



2.1.6. Colombian paramilitary successor groups

The Gaitanista Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AGC, Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia), also known as the Gulf Clan (Clan del Golfo), Urabeños or Gaitanista Army of Colombia (EGC, Ejército Gaitanista de Colombia), emerged from the demobilisation of Colombia's paramilitary movement and have since become the country's dominant criminal organisation.⁵⁰⁶ The AGC is involved in a wide range of criminal activities, including drug trafficking, extortion, and illegal mining.⁵⁰⁷

The group operates through a hybrid organisational model in which roughly one-third of local cells are directly controlled by the leadership based in Urabá, Antioquia department, while the remaining cells consist of local criminal groups that operate under the AGC name.⁵⁰⁸ These affiliated groups are expected to provide services or follow strategic directives when required.⁵⁰⁹ The AGC's model relies on financially self-sufficient local cells, many of which have diversified beyond drug trafficking into illegal mining, extortion, migrant smuggling, and micro-trafficking, while also taxing or overseeing other criminal activities within their territories.⁵¹⁰

The AGC has also attempted to expand its influence into criminal economies along the Colombia-Venezuela border.⁵¹¹ However, the strength of rival armed actors, particularly the ELN and FARC dissident factions, has prevented the organisation from gaining significant territorial control in the area.⁵¹² Briceño-León similarly indicated that the AGC is not very strong along the border between Colombia and Venezuela due to the control exerted by the ELN; however, it has some presence in the state of Táchira where it has established alliances with local criminal gangs.⁵¹³

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InSight Crime, Gaitanistas – Gulf Clan, 18 March 2025, [url](#)

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InSight Crime, Gaitanistas – Gulf Clan, 18 March 2025, [url](#)

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InSight Crime, Gaitanistas – Gulf Clan, 18 March 2025, [url](#)

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InSight Crime, Gaitanistas – Gulf Clan, 18 March 2025, [url](#)

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InSight Crime, Gaitanistas – Gulf Clan, 18 March 2025, [url](#)

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InSight Crime, Gaitanistas – Gulf Clan, 18 March 2025, [url](#); Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2026 Country Report — Venezuela, 2026, [url](#), p. 6

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InSight Crime, Gaitanistas – Gulf Clan, 18 March 2025, [url](#)

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Briceño-León, telephone interview, 28 May 2026