individualism. This is indicative of a society that has a high concern for rules, regulations, and controls, is slow to accept change, and is risk adverse. There is a high emphasis placed on close ties with individuals, or relationships, whereby everyone takes responsibility for fellow members of their group. There are significant inequalities of power and wealth within the society. Venezuela has one of the highest masculinity rankings in Latin America. This indicates that the country experiences a high degree of gender differentiation of roles. The male dominates a significant portion of the society and power structure. [More Details](#)

## Religion in Venezuela



\* WORLD FACTBOOK 2002

## Appearance

- Dress for men is conservative – dark business suits of tropical weight wool
- Fashion is very important to Venezuelan women. Women should pack their best business clothes and one cocktail dress
- People tend to stand very close together when conversing. Venezuelans often touch each

other's arms or jacket during conversation

- Posture while seated is important; avoid slouching

## **Behavior**

- Business people are punctual and small talk is minimal
- It is good practice to follow up morning appointments with an invitation to lunch
- Have business cards printed in English on one side and Spanish on the other. Be sure your position is clearly indicated and present your card immediately following an introduction
- Unlike lunch, dinner is for socializing, not for business
- Businesswomen should be aware that going out alone with Venezuelan businessmen may be misconstrued
- The two senior executives should sit facing each other
- When dining, wait until everyone is served before beginning to eat
- Guests rarely sit at the head of the table
- To indicate you have finished eating, place your utensils in parallel and diagonally across your plate
- An appropriate gift for a man is something for the office - such as a good quality pen. A women would appreciate the gift of an orchid – the national flower
- Guests may bring or send flowers or candy to a hostess
- The senior visiting business person may give a toast offering good wishes for business negotiations, adding a memorized Spanish phrase about the pleasure of being with Venezuelans

## **Communications**

- Handshaking by both sexes common and customary; shake hands on greeting and departing. The handshake is firm

- Good friends hug and women kiss cheeks
- Avoid dominating the conversation. Venezuelans like to be in control
- Titles are important and should be included on business cards. Address a person directly by using his or her title only. A Ph.D. or a physician is called *Doctor*. Teachers prefer the title *Profesor*, engineers go by *Ingeniero*, architects are *Arquitecto*, and lawyers are *Abogado*. Persons who do not have professional titles should be addressed as Mr., Mrs., or Miss, plus their surnames. In Spanish these are:
  - Mr. = *Senor*
  - Mrs. = *Senora*
  - Miss = *Senorita*
- Most Hispanics have two surnames: one from their father, which is listed first, followed by one from their mother. Only the father's surname is used when addressing someone
- Good conversation topics: business, art, literature, history
- Bad conversation topics: local unrest, inflation, politics